



AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

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

NEWSLETTER

May 2021

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MAY VIRTUAL BRANCH MEETING

Tuesday, May 18, 2021

Log in to Zoom meeting: 7:00pm*

Presentation begins: 7:15pm

Montgomery County Climate Change Action Plan

AAUW Gaithersburg President, Edie Allison, will explain the county and school district plans to reduce county greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2027 and 100% by 2035 to help limit global warming. Since 2005 the county has reduced emissions 19% -- faster than the rest of the nation -- by building solar farms, green buildings and schools, and more efficient public transportation. Achieving and paying for the more rigorous 2027 goals will require lifestyle changes, but county actions will also mitigate the impact of more extreme weather associated with global warming. We hope everyone will join to learn about serious local efforts to impact this global issue.

Installation of Branch Officers for 2021-2022 Operating Year

NOTE: All members will receive an email with the Zoom information about a week before the meeting and a reminder email a day before. You can forward the email to any friends and family who may be interested in this meeting.

*New meeting start time

Virtual Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 11, at 7:00pm

Log in to Zoom meeting: 6:50pm

Board meetings are open to all members. If you want to attend, please email Heather Reichardt: hjr1234[at]gmail[dot]com to receive a Zoom meeting invitation/link.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- *Edie Allison*

Spring weather and widespread vaccination have arrived giving me hope for outdoor gatherings of family and friends. It also marks the end of the Maryland General Assembly 2021 session, which produced almost 100 bills for the Governor's signature, including legislation addressing educational and health inequities, instituting major police reform, and promoting the health and safety for women and children.

Some of the important votes of this year's legislature were to override the Governor's 2020 vetoes. Four of these overrides may be of special interest to AAUW members.

- A public safety bill requiring background checks for any sale, transfer or rental of a rifle or shotgun. Federal law only requires background checks by licensed sellers. This law allows Maryland to override federal regulations to require background checks for all rifle and shotgun sales by unlicensed sellers, a protection already in force in Maryland for handguns.
- A bill establishing pre-release facilities and services for women, similar to those long provided to aid men to successfully reenter the community.
- A bill implementing the educational reforms recommended by the Kirwan Commission and another bill allowing a tax on online advertising that will help pay the costs of the Kirwan reforms.

In addition, the legislature passed three bills that were prioritized by the 2021 Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women, MLAW, an organization supported by AAUW Maryland members and several state branches:

- A bill makes a continuing course of child abuse/torture first-degree child abuse rather than a misdemeanor crime, providing greater protection to children and their mothers.

- A bill providing free menstrual hygiene products in public school women's restrooms. Surveys show that many students have missed class or skipped school because of lack of access to menstrual hygiene products.
- A bill establishing the Health Equity Communities Program, to provide grants and other economic incentives to geographic locations with poor health outcomes in order to reduce racial and economic health disparities, and improve health outcomes and access to primary care.



Sadly, a widely anticipated bill requiring greater reductions in Maryland greenhouse gas emissions than the 40% reduction from 2006 to 2030 currently mandated failed even though bills with different levels of restrictions passed each chamber.

Even as Maryland wavers in its emissions commitment, the federal and Montgomery County governments are implementing programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming and mitigate its impacts. I will be talking about the local efforts in a presentation for the May branch meeting. Hope to see you there.

Last but not least, **please vote in the national AAUW election.** You are being asked to consider removing any educational requirement to join AAUW. If you have not voted, hunt up the email you received on April 7 providing ballot access with your personal PIN. If you do not have an email on file with AAUW you will have received a paper ballot in the mail.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Please renew your AAUW dues for the fiscal year which starts July 1, 2021. Dues are \$90, with \$59 tax deductible.

The preferred way to renew is online, using the renewal form from national that you should have received by email. Alternatively, you may send a check made out to AAUW Gaithersburg to Treasurer Ellen Teague, 8621 Plum Creek Drive,

Gaithersburg Md 20882.

Your membership gives you the opportunity to join other women like you in supporting our mission to advance equality for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.



2021-22 OFFICERS ELECTED

All present officers of AAUW Gaithersburg were returned to office for the 2021-22 fiscal year which starts on July 1. The officers were elected by a unanimous vote of the membership attending the Zoom branch meeting on April 20. Returned to office are:

President Edie Allison

Vice President for Program Heather Reichardt

Co-Vice Presidents for Membership Anna Fraker and Mary Wykes

Treasurer Ellen Teague

Secretary Averill Farrelly



The officers will be sworn in at the Installation of Officers ceremony to be held at the May branch meeting.

It's time to reconnect!

- Liz Hessel

Through all of the quarantining, we all looked forward to better times. Now that spring has sprung, and vaccines are available, it is time to reconnect with other AAUW members over lunch. Would you like to join us?

We plan to meet informally at restaurants that offer outdoor dining.

This opportunity is open to anyone who is fully vaccinated.

