



Empowering Women
Since 1881

AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

NEWSLETTER

Dec. 2019/Jan. 2020

December and January Events

December Branch Meeting

Tuesday, December 10 6-8 P.M.

Conley Hall, in the Basement Level of the Trott Building
Asbury Methodist Village

HOLIDAY GATHERING

Please join us for our annual gathering to celebrate the holiday season and enjoy sistrhood, good food and an excellent musical program. This is a potluck event, so we are looking forward to everyone bringing a tasty main or side dish for all to appreciate and savor. AND, this is a perfect, informal opportunity to invite your daughters, friends and neighbors who would enjoy meeting branch members and learning about branch activities and our mission. We have plenty of room for guests, so please bring a "plus 1, or 2!"

January Branch Meeting

Saturday, January 11 10 A.M.-12 P.M.

Conley Hall, in the Basement Level of the Trott Building
Asbury Methodist Village

Speaker and Topic – TBA

Stay tuned to email for update on this branch meeting.

BOARD MEETING

December 3 and January 7 at 7 P.M.

Conference Room, Hefner Community Center, Asbury

The AAUW Gaithersburg Board of Directors will meet on December 3 and January 7 at 7 p.m. Please note that this is the first Tuesday of the month rather than our usual second Tuesday. Rotating as Temporary Presiding Officers, Mary Wykes will lead the meeting in December and Edie Allison will lead the meeting in January. The board meetings are open to all members.

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TEMPORARY PRESIDING OFFICER'S MESSAGE

- *Edie Alliso*

As the temporary presiding officer for the branch in January and February, I wish everyone a joyous holiday and New Year. Mary Wykes continues enthusiastically leading the branch as presiding officer for November and December, and you will see her messages about Great Decisions and Literature group activities in other parts of this newsletter.

Please join us for great food and a special program of holiday music on December 10 at 6:00 p.m. in Conley Hall. Please bring a friend or several friends. There is always plenty of great food and hospitality.

I can report that activities for the 2020 book sale are going well. Many members and friends helped sort about 200 boxes of books on November 17, 18 and 19. Additional sorting events will be scheduled for 2020 and book donations are always welcome.

The 2019 book sale generated about \$20,850. After paying Maryland sales tax and expenses for storage lockers, supplies and advertising, \$18,200 was available for charitable contributions. Earlier this year the branch approved: \$8,900 to Montgomery College and \$3,200 to the Universities at Shady Grove for scholarships for women pursuing subjects in which women are underrepresented. The branch also gave \$500 to the Asbury Benevolent Fund and allocated \$1,400 for scholarships for three women to attend the spring 2020 National Conference

for College Women Student Leaders. Funding for the last \$6,000 of contributions was delayed as branch officers evaluated AAUW's revised funding recommendations. The board and November 19 branch meeting attendees approved these contributions:



- \$3,500 to the AAUW Education and Training Fund, which supports national fellowships and grants, and activities supporting Title IX, pathways to jobs and STEM programs.
- \$500 to AAUW Greatest Needs Fund, which allows the association to rapidly respond to new challenges to women's and girls' education and equality.
- An additional \$1,000 to the Universities at Shady Grove for scholarships to deserving students in non-traditional fields.
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Book Sale News

- *Liz Hessel, Chair of Book Sales*

As we near the end of the year, we all are proud of what our members and friends have accomplished. From proceeds from our 2019 book sales we are supporting six scholarships at Montgomery College, three at the Universities at Shady Grove, and three at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. We also are donating funds to AAUW national to support graduate level fellowships, public policy and research, and the Greatest Needs Fund.

A big thanks to the many members and friends who helped sort books in late November. In a two-day period we put in over 120 hours, adding over 150 boxes of sorted books to our collection for the upcoming April 23-25 book sale.

Please continue to aggressively solicit donations. Be creative in how you can get donations of books, CDs and DVDs. Let us know if you need help finding boxes or moving books. Also important is marketing and advertising. Give us contact information on organizations you belong to—including your neighborhood newsletter, employee organization, book club--so that we can send them information for their newsletter, website or Facebook. Send your information to Liz Hessel at liz-at-meral.com.



