

A Leaf from the Co-Presidents,

The time has come for our adieu and our last *Leaf* article. It is only fitting that we use this space to thank the talented and generous people who made our work easier and often fun.

To Ewa Bacon, who initiated AIR (Aging , Information, and Resources), an innovative and needed resource.

To Karen Bondy, who continues to arrange our wonderful Spring luncheon and get out our *All Branch emails*.

To Laura Desmarais, who did a great job of bringing LunaFest back this year. Laura also serves as the AAUW-IL Funds Director on the state board .

To Tracy Kline, who serves as website editor, ensuring that our information is current and correct.

To Fran Kravitz, who continues to serve as STEM chair, creating *Science Girls on the Go* and the experiments that await young women in the mailboxes of Marilyn Wiedemann, Peggy Connolly, and Mary Mossman.

To Marilyn Mauritz, who does an amazing job serving as Diversity Chair and as this year's Book Sale Chair. We call her the *Energizer Bunny*.

To Ellen McGowan, who serves as Opportunities Funds Chair and continues to find scholarship recipients from our four high schools.

To Kathy McCullough, who serves as Twigs Editor and *motivates* us to get our articles to her in a timely manner.

To Jamie Nelson, one of our newest members who stepped up at the last minute and managed the technology needs of our April program at the Glen Ellyn Police Station.

To Jane Palmer, who served as Secretary, AAUW Online Chair, editor of our Policy Handbook and Branch Bylaws.

To Nancy Possinger, who served as Vice President Membership and will soon serve as our Co-President and always answers the call. She is in that *If you want something done, ask a busy person* category.

To Patricia Spence, who served as Public Policy and Facebook Chair and kept us well informed about national, state and local issues. We learned about pending bills and local elections. Texas' loss is our gain.

To Ruth Schumacher, who served as Twigs proofreader. You see the results every month.

To Maureen Sheehan, who began serving as Treasurer when our dear member, Elaine Nissen succumbed to cancer in 2019. Maureen's clear monthly reports keep us very well informed.

To Marilyn Wiedemann, who serves as Historian and takes us on a journey through our history – five years at a time. Don't miss these; they are fascinating stories.

To Book, Film, and Spice Routes Chairs: Sue Herrmann, Jean Lindsey, Ewa Bacon, Susie Gullickson, Anne Hanley and Peggy Connolly who kept us reading, watching and exploring cuisine.

To Karen Schulz who carefully planned and executed our marvelous Winter Luncheon. Your attention to detail is *sine qua non*.

And finally, to all of you who have stepped up and served when needed, be it Book Sale, food, or hosting meetings.

*Mary Sue Brown & Carolyn Oesterle*

## Upcoming Events

DATE	EVENT	TIME	INFORMATION
June 2	AM Lit Book Selection & Potluck	9:30 am	Peggy Connolly, 1445 Brentwood Lane, Wheaton.
June 9	Film Group	TBD	TBD
June 19	PM Lit Book Selection & Potluck	6:00 pm	Bonnie Wheaton, 1203 E Harrison Street, Wheaton.
July 8	Film Group	7:00 pm	TBD
July 14	AM Lit	9:30 am	Marilyn Wiedemann, 373 Oak Street, Glen Ellyn.
July 17	PM Lit	7:00 pm	TBD
July 26	PM Non-Fiction	7:00 pm	Carolyn Oesterle, 645 Lake Road, Glen Ellyn.
Aug. TBD	Film Group	TBD	TBD
Aug 4	AM Lit	9:30 am	TBD
Aug. 21	PM Lit	7:00 pm	Peggy Connolly, 1445 Brentwood Lane, Wheaton.
Aug. 28	AM Non-Fiction Book Selection & Potluck	10:00 am	Sue Herrmann, 403 Wyndemere Circle, Wheaton.



### Membership

**Nancy Possinger**

*nepossinger@gmail.com*

We are very happy to introduce **Lisa Capps** to our Branch!

