

Looking Ahead to May:



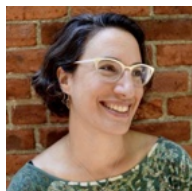
**Beatrix Farrand
and the
History of Bellefield**

**May 9, 2024
7:00 pm
IN PERSON**

The Freedom Plains United
Presbyterian Church
1168 Route 55, Lagrangeville,
NY 12540

Presenter: Karen Waltuch

Come and learn about Beatrix Farrand (1872-1959), America's first woman landscape architect and her oldest surviving residential work in Hyde Park, NY.



Karen Waltuch is the Horticulturist at the [Beatrix Farrand Garden](#) which is located on the grounds of the FDR National Historic Site in Hyde Park, NY. She will be describing the history of this garden and current projects. The site is part of the Bellefield Mansion estate, and the garden has been restored and maintained by an official National Park Service Partner Group, The Beatrix Farrand Garden Association, since 1994. The site is currently in the midst of a major historic realization project: the establishment of a 5,000 sq. ft. native plant garden surrounding the main garden's exterior. We'll learn about this "Wild Garden" project, the mansion, the design and restoration of the garden and the inspiring personal story of Beatrix Farrand.



Directions:

<https://bit.ly/3T3D4jc>

Program Contacts: Gail Sisti or Kay Saderholm at
program.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Join us to learn about this important topic:

**Why US Birth Outcomes Are So Bad:
The Role of Race and Racism**



Presenter: Dr. Richard David

**April 11, 2024
7:00 pm, IN PERSON**

The Freedom Plains United
Presbyterian Church
1168 Route 55, Lagrangeville



- ☐ The United States has the highest infant mortality rate in the developed world, despite spending more money per capita on health care than any other country.
- ☐ Our maternal mortality rate is not only high, but has actually risen in recent years.
- ☐ What explains this seeming paradox in health outcomes?

The analyses discussed in this presentation go beyond individual "risk factors." Research over the past 40 years leads to a change in focus to social mechanisms. In the US context, "race" and racism are an essential area for study and offer insights into the health of both minority and majority populations.

Dr. Richard David is a professor of pediatrics at University of Illinois at Chicago. He is retired from his clinical work as a neonatologist at Stroger Hospital where he was the co-director of the neonatal intensive care unit. His research for over 40 years has focused on perinatal epidemiology and more specifically on the relation between social inequality – especially racism in its various forms – and birth outcomes. He currently teaches a course on racism and health at the UIC School of Public Health.

APRIL 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

- 1 Word Games: 1:30 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 3 Gourmet: Out & About: 6:30 pm**
1488 Route 9 Wappinger Falls
Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin
- 4 Intermediate Bridge Instruction: 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 4 Board Meeting: 7:00 pm on Zoom**
- 8 All those books...: 2:30 pm on Zoom**
Nutshell, by Ian McEwan
Hostess: Susan
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 9 Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of the film *Silver Dollar Road*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 10 Pedal Pushers: 10:00 am**
Hudson Heritage to Highland
Lunch afterwards
Coordinator: Pat Luczai
- 11 Monthly Program: 7:00 pm; see page 1**
- 12 Extending Girls' Horizons: 6:00 pm**
Workshop on Trees
Zion Episcopal Church , Wappingers Falls
Coordinators: Peggy Kelland and Gwen Higgins
- 13 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
- 15 Manderley Literary Society: 4:30 pm**
The Dressmaker of Auschwitz, by L. J. Adlington
Reviewer: Marge Moran
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 16 Cuisine: details TBD**
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 17 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 18 Aventures en Soleil: 2:30 pm**
FDR Library (see announcement, p.4)
Host: Barbara Durniak
Coordinator: Terry Jackrel
- 19 Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Theme: TBD
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 22 Craft 'n' Create: 1:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 22 Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason

- 23 Contemporary Literature: 3:00pm**
Master Slave Husband Wife by Ilyon Woo
Host: Betty Harrel
Coordinators: Linda Freisitzer & Betty Harrel
- 24 Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm**
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
TGI Fridays Restaurant in the Poughkeepsie Plaza
Contact: Blanche Bergman
- 25 Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm**
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg
- 26 Art on the Go: Time and Place TBD**
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH OFFICERS 2023-2024

