

**Twigs**  
January 2022

**A Leaf from the Co-Presidents    Happy New Year to All Branch Members!!**

I would especially like to welcome the four recent new members—Laurie Driscoll, Mary Kelly, Mary Gaither Marshall and Maureen Shekleton.

As I look back on the last six months, we have accomplished a great deal despite COVID. Our interest groups are thriving thanks to their great leadership. Suzanne Gagner was resourceful in leading a productive LUNAFEST by Zoom. Patricia Spence led our successful Fundraising Walk followed by a fun Branch game. Our program committee (Barb Roos, Kathy Wessel, Peggy Connolly, and Cindy Trennert-Lukens) initiated four great programs furthering the AAUW mission. To make this possible, we had Zoom training sessions from Fran Kravitz. Fran also continued with the *Science Girls on the Go* program with exciting new projects. Many members attended the Fall State Conference, led by our own Lisa Cherry and Donna Jean Simon. The program committee has already lined up Deanie Brown, who spoke on implicit bias, as a speaker for next year. Nancy Possinger hosted a new member gathering with Jean Lindsey, celebrating our recent new members. They have had good success with recruitment.

Consistent with the AAUW mission, three Branch members spoke in favor of LGBTQ rights at a local school board meeting. For Cultural Arts, Laura Desmarais aligned us with the Bookstore of Glen Ellyn to sponsor the book release of our own Glennette Turner's book, *A Man Called Horse*. This was a twofer for the Branch as the discussion leader was our own LaVonne Ruoff. We also celebrated both Cultural Arts and Diversity in a special dedication in Milwaukee honoring Frankie Robinson's father-in-law's contributions as the first black architect in Wisconsin.

We marched in the Glen Ellyn July Fourth parade and participated in the Glen Ellyn Scarecrow Rows to celebrate our 65 Years Anniversary. The Winter Banquet was reimagined thanks to Karen Schulz, Carole Yesensky and Ellen McGowan. The feedback on the winter gatherings that replaced the banquet has been excellent. Patricia Spence even initiated a follow-up discussion the next day where the conversation was terrific and the Branch was toasted. In 2022, we will continue our momentum with the reimagined new Book Sale that is led by Susie Gullickson and Suzanne Gagner. We have a new site at Glen Briar Elementary School. The time frame has been shortened to five weeks with the sale June 23 to 25. To help, you can start collecting books and keeping them in your own home or taking them to Mary Sue Brown's.

As we wave good-bye to 2021, the Branch members should be proud of what we have accomplished. Mary Sue and I also want to offer our appreciation to Treasurer Maureen Sheehan, Secretary Lillian Sorenson, Twigs Editor Kathy McCullough, and the AAUW online team Jane Palmer, Tracy Kline and Patricia Spence. As Hillary Clinton said: *It takes a Village*. Mary Sue and I offer our thanks to all our members for a great 2021. We are looking forward to 2022.

*Carolyn & Mary Sue*

## Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENT	TIME	INFORMATION
Jan. 5	Branch Meeting	7:00 pm	Zoom.
Jan. 7	AM Lit	9:30 am	Glen Ellyn Public Library, First Floor Meeting Rooms, 400 Duane St., Glen Ellyn.
Jan. 12	Board Meeting	7:00 pm	Mary Sue Brown, 380 S Milton Ave, Glen Ellyn.
Jan. 14	Film Group	7:00 pm	Anne Hanley, 679 Forest Ave., Glen Ellyn.
Jan. 17	PM Lit	7:00 pm	Susie Gullickson, 1510 Paula Ave., Wheaton.
Jan. 26	PM Non-Fiction	7:00 pm	Peggy Connolly, 1445 Brentwood Lane, Wheaton.



### Programs

**Barbara Roos & Kathy Wessel**

*bamaroos@gmail.com kathywessel@gmail.com*

**January 2022 Branch Meeting**  
**Wednesday, 7:00 pm,**  
**January 5 via Zoom**  
**The *Clotilda* and Africatown**  
**Speaker: Anderson Flen**



For the past several years we have not had a Branch meeting in January due to unpredictable weather. This year, however, we have an exceptional program, which will be presented via Zoom, alleviating any weather concerns. In 1808, Congress banned the importation of slaves: this did not, however, stop the illegal smuggling of slaves. The *Clotilda* was the last known ship to bring slaves to the United States, landing in 1860 in Mobile, Alabama. To hide evidence of his crime, Timothy Meaher, the ship's wealthy owner, burned and scuttled the *Clotilda* in the Mobile River.

Following Emancipation five years later, the former *Clotilda* slaves asked Meaher to return them to Africa. He refused, and many went to work in his mills and on his plantations. With their collective earnings they bought land from Meaher, and built the community of Africatown, where descendants of those who arrived on the *Clotilda* still live today. Skepticism about the *Clotilda* was laid to rest when the remains of the burned vessel were discovered in 2019.