Lisa has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from the University of Oklahoma and an Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She also has a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Kansas with an emphasis on Medical Anthropology. As part of her dissertation, she researched and studied the health beliefs and practices of refugee populations, particularly the Hmong population, and worked with the refugee resettlement population in Kansas City. In addition, Lisa is a Nurse Practitioner and was an Associate Professor of Nursing, a teaching role from which she retired.

Lisa enjoys a myriad of interests: she is very interested in art and has taken several classes in Art History. She enjoys reading, particularly classic novels. She also likes gardening, swimming and cooking! Lisa also has a very significant concern about the environment. A woman of many diverse interests! She lives in Wheaton with her husband and she has two grown children. Welcome, Lisa!

#### **Lisa's contact information**

825 East Liberty Drive  
Wheaton, IL 60187

Primary phone: 630.373.5560

Email: *LLcapps@ameritech.net*

#### **Email address Change:**

Karen Schulz: *karenjschulz@gmail.com*

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Help us get the word out about the **Used Book Sale!** Please remember that Yard Signs for the **Used Book Sale** will be available at the Spring Luncheon on May 20, and for pick up on Nancy Possinger's back porch and Karen Schulz's front porch starting May 22.

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**Treasury**

**Maureen Sheehan**

*maureenjsheehan@aol.com*

Our Branch has had a successful year and we are looking forward to Fiscal Year 2024 so it is time for Membership Renewal. To start the process AAUW National recently sent each Branch member an email with a link to renew membership for Fiscal Year 2024. The email was sent to you about April 24 from AAUW Katrina Breese with the subject line *It's Time to Renew Your AAUW Branch Membership*. Renewal through the website is paid using a credit or debit card by using the link found in the email.

Renewing online is an easy and convenient process, however if you prefer to renew by check you may do so by mailing a check made out to **AAUW Wheaton-Glen Ellyn NFP** for \$101 (National \$72 + AAUW IL \$10 + Branch \$19) to **my new home address: Maureen Sheehan, 200 Wyndemere Circle Apt W126, Wheaton IL 60187.**

Please give me a call at 630.926.1147 if you have any questions or would like assistance with renewing your membership.



**Secretary**

**Jane Palmer**

*jfpalmer@comcast.net*

**Board Meeting Update**

The Board met on May 10. After the Minutes of that meeting are approved by the Board at the next Board Meeting, they will be available on the Branch Website (*Members Only*) web page. Details of topics discussed are described in the reports from officers and chairs elsewhere in this newsletter.

There was one motion approved at that meeting. After a discussion of mailings (i.e., postcards) recently received from an organization hired by AAUW National to conduct an Oral History Project, Secretary Palmer moved to request that Co-President Oesterle take two actions regarding this project:

- a) She will authorize an All-Branch Email to inform members that they do not need to call the Oral History Project to verify their data or share their memories of AAUW.
- b) She will write to the national organization with our Board Members' concerns about this project.

Public Policy Chair Spence seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.



**Historian**

**Marilyn Wiedemann**

*marilyn.mayer@gmail.com*

**Calling For Your Photos**

We are hoping to liven up the historian accounts of the Branch with a few photos from the past. The Branch *Facebook* and web pages now include current photos. BUT have YOU any photos from the past that would be fun to share? Please send them digitally, or take a phone photo and send them along to me. I will put them in *TWIGS* or in our archives. *A picture is worth 1000 words!* And fun.

## Our Branch Fundraising Activities

### Book Sale

Marilyn Mauritz

[marilynmauritz@gmail.com](mailto:marilynmauritz@gmail.com)

**AAUW Used Book Sale  
Forest Glen Elementary School  
561 Elm Street, Glen Ellyn  
June 22 to 24**

**Book Collection:** This is underway at Health Track (thank you Marilyn Wiedemann) and Wheaton Sport Center (thank you Laura Desmarais and Jane Palmer) with good book numbers collected. The new sites at Main Street Recreation Center, Spring Avenue Recreation Center and Wheaton Community Center are starting slowly as they are new. Members are encouraged to collect 50 books each to bring for sorting June 7 and to distribute bags to neighbors to collect more books. Books should be in grocery bags with handles. Double bags work best. Thanks to our site collectors and many other Branch members.

