

## Membership Report 2019-2020

Submitted by Mary Scalise-Annis and Sheila Zweifler

Membership committee activities began in the summer of 2019 when we sent invitations to our annual Open House. The event was held on Thursday, September 12, 2019 at the Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church in Lagrangeville. It was a new venue and everyone thought that it was an improvement on previous locations. The event was very successful and 14 new members joined as a result.

On October 10, 2019, we had our New Members' Reception at The Children's Home in Poughkeepsie. This coincided with the first membership meeting of the year. It was well attended.

All the new members received a welcome letter, a copy of the Membership Booklet and Directory. In addition, we have decided to give each new member a hand-made nametag to wear to all AAUW functions. It is now easy to identify them, so current members can introduce themselves and make the newbies feel welcome. We have also set up a manned Membership table at the monthly meetings with information and new member forms to give out. Board members have volunteered to sit there each month.

Throughout the year, we have continued to add new members bringing this year's total to 32 as of March 2020. We believe retention of these women in our organization is related to follow up. We encouraged all interest and initiative group leaders to reach out to new members who expressed an interest in their group either at the Open House or on their member profile sheets.

In January 2020, we reached out to all new members by phone. We wanted to see how they were doing. We asked if they had become involved in AAUW and how. Also, if they had any questions or concerns. All of the women we spoke to seemed pleased with the organization and appreciated the personal contact.

We have continued writing a monthly column for the Branch, sending out member renewal letters, and updating and printing the Membership Booklet and Directory.

Due to the social distancing that has been mandated because of Covid-19, in April 2020, we started a monthly Zoom meeting for all the members. Feedback has been very positive. We will continue this for the foreseeable future.