

Coming in March:

Mother Jones: A Labor Movement Heroine

Thursday, March 13, 2025:

7:00 pm, IN PERSON

Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church



Presenter: Sandra Opdycke, PhD.,
Historian and Author

Relatively little is known about Mary Jones' early life. But starting in her mid-fifties, and for the next forty years, she devoted herself to supporting strikes and building unions. She covered any number of industries, but her closest attachment was to the nation's coal-miners, who gave her the name Mother Jones.

Sandra Opdycke, PhD, is a retired history professor. She has published books about the 1918 flu epidemic, the New Deal's WPA, and Bellevue Hospital, as well as a biography of Jane Addams, an historical atlas of American women, and several co-authored books on social policy.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

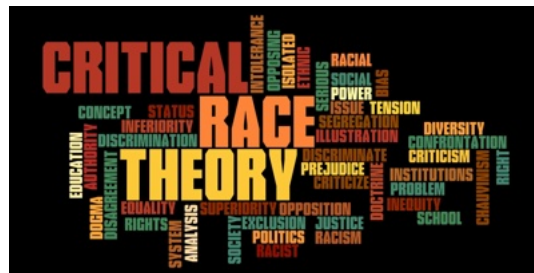
Mary Scalise-Annis, Chair

The Nominating Committee is working to find candidates for the following offices for the June 2025 - June 2027 term:

- Development VP
- Program VPs - 2 positions to Co-Chair
- Membership VP

If you know anyone who may be interested in one of these leadership positions, please contact Mary Scalise-Annis, Committee Chair.

In recognition of Black History Month:



Its Meaning and Implications for Education

Thursday, February 13

7pm on Zoom

Pre-registration required:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/locMrPswQySHno9kMiDykQ>

Presenter: Dr. Jacqueline Goffe-McNish

Critical Race Theory (CRT) has become a divisive issue, primarily because it is misunderstood. CRT is a way of looking at law, power, and race to analyze and understand why patterns of racial disparities endure despite reforms and race-neutral laws. CRT is based on the idea that race is a social construct, and that racism is not merely the product of individual bias or prejudice, but also something embedded in legal systems and policies.



Dr. Goffe-McNish will explain this theory and its implications for education. Five elements addressed by CRT are: the centrality of race, racism, intersectionality; the challenge of the dominant ideology; a commitment to social justice; the centrality of experiential knowledge; and a transdisciplinary perspective.

Dr. Jacqueline Goffe-McNish was a professor of English and Humanities at Dutchess Community College for thirty-two years. She has taught Composition, Introduction to Literature, African American Literature, Caribbean Literature, Technical Writing, and Bible as Literature. She received her Doctorate in Education from St. John Fisher University. Dr. Goffe-McNish is an active member and past president of Poughkeepsie AAUW, where she was Chair of the Diversity Committee for five years.

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

FEBRUARY 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 on trip to Africa
Presenter: Kathy Martin
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 6 Intermediate Bridge Instruction: 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 6 Board Meeting: 7:00 pm on Zoo**
- 7 Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 9 Gourmet: Out & About: 1pm, Sunday brunch, Heritage, 1379 Route 9, Wappingers Falls**
Coordinator: Michelle Miller
- 10 All those books...: 2:30 pm**
Papillon, by Henri Charrière
Presenter: Cathy Lan
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 11 Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of the film *Juniper*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 13 Monthly Program: 7:00 pm on Zoom**
- 15 Days for Girls Poughkeepsie NY Team**
Work session: 1:30-4:30 pm
Zion Church Parish Hall, 12 Satterlee Place, Wapp Falls
Coordinators: Judy Longacre and Sabashnee Govender
- 16 Aventures en Soleil: Details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 17 Manderley Literary Society: 4:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 18 Cuisine: 12:00 am**
Details TBD
Coordinator: Barbara Van Italie
- 19 Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 20 Aventures en Soleil: Time TBD**
The Planetarium at SUNY New Paltz
Contact Linnea for more details
Coordinator: Linnea Mason
- 21 Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 24 Craft 'n' Create: 1:30 pm**
Contact coordinators for project and location
Host: Mary Ann Williams
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 25 Contemporary Literature: 7:30 pm via Zoom**
Discussion of *The Guncle*, by Steven Rowley
Coordinator: Linda Freisitzer

- 26 Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm**
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
Location TBD
Contact: Blanche Bergman
- 27 Bridge II: 12:00 pm**
Meet at a local restaurant for lunch; play at 1:00
Collegeview Apts Community Rm, 141 Fulton Ave, Pok
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg
- 28 Art on the Go: Details 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	Pat Luczai
Secretary	Cindy Emmer
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. Inclusive. Intersectional. Empowering.

