



Upstate Update



AMSTERDAM * GLOVERSVILLE * JOHNSTOWN BRANCH

- The American Association of University Women advances equity for woman and girls through advocacy, education and research.
- In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

2009 – 2010

December/January

Branch Officers:

President

Helen Martin

Vice President - Program

Sandy Maceyka

Vice President - Membership

Liz Russo

Vice President – Ed Foundation

Kaye Schrader

Vice President – Legal Advocacy

Ginni Mazur

Recording Secretary

Sue Summerfield

Treasurer - Barbara Nigro

President's Message

Hi Ladies,

It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of November as I'm writing this. With Thanksgiving next week and Christmas and Hanukkah following soon after, it seems a perfect time to thank each and every one of you for the contributions you make to AAUW. What a great mix of talents and energy our branch includes!

I want to thank Carol Cownie and Maryanne Abad for the fantastic meeting we enjoyed earlier this month. And, of course, thanks to the FM students who comprised our panel. What an interesting and inspiring evening that was. The stories that the students shared with all of us made me reflect on just how fortunate we, as women, are in our country. And, through organizations like AAUW, how we continue to work to improve the quality of life both here and abroad.

Our program schedule for next year promises to be both entertaining and enlightening. I appreciate the effort that goes into the preparation for all of the meetings and the ideas for the programs themselves. I hope all of you are able to attend as many meetings as your busy schedules allow.

For those members who volunteered their time to help with the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Women's Consortium recent antique show and sale, I thank you so much. Since the proceeds from this event are going directly to fund the Third ECS Women's Symposium next March, your help is sincerely appreciated. It is because of AAUW that the Symposium got its start and without your continued support of the Consortium, the Symposium might not be able to continue.

Please take a moment to read the articles on the "Women Making a Difference" and the Women's History Month exhibit at the Fulton County Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry. I hope that we can participate in both of these projects.

I want to wish all of you the happiest of holidays – and time together with your family and friends to enjoy the true spirit of this special time. I would also like to ask one thing of you – please take a moment to remember all of those brave young men and women who will be spending the holidays far from home in their efforts to keep all of us safe. In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, "If we want a free and peaceful world – we can do it!"

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you,

Helen

Community Outreach Collection for the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots

At the December 5 AAUW Brunch at Union Hall, we will have a box to collect unwrapped, new toys or money for the kids...please, no clothes.

Checks should be made payable to 'Toys for Tots.' Dianne will collect and take them to the organization for distribution at Christmas. Please be generous in these hard times.

If you have any questions, you may contact Dianne Kierpiec at 853-4636 or email her at dmkierpiec@yahoo.com.

January Meeting – Asian Symbolism

Donna Callery of Richmond, Virginia will speak to us about Asian symbolism on Thursday, January 28 at Harold's Restaurant in Gloversville. Many of you may remember that Donna gave a wonderful presentation on bound feet entitled "Golden Lilies" two years ago. Donna, originally a Johnstown native, spent seven years in Singapore and traveled extensively throughout the Orient. A true lover of Asian culture, Donna has studied this interesting form of communication and should entertain us with her vast knowledge. We look forward to seeing you there. Please refer to the flier in this newsletter for further information.

--Sandy Fiesinger

Women Making a Difference

I received a letter from Helen Engel and Marilyn Smiley, AAUW Program Chairs for the "Women Making a Difference" project. They are looking for additional biographies, 1-3 pages in length, of prominent women from our community who have made a difference in the past, as well as women who are still living and who are still making contributions. So far the only biography from our branch has been on Elizabeth Cady Stanton. This has evolved into something of a challenge competition. Pennsylvania has already compiled 165 biographies; so far New York has 135. So, if you can think of any notable women that you would be willing to write up a short biography on, it would help to push us closer to taking the lead! If anyone is interested, I have the guidelines – they would love to have the submissions by the end of the year if possible. All of the biographies will be put together into a book written by AAUW members that can be used to promote our organization and increase branch visibility. –Helen

Planning For 11th Sister to Sister Summit Underway

Co-chairs Anne Campos and Dianne Kierpiec are busy planning our AAUW branch's 11th Sister to Sister Summit. The conference for middle school girls from the tri-counties will be held on Tuesday, May 18 at FMCC. The planning committee has been busy reviewing the evaluations and workshop suggestions from the last summit to determine choices for the 2010 event. As a result, they are in the process of securing presenters for the 15 workshops which will be offered. Workshop topics will address mental, emotional, social, and physical fitness issues to help girls in their future endeavors.

In addition, at the last meeting, committee members prepared letters soliciting funds for the Summit. These were sent to area businesses, PTA's, and teachers associations. The donations are needed to cover facility usage costs, materials, and speaker fees. A \$7 registration fee for girls and adults attending the Summit will cover the

cost of lunch and a light breakfast snack.