**Sign up Genius:** Please sign up for book sorting times on *Sign Up Genius*. There will be one chair for each half day. These have almost filled. The big push for sorting is June 7 and 8. We will start at 8:00 am on June 7.

**Ongoing Inventory:** Marilyn Wiedemann is collecting information about book numbers. Please keep her properly informed. She reports 5113 books presently.

#### Books:

- Fiction: Includes science fiction, mystery, fantasy, romance, western and classics.
- Nonfiction: Includes biographies, memoirs, history, politics, current events, and architecture
- Children and young adult
- Better Books

**Yard Signs:** Distribution begins May 22, and should be placed starting June 1. We have 100 signs to distribute. Please place them only on private property, not on easements. Pick up is from Nancy Possinger's back porch and the front porch of Karen Schulz's. Please indicate the number you took and the locations you will place them for accountability for each sign and easier pick up after the sale. If you need to have the signs delivered to you, call Nancy at 630-682-4003

**Flyer Distribution:** Packets of flyers are being distributed at interest groups. Please call Marilyn Mauritz if you can help put up flyers. You can also print the flyers yourself from the website. Please put them up between May 24 and June 1. When you put them up, ask permission and bring tape and thumbtacks. Ask if you can put the flyer up yourself—otherwise they often do not.

### Fundraising Walks

Carolyn Oesterle

[csoesterle@gmail.com](mailto:csoesterle@gmail.com)

#### Do Not Miss the Fall Fundraising Walk

The Fundraising walk will be held on September 22, 2023, at Hidden Lake Forest Preserve which can be entered from Route 53 just south of Butterfield Road in Downers Grove. The event starts at 9:00 am rain or shine and is usually both fun and entertaining. We usually raise several thousand dollars from the contributions of members. After the walk, we will have coffee and donuts and possibly a trivia game. Please email me if you can attend.

## AAUW Oral History Project Carolyn Oesterle

You may have received yellow cards in the mail about the AAUW Oral History Project by the company PCI. This is sanctioned by AAUW National with the idea of checking members' information and also collecting oral histories about AAUW. I called the number to see what it was about. I spoke with Clarissa who first checked my information. She had my phone number wrong—I had recently checked it myself at the Community Hub and it is correct there. After she asked me questions about AAUW, she told me about merchandise they sell, including a bound volume of the histories for \$169.98. Or you could buy the entire package of hardbound book, digital publication, T-shirt, sweatshirt, and travel bag for \$489.96. I obviously declined.

I discussed the project with several AAUW-IL State Officers at the Spring convention. I was told by some that there was a one-third rate of PCI finding incorrect information for members. If my call was any example of this, the mistakes are theirs, not the AAUW database.

We discussed this project at the board meeting May 10 and want to be sure everyone knows that participation is entirely voluntary. If you call, you will be asked at the end to purchase overpriced products. Many of us are just discarding the yellow cards. I will be writing to the organizers of the project with my concerns.

## Aging/Information and Resources AIR Ewa Bacon

Loneliness! There have been numerous articles in print and online recently about the impact of loneliness on our lives. Your health can be impacted by feelings of isolation and withdrawal, by losing social contacts, by living far from family.

However, not all our relationships are equally intense. The key is really the number of social interactions we have. *Casual relationships may be peripheral, but they're also one key to well-being.* (New York Times, April 25, 2023). You walk into a group; you recognize most faces; you cannot quite remember the names. These are called *weak* ties, but they are essential to thriving and feeling connected. Our closest ties are family and dear friends, but that outer circle of friends, neighbors, co-workers is the one which provides opportunities for interaction and stimulation. Our AAUW Branch provides both kinds of interactions. We are healthier by belonging and sharing our ties with each other.

**FYI:** *Aging/Information and Resources* AAUW Branch website has a new stream: *Specialized Health Care Centers* which range across the US. We do not provide the names of people in the Branch who have used them, but we have had contacts with these important sites.