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 by the 10th of the month preceding publication. Cyd Averill, editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celia Serotsky president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



Each year I complete the AAUW National survey. (By the way, we have a copy of the first survey completed by our branch in 1926.) The completed surveys are reviewed by the national organization and provide them with information about local branches. Answers are used also to determine if a branch has earned a *star* towards the **Five Star Program**. Last year we received two stars, and this year I received great news from Tremayne Parquet, Deputy Director of Advancement at AAUW national. The first paragraph of his letter to us reads as follows:

“It is with great pleasure that I share some exciting news—AAUW Poughkeepsie Inc. (NY) Branch has achieved four stars in AAUW’s **FY24 Five Star Program!** Your branch attained the **Advancement, Communications & External Relations, Programming, and Governance & Sustainability** stars. This recognition is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of your branch members to advancing AAUW’s mission of gender equity for women and girls.”

The Five Star Program honors branches that have demonstrated their commitment to gender equity issues for women and girls in the above categories, as well as a fifth category: **Public Policy & Advocacy**.

Each of the categories has criteria that must be met to be awarded a star. This is an honor that I want to share with you, because the criteria involve such achievements as having a DEI officer, providing at least four programs per year based on our Mission Statement, our generosity of support for AAUW’s Greatest Needs Fund, retaining at least 80% of our membership, communication via our newsletter and our Facebook page, and our support of community endeavors through our initiatives. Not only do our dedicated Executive, Appointed, and Off Board members deserve recognition for their service, but also those of you who serve on committees and volunteer your time and effort to our initiatives. Thank you!

Other items of note:

- We will continue to follow the changes that AAUW National has proposed, especially that of an increase in dues. Please keep yourself informed by opening and reading communications from National.
- The committee to review our governance structure as part of the 2024 Strategic Plan completed its work in January. The proposed changes will go to the governing Board at the February meeting for review and approval. If approved, the changes will be phased in through 2025 and 2026.

DEVELOPMENT

Betty Harrel board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Centennial Fund Continues to Grow

Our fund has grown again! We now have **\$5,408** toward an endowment at Dutchess Community College that will provide an annual scholarship to an incoming student. With our matching grant, we’ve raised almost \$11,000 toward our goal!

If you haven’t donated yet, be sure to send your donation and be part of our 100-year celebration.

Donations are accepted at AAUW membership meetings each month. In addition, you may send checks payable to Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc., PO Box 1908, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

Online donations can be made by clicking on <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net/about-us/donations>.

Your gift to the Scholarship fund makes a difference! Read an update from a recent scholarship recipient on page 5.



MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

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

There has been a slight delay in issuing the online version of the directories, but hopefully you will have received them by the end of January. You will be receiving two versions of the directory, one with all of the complete data for each member and a second, more easily printable summary version, which will contain only names, phone numbers and email addresses.

If changes occur, they will be sent out about every three months, so you can make the updates on your computers. You will no longer have to wait a year to update changes in emails and phone numbers or home addresses.

February Birthdays:

Carol Barmann, Diane Closs, Linda Eagleton, Claudette Hennessy, Susan Holland, Muriel Horowitz, Ruth Kava, Linnea Masson, Marta Newkirk, Eileen Nye and Gail Sisti.



PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



Lights, Camera, Action!

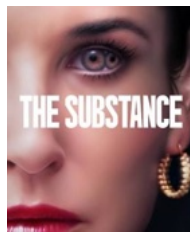
Award season looms for a movie industry in flux as traditional plots are sidelined and new stories introduced. Women’s roles, once confined to portrayals of wives, lovers, and mothers, have somewhat been transformed and reflect a new contemporary social reality and the ideals of gender equity. Women are starring in lead roles typically afforded male actors with scripts addressing issues and scenarios unique to women, LGBTQ and diverse populations. Will the trend continue?