The keynote speaker for the 11th Sister to Sister Summit will be Sandra McGarraugh, a professor at SUNY Albany Center for Women in Government "School to Work" program. McGarraugh will use an interactive approach to her presentation by having girls sit together with their school classmates to discuss what they had experienced and how they can bring the information back to their home schools.

The next Summit planning meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 6 at the Johnstown Public Library. Any interested AAUW members are welcome to attend. –Liz Russo

Public Policy—An Attack on Reproductive Health

On Saturday night, the House passed the largest health care overhaul bill in 40 years. Many of AAUW's key priorities were included in the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962), including coverage for maternity care, preventive care, an end to gender rating, and other protections for women. It's a victory for millions of Americans who are one step closer to quality, affordable health care.

Unfortunately, this victory came at a price that is outrageous and unacceptable. Anti-choice representatives also passed an amendment to the bill that will severely undermine women's access to complete and safe reproductive health care services. The amendment, offered by Rep. Bart Stupak (D-MI), will eliminate coverage for abortion services in the public option. Current law already bans the use of federal dollars to pay for abortion, but this amendment goes further by prohibiting women who receive federal subsidies from purchasing a comprehensive insurance plan that includes abortion services.

Private plans that offer abortion coverage would be banned from receiving funding. This type of restriction would force private insurance companies to choose between eliminating abortion coverage for all insured members and being eligible to

serve patients by receiving federal subsidies. As a result, millions of women who have this coverage now would lose it, effectively ending coverage for abortion services and instituting what amounts to a domestic gag rule. Women who could afford it could pay extra for a "rider" policy to cover such services, but the very nature of unplanned pregnancies makes this an illogical and impractical notion.

AAUW has long advocated for choice in the determination of one's reproductive life and increased access to health care and family planning services. There's no doubt that health care reform is desperately needed, but it should not come on the backs of women. A fundamental principle of health care has always been to "do no harm." Make no mistake; the Stupak amendment does just that--leaving millions of women worse off than they were before. This is the biggest attempt to ban abortion services in years, and a similar amendment is already in the works in the Senate.

--Michele Acquaro

Women's History Exhibit Committee Needed

I recently received an email from the Fulton County Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry. They have invited all women's organizations that are Chamber members (that's us!) to participate in a Women's History Exhibit to be displayed at the Chamber during March 2010, Women's History Month.

I am asking for volunteers to work on a committee to set up a display at the chamber to showcase AAUW. We will be given space to display artifacts, artwork, or anything that exemplifies women's history and/or our work. What great exposure for our branch! The exhibit will run from February 22 to April 1. If you are interested in helping to create a display for our branch, please let me know so we can begin work on it right after the New Year.

Thanks,
Helen

Thank You, Thank You

On October 14, about 30 AAUW members and guests enjoyed a fun evening of fun, laughter, and good food when they attended the ever-fun AAUW Auction. Paula Becker was our auctioneer and it was great to have her back. Many wonderful items were available for a price! We were able to reach our goal, thanks to all of those who donated items for the auction. Those attending had great snacks from which to choose, as well as mimosas, wine, and soda. Thanks to all of those who attended and if you missed it, you missed a fun evening. —Ginni Mazur
VP LAF

Kudos to Antique Show Help

On behalf of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Women's Consortium, sponsor of the recent antique show and sale at St Anthony's Hall in Johnstown, I'd like to thank all the members of the consortium and others who helped with the show. And I'd like to also thank all the vendors and the many attendees and especially the sponsors.

The Holy Trinity staff was most helpful and the NENY Girl Scouts did a great job selling baked goods. The American Association of University Women organized and led by Gloria Kimball sold wonderful lunch food to raise \$439.19 for the AAUW scholarship fund. And the women's consortium will use their profits toward the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Women's Symposium to be held on March 20, 2010. Save the Date!

The Women's Consortium is made up of AAUW, BPW, Republican Women, Women Democrats, Soroptimist International, YWCA, FM Faculty Women, ECS Hometown Association, and NENY Girl Scouts.

Thanks again everyone who helped! —Sandra Maceyka

Hometown Soldiers Fund

A great big thank you goes out to the members who contributed to our Hometown Soldiers Fund collection. We handed in 14 bags of assorted items for our military personnel to use and enjoy. There was a nice variety of snacks, candy, decorations, hygiene products, socks, and other greatly

appreciated items. Five boxes of Christmas cards were signed with warm messages. We collected \$235 to put towards whatever else is needed, including postage for the troops' boxes. Thank for making their Holiday a little more joyous for our soldiers so far from home.

--Dianne Kierpiec

Let the Games Begin!

