



Wheaton-Glen Ellyn Branch, NFP
wheatonglenellyn-il.aauw.net

October 2020

A Leaf from the Co-Presidents

Dear Friends and Fellow Members,

Are you as surprised as we are that we are already nearing October? While it seems that pandemic days can be long, the weeks just seem to fly by!

Looking back for just a moment, many thanks to Carolyn Oesterle for her planning and Sarah Allen for her photographic expertise (and props!) for arranging a very successful Fall Fundraising Walk. See Carolyn's complete report elsewhere in this newsletter.

If you are not familiar with it, the Five-Star program is an initiative by National AAUW to award branches who support and exemplify the mission of AAUW. Our Branch has been awarded three stars with the fourth waiting in the wings. This is something your Branch Co-Presidents plan to complete before the end of this calendar year. We know we are a Five Star Branch!

October is traditionally the month in which we vote on the budget. During our September All-Branch Zoom meeting, treasurer Maureen Sheehan presented the 2020-2021 budget; you also received a copy of the budget in an All-Branch email. In early October, you will receive an email (similar to our surveys) asking you to accept the budget. The Board has already voted its approval.

Save October 10 for our next All-Branch meeting. The format invites you to interact with other Branch members in a safe way, combining two timely and well developed videos you can watch at your convenience and then discuss with other members in small groups or via Zoom. A few members have graciously offered to provide a discussion location for up to six members. See Program Vice President Frankie Robinson's article for details. If you are willing to host a small group in your backyard or at a nearby park, please let us know.

Janet & Donna Jean

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Time	Information
Oct. 2	AM Lit	9:30 am	Zoom.
Oct. 10	Branch Meeting	TBD	Small outside gatherings & Zoom.
Oct. 11	Film Group <i>Note day & time change</i>	3:00 pm	Patio between Wheaton Public Library & Adams Park, Wheaton.
Oct. 14	Board Meeting	7:00 pm	Zoom.
Oct. 19	PM Lit	TBD	TBD
Oct. 28	AM Non Fiction	10:00 am	Zoom.



**Are We Doing All We Can?
Saturday, October 10, 2020**

There is still work to do to make our lives, workplaces, and everyday experiences equitable for all. To help us gain more information regarding how we can better answer that question, please, independently, view both webinars below sponsored by National AAUW prior to our meetings on October 10.

- **Holding Space:** *How to Start & Continue Conversations on Race, Equity, & Inclusion.* (66 minutes)
- **2020 Convening:** *Is Your Perspective Inclusive?* (64 minutes)

Both webinars can be accessed by *YouTube* or the AAUW website.

- Go to *AAUW.org*, choose *Membership*, then *Initiatives*, then *2020 Vision: Marking a Momentous Year*, then scroll down to the webinars.
OR
- Link to *AAUW.org* <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/2020-convening/> then scroll down to webinars.
OR
- Go to *YouTube.com*, use the *Search* option and key in *AAUW Webinar Series*, scroll down to the titles.

After viewing webinars independently, members will gather on October 10, in small groups (no more than 6 plus the host) at various members' homes in outdoor settings (social distancing, of course) to discuss the contents of both webinars. The small group gatherings will be conducted at a variety of times so members will be able to choose a time that works best for them. A Zoom meeting is also planned to accommodate those members who prefer not to attend in person. Please RSVP to Frankie, Donna Jean or Janet so we can plan for meetings. Information for times and locations will be sent in an All-Branch email at a later date.

Please remember: Wear a mask. Bring your own chair, beverage, and snack(s) as you gather for what promises to be something a little different as we consider *Are we doing all we can do to make our community equitable for everyone?*



Obviously, COVID-19 has impacted membership. It is challenging to connect with new members given the predominance of Zoom gatherings. Thus, person to person referrals may be our most effective way of reaching prospective members. We ask you to review your social contacts and suggest they join our Branch. Your friends and neighbors might be looking for a new purpose and social outlet in the time of COVID-19. Share with them AAUW's commitment to furthering women's causes, such as gender equity and education opportunities. Mention the social opportunities usually available. Perhaps suggest that they join a Zoom Branch meeting or literature group. It just might be an opportune time for them. Your membership chairs would send them our informative newsletter and other membership materials. We would be happy to follow up with a phone conversation. We just need you to initiate the process. Thank you.