Women traditionally received secondary stereotypical roles not requiring independence and intelligence and were often portrayed as glorified beauty objects symbolizing sex appeal and entertainment. Some say that Hollywood's attempts to encourage diversity and women’s changing role in society are "performative," inauthentic and insincere. But this year’s leading movies are more audacious about tackling (but not fully ignoring the past stereotypes) and introducing captivating, multi-dimensional characters who simultaneously navigate different worlds and self-exploration.

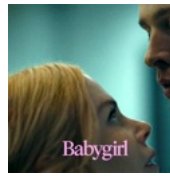


Maria recounts the end days of opera diva Maria Callas, a woman betrayed by love and unable to overcome the onset of a diminished career. What torments her more? Lost love or a loss of career?

Substance is “marketed” as the feminist horror event of the year. A 50-year-old woman is fired as host from her aerobics show and uses a black-market serum that promises a younger, more beautiful, more perfect version of herself. Is she a victim of female ageism, vanity, or societal stereotyping?



In **Emilia Perez**, a cartel boss offers a female Mexican lawyer an unusual job: help him retire and transition into living as a woman to fulfill his long-held desire. Does money, skill or compassion motivate her to assist him? A transgender actress stars in the titular role.



Babygirl introduces a high-powered CEO who puts her career and family on the line when she begins an affair with a much younger intern.

Conclave mixes papal politics with a shocking and controversial twist on gender and power.



Wicked: best summarized simply as the conflict between defying gravity or staying grounded. Part 2 in 2025.

Ironically though, women comprise only 23% of the of the directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and cinematographers, while 35% of the cast is female. The percentage of women working in the film industry has not increased significantly and has remained disproportionate for a quarter century with only a 5% increase since 1998. Work needs to be done. This can only happen if Hollywood lets more women with various narratives be more involved in a movie’s creation by occupying executive roles.

The 2024 award hopefuls mirror public policy priorities of AAUW: financial and independent success for women; equality, individual rights and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society; freedom in the definition of self and family for all family structures; anti ageism; closing the gaps in leadership opportunities; non gender based ladders of success. Pay equity remains a major negotiation for Hollywood women.

It is anticipated that the 2025 movie season will advance women in all aspects of film production and propel the “female forward” trend for both sides of the camera. After all, women don’t lack ambition. They lack opportunity. Has the time come?

HATS OFF TO:

Betsy Kopstein-Stutz, who will be honored at the 34th Catherine Street Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast, held on January 24.

 <p>34TH CATHERINE STREET MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BREAKFAST</p>	
<p>FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025 7:15am DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel 40 Civic Center Plaza Poughkeepsie, New York</p>	<p>GUEST SPEAKER Rob Watson, Jr. Executive Director, Harvard EdInsights Lab Lecturer on Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education Mr. Watson is a graduate of Poughkeepsie High School and a 2005 NEX Youth Honoree.</p>
<p>COMMUNITY HONOREES Ebenezer Baptist Church, Poughkeepsie Founding Member of Catherine Street Center (Class 1922) Betsy Kopstein Stutz Educator, Community Leader & Volunteer RICHARD WAGER INCLUSIVE CHAMPION AWARD Dutchess County Interfaith Council</p>	<p>YOUTH HONOREES Will C. Marlett Poughkeepsie High School Jocelyn R. Pope Roy C. Farnham High School Jessica P. Rodriguez Franklin D. Roosevelt High School Michayla L. Thomas Arlington High School</p>

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jackie Vierno



International Women's Day

2025 Theme is

#AccelerateAction.

Planning is underway for our branch to celebrate International Women's Day this year. **STAY TUNED!**

CSW69 / Beijing+30 (2025)

COMMISSION on the STATUS OF WOMEN



In 2025, the global community will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

The sixty-ninth session of the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from March 10 to 21, 2025.

Themes

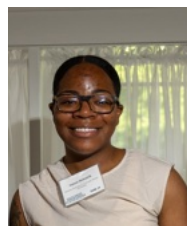
The main focus of the sixty-ninth session will be on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) and the outcomes of the [23rd special session of the General Assembly](#). The review will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(excerpted from <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women/csw69-2025>)

Stay tuned for the parallel events at the NGO CSW69 Forum taking place in person and online March 10-21, 2025. To ensure you don't miss any important announcements or details, join the mailing list at the link below to stay informed about events, workshops, and initiatives promoting gender equality and women's rights worldwide. <https://ngocsw.org/ngocsw69/>

An Update from Scholarship Recipient

Amani Deloatch



I am now attending the SUNY University of Brockport in their online Social Work Program. My first semester went well. I took Human Behavior social environment, DEI&J, Introduction to Social Work, SW & Human Trafficking, and Micro Social Work. I finished my semester on December 16, 2024. Finished with all A's and a 3.93 GPA.

