



# AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

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

NEWSLETTER

February 2022

## February 2022

### VIRTUAL BRANCH MEETING!

Tuesday, February 15, 2022

Log in to Zoom meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Presentation begins: 7:15 p.m.

### TOPIC:

**InterfaithWorks – Supporting Montgomery County’s Vulnerable Families**

**Speaker:** Teri Blandon, Director of Development  
InterfaithWorks, Rockville, MD

We will learn how InterfaithWorks assists the many families in our area that need extra support due to economic insecurity. Often, those in need are women and children.

InterfaithWorks has been aiding families in Montgomery County for 50 years.

\*NOTE – New date and time for Zoom branch meeting!

\* Your Zoom link will be emailed to you a few days before the meeting.

### GAITHERSBURG AAUW AND TITLE IX CELEBRATE 50 YEARS

These two 2022 anniversaries offer exciting opportunities to look back at how far we have come, and imagine and plan how the next 50 years can bring increased educational opportunity and equity to future generations.

Planning for special activities is just beginning, and we need suggestions for commemorative activities from all branch members and friends.

A textbook will tell us that cell phones and home computers were missing from 1972, but we would all enjoy hearing personalized accounts of major women’s issues and activities occupying the branch and its members. I invite members who were here during the early years of the branch to share reminiscences of college life, athletic activities, technological wonders, and major political issues of the 1970s.

Please send any suggestions or commentaries to [edieallison@comcast.net](mailto:edieallison@comcast.net).

### Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 8 - 7 p.m.

The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch Board of Directors will next meet on February 8 at 7 p.m.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- **Edie Allison**

### FLUCTUATIONS

As I write this in mid-January, it seems as if we are on a roller coaster of temperature and Covid fluctuations. One result is that all branch activities will be held virtually starting in February and continuing until members and regulatory organizations determine it is safe to gather indoors. Other fluctuations include changes in the National AAUW organization and website, and new laws expected from the Maryland General Assembly 2022 session.

AAUW has a new CEO, Gloria Blackwell, who has worked for AAUW for many years as manager of Fellowships and Grants, and has long been an advocate for greater AAUW outreach to girls and women of color. In a recent Town Hall webinar, Ms. Blackwell stated her commitment to branches and their members, who have occasionally felt neglected by AAUW's national focus on growth and diversity. Another change that may be more challenging is a revision of the national website that is expected to debut in February. Details are not yet available, but this change is expected to improve the crotchety Member Services Database. Past revisions of this area have been laden with pitfalls, but your branch officers are available to help you navigate the revisions. Other changes that you may wish to investigate are revisions to the AAUW bylaws, which will be voted on in April. These would streamline two organizational functions, nominations for the board and changing the eligibility cutoff for new members to vote in AAUW elections. Proposed changes and forms to comment on the proposed changes are at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>.

As the U.S. Congress gets bogged down, state legislatures, including Maryland's, are passing legislation to improve the lives of women and their families.



Since my December- January message, the Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women, MLAW, members have selected eight bills that they will advocate for during the 2022 Maryland General Assembly regular session, from January 12 to April 11. All the bills on the MLAW priority list are explained at <https://mdlegagendaforwomen.org/>. One example, the "Time to Care Act" (HB0008), establishes a Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program that gives employees up to 12 weeks of paid leave to care for themselves or family members with serious health conditions or disabilities. The benefit is funded through a small mandatory contribution by employee and employer. The bill failed to pass the legislature last year and has been reintroduced. Similar Federal legislation may be included in the Build Back Better bill, but it is unclear if that will pass Congress. This law would add Maryland to nine states and the District of Columbia that provide some form of paid family leave, a poor substitute for a national benefit that is provided by almost all other countries.

## FAREWELL OF A NEWSLETTER EDITOR

- *Dorothy Camara, December 29, 2021*

It is time for me to say goodbye. It was in 2005 that I joined Qing Jiang as editors of your newsletter. It has been an amazing partnership, and I thank Qing for her faithful, consistent and accommodating service all these years working alongside me.

I was trained as a clinical psychologist. A part of our training was with the Rorschach Test, and, in doing so, we were obliged to take the test ourselves. As one aspect, the Rorschach reveals the style of a person's thinking. And it was from this that I discovered that I was not a generalist thinker who develops sweeping, grand ideas, but I was, on the other hand, a detail thinker--very, very detailed thinker. I was humiliated. I wanted to be a big thinker. I felt my detail mindedness was something to hide--like a pimple on the end of my nose. If any of you has a pimple on the end of your nose, please excuse me-- I'm sure yours is rather lovely.

However, when I got into editing the newsletter, that detail orientation found its niche. I found I enjoyed chasing details. I lost my remorse in not being a generalist thinker and now reveled in my delight in details. I had lost that nagging feeling that it was a defect.



So, now as I leave you, I thank you, everyone, for letting me take care of your newsletter-- and for the personality transformation.

### THE MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR WOMEN 2022 LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

Thursday, February 3, at 5 p.m. on Zoom

MLAW will announce the 2022 Legislative Agenda. Hear from legislators and advocates who will present each of the bills on the 2022 Agenda and explain how they will impact Maryland women and families. You will learn what you can do to help pass these bills and become involved in the legislative process.