HERSTORY INTEREST GROUP

— *Anita Taylor, Coordinator*

On December 4 at 2:30 p.m. Maria Roberts will lead the HerStory Group on the roles of women in the Civil War, using information from a book by Stephanie McCurry, professor of history at Columbia University.

The meeting will return to the Club Room in the Park View Building at Asbury. Please come join us.

At our November meeting, we decided the current political season tests our commitment to supporting women. So, then, we will look at women running for office. Dorothy Camara will lead the discussion on Kamala Harris on January 8 (the second Wednesday of the month instead

of the usual first Wednesday). On February 5, Anita Taylor will discuss Amy Klobuchar. Still unassigned are discussants on Elizabeth Warren, Tulsi Gabbard, Kirsten Gillibrand, and Marianne Williamson.



GOODBYE TO SPECIAL MEMBER LOUISE CHATLYNNE

Our special friend and member Louise Chatlynne and her husband, Chuck, are moving to Huntington Beach, California, on December 1. They will be missed by the Maryland community, and Louise will be missed by the Gaithersburg branch of AAUW. We hope they find California exciting.

As Louise served as the branch corresponding secretary, she decided that part of her job would be to correspond with members by email. She initiated the emailing of our newsletters, reminders, and information from various sources. Even when her term ended as corresponding secretary, Louise continued faithfully as the email correspondent until lately when, in view of her impending move to California, she trained another to take her place. Sending the newsletter and notices by email has now become an important, and money-saving part of our operation.

Louise was our Interbranch representative for many years, serving until Interbranch disbanded. As Interbranch representative, she led our branch's participation in the Sonya Kovalevsky

Day program at Montgomery College--a program encouraging middle school girls' interest in science and math. Louise also promoted the yearly Women's Legislative Briefing co-sponsored by Interbranch.



For several years, we could count on Louise's gracious hosting at her home of our June picnic and planning meeting. We could also count on her to help with the book sale and her faithful participation at our monthly meetings.

Louise and Chuck's new address in California is: 4282 Lahaina Drive Huntington Beach CA 92649 email: lgchatlynne-at-gmail.com

WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

Under the theme, "Women's Voices and Votes Count," the highly regarded Women's Legislative Briefing will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, January 26, at the Universities at Shady Grove, Rockville.

This event is organized by the Montgomery County Commission for Women and cosponsored by a number of other distinguished organizations. Its purpose is to advance knowledge and mobilize Marylanders about legislative issues of specific concern to women.

At this meeting, you will meet advocates and policy makers and be enlightened about current

legislation on local, state and national levels. Go to the Women's Legislative Briefing website for full information.



PATHWAY TO RATIFICATION - DEC. 1919 AND JAN. 1920

— *Dorothy Camara*

We continue our monthly story of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution with several states hopping onto the trail. Here is how it went 100 years ago in December 1919 and January 1920.

Ratification of the woman's suffrage amendment by the states is picking up speed. North Dakota led off the month of December by ratifying despite financial backing for the opposition from railroad and liquor interests and widespread advertising by the Anti-Woman Suffrage League and the Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage.

South Dakota had four times previously defeated suffrage amendments on the state level, with the primary opposition coming from the liquor industry. But highly skilled suffragist organizers and leaders now propelled a unanimous "yes" vote in the legislature.

Colorado boasts of having been the first state to give women the vote back in 1893. But some say that the women elected to their general assembly are tokens and that men completely control the legislature. There is hope that this will change now that Colorado has voted, as did South Dakota, a unanimous "yes" on the 19th Amendment.

Kentucky brought in the New Year and ratified the Amendment after contentious debate. So far, it is only one of four southern states to ratify.

Rhode Island had defeated repeated suffrage votes in the past. Now, after long agitation and strong organizational force by the Rhode Island Women's Suffrage Association to change public opinion, Rhode Island finally ratified.

