



Wheaton-Glen Ellyn Branch, NFP

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Twigs

January 2021

A Leaf from the Co-Presidents

Happy New Year! In 2021 the Wheaton/Glen Ellyn Branch of AAUW celebrates its 65th Anniversary. To help us kick off what we hope will be a series of celebrations, we have invited some past presidents to share their thoughts on AAUW — locally and nationally, what it has meant to them personally and professionally, how they — and we — have all grown. To start us off, we're welcoming Suzanne "Sue" Balk, Past President 1981 to 1983 and Liaison 2005 to 2007.

What's past is prologue. William Shakespeare's, *The Tempest*.

Dear Branch Sisters,

The request was made. 'Would you write a past President's letter for Twigs?' Writing a monthly newsletter article always began the night before the deadline, rolling erasable bond and carbon paper into my portable. Thankfully my computer and contents of a box in my attic will get the job done nicely.

Years ago, a good friend gave me a folder labeled AAUW 1981-82. There were my Board agendas. Just what I needed to jolt my fuzzy memory. During hours of reading, I was transported to another time and place. Most everything was there: dates, times, places and names of past and present Branch members bringing a smile to my face and a flood of memories. On to the past.

Those years were witness to an active Branch with over 200 members implementing the full AAUW National (Association) program. We did it all. There were mind stretching programs brought by our VP, study topics to implement, a rewarding effort to reach out to new members and an emphasis on community involvement. Our ably handled book sale brought increased funds for our Fellowships and College of DuPage scholars. We were everywhere; school boards, village board meetings, reps to councils and contacts with local legislators. As a result, many Branch members sat on local boards and became leaders in their communities, ISD (AAUW-IL now) and AAUW national level.

How fortunate we were to be on the cusp of immense change for women, reflected by AAUW's study topic choices and Branch programming. These and similar issues continue to occupy our focus and action today.

A few accomplishments: The big Branch project Facing Divorce, an ERA speaker's bureau, Sixty Seconds with a Technology Sister, cultural arts trips to Chicago, learning to say Chair not Chairman, the Judy Chicago's Dinner Party exhibit, the Chicago March for ERA - a sea of women in white, supporting a leaf burning ban and bringing Lake Michigan water to DuPage. All this while consistently defending women's issues. Placards and angry opponents in the park, Phyllis Schlafly wearing red to oppose choice, wary women cautious about our ERA stance, dethroning a longtime 'just cross your legs ladies' congressman and risking our AAUW name by including those who differed with us. It wasn't always a straight path but we persevered.

Time caught up with: the mimeograph machine, stencils, a Branch camera, long and frequent telephone calls, babysitters for daytime groups, an Infant/toddler group and the newsletter named AAUW. Do board meetings still last until 10:30 or 11:00 pm?

By 2005 to 2007, Branch membership was declining as women joined the workforce to begin or continue their careers. Branch leadership needed to push the pause button to accommodate those life changes. We decided to try a slimmed down version of Board and Branch meetings, concentrating on program, membership retention, our fellowships and scholarships and the book sale. The Liaison-led system became a stopgap measure until our ages and retirements energized us once again.

It's amazing how my AAUW experiences and friendships define my "now life", giving me confidence to try new adventures, meet new people and getting a 48-year Glen Ellyn resident to move to Memphis. There is talk in the neighborhood of beginning a book club. Do I have a reading list to show them? Sure do! It's beginning to feel like home with the future echoing the past.

Happy 65th Anniversary! I'll be there for cake.

*Fondly,
Sue*

A Few Notes from the Co-Presidents' Desks:

As always, we start the New Year with a look to the future and a Nominating Committee of Jean Lindsey and Nancy Possinger (Membership Co-Vice Presidents) along with Kitty Johansson and Patricia Spence. The elected positions to be filled are Co-Presidents and Co-Vice-Presidents, Programs.

Please clear your calendar on Wednesday, January 6, for a very special ZOOM presentation by Linda Hirschman, author of *Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World*. We are thrilled to welcome Ms Hirschman. The timing could not be more important as we step into a post RBG era on the Supreme Court and into a new administration. See additional information elsewhere in this newsletter.

