

Slate of Officers Nominated for 2024-26



l to r: Pat Luczai, Celia Serotsky, Cindy Emmer, Diane Jablonski
Read about these nominees on page 3.

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH AAUW ANNUAL MEETING



**Thursday, June 13, 2025
Coppola's, Rt 9, Hyde Park**

6:00 PM Cash Bar; 6:30 PM Dinner

Dinner, Election and Installation of Officers, Awards and Entertainment

Please plan to join us to support incoming officers, honor outgoing ones, celebrate our members and enjoy the company of interesting women!

A Readers Theatre Evening Featuring Colorful Stories About Strong Women.

A colorful mosaic of storytelling about women will explore identity, art, power, and the struggles of the feminist movement in America; interconnected stories that celebrate humanity in all its beauty, chaos, and contradiction. A small cast of local women will present stories about quirky, unforgettable, and universal characters, women who speak out and change the world around them, revealing the invisible threads that connect us all.

**Plan to attend this fun, collegial event!
Hurry! Deadline for reservations is May 27th.**

See page 7 for reservation details.

2024 AAUW Honorees



Beth DeFiglio
Emerging Leader



Sandy Goldberg
AAUW Funds



Peggy Kelland
AAUW Funds



Linnea Masson
AAUW Funds



Margaret Nijhuis
AAUW Funds



Ann Pinna
AAUW Funds

JUNE 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

- 3 Word Games: 1:30 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 4 World Travelers: 7-9 pm on Zoom and live**
Presentation by Jewel Ratzlaff on her trip to the Pacific Northwest
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 5 Gourmet: Out & About: 6:30 pm**
Millbrook Cafe, 3288 Franklin Avenue, Millbrook
Coordinator: Mary Ann Boylan
- 6 Intermediate Bridge Instruction: 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 6 Board Meeting: 7:00 pm**
Zoom Meeting
- 8 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
- 10 All those books...: 2:30 pm**
Lunch
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 11 Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of the film *American Fiction*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 12 Pedal Pushers: 10:00 am**
Meet at 10-18, Stagecoach Trail, Amenia, NY
Ride from Amenia to Millerton and back
Lunch afterwards
Coordinator: Pat Luczai
- 13 Monthly Program: 7:00**
- 17 Manderley Literary Society: 4:30 pm**
Meeting to choose books for the following year
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 18 Cuisine: details TBD**
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 19 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 20 Aventures en Soleil: 2:30 pm**
Trip to Lasdon Park, led by Tori Smith
Coordinator: Terry Jackrel
- 21 Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Theme TBD
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 24 Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 24 Craft 'n' Create: 1:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 25 Contemporary Literature: 3:00 pm**
The Perfect Marriage, by Jeneva Rose
Hostess: Linda Freisitzer
Coordinator: Linda Freisitzer

- 26 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
- 27 Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm**
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg
- 28 Art on the Go: 10:00 am**
TBD
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux

JULY & AUGUST

Gourmet Out & About:

July 21st at 11 AM; brunch at **The Amsterdam** in Rhinebeck.

August 4th at 11AM; brunch at **Willow at Mirbeau** in Rhinebeck. Please RSVP to Mary Ann Boylan

Adventures en Soleil:

July: Solar Boat ride: Contact Pat Luczai

August: Armour-Steiner House; Contact Linnea Mason

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

Although it is hard to believe, here we are in June! Another year of interest groups, community service initiatives, committees, and special events. This was not an unusual year. It was typical of AAUW Poughkeepsie. In a variety of ways, we implemented the mission of AAUW: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. Please renew your membership as soon as possible, because next year will be as interesting and even more significant than this year has been. Next year marks our 100th year as a branch, and the Centennial Committee has begun work on how we will celebrate that milestone.

In addition, by the end of June, the Strategic Plan Review Committee will have completed its work with our consultant Ingrid Kulick of Forward Solutions, Inc., and you will begin to hear about the areas of improvement AAUW Poughkeepsie will be addressing. What areas of our organization will we set as priorities as we begin our next 100 years?

June 30, 2024, marks the end of my first two-year term of office as President. As you already know, I have accepted the nomination to continue for a second term, which is allowed in our Bylaws. I did not make this decision lightly. I have truly enjoyed working for, and with, you these past two years. The role of President involves a great deal of communication and organization. These are skills I've always possessed, and I have been supported by a great Board of Directors who have done their jobs diligently and efficiently. There are many moments of laughter at our Board meetings, along with the serious business. There have been so many times when I've just enjoyed talking with members at our Program meetings and at our special events. There are a lot of fun aspects to this job! Maybe you would like to try it sometime?