Oregon, holding the distinction of defeating woman suffrage more times than any other

state, finally voted "yes" in a unanimous vote.



Indiana, had previously repealed a state law giving women the vote, now we saw a reemergence of energy and organizational skill in the Woman's Franchise League. The revival of the innovative auto tour that in 1912 had sparked awe and inspiration was notable in now leading to affirming national suffrage.

Wyoming, its women having had the state right to vote since 1870, now proudly affirmed the federal law unanimously.

So far, 27 states have ratified the suffrage amendment; 36 are needed for it to become the law of the land. Dogged and strong-willed suffragists are boosting up their local organizations, realizing that ratification is not a foregone conclusion and pointing out that if 13 states vote against ratification, the amendment will fail. Moreover, they see that some governors continue to avoid calling their legislatures to special session in order to avoid taking a vote. We await what March brings.

"FIRSTS" FOR WOMEN IN 2019

— *Dorothy Camara*

Back then, they liked to tell us, "You've come a long way, baby!" (when they called us "baby" or "chick" or "girl," or even worse). Now they chatter about "breaking the glass ceiling," and we're told it isn't broke yet, maybe only a little cracked. I like to think that each crack in that glass ceiling is triggered by the first time a woman makes a notable achievement. So, to fortify our spirits, here is my compilation of "firsts" for women in 2019.

First, we shout out the success of women in politics. The 116th Congress saw a shift in power as 127 women were seated, 106 of them Democrats and 21 Republicans. This is the largest contingent of women in Congress, women now making up 24 percent. But also of historic significance was the diversity. Ilhan Omar, Democrat from Minnesota, and Rashida Tlaib, Democrat from Michigan, were the first two Muslim women elected to Congress. Moreover, Omar is the first Somali-American, first naturalized citizen from Africa, and the first nonwhite woman elected from Minnesota to serve in Congress. She is the first to wear a hijab on the floor of Congress. Tlaib is the first Palestinian-American woman in Congress.

The first Native American women were elected to Congress: Deb Haaland of New Mexico and Sharice Davids of Kansas. Davids is noted for flipping a usual Republican seat to Democratic. Marsha Blackburn became Tennessee's first female senator. Jahanna Hayes became Connecticut's first black congresswoman. Ayanna Pressley became Massachusetts' first black congresswoman. Texas' first Latina congresswomen were Sylvia Garcia and Veronica Escobar. Mississippi's first female senator was Cindy Hyde-Smith. Eyrsten Sinema and Martha McSally were Arizona's first female senators. In Iowa, Abby Finkenauer and Cindy Axne became the first women elected to the House from Iowa. Stacey Abraham of Georgia became the first African American woman to deliver a response to the State of Union address, and she was the first non-office-holding person to do so.

You can't miss the record number of women running for president: Warren, Harris, Klobuchar, Gillibrand, Gabbard, Williamson. Never before have more than one woman taken the stage for a presidential debate.

Looking at the state level, we find Janet Mills becoming the first woman governor of Maine. In Maryland, Adrienne Jones became the first African American and first woman elected speaker of the House of Delegates; she was unanimously elected. There is a record number of female legislators in the Maryland Assembly, 72 of the 188 legislators. The first majority-female legislature in the nation met in Nevada; women's health and safety issues soared to the top of their agenda. The first black woman and first openly gay person, Lori Lightfoot, was sworn in as Chicago mayor.

At the Supreme Court we now have the first all-female contingent of law clerks serving a justice--appointed by Justice Brett Kavanaugh. This makes the first time there are more women than men in the law clerk jobs on the Supreme Court.



In sports, the U.S. Women's National Team made a splash in soccer, breaking a viewership record. Tennis star, Serena Williams, became the first athlete on Forbes' Richest Self-Made Women list. DeAnna Price was the first U.S. woman to win a world championship throwing event with a victory in the hammer throw at the International Association of Athletics Federations competition.