Anderson Flen who grew up in Africatown and is spearheading a movement to establish a National Slave Ship Memorial there, will speak with us about Africatown and the *Clotilda*.



## Membership

**Jean Lindsey & Nancy Possinger**

*jeanlindsey15@comcast.net napossinger@gmail.com*

We are pleased to welcome a new member, Mary Gaither Marshall. She is a retired director and head of children's services of the Addison Public Library. Mary also worked at the Helen Plum Library. Her other careers include work as a rare book bibliographer (researching books and writing description for several rare bookstores) and an instructor of English composition and literature at Northern Illinois University and College of DuPage. Currently she is president of the Helen Plum Library Foundation and Vice President of Programs for the Lombard/Villa Park AAUW Branch.

Branch aficionados of Jane Austen will be impressed that Mary is a life member of both the Jane Austen Society and the Jane Austen Society of North America. She has given presentations on Austen throughout the United States and Canada.

Mary is married and has two children. Her husband is a lawyer and serves as a trustee for the Helen Plum library while her son and daughter-in-law are both librarians for the Broward County Libraries. Her daughter is on staff at the University of Missouri.

We will look forward to meeting Mary at future meetings and programs.



## AAUW Online

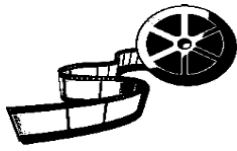
**Jane Palmer**

*jfpalmer@comcast.net*

Recently, a member notified us that the *Members Only* page on our website was no longer requiring a password. Tracy and I compared notes and found differences between whether a password was required depending on whether we were using a PC, Mac or cell phone. Tracy contacted our AAUW support team and learned that different devices follow different rules about saving passwords when a session is ended. Generally, when the cache is cleared on your PC or phone, you will be required to re-enter the password the next time you visit the page. Bottom line – our *Members Only* page continues to be password protected although sometimes your PC or device will retain your password.

Contact Patricia Spence at [pspence101@aol.com](mailto:pspence101@aol.com) with suggested Facebook postings and pictures of members enjoying Branch activities. Tracy Kline at [trakli@msn.com](mailto:trakli@msn.com) continues to update the Branch website with new pictures. Keep them coming! Contact me if you have suggestions of other ways we can promote the Branch online.

## Our Branch Fundraising Activities



Book Sale

**Susie Gullickson**

*gullish.1955@gmail.com*

### **A New Year and a New Opportunity to Live Up to our New Year Resolutions!**

If de-cluttering, downsizing or house cleaning are part of your 2022 objectives, please remember to set aside your unwanted books for our June 2022 Book Sale.

We will be collecting: **Fiction** – including Science Fiction, Fantasy, Romance, Westerns; **Mysteries**; **Non-Fiction** – including History, Politics, Biographies, Autobiographies and **Children and Young Adults**.

Spread the word to your friends, family and neighbors as well.

**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.





Laurie Driscoll, dual member, Wheaton-Glen Ellyn and Lombard Branches, authored this month's Public Policy submission to Twigs. Thank you, Laurie, so glad you have joined us!

On December 8, Jill Salas, Assistant Professor and Department Chair of Developmental English at College of DuPage and Chair of the COD Equity and Access Team, spoke to the Lombard Area AAUW Branch via Zoom on *Tales of Pandemic Learning: COVID's Impact on Children, College Students and Women*. Her talk was based on data showing the disproportionate effects the COVID pandemic has had on women and minority groups.

More women than men are in low-paying and essential jobs which require being in close quarters to others. Limited reproductive and preventative health care services are available, especially for women of color.

Lack of good jobs with health insurance is more apparent.

More women than men are reporting feeling *burned out* from managing jobs, caring for children, and losing work due to limited or unaffordable day care options. Studies show women in general still struggle to say *No* to domestic responsibilities.

The academic growth, social interactions, and mental health of children has been negatively impacted.

Special education and related services have all been disrupted and, in some cases, are non-existent. Disparities in access and opportunity for children attending high poverty schools have become more apparent.

Some suggestions for what we can do to improve the current conditions:

- Make use of available data.
- Spread awareness of inequities in our society.
- Change work/employment practices to be more inclusive.
- Increase women's leadership at the local, state, and national level – in government and in the private sector.

Jill Salas was an interesting and informative speaker. I would recommend her for future presentations.



## SCIENCE GIRLS ON THE GO

The STEM committee has released the next *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, we will explore electrostatic forces in a kit called *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Ball*. The goal of this kit is to have a mylar tinsel ball float above a balloon. Other experiments with the mylar tinsel ball are suggested to investigate the effects of static electricity.

We need your help in 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 pop up in every community.

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



## Our Branch Book Groups

***Whenever you read a good book, somewhere in the world a door opens to allow in more light.***

**Vera Nazarian**

### **AM Lit**

**Jean Lindsey**

*jeanlindsey15@comcast.net*

AM Lit members will discuss James McBride's *Deacon King Kong* on Friday, January 7. Join us at 9:30 am at the Glen Ellyn Public Library as we share insights to his novel which NPR describes as *fast, deep, complex and hilarious. McBride's prose is shimmering and moving, a living thing that has its own rhythm, pulls you in from the first page and never lets go...and is full of heart.* It sounds like a good novel to start the new year. Jean Lindsey and Kathy McCullough will lead the discussion.

