

Program Vice-Presidents Report to the Board for 2022-23 year

The Program Committee consisted of Co-VPS Maria DeWald and Marcine Humphrey as well as Mary Coiteux, Beth DeFiglio, Barbara Durniak, Betty Harrel, Gwen Higgins, Diane Jablonski, Sandy Lash, Jackie Goffe-McNish, and Margaret Nijhuis.

Monthly program meetings were held and were a mix of in-person at our new site, the Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church on Route 55, and ZOOM. In-person programs were held October-December and March through May with the January-February programs presented via ZOOM. A variety of interesting, mission-based topics were covered and attended by 25-35 people in-person (60 at the May program when Woodland Pond sent a bus with 15 attendees) and 40-50 online. We received many positive comments indicating the programs were enjoyed, interesting and inspirational.

As always, our meetings were held on the second Thursday of the month from 7PM to 8:45PM. Since our Branch programs are free and open to the public, we did sometimes have non-members in attendance.

For each ZOOM Program, a short Practice meeting with the presenter and members of the Program Committee was held in advance to assure efficient technology needs were in place. For in-person meetings, we assured chair set up, a resource table, sometimes a membership table and technology were in order. Regarding refreshments, we could never find a new facilitator so we first stopped offering coffee/tea with no complaints and moved to very light offerings of water/soft drinks/juices and a few snacks such as cookies/candy/clementines which Marcine brought. We will need to decide how to proceed next year and whether to phase this out completely or continue to offer light refreshments mostly depending on volunteers.

In addition, notification of upcoming programs was reported to AAUW NY and we had occasional representation from other Branches accordingly, particularly Kingston Branch. It is recommended we continue to expand marketing of programs to places such as Woodland Pond, the Church and other organizations

A marketing flier was developed for each program with the assistance of Margaret Nijhuis and printed in the Branch as well as sent as a reminder three times before each program. All Program registrants were also reminded about the programs a few days before each presentation. For ZOOM, we used the AAUW ZOOM account, registration was required and a reminder sent a few days before.

Our budget for next year raises the honorarium from \$50 to \$100 which can come in the form of a donation, a gift card, a dinner voucher or any appropriate format.

This year's programs included:

Thursday, October 13, 2022: "Clean Air & Water in the US and the Role of Scenic Hudson in the Environmental Movement"- included information on the November Bond

Act, the many projects they are working on in Poughkeepsie, e.g., the collaboration with MASS Design on construction of a new site, as well as examples of recent detrimental SCOTUS rulings . **Presented by Peter Lopez from Scenic Hudson**

Thursday, November 10, 2022: “The Future of Sexual & Reproductive Health”- included information on the overturning of Roe vs Wade in June 2022, an overview of federal and state-level landscapes following the Supreme Court’s decision, discussion of New York’s role as an Abortion Access State, and exploration on how everyone can support the ongoing fight for sexual and reproductive health rights and justice. **Presented by Aura Lopez Zarate and Leanna Zilles from Planned Parenthood of Greater New York**

Thursday, December 8, 2022 – “An Evening of Sharing Through Story Circles”- included a special night of friendship, family and celebration where attendees had the opportunity to share their own memories through stories of their heritage, traditions and celebrations and fun games. Attendees were invited to bring an artifact, object of importance or prop with them to share. There were also be some special snacks. **At this meeting, donations to Grace Smith were collected also.** Presented by Gwen Higgins and Jackie McNish

Thursday, January 12, 2023 via ZOOM – Your Health and Wealth: Safeguarding Your Financial Future” – the World System Builder (WSB) nonprofit organization technique including advice on why women need to learn more about financial planning, strategies to transfer and preserve wealth, assuring your last wishes are prepared and the inevitability and impact of medical expenses. **Presented by Minny Hunt and Ann Li from Norwood Financial Center**

Thursday, February 9, 2023 via ZOOM: "Policy Decisions in our Public Schools: The Role of the Modern School Board"- included a distinguished panel of four discussing their roles and responsibilities and how the current climate of polarization has or has not impacted their important work as well as the need for informed voters and prospective new Board members. **Presented by Kelly Lappan (Executive Director of the DC School Boards Association), Peggy Kelland (President of the Dutchess County School Boards Association), Jason Bing Schetelick (Dutchess County BOCES Superintendent) and Gully Sandford (DC BOCES Board Member).**

Thursday, March 9, 2023: “Arts, Access, and Excellence: Creation and Community in Poughkeepsie with the Art Effect”-including how the arts empower and uplift communities struggling with poverty, how arts-based workforce development programs can provide a pathway out of poverty through helping youth obtain their first paying jobs in the arts, to increasing first-generation students' access to college, to developing a Youth Arts Empowerment Zone that helps to sustainably revitalize Main Street Poughkeepsie. **Presented by Mary Ellen Iatropoulos, Director of Programs, The Art Effect**

Thursday, April 13, 2023: “A Look at How One Local Not-for-Profit Approaches Social Service Issues”- including an overview of the work of Family Services Poughkeepsie, as well as an in depth look of one of their many programs, the Family Partnership Center, and two of the Center’s 20 Partners, Dutchess Outreach and Sun River Health.

Presented by Leah Feldman (CEO of Family Services Poughkeepsie); Dennis Woodbine (Steward of the Family Partnership Center (FPC); Renee Fillette (FPC Partner-Dutchess Outreach); and, Megan Gnomes, Vera Wisniewski and Sherry Wycoff (FPC Partners-Sun River Health)

Thursday, May 11, 2023: “Art As Life: Becoming an Artist”- including the history of the Erik Hawke Dance Company highlighted by a slide show/workshop on the beauty of his technique, unique approach to choreography, and his legacy which continues to be brought into the present with archival research enriching the current Company’s repertory. **Presented by Katherine Duke, Artistic Director of the Erik Hawkins Dance, and her Erik Hawke Dance Company**

The **Program Planning Meeting for 2023-24** was held on **May 25th at 7:00 PM via ZOOM.**

Maria DeWald and Marcine Humphrey, Program VPs

Besides the Monthly Programs, the year included programs chaired by the Membership, Development and Annual Meeting Chairs/Committees:

- **Thursday, September 8, 2022-** Membership Open House at Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church/**chaired by the Membership Committee**
- **Sunday, November 5, 2022-** Luncheon with a Theatrical Twist Fundraiser for Community Initiatives and Scholarships/**Chaired by MaryLou Davis**
- **Sunday, April 23, 2023 –** *Woman of the Year Luncheon. Honoring Jewel Ratzcliff* at Mill Creek Caterers/**chaired by MaryLou Davis**
- **Thursday, June 8, 2023 –** *Annual Meeting: Melanie Rollkamp, President and CEO, Dutchess County Tourism;* Dinner at the Grand Hotel; Election and Installation of Officers and Awards/**chaired by the Annual Meeting Committee**