



# AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

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

NEWSLETTER

November 2023

## November 2023

### VIRTUAL BRANCH MEETING!

Tuesday, November 21, 2023

Log in to Zoom meeting: 7:00pm

Presentation begins: 7:15pm

### SURPRISE PROGRAM TO BE ANNOUNCED

Email announcement and Zoom link coming soon.

Additional information about the program and the Zoom link will be sent closer to the meeting date.

### Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 7 p.m.

Zoom

The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, November 14 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. The Zoom code will be sent by email. These meetings are open to all branch members.

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## IN MEMORIAM – JENNIE FOREHAND LONGTIME MARYLAND DISTRICT 17 SENATOR



Jennie Forehand died on October 3rd at the age of 87, in Indianapolis, Indiana, where she and her husband moved after her retirement in 2014. Jennie served in the Maryland legislature representing District 17 (Rockville, Gaithersburg, and Garrett Park) for 36 years.

Mary Wykes remembered Jennie as a longtime supporter of AAUW -- Jennie and her husband usually came to our book sale. She spoke at one of our meetings about her legislative accomplishments. One of the most significant was outlawing smoking in public buildings in the state.

Memorial contributions may be made in her name to Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation.

## Presidents Message

### - Edie Allison

#### Climate Equity

Montgomery County had pleasant weather this summer but the ferocious heat in other parts of the U.S. and the globe suggest it is time for all of us to be concerned about global warming and take steps to reduce emissions and mitigate the impacts of rising temperatures. Greenhouse gas ( GHG) emissions result from the use of coal, oil, and natural gas. Another major GHG source is agriculture-- methane produced in cow digestion and emissions from manure. On a personal level, choosing renewable energy, an electric vehicle, or reducing meat or dairy consumption are common choices to reduce GHG emissions. Larger emissions reduction actions by corporations, utilities, and governments are needed to achieve significant impacts. Mitigating the effects of global warming, for example by increasing tree cover and reducing flooding from surface runoff and sea level rise is the second half of the equation. I will discuss Montgomery County efforts in mitigation in a future message.

Exceptional weather, whether high heat, drought, or torrential rainfall, impacts disadvantaged individuals more often and more severely than the more affluent. In January 2021 President Biden announced a government campaign to "Tackle the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad." This campaign includes Justice40, which requires at least 40% of benefits from federal investments in affordable housing, workforce development, climate mitigation, clean energy, and pollution reduction must flow to disadvantaged communities. I will focus on efforts to reduce GHG emissions, the area in which I work, and where Maryland and Montgomery County are making major efforts.

Maryland per-capita CO2 emissions are 7.8 tons per year, lower than the average state (13.9 tons per year). However, Maryland emissions are high relative to the areal extent of the state, probably reflecting our population density and the coal and natural gas used in some regional power plants.

Montgomery County is recognized as an affluent area but there are many areas that are designated as disadvantaged. Gaithersburg and Montgomery Village are not so designated, but many of the surrounding areas are identified as disadvantaged. The government Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool available online here maps the details on the about 50 socioeconomic factors impacting the population, <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/about>



Maryland Climate Pathway, the state plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions deserves a read, but I want to highlight more local programs that are working now.

Montgomery County Public Schools, MCPS, is already operating 86 all-electric school buses, the largest electric fleet in the U.S. and plans to have 326 electric school buses by 2025 and an all-electric fleet in 10 years. Electric buses cut GHG emissions and diesel fumes that aggravate asthma. The 326-bus fleet will also cut fuel costs by 50%.

The county's first solar-powered microgrid (solar electricity generating panels, battery storage and charging stations) in Silver Spring powered 14 electric transit buses in 2022 and will house 70 electric buses in 2026. Another county electric-vehicle incentive is over 500 free vehicle-charging stations including 100 DC Fast Chargers in county parking lots. The number of EV charging stations is expected to grow rapidly.

