

Looking Ahead:

**COMMISSION on the
STATUS OF WOMEN**



Commission on the Status of Women: March 6-17

Diane Jablonski

The 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place from March 6 to 17, 2023 at the UN and nearby venues. This will be the first in person meeting since Covid. The theme is “*Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.*” That’s quite a mouthful but the focus on innovation and technology is critical.

In the past, AAUW Poughkeepsie Branch selected one day (usually the day when AAUW national was on the overall agenda), and went as a group via train. There are always many, many sessions to choose from as NGO’s from all over the world come to present the work they are doing to support women and girls. Everyone attending may pick the sessions that most interest them.

If you would be interested in attending in March, send your contact information to Diane Jablonski and she will keep you updated as the final schedules come out (usually in February.)

I personally always found attending these sessions informative, inspiring, and a way to connect with women’s groups around the world. I hope you’ll consider joining us at the UN in March.

On all three components of the “three-legged stool” of retirement security – Social Security, pension and savings – women fall short. As a result, they have 70% of the income that men have during retirement.

Join us on Zoom for this informative program

**Your Health and Wealth:
Safeguarding Your Financial Future**

**January 12, 2023
7:00 PM on Zoom**



Minny Hunt



Ann Li

**Register in advance for
this meeting:**

<https://bit.ly/3WYQJdr>

Why do women need to learn more about financial planning?

- Women on average live 5 years longer than men
- Because of longevity, it comes with higher healthcare and long term care costs
- 9 out of 10 women will be solely responsible for their finances at some point in their lives
- 75% of caregivers are women who take care of children, spouse and aging parents

In this program you will learn:

- The financial importance and impact of your health
- Strategies to transfer and preserve your wealth
- Ensuring that your last wishes are prepared and carried out
- Understand the inevitability and impact of medical expenses

World System Builder (WSB) is a community of financial professionals on a mission to deliver the best financial education to people of all ages and backgrounds. This is a national nonprofit organization. Our speakers come from the Norwood Financial Center.

For more on our speakers, see page 4.

Contacts: Marcine Humphrey or Maria DeWald at program.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

JANUARY CALENDAR

Online Calendar: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

Calendar listing: Philippa Goodman,
communications.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

To contact interest groups: interest.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

- 2 Word Games: 1:30 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 4 Pins & Needles: 2:00 pm**
Pop-up greeting card
Hostess: Mary Ann Williams
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 4 Gourmet: Out & About: 6:00 pm**
Essie's Restaurant, 14 Mt Carmel Pl., Poughkeepsie
(Snow location: Kobe on Route 9, Poughkeepsie)
Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin
- 5 Board Meeting: 7 pm**
Zoom Meeting
- 9 All those books...: 2:30 pm**
Alias Grace, by Margaret Atwood
Hostess/Presenter: Ruth Kava
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 10 Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of streamed films
Film selection: *Moonlight*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 12 Canasta: 1-4 pm**
Coordinator: Barbara Cohen
- 12 Monthly Program: 7:00pm on Zoom**
- 14 Days for Girls Poughkeepsie NY Team**
Work session: 1:30-4:30 pm
Zion Church Parish Hall, 12 Satterlee Place, Wappingers Falls
Coordinators: Judy Longacre and Sabashnee Govender
- 16 Manderley Literary Society: 7:00 pm**
Anxious People, by Frederick Backman
Reviewer to be decided
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 17 Cuisine: 6:00 pm**
Restaurant night; details TBD
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 18 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 19 Aventures en Soleil: details TBD**
Coordinator: Terry Jackrel
- 20 Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Theme TBD
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 23 Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 24 Contemporary Literature: 7:30 pm on Zoom**
The Lincoln Highway, by Amor Towles
Coordinators: Ann Wade and Linda Freisitzer
- 25 Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm**
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
TGI Fridays Restaurant, Poughkeepsie Plaza
Contact: Blanche Bergman
- 26 Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm**
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg

27 Art on the Go: 2:00 pm

Trip to the Francis Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar.
The exhibition theme is "The Authentic Self. Photographs and Portraits."

