

AAUW Annual Report

Community Service Initiatives

Sheila Zweifler, Liaison

2021-2022

This year continued to present challenges for the Community Services Initiatives. Two of our initiatives, The Mothers' Project and Live Your Dream Girls' Conference were put on hold because their chairs resigned and no one volunteered to lead them.

Math Buddies returned in a limited way with only two AAUW Buddies in the City of Poughkeepsie Schools. There may be non-AAUW members serving as Math Buddies. With Covid and remote learning, many buddies chose not to return at this time. Barbara Van Itallie plans to recruit a few more Buddies for the 2022-23 school year, as well as to reach out to some of the old Buddies who might feel it's now safe to return to the schools.

Leading to Reading had an active year in spite of Covid. They received two separate grants. One was from 4Imprint.com where they purchase their string bags. It was for \$500 to purchase the bags. The second grant was from Stewart's Shops Holiday Match for \$1,000. The money was used to purchase additional books, especially multi-ethnic and pre-school. They also added new outlets for their books which included Angels of Light (serving hospitalized children), the DC Probation Department, Clinton Elementary School and Tabernacle Christian Academy. Permission was given to place Little Libraries at a 5th Wappingers CSD elementary school, at the Astor Pre-School on Sheafe Road, and on Holmes St. near the Tabernacle Christian Academy.

Days for Girls resumed in person work sessions and are now meeting the 2nd Saturday of the month at their new location, the Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls. They were able to make a donation of 35 Feminine Hygiene Kits to the Jordan Humanitarian Response Project. This represented the work of their 18 volunteers. They have made contact with a local food pantry (Redeemed Christian Church of God) and are in the process of accessing the need for sustainable feminine hygiene supplies. Days For Girls received \$426 donation from the Student Occupational Therapy Association of Dominican College.

Court Watch resumed monitoring after a hiatus of 2 years. They went to court, but monitored virtually, on a TV screen in a conference room---away from the courtroom itself. Though Court Watch was a team of about 10, only 3 of them participated because the process is currently a rather burdensome one. Merrilee Osterhoudt graciously agreed to stay on as their data entry person, even though she is not a member of AAUW at the present time. She has been testing a free google data sheet so Court Watch can determine if the program provides them with the same effective quantitative analysis as Survey Monkey which costs \$500. If the goggle program doesn't work out, they'll have to go back to Survey Monkey.

Extending Girls' Horizons started their events in January. Peggy Kelland and Gwen Higgins presented the "A-Maze" Journey in a Day twice at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls. Despite last minute cancellations due to COVID quarantining, they had 18 girls on January 8 and 26 girls on January 22. The

girls came from the Towns of Poughkeepsie, Wappingers, Fishkill, East Fishkill, Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley, and the City of Poughkeepsie. They also had Girl Scout Troops from Pine Bush and West Point. They are planning future events, but are awaiting pandemic developments before committing to dates.

As Community Services Liaison, I performed the following duties:

- Contacted initiatives before the monthly Board meetings to see if there were any updates/ issues they needed to communicate to the Board.
- Forwarded any communications from the Board to the initiatives.
- Wrote articles for The Branch
- Welcomed new members and forwarded their contact information to the Initiative Leaders.