Thank you for your generous support of AAUW on National Giving Day. In a time of especially high need, many of us have chosen to support causes personally important to us. We are always thrilled to know that AAUW continues to be a choice many of you make.

Finally, we hope your holiday season, albeit smaller and no doubt quieter than in times past, is warm and refreshing, and wish you the best of health and happiness in the new year! *Donna Jean & Janet*

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Time	Information
Jan. 6	Branch Meeting	7:00 pm	ZOOM.
Jan. 8	AM Lit	9:30 am	ZOOM.
Jan. 9	Film Group	7:00 pm	ZOOM (Anne will send link Saturday morning).
Jan. 13	Board Meeting	7:00 pm	ZOOM.
Jan. 18	PM Lit Book Selection	7:00 pm	ZOOM.
Jan. 27	PM Non-Fiction	7:00 pm	ZOOM.



**January Branch Meeting
Wednesday, January 6, 2021
7:00 pm via ZOOM**

Here Come the Judges! The Addition of Women to the Supreme Court

Join us on the evening of January 6 to meet the author of *Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World*.

Linda Hirshman, Esq. will be our speaker. In her 2015 book, *Sisters in Law*, she revealed "stories of how these two trailblazing women fought for recognition in a male-dominated profession - battles that would ultimately affect every American woman". These women were from opposite political parties, different religions, cultures, and were from different regions of the country, yet they became friends as they listened to controversial court cases and helped create change in America which would make women equal under the law. Furthermore, these two justices "shaped the legal framework of modern feminism, setting precedent in cases dealing with employment discrimination, abortion, affirmative action, sexual harassment, and many other issues crucial to women's lives". The lives of men were changed as well.



Sisters in Law was a *New York Times* and *Washington Post* Best Seller and an NPR pick of the year for 2015. In 2019, Ms. Hirshman published *Reckoning: The Epic Battle Against Sexual Abuse and Harassment*, based on the #MeToo Movement. She received her JD from the University of Chicago Law School and her PhD in philosophy from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and has taught philosophy and women's studies at Brandeis University. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Slate*, *Newsweek*, *the Daily Beast*, and *POLITICO*. Visit lindahirshman.com for more information on our speaker and her many books.

You are encouraged to read Hirshman's book prior to the Branch meeting. This will familiarize you with the struggles these women faced and how they overcame them. Feel free to invite a relative, friend, neighbor, or co-worker to join us for what promises to be a very enlightening and informative evening.

Note to Members Only: The Glen Ellyn Public Library has made multiple copies of the book available to us. You may sign one out at Marilyn Wiedemann's home. Contact Frankie Robinson for additional details on book availability and Zoom details.



Membership

Jean Lindsey & Nancy Possinger

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In 2021, AAUW will turn 140 years old! As our CEO, Kimberly Churches, recently wrote, "AAUW will work tirelessly on behalf of women and girls to advance laws, policies and practices that ensure equity in education, employment and economic security and equal justice for all." With a national membership of more than 170,000 members, AAUW members together can make a difference. Knowing AAUW's history, its goal and strength in numbers, we should be proud to approach prospective members.

New members are the lifeline of all organizations, help keep our Branch viable by recruiting a friend, and by taking on leadership positions. This year the Nominating Committee will be filling a slate including President(s), and Program Vice - President(s). We are depending on you to help us accomplish this!



Our Branch Book Groups

*Reading is the key that opens doors to many good things in life. Reading shaped my dreams,
and more reading helped me make my dreams come true.*

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

AM Lit

Jean Lindsey

jeanlindsey15@comcast.net

AM Lit will welcome the new year on January 8, 2021, with a discussion of *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict. Led by discussion leader Diane Serb, our ZOOM meeting will commence at 9:30 am.

This fictional, compelling story of Hedy Lamarr, shines light “on a historical figure whose talents and achievements have been overlooked...it’s a page turner tapestry of intrigue and glamour...”