AAUW'S LONG HISTORY OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION
Compiled by Caroline Pickens, AAUW Archives Corps & past Virginia State President

Did you know that AAUW has been working for equity and equal rights for **100 years**? After all, AAUW was founded for the express purpose of fighting for women's equal access to education, especially higher education. Take a look at some actions from our amazing past:

- **1921** lobbied for independent citizenship for married women (!)
- **1922** lobbied for access to contraceptives for married women.
- **1922** advocated to allow women in the diplomatic service.
- **1935** lobbied to legalize the dispensing of contraceptive information by physicians.
- **1942** created a refugee aid fund for Jewish women refugees from Germany and other Nazi-held countries; helped Jewish women professors who had been fired find positions in the U.S.
- **1949** amended the national bylaws to clearly state all college women graduates were entitled to membership regardless of race or religion—16 years before the Civil Rights Act. (AAUW never prevented anyone from joining, but it became clear some branches were refusing membership to women of color. The bylaws were amended to make it clear branches could not do that.)
- **1962** established the African Educators Program that for almost 20 years gave African women educators, primarily high school teachers, professional development opportunities in the U.S. to address the shortage of teachers in Africa. Branches in the U.S. hosted these women.
- **1964** and **1965** lobbied for passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act.
- **1969** created the Coretta Scott King Fund to support opportunities for black women to study African-American history and culture.
- **1969** began lobbying for a woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court (that only took 12 years—AAUW is persistent).
- **1972** instrumental in the passage of Title IX, co-authored by Patsy Mink of Hawaii, an AAUW member.
- **1987** admitted men to membership (first proposed in 1979).
- **1988** appointed a Diversity Chair to the national Board with a committee of diverse members.
- **1989** adopted AAUW's Diversity Statement: "AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability." All national, state, and branch publications must include this statement. (Later wording added gender identity, geographical location, and socioeconomic status and changed "creed" to "religious beliefs.")
- **1991** initiated the AAUW Initiative for Educational Equity with *Shortchanging Girls/Shortchanging America*, which was followed throughout the 90's and into this century by researched publications on bullying in schools, gender equity in STEM, discrimination in higher ed tenure, and 2015's *Bias and Barriers: Women in Leadership*.
- **1993** after 7 years of lobbying and support, the Family & Medical Leave Act passed.
- The more recent years have seen continuous work on equal pay and benefits for all women, fighting discrimination of women in higher ed and the workplace, and women's success in STEM fields. Today 2/3 of fellows and grant recipients are women of color or represent religious or ethnic minorities, as is 52% of the national staff.

**AAUW Five Star Recognition Program
Advancement Star**



Dear AAUW Wheaton – Glen Ellyn (IL) Branch,

I hope this finds you all safe and well! I'm happy to share that your branch achieved a star for Advancement in the Five Star Recognition Program! We value your commitment to the future of your branch and your generous contributions to the Greatest Needs Fund. Your hard work will go a long way in advancing AAUW's mission well into the future.

You'll be on the list of branches we'll be celebrating in our September Membership Matters news hub and recognized on the Five Star homepage as a **Three-Star Branch**. I've also attached your Five Star achievement badge for your website.

Congratulations on your achievement! We look forward to your continued Five Star success.

All the best,

Nichia P. McFarlane

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Our Branch Fundraising Activities



Book Sale

Ewa Bacon

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I am sad to announce that there will not be a 2020 or 2021 AAUW Used Book Sale. The positivity rate is too high to hold the book sale on October 28 and additionally the United Methodist Church is closed. We have made the decision to sell all of our books for a single price to a wholesale book dealer this month. We are another pandemic victim!

Fundraising Walks

Carolyn Oesterle

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We met on September 11, 2020 at Hidden Lake Forest Preserve for the fundraising walk. Despite some rain, eleven of us walked and had a great time. I would like to especially thank Jane Palmer for the suggestion and Sarah Allen for bringing suffragette cutouts from the League of Women Voters so we could have our own celebration of 100 years of voting rights for women!! I would like to thank the walkers-- Patricia Spence, Jean Lindsey, Frankie Robinson, Sarah Allen, Nancy Possinger, Mary Sue Brown, Christine Carter, Karen Schulz, Barbara Roos, and Janet Arden. A good time was had by all. I would like to especially note that Christine Carter is a new member and this was one of the first Branch events she could attend. Welcome Christine!! Members that donated,

but could not walk, were Phyllis Fogel, Laura Desmarais, Cathy Soohoo, Ruth Schumacher, Kathy McCullough, Jane Palmer, Patricia Bernhold, Suzanne Gagner, Anne Hanley, Anne Kryger and Susan Levy-Creed. Thanks to all!! So far, we have raised \$1360.00, beating expectations. It is not too late to contribute. Just send your check to me payable to **AAUW Wheaton- Glen Ellyn Branch, NFP**.