Coordinator: Mary Coiteux

Trekkers TBD

Coordinator: Tori Smith



Poughkeepsie Branch Officers 2021-2022

President	Celia Serotsky
Program Co-VPs	Marcine Humphrey Maria DeWald
Membership Co-VPs	Mary Scalise-Annis Bonnie Auchincloss
Development VP	Mary Lou Davis
Communications VP	Barbara Durniak
Secretary	Beth DeFiglio
Treasurer	Diane Jablonski
Membership Treasurer	Susan Doyle

President: president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Board members: board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Association: www.aauw.org NY State: www.aauw-nys.org

Poughkeepsie Branch: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

MISSION: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

VISION: Equity for all.

VALUES: Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW Poughkeepsie values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

THE BRANCH is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc. Submit articles to Cyd Averill, editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celia Serotsky president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Happy New Year! I hope you were able to celebrate during the busy December holiday season in whatever way you chose, and that you are now having a chance to relax and reflect on this past year and think about your hopes for the new one. May 2023 be a healthy and positive year for you.

As I look back on this past year, I am reminded of all that our organization has accomplished. Our Community Service initiatives have provided support to our local communities in so many ways. **Days for Girls** has distributed 70 sustainable and reusable sanitary kits to schools in Kingston and Middletown and will be preparing many more to donate to Planned Parenthood and Hudson River Housing.

Leading to Reading wrapped gifts of books to be given to children at Hudson River Lodge. In addition, the group continues to provide books to newborn babies at Vassar Brothers Hospital, public laundromats, and many Little Libraries around the area. **Expanding Girls Horizons** has done monthly activities with Girl Scouts, including learning about and playing international games and doing woodworking. **Math Buddies** are providing tutoring and extra help for students at the elementary level. And, finally, **Court Watch** has resumed its service of monitoring court proceedings involving domestic abuse. All these initiatives welcome your support either by actively joining them in their efforts or by donating to our initiatives through our website.

In another article in this newsletter you will read of the **UN Commission on the Status of Women** that will be held in person in New York for the first time in three years. Please refer to Diane Jablonski's article for more information. This brings up once again my suggestion mentioned in the December *Branch* that we would like to resume activities with our International Committee. We would need a chair and a committee that has an interest in making our members aware of events of an international nature in our community and would create some informational sessions or coordinate with our Program Chairs to host a membership program. Please email me if you are interested. Keeping members informed of the annual UN Commission on the Status of Women would also be an event you would promote.

In addition to our initiatives, our Interest Groups have offered you fun, interesting and informative opportunities to learn something new or pursue a current interest. The coordinators of all our Interest Groups work diligently to plan activities and events and we are grateful for their efforts.

Finally, I do not want to forget all our committee chairs who provide the backbone of our organization. Their efforts are tireless, and their commitment has made our branch one of the strongest and most active in New York State.

As I look forward to 2023, I know Poughkeepsie AAUW will

continue to fulfill its mission of advancing equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. When you receive your new Membership Directory, you will see listed all our Interest Groups, our Initiatives, committee chairs, and Board members. Our organization is dependent on volunteers, and there are many ways you can become involved. Let 2023 be your year to get more involved with Poughkeepsie AAUW.

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Mary Scalise-Annis and Bonnie Auchincloss:
membership.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Happy New Year for 2023! It's hard to believe that 2022 is already over. We hope you had a happy holiday season and were able to get together with friends and family.

Welcome our newest member: Mary Therese Yamamoto

Please greet our new members when you encounter them at various events. They have all been given sparkly bright nametags to wear, so keep an eye out for them. We now have a total of 250 members!

Save the Date!

Monthly Membership Meeting: Thursday, January 12th at 7:00PM on Zoom. The topic will be "Your Health and Wealth; Safe-guarding Your Financial Future".