Looking ahead: February 5, a discussion of *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich.

PM Lit

Susie Gullickson

gullish.1955@gmail.com

PM Lit will be meeting via ZOOM on January 18 at 7:00 pm, to vote on our book selections for February, March, April and May 2021. Our hope is that we will be able to meet in person in June 2021 to complete our selections for the 2021-2022 year.

Please email me your book suggestions with a short description by January 11, so I can complete a spreadsheet for your review prior to our meeting where we will vote for the top four choices.

PM Non-Fiction

Ewa Bacon

baconew@lewisu.edu

Our January PM Non-Fiction meeting will take place via ZOOM on January 27, 2021. You will receive a link before the meeting. Jane Palmer will lead our discussion. The Glen Ellyn Public Library is collecting copies. Please collect them at Marilyn Mayer Wiedemann’s front porch and sign out your copy.

We know Frederick Law Olmsted as a famous landscape architect, but in the 1850’s he was a correspondent for the New York Times traveling for a year in the pre-Civil War South. Tony Horwitz (author of *Confederates in the Attic*) closely follows in Olmsted’s footsteps in 2018 traveling through Appalachia, using a river boat on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, into the bayous of Louisiana and across Texas to the contested Mexican borderlands. His new (and last) book is *Spying on the South: An Odyssey across the American Divide*. It is a wise, intrepid and often hilarious tale of his journey through a special American landscape during a time of polarization and angry discord.

Please collect your book nominations for our next year. Email me up to three book recommendations and I will collect and distribute them for a special Book Selection ZOOM meeting on February 24. You can speak in support of your recommendation at that meeting. Send me your vote by March 1, so that I can ask the Glen Ellyn Public Library to collect copies for our March meeting. We need to select five books (March 24, May 26, July 28, and Nov 24, 2021).



Happy New Year to all! As we enter 2021, I want to let you know that all our high school counselors are hard at work, even with students learning from home. I have been in touch with all high school representatives, assuring them that we plan to continue our support for worthy young women attending College of DuPage. They start to work on their local scholarship winners in December or January. I have let them know that, due to our interrupted fundraising due to COVID-19, we were unsure of the amount of our scholarship. They all thanked us for our continuing support.



Representative Terra Costa Howard, IL 48

Representative Howard and staff are eager to hear from us and want to keep us up to date on legislative activity. At our December Zoom Branch meeting, she encouraged us to add our names to her email list by contacting her at *reptch48@gmail.com* or her assistant, Gayle Kankovsky (*gayledistrict48@gmail.com*).

A Case in Point: When several attendees told Terra they had received suspicious Illinois Department of Employment Security mailings and debit cards, she urged us to report these to her staff. I followed up with Ms. Kankovsky (see above). She asked me for information that had been provided on the mailings and the cards and requested that I do not destroy the documents. Gayle is reporting each occurrence that comes to her attention to the Illinois Fraud Department. She also advised me to notify credit agencies and the local police department.

Looking ahead to legislative activity, Terra seems committed to advancing paid family leave, a public policy priority for our national and state organizations.

Save the Date: January 22

State of the Village of Glen Ellyn

Mark Franz, Village Manager, and Diane McGinley, President of Board of Trustees, will present their annual report to the League of Women Voters of Glen Ellyn. The meeting will be via ZOOM and is open to the general public. Additional details will soon appear on the LWVGE website. <https://www.lwvge.org/upcoming-events> (Please let me know if Wheaton events come to your attention that should be announced in Twigs in future Public Policy articles.)



Happy New Year! Here's to a better year than 2020. Now that the vaccine is rolling out we have hope of meeting in person in 2021. In the meantime, settle in for three or four more Zoom meetings until the weather warms up enough for us to meet outdoors. Our first meeting of the new year will be on Saturday, January 9 at 7:00 pm, via ZOOM. We will watch and discuss a movie or documentary available on a streaming service, preferably Netflix. Selection will be announced one week in advance. Feel free to contact me with suggestions!

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

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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!