President	Celia Serotsky
Program Co-VPs	Kay Saderholm Gail Sisti
Membership VP	Bonnie Auchincloss
Development VP	Betty Harrel
Communications VP	Barbara Durniak
Secretary	Beth DeFiglio
Treasurer	Diane Jablonski
Membership Treasurer	Kathy Friedman

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

There will be a great deal of activity occurring in our Branch over the next few months. On April 14th our annual **Woman of the Year luncheon** will honor Cara Mia Bacchiochi, Founder of Hope on a Mission. Depending on when you are reading this, you may still have time to send in your reservation (Deadline is April 1st). Our Woman of the Year Committee begins almost a year in advance of this event seeking nominations for this award. Woman of the Year honors the contributions of a local woman whose work reflects the AAUW mission, and has made outstanding contributions to the community in either a voluntary or paid capacity. If you have someone in mind for next year, please jot yourself a note and when the committee seeks nominees, please respond.

Our **Annual Meeting** (June 13) will be the next big event where we come together to socialize and celebrate our accomplishments and our members. The information for this event is in this newsletter, and we hope you will attend. The price is right, and the location is easily accessible.

As for governance and membership issues, **AAUW New York State** will hold its **Annual Meeting** on June 28 and 29, 2024 as a hybrid meeting. The location for in-person events has not yet been determined, but the committee has been looking at Poughkeepsie. You may also attend via Zoom. The Saturday portion of this event will be a formal meeting during which members will vote on governance issues. Each branch is allotted voting delegates based on a proportional system of their membership. We are the largest branch in New York State, and we will have **six voting delegates**. **Please contact me as soon as possible if you are interested in being a voting delegate.**

Spring is our major membership renewal time. Our Membership VP Bonnie Auchincloss has done an outstanding job in recruiting members and following up with members who have not renewed. Feedback from non-renewing members is valued as it helps us to shore up our weaknesses and make us stronger. I realize that most of us have a clear idea of what our local branch provides: interest groups, community service initiatives, informative and interesting monthly programs, and honors and awards for community members as well as our own members. However, the largest portion of our dues payment goes to the national organization, and sometimes we lose track of what that umbrella group does for us.

AAUW partners with other organizations to strengthen its impact on legislative issues that affect equity for women and girls. For example, achieving pay equity has been an on-going effort and has been very successful in raising women's opportunities to receive fair and equitable compensation for their work. Another issue that has recently been in the news a great deal is women's personal health rights. AAUW takes a strong position advocating for, and protecting, women's right

to make their own health choices, especially regarding reproductive health. AAUW also has been a strong proponent of STEM education and has partnered with other organizations to provide opportunities for this. Of course, being in Washington, D.C., allows AAUW representatives to have direct contact with legislators to encourage them to support or propose legislation that supports equity for women and girls. We may not always be aware of these efforts, but the national organization is continually working for the benefit of women.

Look at your June calendar, save the date of June 13th for our branch's Annual Meeting, and seriously consider attending AAUW New York State's Annual Meeting on June 28 and 29. If you would like to participate as a voting member, contact me. And, finally, when you receive notice to renew your membership, please do so quickly. Each year we become stronger, and you are part of that strength.

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Bonnie Auchincloss and Linda Eagleton
membership.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

New Member Glimpses - Meet some new members here:

Michelle Miller is a licensed clinical social worker with her own practice, she is the mother of an awesome 9 year old daughter and loves to travel, ride her bike and work on all kinds of different artistic and creative projects.

Michele Di Napoli is a retired educator, librarian and innkeeper who volunteers with several organizations and enjoys gardening. She has already begun her membership in our branch by working with our Leading to Reading initiative. She looks forward to meeting everyone at the Woman of the Year luncheon.

Please keep an eye out for these new members and help us to welcome them to our Poughkeepsie Branch.



April Birthdays: Brenda Berry, Sandy Goldberg, Laura Graceffa, Carol Gray, Joanne Pinello Kaley, Margret Kasin, Peggy Kelland, Judy Killmer, Joan Kimmel, Linda Kinney, Irene(Renie)Milliken, Anthula Natsoulas, Nadine Revheim, Patricia Richardson, Joanne Sclaro, Celia Serotsky, Nancy Shannon, Noreen Sheehan, Tricia Sims, Tori Smith, Roberta Tracy, Elizabeth Villanti, Beatrice Wong

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

An Alabama Slammer

If you suspected the overturning of Roe v. Wade to be a common denominator to strip women of personal rights, then the recent ruling by the Alabama Supreme Court probably didn't surprise you. What was once an uncommon phrase, "personhood," is emerging as a candidate for word of the year. Personhood assures citizenship, equality, liberty and the rights, protections, privileges, responsibilities, and legal liabilities that accompany. So, what did Alabama do? They attempted to expand and redefine "personhood."



