



Empowering Women
Since 1881

AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

NEWSLETTER

Dec. '17—Jan. '18

December and January Events

BRANCH MEETING
HOLIDAY PARTY.....HO, HO, HO!
Tuesday, December 12 - 6 P.M.
Park View Club Room, Asbury

Come one, come all to the Park View Club Room at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12. We are gathering for a joyous holiday party... Bring a delicious dish, bring your seasonal cheer and your holiday sweater, and be prepared for a festive evening.

Patsy Marks has invited a violinist and a pianist to serenade us. We will have a chance to break into song to add to the merriment. There will be the opportunity to share a memory of a particularly unusual holiday. So, take time this season to reflect on previous holidays that stand out in your life.

As in the past, we will share our joy by taking up a collection for a worthy cause. Inspired by the speaker at our November Branch meeting, we will contribute to the young victims of human trafficking. Your donations will be turned into small denomination gift cards for McDonald's or Panera's for use by these victims. If you give by check, make it out to Judy Sholes. Your donation will help provide a bit of joy to the life of a child in dire straits as a result of being a victim of human trafficking.

BRANCH MEETING
Saturday, January 20 - 10 A.M.
Rosborough Community Center, Asbury
Rooms B and C

"How Can I Be an Advocate?" - Presented by Erin Prangley

If you attended the AAUW state meeting in October, you heard Erin Prangley speak in general terms about the importance of advocacy. Now in our January Branch meeting on January 20, she will provide some specific ways in which we can become involved on both state and federal levels.

Erin is an expert in legislative affairs and advocacy. She served as associate director for public policy in AAUW's national office. Besides extensive AAUW experience, Erin also serves on the board of the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women. She will explain the mission of MLAW and give some examples of specific pieces of legislation that might come before the Maryland General Assembly next year, and she will explain how we can become involved. Then, along with input from our Branch members who regularly participate in AAUW's Lobby Corps, Erin will discuss the value of this effort and how everyone can be an advocate at the federal level.

This will be an informative morning, focusing on how each of us can make a difference by actively participating in the legislative process.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- **Heather Reichardt**

Here we are at the end of 2017. It's hard to fathom that December is upon us! And this means that everyone's lives get more and more busy with end-of-year work, holiday preparations and visiting or hosting family. We are busy at the Branch as well!

December 12 is the date of our always entertaining holiday potluck party. Having missed last year due to my illness after my family's trip to Taiwan, I am looking forward to this year's festivities. In addition to the anticipation of wonderful dishes on the table, I look forward to some lovely musical entertainment. Consider bringing family or friends to the party. This will introduce them to our fantastic members and the work of the Branch.

Our January meeting will feature a presentation by Erin Prangley, state VP for public policy. She has a wealth of experience with AAUW national and our state and local legislative processes. We will also hear from our own Lobby Corps participants regarding their experiences on Capitol Hill. I am really looking forward to that session.

You will see in another part of this newsletter a notice about the 2018 Women's Legislative Briefing to be held on January 28 at the Universities at Shady Grove. This is a wonderful program spearheaded by the Montgomery County Commission for Women. As I've said many times, my life changed after attending this event several years ago when I met Mary

Wykes there. We all know the rest of the story! I encourage everyone to attend this important state-wide event that is held in our back yard. And, invite your friends and neighbors, too-- everyone who attends will benefit.



Speaking of important events, Judy Sholes, co-VP for programs, and I attended the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women fall conference on November 18. This is always an informative program. The leaders at MLAW were excited that over 200 women attended, by far the largest crowd they have had. And, 19 different proposals were made for MLAW to consider for support for the 2018 Maryland General Assembly. The proposals included topics such as "Escaping Maryland's Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit," "Civil Penalty for Hate Crimes," and "Domestic Violence--Education and Definition of Abuse." MLAW will post the proposals on their website and send a message to members to vote for the top seven. There were so many worthy ideas that the choice will be difficult. For more information, go to www.mdlegagendaforwomen.org.

Wishing everyone a happy and safe holiday season and a Happy New Year!



Heather Reichardt and Judy Sholes at the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women meeting on November 18. (Photo courtesy of Heather Reichardt.)

AAUW LOBBYING REPORT

- Maria Roberts

Members of AAUW give voice to political issues important to us by visiting legislators on Capitol Hill. As the Capitol Hill Lobby Corps, they have had significant impact on legislation. Here are some examples of bills on which the Lobby Corps members from Maryland and Virginia lobbied during this past fall. These bills, chosen by AAUW national professional staff, represent public policy priorities established biennially by AAUW's membership.