**Note:** We have posted the names of two Medicare Consulting groups on the *Health and Care Resource* page to help negotiate the arcane universe of health insurance:

- Patrick Kennedy (847.323.8368)
- Robin Davis (773.718.4604)

Please visit the AIR website and let us expand it! Who is missing? What should we add?



### **AAUW Higher Education Incentive Award**

May is the month all college-bound high school seniors committed to the college of their choice. AAUW is pleased to announce that we will award \$2500 to four selected females. The AAUW Higher Education Incentive Award is given to a graduating high school female student enrolling at College of DuPage for the fall 2023 semester.

Student selection criteria included:

- Be a citizen of College of DuPage district.
- Have the academic potential and desire to attain a Bachelor's Degree.
- Might have been a work-based student while in high school and be planning to continue that job while attending COD.
- May not have met criteria for other scholarships due to work or family obligations in high school.

Thank you to the high school counselors who were responsible for selecting the awardees.

The following students will receive our award for the fall 2023 semester at College of DuPage.

**Wheaton North: Samantha Estrada**

Samantha is a wonderful person who works hard at school and has earned top grades in her classes this year. She is kind and cares for others around her. She will be starting her college career at College of DuPage next fall and will transfer to either Illinois State University or Aurora University to pursue a degree in Social Work. Her counselor knows she will one day be an important asset to our society and will help those in need.



**Wheaton Warrenville South: Gianna Chivilo**

Gianna resides in Wheaton and is currently taking classes at College of DuPage before she graduates in May from WWSHS. She is will major in English as a writing major and while pursuing a goal of writing Fantasy Novels for young adults. After COD, Gianna plans on attending University of Iowa.

**Glenbard South: Ashley Foster**

Ashley truly embodies a student who puts in maximum effort to achieve her goals. As a student who enrolls in rigorous courses, Ashley prides herself in overcoming obstacles and challenges faced in those classes. Her career goal is in the field of biology with an emphasis on genetics. While studying and earning her degree, Ashley will major in molecular biology or biology, to support her goal of becoming a geneticist. After College of DuPage, Ashley will leave Glen Ellyn for a four-year university.



**Glenbard West: Isabella "Luna" Escobar**

Isabella "Luna" Escobar is an 18 year old Latina woman from West Chicago, who has an undying love for music, art and psychology. Her goal in life is to inspire and change the world. She is curious about multiple majors, but wishes to study criminology and do art, acting and music as a hobby. Possessing much passion, Luna desires to accomplish her dreams.

**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.





**ERA Update from A.J. Conroy, ERA Illinois, via AAUW-IL Public Policy Group:**

In late April, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was in the news due to a procedural vote in the Senate to close debate on a resolution for Congress to affirm ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment-- a request by President Biden. Even though the resolution had a majority, the Senate requires a 60-vote majority for most measures.

**Why have a vote?** Here is a Reuter's article on the vote and a summary from Roll Call:

- <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/us-equal-rights-amendment-blocked-again-century-after-introduction-2023-04-27/>
- <https://rollcall.com/2023/04/27/senate-gop-blocks-resolution-nixing-equal-rights-amendment-ratification-deadline/>

**Next steps?** For us in Illinois, that's pressuring Democratic Party legislators to make Biden's ERA promise a campaign issue. Please keep asking about the ERA at legislator events!

**Branch Candidate AAUW Values Alignment Project Update:**

In a final tally of the April Consolidated Election, in CUSD200, Erik Hjerpe received 6,723 votes; Amy Erkenwick received 6,690 in the contest for the fourth open school board seat. Since Hierpe was an aligned candidate, all aligned candidates won in CUSD200.

**AAUW-IL 103rd Legislature Update:**

As Twigs goes to publication, below are the bills that our state Public Policy leaders continue to support. Contact your legislators. These bills could emerge in a summer session or fall veto session.