By a vote of 8 to 1, the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that a fertilized egg outside the womb is a person and entitled to the rights of "personhood." People wishing to have children and start families, but biologically unable to do so, have traditionally gone to in vitro fertilization clinics where out-of-womb embryos are created and at the appropriate time implanted in a womb. They create multiple zygotes using eggs and sperm from the donors and implant developed embryos with the highest chance of success. They discard unhealthy and unwanted ones or store viable ones for future use or research.

The Alabama Supreme Court ruling gave full "personhood" to what are commonly known as "test tube babies," embryos created outside of the womb but not yet implanted. It was a surprise slam dunk as no other state has ventured into that area of reproduction. Many of the ruling's implications were not anticipated: economic impacts, child support payments, taxes, the legality of certain forms of contraception that work by preventing implantation, not fertilization, medical expenses to bring embryos to birth and quality care for those embryos predestined to genetic abnormalities, adoptions, host wombs when needed, eugenics, what to do with currently frozen biological material, and attempts to classify collected sperm and eggs for "personhood."

The ruling attempts to define when life begins, rewrite reproductive rights and apply existing laws to I.V.F. practices. Under the ruling, once created, an embryo could not be destroyed or ignored and must be provided with all rights due a citizen. Instantly, Alabama clinics stopped offering I.V.F. for fear that the destruction or mishandling of any out-of-womb embryo could lead to a lawsuit or criminal prosecution. If an embryo has all the rights of a person, then destroying it could be murder. Thirty states' laws currently give "personhood" to fetuses who are in utero, but only Alabama is attempting to extend "personhood" to un-implanted embryos.

In response to citizen, business and political outrage, the governor signed legislation into law shielding I.V.F. providers and patients from potential legal liability raised by the court ruling that equated frozen embryos to in utero fetuses. However, the issue of "personhood" is now at the forefront of reproductive rights discussions as anti-abortion groups try to diminish time limits for those seeking abortion for any reason and those providing services to pregnant women who require medical intervention that could result in loss of a fetus. The Supreme Court decision remains but current practices are protected from litigation.

The decision to have, or not have, children is not one for politicians, pundits, journalists, religious leaders or philosophers, but a personal and private one. AAUW trusts that everyone can make their own informed choices about their reproductive lives within the dictates of their own moral and religious beliefs, and these personal decisions should be made without government interference.

AVENTURES EN SOLEIL: JOIN OUR SPECIAL TOUR!

Betty Harrel



All members are invited to join the April Soleil trip to see a special exhibit at the Wallace Center. It will be held on Thursday, April 18th at 10:30 am. **"Black Americans, Civil Rights, and the Roosevelts: 1932-1962"** focuses on historical voices of many Black community leaders, armed service members, and ordinary citizens. The exhibit highlights our progress toward equality in civil rights and the gradual changes in the Roosevelts' attitude toward racial justice.

Tickets are \$6 and can be purchased at 10:15 when we meet at the admissions desk. Lunch will be at La Catrina on Route 9. For reservations or further information, please contact Betty Harrel.

EXTENDING GIRLS' HORIZONS

Peggy Kelland



A workshop on "Trees" will be presented Friday, April 12, at 6:00 P.M. at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls. All AAUW members are welcome to drop by and see what we do.

We have had a busy year in our collaboration with the Girl Scouts. On November 3, new AAUW member Kathy Prisco taught the **Woodworking** badge to 23 girls from 5 different troops. Assisted by AAUW members Lynda Byrne, Kathy Friedman, Sue Kinney, Gwen Higgins, and Peggy Kelland, the girls learned to saw, sand, stain, nail, and screw to create a plaque.

On December 20, Gwen's daughter, Ginnia Hargins, gave a demonstration and lesson in **samba dance**. Several AAUW members joined 7 girls from 3 troops and their leaders in participating.