The Trivia night games will take place at our Thursday, March 25 meeting at the Fireside Restaurant in Gloversville. A buffet will be served at 5:30 p.m. followed by a challenging and informative Trivia contest. Don't miss it!

Great fun and a chance to strut your stuff! Contact Dianne Kierpiec with questions. (Ginni Mazur will be taking care of reservations for this dinner).

Half Year AAUW Memberships Available

If you know someone who is thinking about 'trying out AAUW,' why not suggest a 1/2 year membership. Anyone who joins between now and January 31 can get a 1/2 year membership for \$35 which covers through June of 2010. Checks should, as usual, be made payable to AAUW and sent to treasurer, Barbara Nigro, 484 Co. Hwy 122, Gloversville, 12078. Membership forms available from Membership VP Liz Russo should accompany the check. —Liz Russo

Give A Gift to a Grad

AAUW members can give a recent grad, a friend, daughter, granddaughter, or niece a free AAUW membership at no cost to you or her! Remember, only members can take advantage of this offer. Just complete the online membership application now or download the application (MSWord) (PDF). Your grad will receive a one-year member-at-large membership, a \$49 value. She can join a branch at any time, but will be responsible for paying branch and state dues. (Or you can pay the state and branch dues as the rest of your gift.) Just go to: www.aauw.org/member_center/programs/gradgift

If you do not have a computer and wish to give a gift to a December or January graduate (associate, bachelors or masters degree) contact Liz Russo at 762-9702 for help.

From the treasurer: If you want your tax form to use a part of your dues as an exemption, you must first fill out the information sheet. None of these will be mailed, in an attempt to keep costs low. They will be available at meetings in October, November and December. If you will not be there please have a friend pick yours up for you or call me at 725-6228 and we can make arrangements to get together. Thanks a million for your help.

--Barb Nigro



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*November 23

AAUW Board Meeting
Johnstown Public Library
5:30 p.m.

*December 5

Holiday Brunch, 'Toys for Tots'
Donation
Union Hall, Johnstown
10:30 a.m.
Entertainment by The Durey Creek Band

*January 6

Sister to Sister Planning Meeting
Johnstown Public Library
3:30 p.m.

*January 28

Asian Symbolism
Harold's Restaurant, Gloversville
5:30 p.m.

**AMSTERDAM-GLOVERSVILLE-JOHNSTOWN AAUW
2009-2010 Membership Renewal Form**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Institution(s), Degree(s), and year(s) of graduation:

Email Address: _____

Please Check:

_____ I have enclosed \$_____ * for dues before June 1, 2009.

(*Subject to revision re AAUW National and State assessments)

_____ I have enclosed \$_____ * for dues as a Life Member.

(*To become a life member one pays 20 times the current national dues plus the current yearly state and local dues yearly)

Make your check payable to AAUW and send this form along with your check to:

Barb Nigro, 484 Co. Hwy. 122, Gloversville, NY 12078

_____ I am resigning membership in AAUW.

My reason(s) is/are as follows:

___ Family obligations ___ Moving out of the area ___ Dues amount ___ Meeting topics

Other (please specify):

Committee descriptions are at the front of this booklet. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please indicate by putting an X by the name of that committee.

___ Program ___ Community Outreach ___ Finance ___ Membership ___ Historical
___ Nominating ___ Cultural ___ Public Policy ___ International Issues ___ Diversity

___ Educational Equity/Scholarship ___ LAF - Legal Advocacy Fund ___ Sister 2 Sister

Happy Holidays

Join us for our annual holiday brunch at:

Union Hall
2 Union Place
Johnstown, NY 12095
762-3210

Saturday, December 5, 2009 at 10:30 am

Brunch menu:
Assorted Quiches
Fresh Vegetables
Sausage Stuffed Pastry Shells
Fresh Fruit
Mimosas

Entertainment provided by The Durey Creek Band.

Please don't forget to bring a new toy for our 'Toys for Tots' drive. 'Toys for Tots' is this year's holiday giving project.

Reservations must be received by Linda Bumpus by Tuesday,
November 24, 2009.

(I know this is earlier than normal, but I think it is best prior to Thanksgiving)

Please make checks out to AAUW and the cost this year is \$16.00

Linda Bumpus
257 Co. Hwy. 154
Gloversville, NY 12078
725-1927
lbumpus@nycap.rr.com

The Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown Branch of AAUW

proudly presents:

Asian Symbolism
by
Donna Callery

Harold's Restaurant
176 West Fulton Street
Gloversville, NY

5:30 on Thursday, January 28, 2010

Buffet of:

Baked chicken, potato, vegetable, meatless pasta, tossed salad, Italian bread, coffee
or tea

Desserts by AAUW members

Please RSVP with a check made out to AAUW for \$18.00 by January 20th.

Send to:

Sandy Fiesinger
606 South Market Street
Johnstown, NY 12095
736-1255