- Sunset the *Invest in Kids Act* voucher program!
- Ask for an increase in FY24 Funding:
  1. \$2.88 million for the Illinois Department of Public Health's Family Planning Program to fill the funding gap and ensure that uninsured Illinoisans have affordable access to preventive reproductive health care like annual well visits, cancer screenings, birth control, and STI services.
  2. \$20 million in funding to the Department of Human Services for a *Keeping Youth Safe and Healthy* grant program to help local schools implement personal health and safety education in grades K-5 and sexual health education in grades 6-12.
- Advocate for passage:
  1. SB 1909 *Deceptive Practices by Limited Services Pregnancy Center Deception*: amends *Consumer Protection Law* to allow the Attorney General to investigate any limited-service pregnancy center found guilty of using fraud or deception to stop a person from receiving or entering a reproductive healthcare clinic.
  2. HB 2280 & SB 2427 *Health Care Cultural Competency*: would require cultural competency training to be a part of continuing health care education for medical professionals in Illinois.



**98<sup>th</sup> Annual AAUW-IL State Convention Report**  
**May 5 and 6, 2023**  
**Carolyn Oesterle**

**May 5**

▪ **Sharmili Majmudar:           Everyday Opportunities to Advance Pay Equity**

It is disappointing that women still earn only 83% of what men earn. One improvement is in wage transparency in that employers cannot ask about past salaries. The pay gap starts with children's allowances—sadly.

**May 6:**

▪ **President Donna Jean Simon:**       Reported on the state of AAUW-IL which is pretty good considering the pandemic, etc.

▪ **Gloria Blackwell:   *Advancing Gender Equity: An Update***

Our CEO discussed that AAUW's effort in this area has had some legislative successes and progress in areas advancing equity for women, but much more needs to be done.

▪ ***Will It Play in Peoria?*   Excellent talks by two presenters from Peoria**

• **Dr. Sheila Quirk-Baily** discussed improvements that she has overseen in the Peoria Schools as the superintendent over the last 6 years. There has been significant increase in both test scores, graduation rates and college attendance after high school. This was implemented by reimagining education for struggling students and stressing diversity needs. She learned that having algebra early, even before high school was a marker for college admission and future success. She emphasized algebra for ALL students starting in eighth grade. She is an amazing leader.

• **Dr. Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat** has been President of Illinois Central College since 2016 and discussed her successes with community outreach working through an equity lens to increase readiness for high school students and to provide support to students in poverty. She started a program where high school students can spend the last two years of high school taking college classes at a community college and receive an associate degree from the community college at the same time they receive their high school diploma.

▪ **Public Policy:       Jenni Purdue**

AAUW is lobbying for the Medical Leave bill in the last two weeks of this legislative session. They are lobbying for sunsetting the *Invest in Kids* bill that uses public funds for private education and advocating for the sex education curriculum that the state is sponsoring.

**After lunch—Keynote Speaker**

▪ **Dr. Elsa Vazquez-Melendez spoke on *Inequities in Medicine***

She gave an excellent talk on diversity issues and implicit bias in medicine. She gave an overview of implicit bias and then applied that to problems in medical care. I learned that since George Floyd's murder, the country has learned that implicit bias needs to be addressed. There is now implicit bias training in medical schools, hospitals and many corporations—just like the sexual harassment training of the 1990's. About time.

This was followed by affinity groups discussion. I was in the programs and public policy group. We discussed starting a program bank for the branches where Program Vice Presidents could search for excellent program speakers recommended by other branches. I agreed to help and have asked Jamie Nelson to help with the computer work and she agreed. Thanks Jamie.



## Our Branch Book Groups

### AM Lit

**Jean Lindsey**

*jeanlindsey15@comcast.net*

After we have selected novels for our 2023-2024 year on June 2 at Peggy Connolly's house and have enjoyed a potluck, we will meet on **July 14** ( due to July 4 holiday) at Marilyn Mayer Wiedemann's home, 373 Oak Street, Glen Ellyn. Jean Lindsey will lead the discussion of *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone* written by Lori Gottlieb. The meeting will commence at 9:30 am.

### PM Lit

**Susie Gullickson**

*gullish.1955@gmail.com*

There is lots happening with PM Lit over the summer months!

June is our Book Selection Potluck event for the 2023-24 year. We will meet on June 19 at 6:00 pm at Bonnie Wheaton's home, 1203 Harrison St., Wheaton; bring a dish to share.