Friends and spouses are welcome, invite them.

Participants are expected to wear masks, as required by local authorities.

Everyone will pay for their own food.

We can help with car pools if anyone needs a ride.

Announcement of the date and location will be made by an e-mail sent out to the Branch.

Participants should respond to Liz Hessel by e-mail (liz[at]meral[dot]com) or phone 301-840-1258 so that we can tell how many tables will be needed.

We hope you will join us when you are available. We've missed seeing friends for over a year.



A FAMOUS AAUW SISTER

- Dorothy Camara

If you are a member of AAUW, you walk in the path of some famous women who were also members. One of our famous sisters is Katharine Houghton Hepburn. She also was, incidentally, the mother of actor Katharine Hepburn.

Katharine Houghton Hepburn was an ardent suffragist and reformer in Connecticut during the first half of the 20th Century. In Hartford, she met British suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst who had come to spread the message that more confrontational tactics were necessary to achieve women's equality and suffrage. Hepburn, inspired by Pankhurst, started her journey as a champion of women's rights.

In 1909 she was a co-founder of the Hartford Equality Franchise League, which in the following year was absorbed into the Connecticut Woman's Suffrage Association, where she was its president. That organization later became a branch of the National American Woman Suffrage Association.

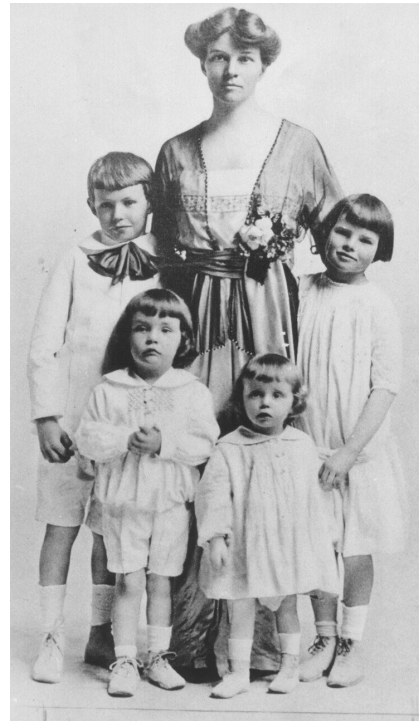
In 1913 she found these organizations "old-fashioned and supine," and joined Alice Paul in the more aggressive National Women's Party. She took part in the suffrage picketing of Woodrow Wilson's White House, seeking to change Wilson's initial opposition to suffrage.

After passage of woman suffrage in 1920, Hepburn redirected her reformist passion to the birth control movement, campaigning in rallies and other events with Margaret Sanger. With Sanger, she co-founded the organization that later would become Planned Parenthood. Also with Sanger, and others, she testified at the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee on allowing physicians to provide contraceptive information. Her leadership in the birth control movement was instrumental in giving women legal access to information and access to safe contraception.

All this was not without cost. She was greatly criticized by her Hartford community for her re-

formist views. Stones were thrown through the windows of her home. The Hartford Courant wrote editorials against her. Nevertheless, she remained an ardent reformer for the rest of her life, and her community came to accept her views. In 1994 she was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame.

Even now, women of esteem, such as Katharine Houghton Hepburn, walk within the halls of AAUW. You are among them.



Katharine Houghton Hepburn with four of her six children. Future actor Katharine Hepburn at right.

GREAT DECISIONS

- Mary Wykes, Coordinator



The next meeting of the Great Decisions interest group will be at 2:30 p.m., Friday, May 21, via Zoom. Judy Sholes will set up the meeting and

advise members of the ID and password the day before.

The discussion topic is: "The Coldest War: Toward a Return to Great Power Competition in the Arctic?" The study guide article is written by Stephanie Pezard. She is a senior

political scientist at the Rand Corporation. Our member Edie Allison, a geologist who has actually been to the Arctic, will lead our discussion.

New members are always welcome and I still have extra study guides.

Contact me at [Mary.Wykes\[at\]aol\[dot\]com](mailto:Mary.Wykes@aol.com) or 301-717-1040.

LITERATURE GROUP

- Mary Wykes



Here are some suggested book titles from our former coordinator Jean Young for our Literature Group to consider when

we resume meeting at Jean's home in the Villas. We hope that will be soon. As always, we welcome new members.

Caste by Isabel Wilkerson

Warmth of Other Suns by same author

Becoming by Michelle Obama

The Last Stand by Nathaniel Philbrick

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

Website: gaithersburg-md.aauw.net

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

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President

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AAUW GAITHERSBURG CALENDAR OF ZOOM MEETINGS

Board of Directors

Tuesday, May 11 - 7 p.m.

Branch Meeting

Tuesday, May 18 - 7:15 p.m.

Great Decisions

Friday, May 21 - 2:30 p.m.

AAUW Maryland Annual Convention

Saturday & Sunday, May 22-23

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