Registration is required but is free. To register, Click on <https://mdlegagendaforwomen.org/2022/01/04/mlaw-invites-you-to-attend-our-2022-legislative-briefing/>

## NEWS FROM OUT-OF-STATE MEMBERS

Lois and Walter Liggett reported in their Christmas letter that everyone is well, and the family has grown with the birth of their fifth great-grandchild in November. Among their 2021 adventures, was the Abenaki Land Link Harvest Festival, which was orchestrated by the Nuthegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation. At the festival they obtained seeds of a winter squash traditionally grown by the indigenous people of Vermont. The Land-link projects works to have people with access to land grow traditional crops and donate their harvest. The Liggetts also participated in the 2021 Vermont Humanities Conference: This Mazéd World: The Humanities and Climate Change.” In other news, Lois’ book, “Decoding Norse Myths with Pet Ravens” should be available through Amazon and local bookstores in early 2022.

Jean and Roland Hirsch sent Christmas greetings from Overland Park, Kansas, where they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with their daughters Betsy and Sallie, and son Paul, along with numerous grandchildren and friends. Jean is active in the Garden Club, quilting group, and bible study group in their new community. Roland is active in the bible study group and the American Chemical Society. He has spoken on climate science several times this year.



## AAUW HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Not even a Pandemic could keep Santa Claus and 23 of his AAUW friends from gathering for our December 6 th Holiday Luncheon, although maneuvering the parking lot was a bit of a challenge. Several spouses and AAUW members of the Frederick and Kensington/Rockville Branches who had joined us on our Zoom meetings were also in attendance at the Germantown Carrabba’s Italian Grill. To show the interconnectedness of our lives, I was sitting next to a Frederick AAUW member, and it turned out that we knew each other as we attended the same Church.

The seating was a little tight, but that did not stop people from table hopping to greet and laugh with friends we had not seen in person for some time. We were blessed by the presence of one of the Gaithersburg Branch’s founders –Anna Fraker and another, Mina Parsont sent regrets but hopes to join us at upcoming events to celebrate our 50 th Anniversary.

If this pandemic has taught us nothing else, it has shown us the importance of friendship and

socializing in person. We will have more gatherings as we move into the new year.



*Photo, left to right: Cathy Manning; Santa, aka Jim Pearson; and Mary Wykes.*

## GREAT DECISIONS

- **Mary Wykes, Coordinataor**



Great Decisions will begin the 2022 series via Zoom at 2:30 on Friday, February 18, considering the timely topic: "The Renewed Climate

Change Agenda" authored by Ronald J. Bee, international relations, foreign policy, and national security lecturer at the Oxford Study Abroad Program in the UK. Edie Allison will be the discussion leader. Her extensive background as a geologist at the Energy Department

gives her a unique prospective on this topic.

This is a good time for new members to join this group for discussions on global challenges facing our interdependent world today, as briefed through the Foreign Policy Association. If you are interested in learning more or attending a Zoom meeting, please contact Mary Wykes at 301-717-1040 or Mary[dot]wykes[at]aol.com.

## HERSTORY SNAPSHOTS

“The Day Gloria Steinem Changed Dr. Spock”

- **Dorothy Camara, as dictated to Alice Wong**

In the early 1970s, a group of 200-300 women met in Washington, D.C., to form the National Women's Political Caucus, with the mission of attracting women to politics and nurturing and supporting them in their political careers.

At the final General Assembly of the gathering there was a notable panel of speakers, which included Bella Abzug, the U.S. Congresswoman from New York, and the famous Dr. Benjamin Spock, renowned leader in the field of childrearing.

Bella made a rousing speech, which her adoring fans responded to with loud applause. Then Spock rose to a chorus of boos, which rocked him back with a look of bewilderment and ineptitude. Gloria Steinem rose to provide an explanation for the enmity. Speaking softly with

kindness and brilliance, she explained to Spock that he had trained a generation of women to raise their children with a distorted expectation of women's role in society. Spock had no retort, but listened gravely. From that time on, Spock's writings incorporated the perspective of the women's liberation movement.



### AFTER WORD

During the conference, Gloria Steinem borrowed my typewriter for an article she wanted to write. She returned the typewriter a few days later without having written the article. Nevertheless, that typewriter became an icon for me as "The Typewriter that Gloria Steinem almost typed on."

## HERSTORY INTEREST GROUP

- **Maria Roberts**



On February 12, Mary Wykes will discuss Mary Coffin Ware Dennett, an early 20th century suffragist, pacifist, and advocate for women's access to birth control.

HerStory Meeting: Saturday, February 12, at 2 p.m.

The meeting will be in the Park View Club Room (Building 211 on the Asbury campus) if Covid-19 permits. If Covid-19 makes that impossible, the meeting will take place by Zoom on the same day and time.

### AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

**Website:** [gaithersburg-md.aauw.net](http://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 EVENTS**

Board Meeting - Zoom	Tuesday, February 8 - 7:00 p.m.
HerStory – Zoom	Saturday, February 12, 2:00 p.m.
Branch Meeting – Zoom	Tuesday, February 15, 7:00 p.m.
Great Decisions – Zoom	Friday, February 18 - 2:30 p.m.
AAUW Maryland Annual Meeting, Annapolis	Friday-Saturday, March 25-26, 2022

The American Association of University Women  
Gaithersburg Branch  
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Gaithersburg, MD 20877