January Birthdays

Geraldine Allan, Patty Cerniglia, Susan Davis, Pat DeLeo, Sharon Fleury, Mara Goldstone, Pat Gullick, Beverly Hanna, Mary Anne Hogarty, Christina Houghtaling, Julia Kessler, Susan Kinney, Jacki Kline, Pat Luczai, Kathleen Mantaro, Barbara Mindel, Christine Romano, Marilyn Walsh, Mary Therese Yamamoto

Reach out to **Membership** anytime if any friends wish to join. Be sure to send us any **change of address** or **contact information**, email or phone number. Thank you!

In Sympathy

We offer our sincere sympathy to Poughkeepsie branch member **Dorothy Evangelista** on the death of her husband, John, on Dec 11, 2022.

Link to obituary:

<https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/obituaries/pjo073358>

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

The Children Were Nestled...

The history of child care in America showcases how crossing class lines can benefit some and be a detriment to others. The current status of American child care remains one of the prime obstacles to economic stability for working women, especially women in the lower economic strata.



The 19th century saw child care begin as a charitable enterprise to keep the children of factory workers in urban industrial centers safe while their mothers worked. Settlement houses provided services and early education to children and continued through World War I and WWII as women were needed as part of the war effort. The need for women to continue working accelerated when widows' and mothers' pensions were unsustainable. Two welfare reform bills in the fifties were created to encourage poor women to enter training programs or gain outside employment, but at the elimination of childcare incentives.

The seventies saw corporate incentives for employer-sponsored child care and other ways of using child care costs to reduce income taxes. The eighties saw another shift from the child care focus and subsidies for poor communities when President Reagan slashed aid to the poor and created child tax credits for middle and upper class taxpayers. This stimulated the growth for voluntary child care, business-provided child care and for-profit childcare. Women in lower economic positions were/are unable to incur the cost of private child care. As a result, they are often unable to pursue education and compete in an economically advantageous competitive job market.

Current issues plaguing quality child care include: a majority of employers do not provide onsite child care services; the cost of private care may exceed the salary of a working person or absorb a majority of the person's income; the turnover in child care workers and centers due to low pay impacts private child care availability; non-compliance in licensing; children's on-site health issues; difficult child behavior; parent communication.

"AAUW advocates to establish universal paid leave. Unlike the majority of developed countries worldwide, the United States does not guarantee paid annual leave, paid time off for illness or family care, or paid parental leave. For many Americans, unpaid time off work is untenable and it threatens their job and economic security. AAUW advocates to make child care affordable. Most Americans live in areas without child care options and for those who have access to center-based child care, the National average cost is nearly \$12,000 per year. (In NYS, the average cost is \$17,000.). A Reduction in child poverty via The Child Tax Credit was recently extended to the families of more than 23 million children who were previously ineligible because the parents made *too little*. Making it permanent, without including harmful work requirements, will

facilitate economic stability, assisting with families' basic needs like housing, groceries and care while reducing the child poverty rate by an estimated 45 percent."

Let this decade be time for visions of sugarplums.

PROGRAM NOTES: Speaker Bios

Minnie Hunt is on a mission to help provide free financial education to families, small businesses and organizations. She retired from a major financial services firm in 2021 where she had a successful career as an IT Professional for the past 27 years; after which she joined the Norwood Financial Center to exercise her passion in promoting financial literacy; helping people of all ages learn how to manage their personal finances and plan for their financial future in a holistic manner.

Ann Li joined the Norwood Financial Center in 2020; she came from a banking background and initially joined to educate herself and to improve her family's financial portfolio management. She quickly realized how much more she is learning and the fact that our communities are lacking the opportunity to receive financial education. She is now a proud Financial Literacy campaigner actively involved in delivering the best financial education to friends, families and communities.

EXTENDING GIRLS' HORIZONS

Peggy Kelland

Our community initiative with the Girl Scouts for girls in grades 6-12 is up and running with a regular schedule again. At the summer conference at Rock Hill, we received many words of thanks, as well as praise for AAUW, from leaders, parents and the interim executive director of the seven county Heart of the Hudson Council.