You can find a more comprehensive report of this past year and my responsibilities as President on our website: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>. Annual reports from our Board members and chairs of our community service initiatives are also located there. Reading them will give you a complete picture of what your Branch has accomplished in 2023-2024. Moving forward is a hallmark of our Branch, and I hope you will not only renew your membership but will also find ways to become actively involved in furthering our mission.

2024 NOMINEE BIOS

President: Celia Serotsky

Celia is nominated for a second term as our branch President. Previously, she served one term as Public Policy Chair and was coordinator of Hospitality for monthly Program meetings. She has participated in several Interest Groups during her eighteen years as a member. She is active with Days for Girls and Leading to Reading and has



attended sessions of other Community Service Initiatives. She is one of the “caretakers” for a Little Library located opposite Clinton Elementary School in the City of Poughkeepsie. She served for several years as a Book Buddy at Krieger Elementary School, also in Poughkeepsie. She was the Coordinator of Youth Ministries and a Sunday School teacher for a number of years at her church. Celia was a middle and high school French and Spanish teacher in the Greece Central School District for 30 years, has tutored adults in both languages, and enjoys participating in local French conversation groups.

Treasurer: Diane Jablonski

Diane has played an active role since joining AAUW in 2010. She is nominated for a second term as our branch Treasurer. Previously, she served as AAUW-NYS treasurer for 3 years, and is a former branch president. She's taken part in the Adventures en Soleil, World Travelers, and Trekkers interest groups, served on the Writers' Tea committee and has supported the Woman of the Year. She held various technical and management positions in her long career at IBM and was a Director for Cap Gemini America. She was elected as the Dutchess County Comptroller and is a trained mediator for and former board member of the Mediation Center of Dutchess County. She is active in her church and is an advocate/mentor supporting women running for office.

Secretary: Cindy Emmer

Cindy is nominated for the position of Secretary for the first time. She is an active member of the Word Games and Movie Mavens interest groups and is a member of the Strategic Planning Committee. Cindy has returned to the Hudson Valley after a 50-year hiatus. Prior to that, she lived several years in Elmira, NY. She retired from the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) where she worked as a Business Manager for Broome Developmental Center. She is a former Chair of the Chemung County Democratic Committee as well as former Election Commissioner at the Chemung County Board of Elections. She is a trained mediator for Chemung and Dutchess County Mediation Centers and serves on the Board of the Chemung Mediation Center. Cindy also volunteers at the FDR estate, giving tours of Springwood.

Communications VP: Pat Luczai

Since joining AAUW in 2003, Pat has served in multiple capacities on the board including VP for the Educational Foundation (now the Development VP), Program VP and two terms as Treasurer. She is a recipient of the Cornerstone Award and currently the chair of the nominating committee. She is a previous coordinator of Gourmet Out and About and currently runs Pedal Pushers, is a co-leader of Craft 'n' Create and an active participant in Leading to Reading, Days for Girls, the Photography Committee, NCCWSL and the Strategic Planning Committee. She also participates in a number of interest groups. Pat is a retired IBM Data and Business System analyst and holds an MBA from the University of Notre Dame. She is nominated for Communications VP.

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

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

June begins the new year for most rejoining members. You should all have received your renewal notices by now, except for members who have renewal dates other than June 1st. You will be receiving your reminders closer to your due dates. As

you may have heard, we are no longer sending reminders by mail in order to save postage costs as well as the time involved

**RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP**



in sending them. If you do not have access to a computer, you can still receive your registration form by contacting me, Bonnie Auchincloss, Membership VP at 845-625-4925 and I will mail you one. For those of you with computers, you can access your registration form at <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net/>. All of the directions for renewing are included on the form as well as the updated dues. And please remember to fill out both pages even though nothing has changed, so that we can be sure that all of your data is accurate. Also, we prefer that you fill in the form online and send it to Kathy Friedman by email, because typed forms are easier to read than hand written ones and leaves less room for errors.

And speaking of dues, you may have noticed that the portion of the dues that our branch receives is a miniscule portion of the total dues, so if you so desire to help our branch to maintain the standard of programs and scholarships that we offer, you may want to contribute a bit extra. It is always welcome. If you know of any non-members who might be interested in joining us, please feel free to share the link containing the registration form.

New Member Glimpses

Jody Miller is the executive director of the Dutchess County Commission on Human Rights. Prior to her current position, she served as executive director of a community mediation center. She enjoys traveling, spending time with family and friends, and fiber arts. Please help us to welcome Jody to our branch.

GeeGee Anderson's career encompasses non-profit management and teaching, training, and management as a life-long academic/educator. She has held three deanships in higher education, a directorship of an experiential learning program at the University of Southern California, and two founding executive directorships of LA area non-profit organizations. Her doctorate degree is in Urban Policy and she remains vitally interested in public policy reform.