Looking ahead: The February 4 AM Lit choice is *This Is How It Always Is* by Laurel Frankel. Laura Desmarais and Ruth Schumacher will lead the discussion.

### **PM Lit**

**Susie Gullickson**

*gullish.1955@gmail.com*

Happy New Year Readers!

We will start 2022 with a work of non-fiction, *Hidden Valley Road* by Robert Kolker. This work is the *Heartrending story of a midcentury American family with twelve children, six of them diagnosed with schizophrenia, that become science's great hope in the quest to understand the disease* (Goodreads).

We will meet on Monday, January 17 at 7:00 pm at Susie Gullickson's home. We still need a volunteer to lead the discussion.

### **PM Non-Fiction**

**Ewa Bacon**

*baconew@lewisu.edu*

We are meeting on Wednesday, January 26, 7:00 pm, at Peggy Connolly's home (1445 Brentwood Lane, Wheaton) to discuss Lynne Olson's book *Lost Hope Island: Britain, Occupied Europe and the Brotherhood That Helped Turn the Tide of War*. Jean Lindsey will lead our discussion of this tale of hair breadth escapes, espionage and resistance. Please pick up your copy at the Glen Ellyn Public Library (second floor, Book Club shelves).



Branch Member Frankie Robinson's father-in-law was honored in Milwaukee on November 30 as the first registered African American architect in Wisconsin and the only one for three decades. The ceremony was held at the Milwaukee Fire Department Administration Building which was renamed the *Alonzo Robinson Milwaukee Fire Department Administration Building*. Mr. Robinson was the chief architect of this building, one of his many contributions to the Milwaukee architectural landscape.

The event was an all-out family affair recognizing not only the late Alonzo Robinson for his work, but recognizing that the delay for such outstanding accomplishments was due to his race. Fire Chief

Aaron Lipski hosted the event stating that Alonzo Robinson was not acknowledged in any way when the building was opened and apologizing to the family for the long delay in recognition. It was a major event in Milwaukee attended by most of the Milwaukee city leaders and had large media coverage.

Five of us from the Branch attended the ceremony and were thrilled to be invited afterwards to have lunch with the Robinson family. We met family and friends that had come from around the country and were inspired by the strong family and their camaraderie. There was a feeling of joy and accomplishments throughout the day. It was also a perfect lesson in how such talent can be almost invisible in a world where vision is warped by discrimination.



When next we meet, it will be 2022! Omicron is in the news as I write and we do not know enough about it yet to say what effect it will have on our gatherings, but I choose to believe that science has got this figured out and that we will have good guidance by our next meeting date on January 14. The plan is this: I will host the January meeting at my home unless that becomes unsafe. **Please have your booster shot before attending.** If you do not have a booster by then, I respectfully ask that you not attend.

Note: For many varied reasons, I will be unable to host our gatherings from February through April. Please volunteer! Our meeting dates will be Saturday 2/12, Friday 3/11, and Saturday 4/9. Send me an email to sign up to host.

We will meet on Friday, January 14 at 7:00 pm. Film selection will go out the weekend before. Please send in your suggestions for what to watch!

## Co-Presidents Editorial

Mary Sue Brown

Carolyn Oesterle

In the Co-Presidents Leaf on the front page of the issue, I lauded a good year for the Branch and thanked the many members who made it possible. However, I approach 2022 with special caution. The policy priorities of AAUW are terrific—from Equal Pay to Diversity and STEM programs. However, underlying all of these wonderful priorities is the assumption that our democracy will continue. Unfortunately, our democratic system is under attack from within. While AAUW is non-partisan, I do not think we, as a group, can ignore a situation where voting rights are being attacked and the election process itself is being undermined.

I am reminded of the take-over in South Africa in 1948 in a democratic election. The Afrikaner white supremacists won and passed laws to start apartheid, and the only people in a position to stop them were their supporters. This caused a loss of property for all blacks, eventually requiring three million blacks to move to *homelands* which were undeveloped wastelands. Apartheid severely restricted education, voting and jobs for blacks, mixed race people, and Asians. Our own democracy is fragile, as we saw on January sixth.

This year we need to commit ourselves to protecting democracy by writing letters to our congressional leaders regularly to support the *John Lewis Voting Rights Act* and the *For the People Act* before it is too late. We can write letters to the editor. We also need to support our local election officials as much as possible to assure accurate voting procedures. If we each do a small thing every week, we can protect our voting systems and our democracy.

### The Twigs Team

Editor:	Kathleen McCullough
Proofreader:	Ruth Schumacher
AAUW Online:	Jane Palmer
Website Editor:	Tracy Kline

*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!***