New AAUW member (and 60-year Girl Scout member) Pam Terwilliger taught **First Aid** to 19 girls from 7 troops. Peggy and Gwen helped organize this February 23 event.

March 8 had the annual repeat of the ever-popular **New Cuisines** badge workshop. Girl Scout Leaders Jenn Weisel and Amy Caba, together with AAUW members Norma Vasquez, Gwen Higgins, Kathy Friedman, Lynda Byrne, Ann Pinna, and Peggy Kelland planned, shopped, and taught four stations, making 12 different recipes for a five-course menu, prepared and enjoyed by 22 girls from 4 troops.

Although most troops come from Poughkeepsie, Wappingers, and Fishkill, we also had participants from Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley, East Fishkill, Highland, Newburgh, Carmel, Putnam Valley, Cold Spring, and New Rochelle. All events were held on Friday evenings at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls.

HAT'S OFF



Congratulations to Jackie Goffe-McNish on earning her doctorate. After retiring from DCC last year, she completed her Ed.D in Executive Leadership and Social Justice. Her dissertation investigated the retention of newly tenured faculty of color at community colleges in New York.

Jackie is a former branch president, former chair and current active member of the Diversity Committee, and active supporter of Girls Conference and NCCWSL.

MOTHER'S DAY FOR GRACE SMITH HOUSE

This year, we're sharing the spirit of Mother's Day with the residents of Grace Smith House. We are asking members who attend the **May 9th program meeting** to bring a gift for a woman. We will be sure all gifts are transported to the residents!



If you wish to donate, please follow the staff's guidelines:

- Gifts must be newly purchased, unused and unwrapped.
- Gifts must be something usable and personal that is uplifting.
- Favorite gifts include: Pajamas, robes, slippers, fuzzy socks, lotions & bath items, perfume, pocketbooks, and cosmetic sets.

Donations can also be made online or mailed to: Grace Smith House, 1 Brookside Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

<https://www.gracesmithhouse.org/> Call Mary Ann Boylan if you have questions.

NCCWSL SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

Do you know a college women who could benefit from attending AAUW's **National Conference for Collegiate Women Leaders (NCCWSL)**? Registration is now open for this conference to be held at the University of Maryland, College Park, May 30 through June 1, 2024. This year's theme is "**Dare to Be**"—challenging young women to be bold, be engaged, and be a leader. The conference is an inspiring, transformative experience.

The **Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship** funds the tuition (which covers all expenses) and offers a travel stipend. Women are required to fill out an application, provide letters of recommendation and agree to write about their experience.



Our website has the application form and testimonials from previous attendees. <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net> Please share this information!

Questions? Contact committee chair

Marcine.humphrey@gmail.com, or call 914-474-1392.

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH AAUW ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, June 13, 2025

6:00 PM Cash Bar; 6:30 PM Dinner
Coppola's, Rt 9, Hyde Park

**Dinner, Election and Installation of
Officers, Awards, and
Entertainment**



Each year we gather together to take care of important organizational business and to celebrate our members.

We will have a delicious dinner and exciting entertainment presented by the Reader's Theatre. Part of Dutchess County's County Players, they will present a program of a playwright's work, in keeping with the mission and interests of AAUW.

The most important part of the evening is the election of officers that will guide our organization over the next year. They will be installed after this election by an officer of AAUW- NYS. We will recognize our members who have been faithful to AAUW for 10, 20....50 plus years. We will introduce the AAUW Funds Named Honorees and one of the evening highlights, the surprise announcement of the Cornerstone Award recipient.

Come to visit with fellow AAUW members, pay tribute to those who have served the organization in so many ways and meet some AAUW-NYS officers. It is a great evening and everyone should be there to share in the comradery and true meaning of AAUW. Sign up will appear in next month's newsletter.

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH CENTENNIAL: 1925 to 2025

We are organizing a committee to celebrate our Branch Centennial. If you would like to be a part of this committee, please email Celia Serotsky at president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com.

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, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis

From AAUW.org: Not-So-Golden Years

Women encounter a pay gap at every stage of life, but nowhere is it more pronounced than during the retirement years. 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.

Older women are more likely than men to live below the poverty line: In [2018](#), 11% of women over age 65 lived in poverty, compared to 8% of men. And even those who aren't impoverished struggle to get by on meager incomes: While white men over 65 have an average annual income of \$44,200, Black women in that age group have only \$21,900, Latinas have \$14,800, and white women have an average annual income of \$23,100.