June Birthdays:

Bernadette Bergen, Lillian Bowers, Mary Ann Boylan, Linda Cantor, Maria DeWald, Donna

Fitzgibbons, Judy Fox, Gloria Ghedini, Philippa Goodman, Shirley Granda, Wendy Maragh Taylor, Eleanor Maslinoff, Gael Morey, Anne Pinna, Janey Richlin, Diana Salsberg, Gail Simon, Jane Barber Smith, Sue Elen Sohn, Marleen Straus, Sally Taylor, Barbara Van Itallie, Mary Jane Von Allmen, Ann Wade, Carole Wolf, Darlene Yerdon.



DEVELOPMENT

Betty Harrel



Join our major fund drive this year! Along with the dues renewal notice, members received a letter describing the many membership benefits along with our branch needs. Since our **local** dues haven't been raised in over 20 years, we've been frugal with

your dollars and need your support to continue our vibrant programming!

Thanks to the many members who have included a contribution along with their dues payment! Donations can be designated for branch needs or for specific projects such as initiatives or scholarships.

Payments may be made by sending a check, payable to Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc., to Kathy Friedman, 118 Kingwood Park, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601, or by using PayPal or a credit card at <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net/membership/join-renew>.

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

The worst crimes may not be against the law.

"This is what it's like to be a woman in America living with male entitlement to our bodies," said Ashley Judd. "This today is an act of institutional betrayal....our institutions betray survivors of male sexual violence."



The recent court ruling freeing movie mongrel, excuse me, mogul, Harvey Weinstein from his guilty verdicts for sexual assault and rape is based on **procedural** error - not morality, not common sense, not the verdict of twelve and a judge. Men

are not entitled to liberty with women's bodies or to use sexual harassment and threats of violence to subjugate them. Our society continues to utilize norms and mores that ignore women's current role in modern society. Equal pay? No. Reproductive rights? Reversed in fourteen states. Care for women who are victims of rape and sexual assault? Humiliating medical procedures for **procedural** physical evidence. Fair trials? "Himpathy" – the sympathy extended to a male perpetrator rather than to his female victims and the preponderance of evidence required to overcome the credibility gap accusers often face.. A man's word carries more weight than a woman's. Opportunity? Women are conscripted to provide feminine goods (sex, care, nurturing, secondary labor) while not taking masculine goods (power, authority and claims to knowledge). Laws for equal treatment may be on the books but application is minimal and tied to antiquated behaviors.

Eighty five women had leveled claims of harassment/assault against Weinstein. But under NYS criminal **procedures**, unless the criminal acts were reported and litigated, the victims were not "entitled" to testify. For this reason, Weinstein will receive a new trial. In California, where other Weinstein court cases are looming, the same **procedural** requirement is not on the books.

Of the eighty five who risked speaking out against Weinstein, several had their careers halted, others found themselves blacklisted. Some careers ended because of their refusals to engage in unwanted sexual behavior.

Ashley Judd continues to be the voice of the "silence breakers." She said that the court's decision was a betrayal for sexual assault survivors. **"Oftentimes survivors say that the betrayal and the moral injury we suffer within the system is worse than the sexual body invasion we experienced in the first place,"** Ms. Judd summarized. What was once deemed unacceptable and unforgivable behavior seems to have found a home in a dark corner of the court as **procedure** displaces morality and human rights.

And then this morning, a Rochester judge ruled that the State Senate made a **procedural** error when approving the Equal Rights Amendment. It aims to throw a legal hurdle to block New Yorkers from voting to protect their rights and reproductive freedom on November's ballot for the NY ERA. An appeal is in progress.

AAUW believes sexual harassment, abuse and assault further leads to depression, post-traumatic stress, an increased risk of long-term physical health problems and failing women's mental health and physical safety. It further erodes women's short- and long-term economic security and exacerbates leadership and economic gaps.

Male entitlement cannot remain the norm. Procedure cannot circumvent morality. Replace entitlement by affirming fundamental human rights free of political interference in a court system that values the dignity and well-being of all people.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jackie Vierno

Multicultural Events Summer 2024



The Hudson Valley is rich with so many opportunities to enjoy art, music, theater, sports, nature, fairs and festivals, especially during the summer. I hope you'll consider some multicultural events too.