The September AAUW Maryland meeting, which focused on how climate change is affecting health equity introduced two organizations that you may want to be involved with:

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## Presidents Message

### - continue

- Mom's Clean Air Force, a non-profit, grassroots environmental advocacy program was introduced by Almeta E. Cooper. The 22,000 member Maryland chapter of this national organization has helped pressure the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority, WMATA, to commit to electrify its bus fleet by 2045 and continues to pressure WMATA to stop purchasing internal combustion buses. Organization members also testified in support of the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, strengthening its methane emissions rule that is currently being implemented.

- Bob Deans, the Director of Strategic Engagement for the Natural Resources Defense Council,

NRDC, described the activities and resources of this environmental advocacy organization that focuses on legal action. You should take advantage of the data and analysis provided by the organizations large and diverse expert staff. The organization website, NRDC.org, also provides information and suggestions for acting on major climate and health issues of local concern such as offshore wind energy development and protecting Potomac River quality.



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR WOMEN – FALL CONFERENCE



MLAW's Annual Fall Conference, Eyes on the Prize: When Women Vote, We All Win, on November 4, is where we hear from legislators and advocates on upcoming bills in the Maryland General Assembly. This year it will be held from 9am to 1 pm at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) in the Engineering Arts Building. The location may not be as close as past meetings, but UMBC is only a 40-minute drive from Gaithersburg.

The Conference will provide information and strategies to activate and energize participants to successfully advocate for legislation impacting women and families during the 2024 Maryland General Assembly Session. Advocates

and legislators will be presenting 2024 legislative proposals.

2023 MLAW legislative-proposal advocacy contributed to passage of bills bringing reproductive freedom constitutional amendment to a vote in November 2024, repealing the spousal defense for sex crimes against one's spouse, and prevents criminalizing of child victims of sex trafficking for acts committed as a result of their trafficking.

For more details and to register visit <https://mdlegagendaforwomen.org/>.

## GREAT DECISIONS NOVEMBER 17, 2:30 pm MEETING

- **Mary Wykes, Coordinator**



Great Decisions Foreign Policy discussion group will meet Friday, November 17 at 2:30 via Zoom. The final topic of the 2023 Study Guide will be discussed. It is the timely topic of "Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and Migration" - author Karen Jacobsen, Professor in Global Migration at Tufts University.

New members are always welcome. To secure the Zoom link and copy of the study text, contact Mary Wykes, Coordinator, 301-717-1040 or mary[dot]wykes[at]aol[dot]com.

## AAUW HerStory: Saturday, November 11, 2 pm in-person meeting

- **Maria Roberts, Coordinator**

On Sat. Nov. 11th at 2 pm in Park View Club Room Herstory interest group will hear about a woman who did not care whom she antagonized in the fight against brutality. She mustered written and organizational skills as a fierce voice against racial and gender injustice.

Please email meroberts27700[at]cs[dot]com or call (301) 987-6986 if you need directions.



### AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

**Website:** gaithersburg-md.aauw.net

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

#### **President**

Edie Allison

Edieallison[at]comcast[dot]net

#### **Vice President for Membership**

Heather Reichardt

hjr1234[at]gmail[dot]com

#### **Treasurer**

Ellen Teague

Ellensteague[at]gmail[dot]com

#### **Secretary**

Vacant

#### **Appointed Member of the Board**

Liz Hessel

Liz[at]meral[dot]com

#### **Newsletter Editor**

Qing Jiang

Qjmailbox[at]gmail[dot]com

#### **Newsletter Managing Editor**

## **AAUW GAITHERSBURG CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

MLAW Fall Conference	Saturday, November 4, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
HerStory – In person	Saturday, November 11 - 2:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – Zoom	Tuesday, November 14, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.
Great Decisions – Zoom	Friday, November 17 - 2:30 p.m.
Branch Program	Tuesday, November 21 – 7:00 p.m.

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