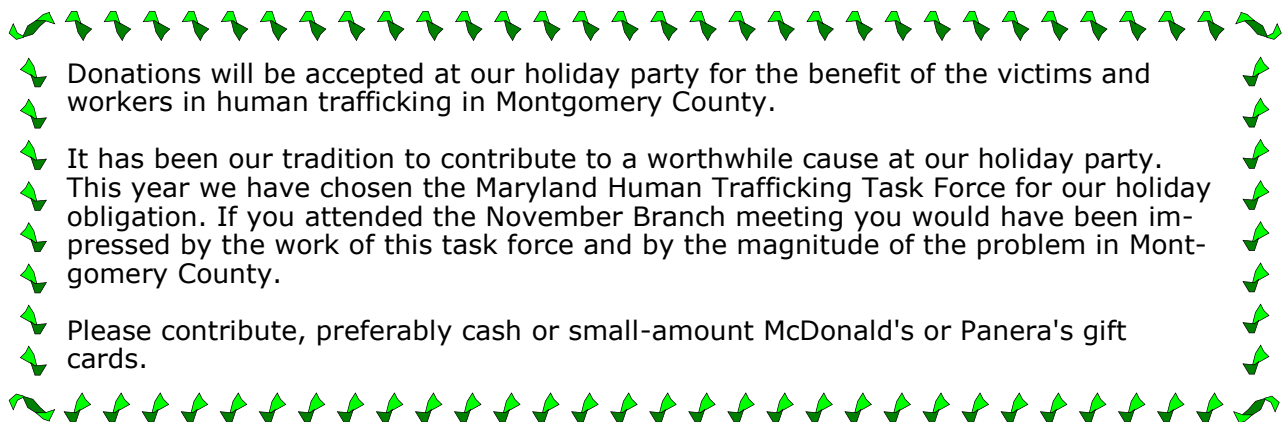
The Pay Equity for All Act and Fair Pay Act. These closely linked bills contain several AAUW priorities so we lobbied for them in the same week. The Pay Equity for All Act would protect job seekers from having to disclose their salary history to be considered for a job. It would also encourage employers to base pay levels on job requirements, applicant qualifications and prior experience. The Fair Pay Act would require employers to provide equal pay for work of equal value and would prohibit retaliation against employees who inquire about employers' wage practices or who disclose their own wages. Remember that wage secrecy prevented Lilly Ledbetter from knowing that for 19 years she was paid far less than men doing the same work.





The Family and Medical Insurance Leave Act (FAMILY Act). Currently the 1993 Family Medical Leave Law (FMLA) provides those in workplaces with over 50 employees with up to 12 weeks of job-protected unpaid leave for major medical issues or birth/adoption of a new baby. But this is unpaid leave, which makes it financially unfeasible for most people to actually take this leave. The FAMILY Act would provide up to 66 percent of their

income for people who take leave under FMLA and it would cover all workers regardless of workplace size. It would be funded by employee and employer payroll deduction of two-tenths of one percent.

The Gender Equity in Education Act. This bill tackles the issue of supporting Title IX compliance officers required to be appointed in every school district, college and university. Nationwide there are increased reports of sexual harassment, bullying of LGBT and transgender students, discrimination against pregnant students, and a decrease in the number of girls studying in STEM fields. These and other trends affect the ability of all students to get the most out of their education and in turn limit our country's ability to produce skilled workers prepared for a global marketplace. The Gender Equity in Education Act would provide technical support and training for local Title IX coordinators, empowering them to enforce Title IX at every level and would authorize funds for competitive grants to establish best practices in Title IX enforcement.

As you can see, our citizen lobbyists make sure that lawmakers know which issues are important to women. As an AAUW member, you, too, can participate. AAUW Gaithersburg members who worked with Lobby Corps during the past year include Edie Allison, Judy Sholes, Heather Reichardt, Carolyn Fisher, Jean Kosow, and Maria Roberts. They would be happy to provide details to others who are interested.



-  Donations will be accepted at our holiday party for the benefit of the victims and workers in human trafficking in Montgomery County.
-  It has been our tradition to contribute to a worthwhile cause at our holiday party.
-  This year we have chosen the Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force for our holiday obligation. If you attended the November Branch meeting you would have been impressed by the work of this task force and by the magnitude of the problem in Montgomery County.
-  Please contribute, preferably cash or small-amount McDonald's or Panera's gift cards.

BOOK SALE NEWS

- Liz Hessel, Book Sales Chair

We continue to work on our book sale, which is quickly coming up on March 22-24.

There's plenty of work for you to do:

- Set aside as much time as you can between March 15 and March 25 to help out.
- Invite friends and neighbors to donate books, DVDs and movies, starting now.
- Find places where we can publicize the sale-- a club, a community bulletin board.
- Help every now and then to separate books.
- Pick up books occasionally from donors.
- If you have an SUV or a van, move boxes occasionally.

- Sort books into specific topics such as history, business, science, literature. We especially need help sorting CDs and DVDs.



Remember that the task is light when many share the work, and the beneficiaries are our students, their families, and our community.

Contact Liz Hessel at liz@meral.com.

THE WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING IS COMING

The annual Montgomery County Women's Commission Legislative Briefing is a favorite of many. Coordinated by the Montgomery County Commission on Women and sponsored by 12 community and women's organizations, the meeting brings together leaders and policymakers who advocate for issues affecting girls and women throughout the state. Not only will you get information on issues concerning women and families coming up in the Maryland General Assembly, you will also have the opportunity to meet legislators face to face and discuss issues you are interested in.

The meeting is on Sunday, January 28, from

12:30 to 6 at The Universities of Shady Grove, Building II, 9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville. You will



find full information by entering Montgomery County Women's Commission Legislative Briefing in your search engine.