Christine Lau became the first woman chair of surgery at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore. She is a nationally renowned thoracic and lung transplant surgeon and will oversee one of the preeminent organ transplant centers in the U.S. Joy Harjo was named the 23rd poet laureate by the Library of Congress, the first Native American to hold that honor.

I remember in the early '70s marching with other feminists to protest NASA's exclusion of women from being astronauts on the assumption that women were unfit emotionally or physically. Now, Jessica Meir and Christina Koch became the first all-woman astronaut team to walk in space. Tethered to the International Space Station, they spent a seven-hour spacewalk, replacing a battery component on the station's exterior and performing other tasks.

Time magazine named 48 women among the 100 most influential people in the world--the greatest number of women ever.

And yet.

More states than ever passed restrictive abortion laws that essentially deny women's constitutional right to choose an abortion. And the Constitution still does not affirm women's social, political, and economic equality with men.

Now, what do the stars hold for 2020? The first woman to be elected president?

GREAT DECISIONS

- *Mary Wykes, Coordinator*



The Great Decisions group will not be meeting during December.

On January 24, at 12 noon, we will have our planning meeting for 2020 with a luncheon in the private dining room at the Gaithersburg Doubletree by Hilton Hotel on Perry Parkway (arranged by Vivian Otto). We will order from the menu and have separate checks. We will decide on hosts and topic leaders for our meetings for the coming year. New study guides from the Foreign Policy Association will be available for purchase at \$27.60 at the time of the luncheon. This is a wonderful time for new members to join the group. We now have nine or ten members and the discussion of current topics is generally very lively.

The Great Decisions topics for 2020 are:

- Climate Change and the Global Order
- India and Pakistan
- Red Sea Security
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- U.S. Relations with the Northern Triangle
- China's Road Into Latin America
- The Philippines and the U.S.
- Artificial Intelligence and Data

Please contact Mary Wykes, Great Decisions chair, at 301-717-1040 or mary.wykes-at-aol.com if you have questions regarding the luncheon meeting in January. All are welcome even if you just want to join us for lunch.

LITERATURE GROUP

- *Mary Wykes for Coordinator Jean Young*

The Literature Group will meet on Saturday, December 7, at 10 a.m. at the home of Jean Young, 592 Russell Avenue, in the Villas at Asbury Village. Her contacts are 301-2165599, jsy592-at-comcast.net. Jean will lead us in discussing the book "A Man Called Ove" by Fredrik Backman. One reviewer describes the book as "bittersweet, tender, and often wickedly humorous and almost certain to elicit tears."

The January meeting will be at the home of Cathy Manning in the Villas at Asbury on Saturday, January 25, at 10 a.m. We will discuss the book "Educated" by Tara Westover. This is

a memoir about a girl whose childhood begins on a beautiful mountain in Idaho in a narrow world created by her father's anti-establishment mindset of fear, insanity and control, ending when she decides to venture out into the wider world and research the facts for herself. It is a gripping true story.

New members are always welcome in the group.



AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

Website: gaithersburg-md.aauw.net

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

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Dorothy Camara

AAUW Gaithersburg Calendar of Events

Board Meeting	Tuesday, December 3 - 7 p.m.
HerStory Interest Group	Wednesday, December 4 - 2:30 p.m.
Literature Group	Saturday, December 7 - 10 a.m.
HOLIDAY PARTY	Tuesday, December 10 - 6 p.m.
Board Meeting	Tuesday, January 7 - 7:30 p.m.
HerStory Interest Group	Wednesday, January 8 - 2:30 p.m.
Branch Meeting	Saturday, January 11 - 10 a.m.
Great Decisions	Friday, January 24 - 12 p.m.
Literature Group	Saturday, January 25 - 10 a.m.
Women's Legislative Briefing, Rockville	Sunday, January 26
HerStory Group	Wednesday, February 5 - 2:30 p.m.
HOLD THIS DATE: Book Sale	April 23-25, 2020

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