That's because, over the course of a lifetime, the gender pay gap causes women to lose out on hundreds of thousands of dollars in earnings, making it difficult for them to accumulate savings. What's more, because women are more likely to work part-time, or to move in and out of the workforce as they juggle caregiving responsibilities, they are less able to save for retirement and less likely to have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Lower wages — coupled with time away from work — results in lower Social Security benefits. At the same time, women typically live longer than men, meaning they will face higher costs in retirement, both in terms of daily living expenses and health-care costs. And women are more likely to rely on Social Security to meet those expenses: Social Security [accounts](#) for 47% of total income for unmarried women, including widows, compared to 34% of total income for unmarried men. 46% of unmarried women over 65 receiving benefits rely on Social Security for nearly all (90% or more) of their income.

American women deserve a secure retirement, no matter what career choices they made during their lifetime. To ensure that, we need laws and policies that will strengthen retirement programs, including protecting Social Security, improving pension benefits and ensuring women receive fair pay throughout their careers to bolster their savings. Gender equity is a lifelong proposition!

*Please join the Poughkeepsie Branch of the
American Association of University Women,
Inc. to:*

Honor our Woman of the Year 2024

CARA MIA BACCHIOCHI

Founder of Hope on a Mission, Inc.

Mill Creek Caterers

17 NY-376, Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

Sunday, April 14, 2024

12-3 pm



Cash Bar & Hot Luncheon

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Entrée Choice: _____

If you are making reservations for more than one person,
please list all additional **names and choices** on back.

Entrée Choices:

Sliced London Broil with Burgundy Sauce

Honey Garlic Glazed Salmon

Chicken Francese

Vegetarian option

Accompanied by Butternut Squash soup and cake.

****If you have any dietary concerns, please let us know.**

Price: \$58 (includes gratuity)/

\$60 if using PayPal or Credit Card.

Reservations and checks due: April 1, 2024

Make checks payable to:

"Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc."

Mail to:

Maria DeWald, 127 Willow Brook Road

Clinton Corners, NY 12514

Questions: Call Maria DeWald 845-266-4960 or

mfdewald@yahoo.com

**To make reservations using PayPal or Credit Card
go to <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>**

If you would like to make a contribution in Cara Mia
Bacchiochi's honor, please send it to Maria DeWald at
the address above. Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW is a
501(c)3 organization.

"To restore dignity with love and grace to homeless, addicted women and men, who are surviving on the streets of Poughkeepsie New York" is the mission statement of **Hope on a Mission**. This non-profit organization was initiated in 2015 by AAUW's 2024 Woman of the Year, Cara Mia Bacchiochi.

Every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evening, as well as Saturday mornings, volunteers bring hot food, beverages, personal hygiene items and seasonally appropriate clothing to Poughkeepsie's city streets. Last year, Hope on a Mission served nearly 8,000 meals and provided over 1,000 "blessing bags" with socks, underwear, shoes, and winter clothes.

In addition to providing food and clothing, volunteers become advocates who listen, assist, and make referrals to community organizations, upon request. They help those struggling with addiction to get treatment and assure them that Hope on a Mission will be there when they finish treatment. They spend hours in emergency rooms waiting with clients for rehabilitation services, hold cookouts for holidays, and advocate for appropriate treatment. All this is made possible with support from individuals, community and civic organizations, as well as student organizations.

Cara Mia Bacchiochi, AAUW's 2024 Woman of the Year, founded Hope on a Mission at a time when she was at her lowest point in life. She dealt with alcoholism, step-families and multiple moves in her childhood and started using marijuana and alcohol in middle school. By high school, she was using cocaine and, in subsequent jobs, was surrounded by substance abuse, alcoholism and addiction. She made several attempts to continue her education and beat her addictions but had several relapses. In 2013, after years of drug addiction, rehabilitation, jail, homelessness, hopelessness, and alcohol addiction, Cara Mia found herself in jail again. Her children had been taken from her by CPS, and she was being evicted for non-payment of rent. It was then she realized it takes a community of support and encouragement to help those with addiction problems. The idea for Hope on a Mission started in a jail cell and grew into the amazing non-profit ministry it is today. Cara Mia has become the woman she needed when she was homeless and addicted, and she has ambitious plans for the future of the organization should she obtain the funds to grow.