Our members who have attended these briefings speak highly of what they learn.

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, December 5 (Note Change in Usual Date)

and

Tuesday, January 9

7 P.M.

Conference Room, Hefner Building, Asbury Village

The Board of Directors of AAUW Gaithersburg invites members to their meetings on December 5 and January 9. The meetings are held in the Conference Room of the Hefner Center at Asbury Village at 7 p.m.

REMEMBERING BEATRICE CARASSO

Beatrice Carasso died of cancer on October 19. She was a past member of the Literature Group, at one time serving as its coordinator. She is survived by her husband, Alfred, and her son, daughter and son-in-law.

Bea was born in Romania into a vibrant German-speaking Jewish community. As World War II engulfed Europe, Bea and her parents and grandparents were interned in a concentration camp in Ukraine. Bea's father died of typhus in the camp but the rest of the family survived, becoming refugees in Italy, then, in 1949, immigrating to the U.S.

Bea attended Hunter College High School in New York City, graduated from Brooklyn College with a major in Romance languages, and won a Fulbright Scholarship for study in France at the University of Bordeaux. Returning from France, she was accepted for graduate study in French at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Later, being fluent in English, French, German and Spanish, Bea employed her linguistic talents at the University of New Mexico's library, translating the archaic Spanish text used in some of the original New Mexico land-grant documents.

In 1982 she and her family moved to Gaithersburg, where, most recently, she worked as a librarian at Montgomery College in Rockville and also conducted English conversation classes at Quince Orchard library. Her lifetime love of learning filled the shelves of her home with a library of English and Spanish literature, with notes scribbled in the margins. It was in this beautiful home that she was the gracious host to the Literature Group. She never took any good fortune for granted. She liked to quip that life is uncertain, and one should start with dessert.



Marilyn O'Connell and Carol Plummer womaned a table at the Montgomery Village, Maryland, Newcomer's Reception on November 16. They talked about what AAUW was and does and invited interested women to our meetings. They enjoyed meeting potential members and getting them to sign up for our newsletter. (Photo courtesy of Carol Plummer.)

GREAT DECISIONS

- **Mary Wykes, Coordinator**

There will be no meeting of Great Decisions in December. On January 24 we will meet at the Hilton Hotel's private dining room for luncheon at 12 noon, at which time topics from the 2018 study guide and hosts will be selected for the coming year. New members are always

welcome. Meetings are held in members' homes on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 2:30. Light refreshments are served.



LITERATURE GROUP

- **Mary Wykes for Coordinator Jean Young**



There will be no meeting of the Literature Group in December. The next meeting will be on Saturday, January 27, at 10 a.m., hosted and led by Jean Young at her home. The book

"Endurance" by Alfred Lansing and Nathaniel Philbrick will be discussed. This is an astonishing tale of survival for over a year by polar explorer Ernest Shackleton and his crew of 27 men on the ice-bound Antarctic seas. As Time magazine

put it, it defined heroism in a brilliantly narrated book about the Endurance's fateful trip in 1914.

New members are always welcome to attend our group.

HER-STORY INTEREST GROUP

- **Anita Taylor, Coordinator**

At the December 6 meeting of the HerStory Group, Maria Roberts will lead the discussion on Janet Yellen, whom we now know will not be re-appointed as chair of the Federal Reserve Board. We might discuss the person who is to follow her and what this early non-reappointment may mean.

The January 3 meeting will be led by Mary Wykes on the subject of Angela Merkel. For that discussion, come prepared to discuss the present situation both in Germany and in the rest of Europe. A comparison to the U.S. at the time may well also be in order.

Unless you get subsequent changes of location or time, we gather on the first Wednesday of each month at 2:30 p.m. in the Club Room at Park View (Asbury Building 211). For the December meeting, call Maria Roberts for more information. Anita is in Kansas from November 17 to early December.



AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

Website: gaithersburg-md.aauw.net

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

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Marilyn O'Connell
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Vice President for Membership

Carol Plummer

Treasurer

Edie Allison

Secretary

Barbara Garrard

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Anna Fraker
Liz Hessel
Maria Roberts

Newsletter Editor

Qing Jiang

Newsletter Coordinator

Dorothy Camara

AAUW Gaithersburg Calendar of Events Dec /Jan

Board Meeting	Tuesday, December 5 (change in usual date)
HerStory Interest Group	Wednesday, December 6 - 2:30 p.m.
Branch Holiday Potluck & Festivities	Tuesday, December 12 - 6 p.m.
HerStory Interest Group	Wednesday, January 3 - 2:30 p.m.
Board Meeting	Tuesday, January 9 - 7 p.m.
Branch Meeting	Saturday, January 20 - 10 a.m.
Great Decisions	Wednesday, January 24 -12 p.m.
Literature Group	Saturday, January 27 - 10 a.m.
Montgomery County Women's Commission Legislative Briefing, Universities at Shady Grove	Saturday, January 28 - 12:30-6 p.m.

The American Association of University Women
Gaithersburg Branch
437 Fellowship Circle
Gaithersburg, MD 20877