"Whereas, the City of Poughkeepsie is animated... by the beauty and richness born of cultural diversity and artistry of the peoples comprising this great city... the first Sunday of August shall hence be known as **La Guelaguetza Day**." – Excerpt from the La Guelaguetza Proclamation, signed by Mayor Marc Nelson on November 1, 2023

Poughkeepsie's annual La Guelaguetza event has grown vastly from its original 200 visitors in 2008 to over 7,500 at the 2023 event, thanks in no small part to the tremendous efforts of Library District staff members Elva Margarita Corbatón and Jessica Sherman. The beloved cultural celebration now also coincides with Poughkeepsie's popular annual Oaxaca Week. We hope to see you at La Guelaguetza on August 3, 2024! (Reprinted from "The Rotunda", Poughkeepsie Public Library District, Vol. 24, Issue 2, poklib.org)

More information about this summer's Oaxaca Week and Guelaguetza event can be found on the Poughkeepsie Library website or on Facebook. www.poklib.org www.facebook.com/pokguelaguetza/ Other multicultural events happening this summer in the Hudson Valley can be found on the Dutchess Tourism website. www.dutchesstourism.com

Marist Freshman Receives Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship



Lily Hardwick, a first-year student at Marist College is the recipient of the **Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship** to attend the **National Conference for Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)**. Lily is majoring in Political Science with double minors in Environmental Policy and Global Studies while earning a paralegal certificate. She is enrolled in the Honors Program, Emerging Leaders Program, and is a Peer Mentor. Lily's goal is to combine all her passions of diversity, equity and inclusion, politics, and climate change to become an Environmental Lawyer. Lily was "adopted from China by immigrant parents and is a member of the LGBTQ+ Community."

Lily recognizes the positive opportunity that the conference will provide. She wrote "I will be able to connect with diverse young leaders who share my passion for personal and professional development." She anticipates "learning from experienced professionals about navigating both gender and racial diversity in a leadership role and discovering how to navigate the unique challenges I face." Lily feels the "representation of women in politics is low, and even lower for women of color. I aspire to be an inspirational leader for younger girls."

Her leadership abilities have been evidenced by her work with the League of Women Voters. She was one of the youngest speakers at their National Convention. She is a member of the Citizens Climate Lobby Mid-Hudson Chapter, and works at the Marist Institute for Public Opinion where she is a student representative for recruitment and retention. The committee is very pleased we found her! She will be reporting back on her experience.

Committee members: Marcine Humphrey, Betty Harrel, Pat Luczai, Marylou Davis, Mary Coiteux, Shaileen Kopec, and Maureen Tremblay.

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

NY Equal Rights Amendment: UPDATE

What is it? The New York State Constitution contains enumerated protections prohibiting discrimination based only on race and religion. There are no such protections for gender or other classifications. **The ERA**, as it will appear on the November ballot, **would prohibit discrimination based on a person's ethnicity, national origin, age, disability and sex, including their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes.** It would also protect against any government actions that would curtail a person's reproductive autonomy or access to reproductive health care.

What happened? New York's Equal Rights Amendment has been ordered off the November ballot after a judge ruled that lawmakers didn't follow the appropriate procedure in passing it.

Read about it:

The City:

<https://www.thecity.nyc/2024/05/07/equal-rights-amendment-abortion-judge>

BRANCH PUBLICITY

Barbara Durniak, Communications VP

As you know, our monthly meetings are open to the public. The branch has been looking at ways to publicize this fact. At one time, newspapers published upcoming events, and people regularly reviewed flyers posted on the bulletin boards of local businesses, but those days are gone. In this digital age, organizations are posting information about their activities via online community calendars.

Are there sites that you use regularly to find out what's going on in your area? If so, please email the links to communications.aaupoughkeepsie@gmail.com. And if you'd like to help with publicity efforts, you can use the same email address to indicate your interests and ideas.



Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 13, 2024

6:00 Cash Bar

6:30 Dinner

Coppola's, Route 9, Hyde Park, NY

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

Entertainment: CP2 Readers Theatre of Dutchess County will present a program of a playwright's words, in keeping with the mission and interest of AAUW.

Menu:

Antipasto Salad

Penne with Marinara Sauce (vegetarian)

Seasonal Vegetables

Entrée Choices (Please indicate below):

Chicken Marsala

Norwegian Salmon

Eggplant Rollatini (vegetarian)

Dessert – Ice Cream Sundae

Coffee/Tea/Soda



Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Entrée Choice: _____

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

Cost for the dinner is \$50 (Includes service charge)

Deadline for reservations is May 27th. No refunds after June 1, 2024.

Payment can be made by personal check, payable to "Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW" or PayPal/Credit Card (**\$2.00 surcharge**). Your personal credit card can be used through PayPal on the AAUW website homepage <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net> **Include menu choice on your check or in the space PayPal provides.**

Send reservations to: Michelle Miller
37 Argent Drive
Highland, NY 12528

Questions: Michelle Miller, call or text 845-401-5202 or email event.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com