Suffrage Celebration, Fundraising, and Fun by our resident poet, Carolyn Oesterle

The fundraising walk was to be a great day
It would be outside and we could meet together that way.
But when morning came, it was rainy and gray
So we pondered a while about what to say.

I spent time on my phone with the weather app
And felt that by ten we would have a rain gap.
Eleven of us braved it at Hidden Lake Park
As we signed in, it was still quite dismal and dark.

But as we put on our raincoats to walk by the lake
Lo and behold, the rain stopped—now that was a break!
We passed trees and fall flowers—some ripe with seeds
And even an egret catching food in the reeds.

After two scenic lakes, we joined with our colleagues
To pose suffragette cut outs Sarah brought from the League.
With colored sashes on white for voting rights
We remembered our ancestors and revered their fight.

This was followed by coffee and donuts—the best
Also enjoyed by wasps wanting scraps for their nest.
We smacked them away without making a fuss
Lucky the wasps stung nary any of us.

It had come time to leave and we said our good byes
Gray, dreary weather at first caused some sighs
But the walk turned out great and we cherished each other
Next year we'll be eager to walk at another.





Our Branch Book Groups

AM Lit

Jean Lindsey

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Rebecca Solnit describes *some books as journeys where at the end you are not the same person*. Some readers will find *American Dirt* to be a challenging literary experience. Written by Jeanine Cummins, *American Dirt* takes readers on quite a dramatic trip through Mexico. Am Lit will be discussing this novel on Friday, October 2 at 9:30 am via Zoom. Thanks to Karen Bondy for volunteering to lead the discussion.

Looking ahead to November 6, we will read *Beautiful Ruins* by Jess Walter. Jane Palmer will lead the Zoom discussion.

Library copies of the novels can often be found on Marilyn Wiedemann's front porch shortly after the previous month's discussion. Please sign the book out and return it in a timely fashion.

PM Lit

Susie Gullickson

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Our book selection for the October 19 meeting is *Unsheltered* by Barbara Kingsolver. Lisa Cherry will be the discussion leader. Meeting format will either be outside in Bonnie Wheaton's yard or if weather does not cooperate, we will do our first Zoom Meeting. Time and format will be communicated by email closer to our meeting date.

When available from the Glen Ellyn Library, copies of *Unsheltered* will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis from my front porch. Watch for an email for book availability.

From Goodreads: *Kingsolver is the New York Times bestselling author of Flight Behavior, The Lacuna and The Poisonwood Bible and the recipient of numerous literary awards. With Unsheltered, Kingsolver returns with a timely novel that interweaves past and present to explore the human capacity for resiliency and compassion in times of great upheaval.*

If you are interested, check out Diane Rehm's 1/20/19 interview with Barbara Kingsolver on *YouTube* for additional insight into this novel.

AM Non-Fiction

Sue Herrmann

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We held our Book Selection Zoom meeting on August 26 to select books for 2020-21. It was a lively and fun meeting of great minds! Our next Zoom meeting will be on October 28. We will discuss *How Democracies Die* by Levitsky and Ziblatt. I will send the Zoom link to those who request an invitation.

Copies of the book will be picked up at the Glen Ellyn Public Library by Marilyn Wiedemann and kept on her front porch. She will inform us when they are available for you to pick them up. Go to our website to see the books selected for 2020-21. We have chosen great books through June 23, 2021. All book meetings will be by Zoom. Stay well and be safe!

******Please contact the appropriate chairperson if you wish to be added to the email database to receive up-to-date information as well as Zoom invitations to meetings.**



Springfield Update: Gun Control

The summer phone discussions I had with Representative Terra Costa Howard and Senator Suzi Glowiak Hilton's staffers did not reveal a hopeful future for gun control reform. Representative Howard believed gun control might come up during fall veto session only in connection with measures to address violence in Chicago. The Senator's staffers reported that Senator Julie Morrison (Democrat, District. 29), a chief co-sponsor of SB 1966, the *Fix the FOID Act*, currently feels she does not have enough votes from the Democratic caucus to get the bill passed. SB 1966 tightens loopholes in the state's gun laws.

