

## **Program Vice-Presidents Report to the Branch for 2023-2024**

The regular monthly meetings of the Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW were held on the second Thursday of each month from October 2023 to May 2024. Six of the meetings were held at the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church on Rt. 55, Lagrangeville, N. Y. During the months of January and February 2024 the meetings were held by ZOOM.

Meeting times were 7 PM to 8:45 PM. Approximately 50 individuals were in attendance at these events, both members and nonmembers, since we are open to the public. A marketing brochure for each program was available and the meetings were printed in the Branch and three mailings of each were sent to members as reminders of the programs.

Below are listed the programs for the year.

Thursday, October 12, 2023

The 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

A presentation was made by representatives from the Eleanor Roosevelt NHS in Hyde Park, NY: they are Franceska Macsali-Urbin, Supervising Ranger, Kevin Oldenburg, Lead Ranger, and Dani Massaro, Park Guide. They spoke on where the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary finds us today and how the declaration has affected human rights globally. They explained how women continue to advocate and be involved in assuring human rights.

Thursday, November 9, 2023

Woman to Woman: from Poughkeepsie to Chermaitre, Haiti. What Can We Create?

The program was presented by Lila Meade, Co-founder and Executive Director of the Vassar Haiti Project at Vassar College. She was assisted by Sara Neequaye, a sophomore at the college and the Vice President of the Women's Initiative Student

Committee. They told of the impact the project has had on the region, especially in assisting women who struggle to raise large families with little income.

Thursday, December 14, 2023

### Fabulous Foods

Six members of the Poughkeepsie Branch gave descriptions of foods important to their families and descriptions of their heritages which influenced the foods. Samples of the various items were available. Presenters were Blanche Bergman who told us about honey-apple muffins; Gwen Higgins who described Kwanzaa and gave us corn pudding; Marcine Humphrey who described sausage bread; Kay Saderholm, who told about Moravian sugar cake; Gail Sisti brought her Italian heritage through mushroom risotto; Maureen Trembly who presented us with a French-Canadian dish, tourtiere; and Barbara Van Itallie who described some of Australia's unusual foods.

Thursday, January 11, 2024

### A View from the Clean Energy Future

Sean Dague gave us a view of the world where energy no longer comes from extracting and burning large amounts of coal, gas, and oil, and its accompanying pollution. Sean is a volunteer with the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) a grassroots advocacy organization. He is one of the leaders in the Mid Hudson Chapter of CCL as well as a NY State Coordinator for the same.

Thursday, February 8, 2024

### Slavery, Antislavery and the Underground Railroad: A Dutchess County Primer

This was presented by Peter A. Bunten, Executive Director of the Mid Hudson Anti-Slavery Project. He told of the history of slavery and antislavery in Dutchess County, placing the local history within the broader national context of slavery and

antislavery. He is a Trustee of the Dutchess County Historical Society and a native of Poughkeepsie.

Thursday, March 14, 2024

Existential Captivation: On the (Im)Possibility on a Life Lived in Terror

Dr. Jessica Sims, AAUW Fellow (scholarship recipient) was the presenter. She described the traditional concept of the Stockholm Syndrome in the context of a type of domestic violence known as “coercive control.” She touched on ancient Greek philosophical concepts and concluded with describing the long term effects of this psychological abuse.

Thursday, April 11, 2024

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

The United States has the highest infant mortality rate in the developed world, despite spending more money per capita than any other country. Dr. Richard David is a professor of pediatrics at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He has done research on perinatal epidemiology for 40 years and currently teaches a course on racism and health at the UIC School of Public Health.

Thursday, May 9, 2024

Beatrix Farrand and the History of Bellefield

Beatrix Farrand was America’s first woman landscape architect. She designed a garden at Bellefield on the grounds of the FDR National Historic Site in Hyde Park, NY. Karen Waltuch, the horticulturist at the site described the history of the site and some of the current projects. The garden is currently in the midst of a major historic realization project, the establishment of a 500 sq. ft. native plant garden around the exterior of the main garden.

A planning meeting for the 2024-2025 year, via ZOOM, is scheduled for Friday, May 17, at 10 AM. All branch members are welcome to attend. Their input will be much appreciated.

Many thanks and much appreciation to all those who assisted in making these programs possible. This includes Maria DeWalt, Marcine Humphrey, Gwen Higgins, Barbara Van Itallie, Ruth Sheets, Margaret Nijhuis, Beth DeFiglio, Bonnie Auchincloss, Celia Serotsky