In **November** we hosted 27 girls for **International Game Night**. Thanks go to Gwen Higgins for leading the cooperative game Friendly Village, and to Sue Doyle for assisting with the many math and language board games. In **December** we held a "**Woodworking**" badge workshop, where 12 girls learned to saw, sand, stain, and use nails and screws to create a string art plaque of their own design. AAUW members Gwen Higgins, Norma Vasquez, and Lynda Byrne joined Girl Scout leaders Heather and Andrew Wilantewicz in teaching the girls.

Upcoming events in 2023 include "**Special Agent**", a badge focusing on forensic science, on **Friday, January 6**, and "**A-Maze**," a Journey in a Day on social relationships on **Saturdays January 21** and **February 4**. All events are held at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls across from Grinnell Library. Contact Peggy Kelland if you'd like to help.

IN MEMORIAM: F. Eleanor “Lee” Swartz

We note with sadness the passing of Poughkeepsie Branch member **F. Eleanor “Lee” Swartz** on Wednesday, December 7, 2022.



Born on August 9, 1927, in Honolulu, Hawaii, she was the daughter of the Rev. Dr. Philip Allen and Lillian Gleason Swartz. Lee graduated from Poughkeepsie High School in 1945, & from SUNY Cortland in 1951. She went on to a long, successful career in administrative positions at IBM from 1952 – 1992, culminating as a coordinator in the IBM educational department.

A long-time resident of both Poughkeepsie and Candlewood Knolls in New Fairfield, CT, Lee was known for her extensive volunteer work, serving on boards and committees for the First Congregational Church (where she sang in the choir and where her father was senior minister for many years), Interfaith Towers, Meals on Wheels, the Junior League, Habitat for Humanity and P.E.O. International, a philanthropic organization dedicated to the education and advancement of women. She also enjoyed the fellowship of Coterie and her Tuesday Prayer Group.

Known to many family members and friends as Auntie Lee, she was an avid lover of animals and nature, and enjoyed concerts, traveling, boating, swimming, and water-skiing. She was always known for her supportive and positive attitude, her sense of humor and ready smile.

A memorial service is being planned for Saturday, January 21 at 1:30 PM at the First Congregational Church United Church of Christ, 269 Mill St., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. The service will be livestreamed. To get access instructions email mks427@hotmail.com. A family commemoration of Auntie Lee’s life will be held at Candlewood Lake this summer. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the First Congregational Church (Poughkeepsie), the Vassar-Warner Home, 52 South Hamilton St., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601, or to a charity of one’s choice.

<https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/obituaries/pjo073320>

Persistent Wage Gap Threatens Women’s Economic Security

Women’s economic security is under constant threat and, no matter how you measure it, the gender pay gap remains persistent and unacceptable. In a calculation of the latest data from the U.S. Census Bureau comparing full-time, year-round workers, women took home 83.7% of the pay that men did—a figure that is not statistically different from the pay gap in 2020. In addition, a more comprehensive calculation that compared everyone with earnings in 2021 (including part-time and seasonal workers) found that women were paid a shocking 77% of men’s wages last year.

In coalition with other equity organizations, AAUW this year used this new calculation that assesses all workers. Our goal was to get a fuller sense of the wage gap at a time when millions of women were forced out of the workforce due to layoffs and increased caregiving demands. The results underscore a grim reality: Women still face a pay gap that has, at best, stagnated over the past several years and, at worst, widened further.

Moreover, the pay gap continues to be most egregious for so many women of color. Using the analysis that included all wage earners, AAUW found that Black women were compensated a mere 64% of what white, non-Hispanic men were paid in 2021. For Latinas, the gap was even more abysmal: 54%.

“ AAUW remains strongly committed to advocating for laws and policies to ensure fair pay, relieve the disproportionate burden of student debt on women of color, and provide paid leave and affordable child care. ”

SUPPORTERS OF ^{THE} BRANCH

Many thanks to our newsletter Patrons (\$25 or more) and Sponsors (\$10 or more). Their annual contributions help defray the expense of publishing ^{THE} BRANCH and other communication expenses. To add your name, send a check, payable to: “**Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.**” to Cyd Averill, editor.

Patrons: Ruth Aldrich Gau, Sandy Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis, Sheila Zweifler

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