Reproductive Rights-Talking Point Reminder

AAUW-IL Public Policy Co-Chair, Tracey Sherman-Falcon, recently addressed a member's concern that AAUW needed to place more emphasis on providing education on contraceptives and less on access to abortion. Tracey-Falcon's response:

*We are currently working on legislation with ACLU and the Aids Foundation and legislation with Planned Parenthood and Equality Illinois to work on updating the Illinois Sex Educational requirements, in addition to our past support to include free contraceptives in insurance programs and expanding Medicaid and the previous update to sex education to focus on medically accurate information. **As an organization that is pro-choice, we are supporting all forms of reproductive justice and access, including abortion access.***

Having judges who support access to a range of reproductive health options allows for more choices, not less, and that is the goal here. (Re: AAUW-IL recent opposition to David Dugan and Stephen McGlynn, anti-choice candidates to the US District for the Southern District of Illinois.)

Pro-choice judges or legislators do not take away anyone's choice to carry a pregnancy to term.

Equal Rights Amendment Update

In a September 10 Zoom presentation to AAUW-Action Ridge (Park Ridge, Illinois) and guests, AJ Conroy (AAUW-Chicago, Inc.) reviewed the obstacles facing the ERA, i.e., court challenges and the need for the U.S. Senate to pass S.J. Resolution 6. The latter would dissolve the current deadline for passage and would automatically override the court challenges. Go to www.eraillinois.org to take action.

Conversation with Rep. Ann Williams- Highlights

AAUW-Chicago, Inc. hosted a September 15 Zoom chat between Jenni Perdue, AAUW-IL lobbyist, and Representative Ann Williams (Democrat, District 11). Representative Williams stated that it is difficult to predict what will occur in November and December legislative veto sessions, if they are even held. She is proud of the work she has done, in concert with other legislators, to try to bring the topic of consent into public school sex education. She noted that the Clean Energy Jobs Act is still under construction, but expects its eventual passage. She is concerned that economic repercussions due to COVID-19 will negatively impact the vote on the Fair Tax Amendment and does not foresee pension reform. Finally, to move forward expeditiously on all issues, Representative Williams emphasized that the legislature must develop better remote operations.



We have been busy in September, on Facebook and the website. Our Facebook posts about the Fundraising Walk for Suffrage and the *Science Girls on the Go* boxes are getting a lot of likes. On the website, we now have an informational page for our STEM projects. Also, for members, the home page now includes a centralized sign-up opportunity on the home page. Previously, one would have to go to each page to sign up for the email list. We also hope that this will inform any visitors that we continue to have many activities each month in spite of the pandemic restrictions.

Zoom news – The Branch now has an upgraded Zoom Pro license. This will allow our interest group leaders to conduct meetings longer than 40 minutes without having to close and restart, as is required by the free version. Janet Arden is the holder of the license and will schedule a meeting for you on request.



STEM

Fran Kravitz

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The STEM committee is pleased to report that we have distributed our second *Science Girls on the Go* kit to the little science houses in Wheaton (1445 Brentwood Lane) and Glen Ellyn (373 Oak Street). *Science Girls on the Go* is a science enrichment program for K-12 girls in the community. This month, the kits demonstrate the properties of refracted light by making a simple kaleidoscope using a toilet paper roll and a diffraction gradient. This kit will leave you seeing stars.

We need your help spreading the word about *Science Girls on the Go* and our two little science houses. Please tell your neighbors, friends, schoolteachers, and your extended families about this program. The kits are free, and anyone is welcome to take a kit no matter where they live. Someday we will see a little science house up in every community.



The STEM committee is busy experimenting on kit three. I do not want to give the surprise away, but these kits will get everyone ready for the holidays. Fingers crossed that the experiment is successful.

Please contact Fran Kravitz if you are interested in helping with this project, have ideas for new kits or have questions.



Film Group

Anne Hanley

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We met in the space between Adams Park and the Wheaton Public Library all summer, and now into the fall. Night fell an hour into our discussion of the wonderful film, *The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected)*, but it was a lovely evening in spite of threatening clouds. Because the Earth continues to spin and days continue to shorten, next month's meeting would begin in the dark without some change to our plans. Therefore, with the great hope that the weather will be beautiful, we decided to move our meeting from 6:00 pm to the **afternoon**, at 3:00 pm. And because of Branch discussion groups on Saturday, October 10, our usual meeting day, we will meet on **Sunday**.

Bring your lawn chair and snacks, and come sit in a big circle with us on **Sunday, October 11 at 3:00 pm**.

******Please contact Anne if you wish to be added to her email database for the film selection & other up-to-date information.**

Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Vision: Equity for all.

Values: Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.



The Twigs Team

Editor:	Kathleen McCullough
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*Editor's Note: It takes a team to get Twigs out to all of you.
I would like to acknowledge and thank the other members that make it all possible!*

Volunteers are seldom paid; not because they are worthless, but because they are PRICELESS!