We need your book selection ideas, with a short description of the book; preferably, this will be a book that you have read. Please get your suggestions to me by *Monday, June 12* so I have adequate time to compile the list. The list will be emailed to you in advance of our meeting to allow you time to review the options. We will vote for eleven books during the meeting.

We will continue to meet during the summer months. In July, we will discuss *Her Hidden Genius* by Marie Benedict. Meeting details will be sent by email closer to the date.

In August, we have a special event as author, Andrea Friederici Ross will join us and offer her insight into her novel, *Edith: The Rogue Rockefeller McCormick*. Peggy Connolly has agreed to host this event at her home at 1445 Brentwood Lane, Wheaton, on August 21 at 7:00 pm.

### AM Non-Fiction

**Sue Herrmann**

*sherrmann710@gmail.com*

We meet for our Annual Potluck/Book Selection Meeting on August 28 at the home of Sue Herrmann, 403 Wyndemere Circle, Wheaton at 10:00 am. We will select our books for 2023-2024. Please send me the title and a two sentence summary of the books you wish to nominate by August 1. Also indicate if you have read the book and how many pages it contains. Please send me the name of the dish you wish to bring. We usually have about 10 people. We will select the books and then eat. Hope you can come!

### PM Non-Fiction

**Ewa Bacon**

*baconew@lewisu.edu*

The world of non-fiction is immense and we get to travel to far off places with excellent guides. Join us this summer on July 26 at 7:00 pm to discuss Fintan O'Toole's *We Don't Know Ourselves. A History of Modern Ireland*. Jean Lindsey will lead our discussion at the home of Carolyn Oesterle (645 Lake Road GE). Please RSVP Carolyn at *csoesterle@gmail.com*, if you are able to join us.



Summer film group dates are Friday June 9, Saturday July 8, and August is to be determined. Please consider hosting! We can also return to our pandemic era outdoor meetings at the patio between the Public Library and Adams Park in Wheaton, which was occasionally noisy because of trains but also a lovely place to gather in our camp chairs and enjoy the warm weather. Film selections will go out the weekend before the meeting. Happy viewing!

**Cultural Arts**  
**Buffalo Theater Ensemble (BTE)**  
**Peggy Connolly**

You are never too old for playdates. We will meet again *Chez Peggy* before the coming year's Buffalo Theatre Ensemble performances for appetizers and wine – and a very fun season!

• **Thursday, December 7, 2023:**    *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*

I am So excited for this play (of course)! Two years after their marriage, the Darcys host the Bennet sisters for Christmas. Mary, the wallflower among the vibrant Bennet sisters, is resigned to the life of a spinster, when an unexpected visitor arrives: Arthur de Bourgh, the bookish heir of Rosings. It seems a perfect match until Lydia - as determined a flirt as ever lived, and Anne de Bourgh – determined to lay claim to the nerdy Lord de Bourgh and hence to lay reclaim to Rosings, arrive.

• **Thursday, February 15, 2024:**    *The Outgoing Tide*

*The story of one family's struggle with Alzheimer's—humorous, sensitive and uplifting. Have to admit I am intrigued to see how BTE makes Alzheimer's humorous and uplifting – but they can do ANYTHING!*

• **Thursday, May 9, 2024:**                    *Into the Earth with You*                    \*\*\*\*\*World Premiere!\*\*\*\*\*

*Granddad is gone. No elegies. No dirges. No dowries. It all goes in the grave. But three sisters can't forget what's buried when an impossible discovery upends their notions of loss, and gets the women asking: who among us has been digging? As this is a world premiere with very little available about it, I cannot give you any more insight into the play, but we know it will be fabulous!*

**Subscribe by May 31 to save 25%.**

## **The Twigs Team**

<b>Editor:</b>	<b>Kathleen McCullough</b>
<b>Proofreader:</b>	<b>Ruth Schumacher</b>
<b>AAUW Online:</b>	<b>Jane Palmer</b>
<b>Website Editor:</b>	<b>Tracy Kline</b>

*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!*

**Twigs  
Members Only Password**

***twigs***