I'm shortly finishing up a winter class, which ends January 17th, and my spring Semester starts on January 28th. I am on track to graduate a semester early from my baccalaureate program. The projected finish date is December 2025.

I have my field placement assigned for the fall semester. My internship will be at the local Poughkeepsie City School District working alongside the school social workers as I have an interest in potentially working in the field of education after I graduate.

Please send my well wishes to those at the organization and let them know I am doing well and achieving beyond my academic expectations. Thank you all for your continued support in assisting me financially with my academic needs. Please let me know if there are any events or volunteer opportunities I can attend within your organization to support.

LEADING TO READING

Betty Harrel
board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



Holiday Gift Wrapping

Thank you to all who took part in the holiday gift wrapping sponsored by our Leading to Reading project!

Special thanks go to Flo Mondanaro and Judy Linville who coordinated the two sessions. Members wrapped 2 new books for each child, which were purchased using our Holiday Helping Hand grant. In addition, gifts provided by Hudson River Lodging were also wrapped. The gifts were distributed to children living in the long-term shelter at a holiday party in December.

Adams Donates Bags



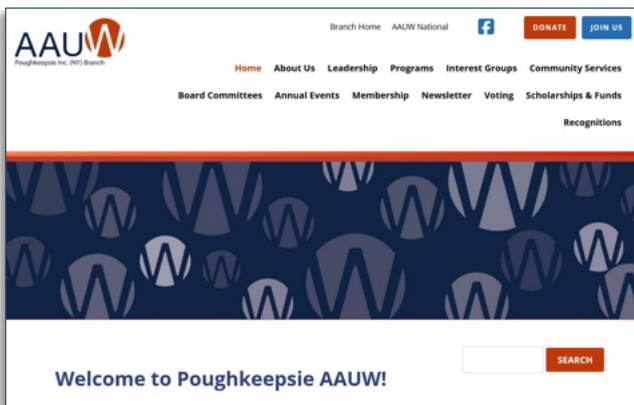
Once again, **Adams Fairacre Farms** has donated bags for our Leading to Reading project. When books and family reading kits are delivered to each participating program throughout the region, the Adams bags provide a

handy way to carry and store them. Adams has been a long-time supporter of our program, and their generosity is truly appreciated!

Our New Look

Margaret Nijhuis, Website Editor

Poughkeepsie AAUW's website <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net> has a new look.



All the former information is still there.

When you visit, you can:

- Contribute to the Poughkeepsie AAUW Centennial Matching Fund
- Register for the February Zoom program
- Note the activities of our Community Services
- Choose an Interest Group (or more than one) to attend

and much, much more.

DAYS FOR GIRLS

Judy Longacre & Sabashnee Govender



Just a little round-up of information to send off 2024. After a very productive December work session, we managed to make 32 carry pouches. Those were added to 3 in our inventory and we sent components for 35 kits to our distribution center in PA.

This donation meant we hit 100 kits given in 2024 plus 132 carry pouches. In addition we donated 15 drawstring bags, 10 carry pouches, 268 washcloths, 165 panties, and 15 soaps to either the Camaroon/Chad effort or our PA distribution center. All together it was a very productive 2024.

EXTENDING GIRLS' HORIZONS

Peggy Kelland

On February 1, we will be offering our **Cadette "A-Maze" Journey in a Day** for Girl Scouts in grades 6-8 at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. The girls will explore first impressions, friendships, peer pressure, cliques vs. circles of belonging, and bullying through interactive games, small group discussions, and journaling.



Then on Friday, March 28, we will present **"New Cuisines"** from 5:00 to 8:30. The girls will prepare a variety of international, historical, and regional recipes and then enjoy sampling all their creations. It will again take place at Zion Church.

All Poughkeepsie AAUW members are welcome to assist or just come for a look.

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, Mary Ann Boylan, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis