



Message from the Interim Administrator

By Carolyn MacRae

In the AAUW world, springtime seems almost as busy as the holidays during November and December feel in my personal life. It's easy for things to fall through the cracks, so here are some reminders.

- **AAUW of Maine convention: May 31-June 1 in Bangor.** The Program and Public Policy committee has been working diligently all year and has come up with a great program that focuses on the importance of an Equal Rights Amendment, both in Maine and nationally. There's lots more information about the convention in this issue, and you also have a real live resource in your own branch! Beth Clark (Waterville) is chair of this committee. The other members are Debbie Melvin (Aroostook), Judy Fuller (Hancock County), Mary Cathcart (Penobscot Valley), and Jackie Kulik (Waterville). Talk with them and register to attend. I hope to see you there!
- AAUW nationally is voting on an important issue this spring. **Elections are now open and will close on May 15.** We have, in the past, done away with several membership restrictions. I was on the national AAUW board the year we voted that men could join. It was a big deal! This year, we are voting to eliminate the education requirement. If it passes, all people who support our mission will be able to become members, regardless of education level. For AAUW, it's the last remaining barrier. **All current members should have received an email with voting instructions.** Please find yours and vote now.



- **Dues are due the end of June for next year.** Did you know that your national dues are now a fully deductible charitable expense on your income tax? Prospective members might also like to know this.

- This is also the time of year when **branches and the state AAUW are electing new officers.** Consider accepting a leadership role, either by yourself or as a shared position with another member. I found out how important my AAUW leadership experience was when, in my late 40s, I went back to school to earn an MBA. I was surprised to realize, as I worked on this degree, that the two things that best prepared me for this venture were what I learned from my other master's degree studies AND my AAUW leadership experience.

If I have counted correctly, June 30 will mark the completion of my 50th year in AAUW. This organization has given me ongoing opportunities to learn, grow, develop new skills, and become a strong woman. Over the years I have made many good friends among its members. All the best – and thank you for what you do to support AAUW and its mission.



Raffle Baskets for State Convention

By Kristin Sweeney, Funds Chair

Have you have already begun filling your raffle baskets with irresistible treasures? If not, please waste no time. There is no theme again this year. The most creative basket will win a prize. **This year we will try something new: dedicated ticket containers for specific baskets.**

Tickets are \$1, 6 for \$5, and 13 for \$10. Your branch funds chair can sell tickets in advance to those who cannot attend. I will be selling tickets at convention on Friday and Saturday during meals and breaks. Remember to bring your address labels to convention to put on the raffle tickets. **There is no need to keep half of the ticket.**

Contact me if you need raffle tickets to sell at: sweeneykg@gmail.com.

Convention News from the Program and Public Policy Committee

By Beth Clark, Chair

The Program and Public Policy Committee (PPPC) members look forward to seeing you at the **state-wide convention *Equal Rights for Women: The Time is NOW!* on May 31 and June 1**. 2024 is a year of 100s: the hundredth anniversary of the first consideration of the Equal Rights Amendment by Congress and the hundredth anniversaries of both the Waterville and Penobscot Valley (originally Univ. of Maine Branch) branches. We have a lot to celebrate. AAUW members, past and present, have made tremendous strides in helping to improve the status of women in society. The work must continue.

The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was introduced in the U. S. Congress in 1921 and has been reintroduced repeatedly for over a century; however, it has never been fully ratified as part of either the U. S. or Maine's Constitutions. Even more troubling is that, in recent years, five states have acted to rescind prior approval that is needed for ratification. What can AAUW and other groups do to protect the rights of women for present and future generations? The first step is to understand the history, current status, and hopes for the ERA. With this understanding, women have the power to network and to vote. Current statistics show that women are more likely to vote than men, in both actual percentage of voters and the percentage of registered voters who vote. **The time is NOW to protect women's rights and ratify the ERA.**

Women are smart, powerful, and resourceful. Through our life experiences, we know how to negotiate and compromise. The rising number of women who hold leadership roles in government, locally and nationally, has already begun to shape policies affecting women. An example of this is the power of Maine Women's Lobby and other groups in promoting the successful passage of the Maine Paid Family Leave Insurance Program. Despite successes like these, and though the gap in wages between women and men is narrowing, women working full-time, year-round, are still paid an average of 84 cents for every dollar paid to men. Over the course of a career, this has a huge impact on a woman's economic security and quality of life. This gap is present even in woman dominated professions like nursing. Although only 13% of nurses are men, their mean annual salary is 14% higher than women's (2022 Nurses Salary Report). This is just one example where there is more that we can do.

The PPPC has been working diligently to plan a convention that combines dynamic speakers, a sense of community among our members, recognition of our successes, and time for fun and reflection. Mary Cathcart,

Judy Fuller, Jackie Kulik, and Debbie Melvin have been dedicated and passionate in representing their branches to bring you the best we can offer. We are fortunate to have three outstanding speakers to share their knowledge and answer questions about the ERA's past, present, and future and how we can be involved. The **Committee's choice of these speakers** was influenced by a list of suggested topics from the Aroostook Branch.

Presenter **Nancy Murdock** was studying architecture at Princeton University in 1972, when the ERA finally passed the U. S. Congress. From her perspective as one of the first female students at that school, it seemed overdue at the time. After retiring, forty years later, from a career as an architect, Nancy co-founded **Equal Rights Maine**, a group committed to seeing the amendment ratification completed and recognized. Nancy lives in Brooklin, Maine with her husband and collaborator.



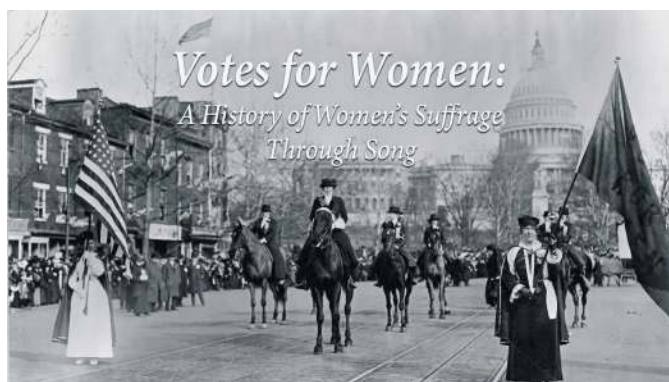
Catie Reed joined the **Maine Women's Lobby** in 2022, as Partnerships and Programs Coordinator, after a decade-long career at Partners for Peace in the movement to end domestic violence, and other work focused on age-friendly initiatives at Eastern Area Agency on Aging. Catie has a Bachelor's degree in Gender Studies and Master of Social Work from the University of Maine, where she focused on promoting gender equity through advocacy and systems change. She resides in Bangor, Maine. **She and Nancy work collaboratively on the ERA initiative as representatives of their respective organizations.**

Dorcas Ngaliema, a young Congolese-South African immigrant, has called Maine her home since 2014, after diving headfirst into community initiatives such as the King Fellows and the Boys and Girls Club. Her journey as a Black woman in the United States has fostered an intersectional feminist perspective, focusing on amplifying the voices and experiences of Black women. Interning with Senators Angus King and Jon Ossoff provided invaluable insights into the political landscape, leading to her **current role as staff assistant and intern coordinator for Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley**. Dedicated to fostering opportunities for young women and women of color in politics, Dorcas is committed to mentoring and supporting their journey on Capitol Hill. She will share her perspectives on women's rights and lessons she has learned from her experiences in government.

For those who aren't familiar with **Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley**, she is the first woman of color to be elected to the Boston City Council and, is currently running for a second term as the first to be elected to Congress from the **Commonwealth of Massachusetts**. Pressley is **Co-Founder and Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus for the Equal Rights Amendment**. **Along with Senator Ben Cardin, she spearheaded** the introduction of *H.J. Res. 25: A Resolution to Affirm the Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and Enshrine It as the 28th Amendment*.

Friday Night Activities Return to the Convention

Thanks to the work of Mary Cathcart and Debbie Melvin, the PPPC will have the opportunity to show the



documentary, ***Votes for Women: The History of Women's Suffrage Through Song*** on Friday night. We hope that **producer Barbara Cray** will be joining us for the discussion. From Barbara's web page, "[the documentary] *tells the story of the women's suffrage movement through historical segments narrated by Nancy Giles and illustrated with archival images and video from the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and other sources. These segments appear between songs from or about the suffrage movement performed by Women in Harmony, a social justice chorus from Portland, Maine.*"

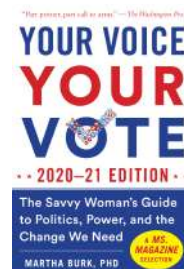


Friday will also bring back awards in the form of the **Branch Recognition Award**. Formerly known as the Unsung Hero Award, Debbie Melvin proposed the new name and suggested each branch should choose one member to be recognized for their efforts. This proposal received the full support of the PPPC and Council. The Council suggested we might alternate this award with the Citation award from year to year.

For trivia enthusiasts, Friday and Saturday will provide the opportunity for some low-key trivia fun particularly focusing on Maine women who have advanced the rights of all women.

State-wide Book

As part of our goal to strengthen communication among members and branches, the PPP Committee decided to revive the custom of a state-wide book. ***Your Voice Your Vote: 2020-2021 Edition: The Savvy Woman's Guide to Politics, Power, and the Change We Need*** by Martha Burk was chosen, this being an important election year, and because it covers several of the topics that were suggested for the conference. We have received feedback that some find the reading rather dry. Do not feel the need to read cover to cover. Read what captures your interest.



Another book that might interest members and was recently highlighted at the Mid-Maine Global Forum Book Discussion at Colby College, is ***Secrets of the Sprakkar: Iceland's Extraordinary Women and How They Are Changing the World***. Written by Eliza Reid, first lady of Iceland, the book describes a society that sees the benefits of gender equality in areas such as childcare, health care, and work-life balance. It is written from the perspective of a woman who immigrated from Canada, became first lady, had four children, received the acceptance and support of wise women, and, in a sometimes humorous and endearing manner, looks of the benefits and areas for growth in this egalitarian society. Both books can be discussed over lunch on Saturday if there are people who are interested.

Invite a Friend

We often hear the question, "How can we increase our membership and strengthen our branch?" One of the easiest ways is to simply ask. I have only been a member for 4 years. I joined because someone, whom I did not know well, invited me. I knew nothing about AAUW at the time. Since then, I have invited three people to join and, surprisingly, all agreed. Two I did not know well. One I invited because I was impressed with the quality of the preparation and leadership that she demonstrated in a group I belong to. Another had just moved from California and was working on her doctorate, despite having two very young children. I figured that membership could provide the moral and logistic support she might need. The third I knew well and felt she might enjoy membership. Last year, I brought a friend to the convention as my guest. She knew nothing about the organization when I asked.

She has five daughters, a daughter-in-law, and two granddaughters. I figured I had three generations covered!

So... Invite a friend, a neighbor, a child, or someone you don't know well and want to get to know better. You will be glad you did. The Aroostook Branch and the members of the PPPC are ready to welcome anyone interested in promoting the rights of women. The price of chocolate is going up, but we are ready to meet your needs at the registration table. Don't miss out!

Membership: Securing Our Future

By Betty-Jane Meader, Membership Chair

On March 26, I attended an AAUW webinar on branch membership. It was organized by AAUW's National Advancement Committee. Chair Dianne Owens (CA) informed attendees that 749 AAUW branches exist as of February 2024. Branch membership has grown in 211 branches. She relayed that 71 branches retained 100 percent of their members. The largest branch has 280 members!

Then, Advancement Committee members shared best practices from small and large branches through role playing. A "Getting to Know You" skit emphasized the importance of the availability of a permanent name badge as soon as a person joins AAUW. A Texas branch lowered the age of their branch members by 20 years by organizing interest groups targeting younger women; topics that attract them include pay equity, reproductive health, advocacy, and public education. They also invited AAUW fellows to join their branch. To attract younger members, a Minnesota branch hosted a Dolly Parton un-happy pub event in a local bar room.

A New York branch reached out to college/university representatives in their area. One branch invited female college presidents to participate on a panel. A California branch meets on Saturday mornings with a brunch.

A Q & A followed. The chair reminded members to access AAUWMembershipMatters@gmail.com for additional information about branch membership.



News Flashes from Darlene Taylor Our AAUW Fellow in 2015-2016

By Kristin Sweeney, editor

Every couple of years I receive gratifying updates from Darlene Taylor, who very recently emailed me, "Know that I am always grateful for the support your AAUW provided. You helped me on this journey." She received an AAUW Career Development Grant for the Stonecoast MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Southern Maine in 2015-2016.

In 2022, she was awarded a Creative Writing fellowship with the American Antiquarian Society. Also in 2022, she was the inaugural Aminah Robinson writer-in-residence at the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio. **From the Columbus Museum of Art [website](#).**

Her art is the title work in this [newspaper article](#) about **Legacy: Civil Rights at 60**, a 2024 [exhibition](#) for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.



Courtesy of Darlene Taylor



Taylor's residency at the Columbus Museum of Art has resulted in a solo exhibition: [Darlene R. Taylor: Heirlooms](#), which just opened (April 5, 2024 - July 14, 2024) at the Academy Art Museum in Easton, Maryland. There will be an accompanying artbook.

Courtesy of Darlene Taylor



As Darlene proves, "Writing is a multidisciplinary practice of prose, poetry, and collage portraits." **For more information: Academy Art Museum [website](#).**

Nancy E. Fritz: Steadfast and Humble Advocate for Women Nomination for the 2024 Maine Women's Hall of Fame

Nominated by the Waterville, Maine, Branch, American Association of University Women (by unanimous vote)
Written by Beth Clark and Kathryn Kellison, MSW, with input from Nancy's former associates and friends

Courtesy of Joanne LaFear



Left to right: Beth Clark, Nancy E. Fritz, and Kathy Kellison at the Maine Women's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on March 8, 2024.

Nancy Fritz's career has focused on improving the welfare of women and families in Maine. All of her work, paid and volunteer, is rooted in her faith and her commitment to social justice. Her life exemplifies the best of what Maine women do as professionals, family members, volunteers, and craftswomen. She does it with humility, respect, and love.

Born in Nebraska to a working-class family, Nancy knows economic struggles. She was married at 18, a mother at 19. She first worked as a newspaper journalist and photographer and enrolled part-time in college after the birth of her second child. When she was 33, her family relocated to Bangor where she and her husband studied at Bangor Theological Seminary. She finished a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development from The University of Maine while simultaneously achieving her Master of Divinity Degree. While there, Nancy volunteered as an advocate for families experiencing domestic violence.

Her work in the nonprofit sector included serving as Executive Director for three agencies providing services to neglected residents of Maine. First was the Family Violence Project in Augusta. She took that position after serving as a paid advocate. Next was The Children's Center in Augusta which offers early intervention services for children aged birth to five and their families. The third was the Coastal Community Action Program in Rockland, an antipoverty agency. She left each of these organizations strengthened in terms of staff morale, financial stability, and effective policies and procedures. She served as Statewide Director of Homeless Initiatives for the Baldacci administration, a cabinet level position, while she served as Director of the Homeless Department at Maine State Housing Authority. Nancy's state-wide impact includes 18 months providing staff training for Maine Department of Human Services employees and nonprofits contracting with DHS: communication and negotiation skills, increasing self-awareness, and understanding and acceptance of diversity.

As a leader, Nancy brings her willingness to accept people as they are. She collaborates to help them grow in competence and satisfaction, whatever their role. She supports success through clear job descriptions and by serving as a mentor and coach. Her intention is to promote individual growth in the work for organizational success.

Nancy applies her passion for social justice to individual staff members, to the recipients of services provided by her organization, and to the social factors which create inequality and marginalization in our state.

Beyond her paid work, Nancy has been a reliable volunteer for diverse organizations. Examples include serving on the Boards of Directors of the Maine Health Access Foundation, Maine Association of Nonprofits, and the Maine Economic Policy Center. She was a founding member of the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition and served for ten years as an Augusta Housing Authority Commissioner. Over her 35 years as a church member, she volunteered in many capacities including co-leading a holiday fair which raised \$5,000-\$6,000 annually and involved 70 volunteers. She continues to sew and help others create items for that fair. As church Treasurer, she serves on the Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee. She delivers Meals on Wheels, volunteers as a Money Matters mentor for Spectrum Generations, and coordinates two sewing/needle craft groups open to any skill level. Her friends see her as a willing source for support during challenging times.

As matriarch of her four-generation family, Nancy keeps everyone connected. She patiently teaches baking, sewing, needlework, and other home making skills to anyone willing to learn. Her home is decorated with her stunning counted cross stitch projects and patchwork quilts.

Promoting Justice, Equity, and Compassion

While in seminary, Nancy came to understand her lesbian identity and was part of an activist group that formed the Maine Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance (now known as Equality Maine). The challenges of working in the church at that time led her to choose to use her ministry skills in the community rather than a church and to focus on domestic violence. She began as a staff advocate at the Family Violence Project in Augusta and moved into the role of Director. She took on the task of maturing the Project and the Maine Coalition against Domestic Violence from primarily volunteer organizations into sustainable and reliable resources for women across the state. She expanded services within Somerset County. Her leadership led to increased community awareness of domestic violence as a significant social issue. Under Nancy's leadership as Executive Director, the Children's Center refined its focus from providing services to children with disabilities to early intervention services. Recipients of services include families, typically developing children, and those with physical and emotional illnesses or developmental disabilities. Nancy stabilized the funding sources and expanded the scope of services to an interdisciplinary approach: physical, occupational, and speech therapies; public health nurses; child development services; and education and respite for families. Nancy's collaborative approach was key to the organization's survival and growth.

Nancy's commitment to and impact on overlooked populations in Maine broadened when she became Executive Director of the antipoverty Coastal Community Action Program in Rockland. She oversaw the implementation of federal grants for Head Start, home weatherization and fuel assistance, and a Retired Senior Volunteer Program. As a result, more Maine children were prepared for success in school and the lifelong economic well-being of many families was enhanced. She left a stable organization with improved delivery of services.

Nancy had the opportunity to improve the welfare of families across the state during the six years she served as the Director of Homeless Initiatives for the Baldacci administration. As part of her work in this cabinet level position, Nancy chaired the Statewide Homeless Council, coordinating policies and services for the unhoused population in Maine. Concurrently she worked as Director of the Homeless Department at Maine State Housing Authority with the goal of bringing widespread attention and services to the needs of unhoused people in our state. In her retirement, Nancy continues to volunteer with this population.

The sale of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Maine to Anthem provided a significant amount of money dedicated to improving access to health care for all Mainers. Nancy was part of the original group that created the Maine Health Access Foundation to invest that money throughout the state. For nine years she served on the Board as well as the Grants and Finance Committees. That work involved understanding and exploring the social determinants of health. This step led to including mental and dental health services within the definition of "health care" and a focus on housing and adequate food as fundamental to health.

Nancy is a generous and humble woman who is willing to step up when she can make a difference. She is equally at home sitting with an unhoused individual at breakfast as she is chairing a committee in Augusta creating housing policy or distributing grant funding to improve statewide access to healthcare. This comfort is rooted in her belief that each individual has worth and dignity and the ability to change.





By Mary Cathcart

Maine NEW Leadership will be held on the UMaine campus, May 30-June 4, led by Dr. Mary-Ellen Mahoney-O'Neill and Susan D'Angelo. Students and staff will reside in Edith Patch Hall, named for one of the founding members of University of Maine Branch of AAUW. We are excited that 2018 alumna Flavia DeBrito is a candidate for Waterville City Council!

Branching Out: News from Our Branches

Aroostook Branch
By Carol Pierson, Secretary

The Aroostook County branch of AAUW started their 2024 meetings on April 4th, featuring an informational talk by Tim Crowley, president of NMCC (Northern Maine Community College). He presented detailed information about the free college tuition and fees program which is being offered through 2024-2025 - possibly longer if the legislature decides in their next session to extend the program. This program has been especially beneficial to middle income students, as very low-income students are eligible for the same support through Pell and state grants. There are many supports in place to help students become acclimated to the college requirements of having to do homework and attend classes on a regular basis. Since many of these students have families, there are now ten apartment units on campus for families with at least one full time student attending NMCC. Construction is underway on a childcare facility for the children of students as well as the college staff. Some of the new programs now offered at NMCC are Practical Nursing, Medical Assistant, and Paramedic Preparation. Other new programs include short term training in Mechanized Logging and Commercial Truck Driving.

Programs we have planned for our 2024 season include "Death With Dignity" with Dr. Elizabeth Weiss as the speaker; Our Best Reads Discussion where members

present and discuss their favorite books; an update on the Caribou waterfront project with speaker Mark Draper who is a member of the Riverfront Redevelopment Committee for Caribou; and Immigration: Refugees in Aroostook County with speaker Victoria Llawanga. **We will be celebrating 50 years of AAUW in Aroostook County with an Anniversary Party in September.**

Hancock County Branch
By Louise Storer, Secretary

In December, the Hancock County Branch "adopted" a previously homeless single mother who was moving into a permanent apartment by providing her with a Christmas surprise of most of the household utensils - including a microwave - she would need to start a new life. We also included some toys and play materials for her 5-year-old daughter.

We do not meet in January or February since so many of our members are away for the winter and the weather is so unpredictable.

In March, for Women's History Month, we attended a joint meeting with the local Business and Professional Women and Delta Kappa Gamma, where one of our members presented a biographical program on Lotta Crabtree, a 19th century actress who was one of the first (maybe THE first) American-born women to become a millionaire without inherited wealth or support from a man.



Penobscot Valley Branch
by Mary Cathcart, Liaison

Penobscot Valley Branch will celebrate our 100th anniversary at our May annual meeting. On May 12, 1924, Dr. Caroline Colvin, Professor of History and first Dean of Women at the University of Maine, called together a dozen women. She had recently attended the annual meeting of the American Association of University Women in Washington, D.C. and told the others about the organization's history and purpose. They joined her at once to form the University of Maine Branch and voted to give a tea for Senior "girls" at the University and suggest that graduates join AAUW. They also began an association with the Bangor and Waterville branches,

which were launched that same year, and national. Three of the women at that first meeting now have UMaine buildings named for them: Dean Colvin, Dr. Ava Chadbourne, and Dr. Edith Patch.

Our branch has selected two scholarship recipients who will speak at our May meeting. This year's awardees are both at UMaine: Donne Sinderson, a Biology major who participates in entomology research (also Dr. Edith Patch's field) and Heather Richard, a major in Ecology and Environmental Sciences, who is also a board member for WERU community radio.

Courtesy of Rajika Bhandari.



Shown left to right at the March 19 UMaine "Salon" are Dr. Bhandari, Kathryn Olmstead of the Aroostook Branch, and Mary Cathcart and Susan Landry from the Penobscot Valley Branch.

For our March 19 meeting, we joined with Fogler Library for an excellent Salon program with Dr. Rajika Bhandari, author of the award-winning memoir *America Calling: A Foreign Student in a Country of Possibility*. Dr. Bhandari, who was an AAUW International Fellow while completing her graduate studies, shared her experience as an international higher education expert and her personal and professional insights on attracting international students and the policies that position them for success. She was pleased to meet local AAUW members from Penobscot Valley Branch and also Kathryn Olmstead of the Aroostook Branch. She promised to send her photo with us to Gloria Blackwell, who is a close friend of hers.

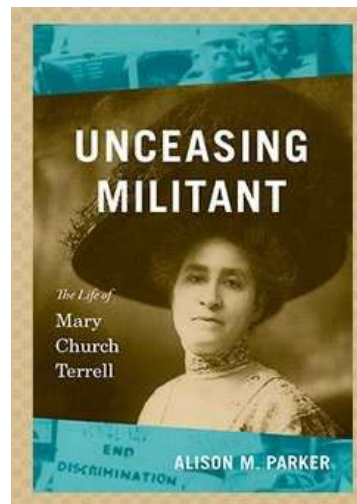
Our branch continues to hold Pizza and Politics on Zoom, the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm. We look forward to returning to in-person meetings in May and through the Summer.

Waterville Branch

By Martha Arterberry

In January 2024, we started a year-long celebration of our branch's 100th anniversary. The Waterville branch was founded on February 9, 1924. On January 17, 2024, branch members met at Special Collections of Colby College to view materials from the past 100 years. In preparing for this event, we noticed that materials were scarce for the past 50 years, and thus we also did a "history harvest." The result was finding materials at the Waterville Public Library, others submitting materials they carefully collected on their computers, and a few tote bags from basements (one from a current member's mother when she was active in the branch). Beth Clark prepared for the event by reviewing the archived materials, and she wrote a reflection about the past 100 years. See the document on pages 10-12 of the newsletter.

In celebration of Black History Month (February) and Women's History Month (March), we watched a recorded program from the Oakland (CA) AAUW on Mary Church Terrell's efforts to integrate AAUW. The speaker is Dr. Alison Parker of the University of Delaware. She tells the story of how many AAUW branches in the early- to mid-1900s restricted membership to white women from a select group of colleges and universities. It is a dark chapter in our history, but the story of how Terrell (a black woman born in 1863 as an enslaved person) and sympathetic others broke the resistance in the late 1940s is fascinating. The presentation is based on one chapter of Parker's book (see below). You can watch the program [here](#). You may also see a familiar face: Charmen Goehring is one of the hosts.



A Reminder from National

Officer Updates Begin April 1

If your affiliate title is president/administrator, membership vice president or finance officer, **you have the access rights to update officers for FY25 by June 30**. Even if an officer is returning, make sure to update your records if their next term starts July 1, 2024.

- Login to [Community Hub](#).
- Then go to MY AFFILIATIONS and click the button next to your affiliate name.
- Choose BRANCH COMMITTEE to update officers by following the step-by-step screen instructions.

A Year of Generous Support

- In 2023, more than 52,000 members and thousands of donors supported AAUW — including nearly 450 college and university members and over 700 branches across the country.
- **29 new members joined our Legacy Circle**, AAUW's growing community of over 700 individuals committed to making a planned estate gift to AAUW to ensure AAUW's future impact.
- **AAUW earned a 4-star Charity Navigator rating** in 2023, recognizing our commitment to best practices and industry standards in accountability, finance, culture, and community.
- AAUW members participated in an Oral History Project, collecting more than 900 stories detailing the lifelong relationships and impactful experiences they've had as a result of their dedicated membership to AAUW.



IMPORTANT DATES

- May 15, 2024 Deadline for AAUW voting
- May 30 – June 1 NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders), University of Maryland
- May 30 – June 4 Maine NEW Leadership University of Maine Campus Orono
- May 31, 2024 AAUW of Maine Council meeting (hybrid) Hilton Garden Inn Bangor
- May 31 – June 1 AAUW of Maine Annual Convention Hilton Garden Inn Bangor
- June 30, 2024 Deadline for 2024-2025 AAUW dues

Kristin Sweeney, Editor
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A Brief History on the 100th Anniversary of the Waterville Branch of the American Association of University Women

**Beth Clark, aka Mrs. J. R. Clark
January 17, 2024**

Why am I speaking tonight? As fairly a new member, I don't have the broad perspective of those of you with greater longevity. When I volunteered to view the materials in the Colby archives, I did not anticipate that I would be tasked with summarizing 100 years of our branch's history in 15 minutes. As a qualitative researcher, I am used to looking at themes and patterns. That is what I did and what I will share. I can cover only a tiny portion of the materials we have available. My hope is that Pat Burdic's skill and expertise, and my enthusiasm for what I found, will encourage others to spend time in the archives. Throughout this year, we will continue to celebrate our branch's history and the exceptional members and leaders who have helped it thrive.

Speaking of outstanding leaders, it was fun to see names of people I know repeated over and over again in the minutes: Bets Brown, passionate advocate for women in science, serving on national advisory boards; Joan Sanzenbacher championing adult education and reaching out to the greater Waterville community in many ways; a poster advertising our auction "led by the dazzling deftness and dexterity of our magical auctioneer Betty-Jane Meader"; Jackie Kulik, always ready to step in and volunteer when others may not, whether as branch president or organizing the raffle basket; Regina Oliver serving as secretary for many years and receiving the Unsung Hero Award; Carolyn MacRae who not only served in leadership positions from national on down but also organized knitting groups in her home to keep children warm and to donate to the homeless shelter. Kristin Sweeney, who left, and we gratefully welcomed her back. Her contributions to both the branch and the state are laudable. Among our members we have 2 city mayors, a state senator, a state president who was also a member of the Governor's Committee on Educational TV, and two inductees into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame.

In starting the Waterville Branch, Ninette Runnels wanted to ensure that women were included among the faculty and trustees at Colby College and that there were adequate facilities for a women's physical education program. It seems her goals are being achieved. The numbers of men and women in administrative positions at Colby are equal. On the Board the ratio is still two men for each woman; however, among the faculty there appears to be a fairly equal split. (don't know about the ratio of Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors.) Colby has recently opened a new athletic facility that serves all.

The founders had a goal to increase the number of women both entering and succeeding in higher education. Support has been given materially, financially, and socially since the branch's inception. The first scholarship was for \$50 and covered the entire cost of tuition. This year, Colby's published cost of a baccalaureate education is \$66,000. Wanting to reach more students, our focus shifted to providing interest free loans to be paid back over five years. When the cost of college tuition rose beyond our budget, we offered book allowances of \$100. That did not last long. The cost of textbooks rose as well. In 1987 we gave student memberships to Colby, Thomas, and Unity College Students. The efforts of AAUW, both locally and nation-wide, were not futile. In 1920 about 7% of American women had earned bachelor's degrees. By 2022 it was 39%. And in the fall of 2022 female students made up 58.6 % of undergraduate students nationwide. They are more likely than men to be successful in college; however, outstanding student loan balances are disproportionately high among women compared to men. Our more recent focus has shifted to pay equity and workshops on salary negotiation skills. Martha and Bet's editorial comments on Equal Pay Day have appeared in local papers for the past two years. Because of the numbers, we no longer have teas or covered dish suppers for graduating Colby women, an AAUW tradition for forty years.

Our meeting structure has changed little over 100 years. The September supper and the May gala have existed in some form throughout. In later years, this involved picnic baskets being auctioned off as a fundraiser. There were years when the choice of a restaurant was a weighty decision. For the 90th anniversary, members came to the gala dressed in costumes from each of the 9 decades. In 2021, it was

a British high tea. More recently it has been a potluck and a book swap. It is clear that food and fellowship are important to members. Meetings have always featured speakers on various subjects and consistently highlight the works of Colby's women faculty. We have connected with and learned about the work of other women's advocacy groups such as Waterville Women's Group, Family Planning, Grandparents for Reproductive Rights, Hardy Girls, and Maine Women's Lobby.

As I read through the files, I saw how the priorities of our branch changed and reflected current social norms. The emphasis on women in college education naturally branched out to include all levels of education from nursery school to adult education. As more women entered and stayed in the workforce, the focus was on supporting *those* women as well. In the 70's we talked with local employers about part time jobs for women. We also put our efforts into expanding the range of choices for women in nontraditional occupations. Our college nights for seniors were very successful but we began to see that choices needed to be explored at a younger age. A Future Focus program introduced eighth grade girls to the college experience and a range of nontraditional occupations. It continued to grow in size and, at its peak, the program hosted over 350 students.

An emphasis on lifelong learning is reflected in the study groups that were formed in the early years of our branch. These groups met in women's homes and had both an educational and an action focus. The Arts study group hosted fundraising plays and concerts, a children's art contest and show, and later a member's art show. In recent years, groups of members have attended plays at the Theater at Monmouth. The Literature study group appears to be the most enduring group lasting well into the 21st century. Some years, each study group was responsible for providing a speaker for one meeting. Having an author come and speak has been a consistent pattern over time. The Education study group lobbied for a citizen's group to evaluate the Waterville public school system. When the mayor formed a committee, several served as members. The group then advocated for the new Waterville High School and ensured there was a school library in the plans. In 1964 the International Relations study group read the book *World Peace through World Law*. I noticed that our program lists have included presentations about women's rights in countries such as the Philippines, Cambodia, Zimbabwe, and more recently Zambia. The Environmental study group passed out eco-tip brochures at Cottles and assisted with the 1969 New England Conference on Air Pollution. The Social Studies group prepared a guide for parents of children with developmental disabilities. The minutes also mention a branch choral group and a bowling league.

As women entered and stayed in the workforce, they had less time to participate in study groups. Theme based programs became the norm. Often the theme was woven throughout the year. In 1960s, one theme was testing values. The group sponsored a program on contraception, an idea which appeared to stir up controversy within the branch. This necessitated a talk with AAUW National, which strongly supported the idea. The 1970s brought *We the People*; *The Media*, *Living with Less*; *the 21st Century*; *Deciding Now*; *Redefining the Goals of Education*, *Women as Agents of Change*, and *The Politics of Food*. The 1980s included *Families Facing Change*, *Managing Resources for Tomorrow*, *Taking Hold of Technology*, *Money Talks*, *Achieving Change through Advocacy Networks*, *Peace and National Security*, *Women's Legal Issues*, *War and Peace*, *Job Seeking Skills*, and *Career Change*. The 1990s included *Assertiveness Training and Conflict Resolution*.

Working with children, particularly girls, has always been important to members. During the depression our chapter provided milk to Waterville school children until the city was able to take over. In 1943, the chapter started a Girl Scout troop, later supported a second one, and then advocated for the development of the Girl Scout Council. We started a nursery school that lasted for seven years. When it disbanded, the furniture and supplies were given to Colby which was starting its own nursery program. We supported legislation for educational TV and a statewide library system. In 1975, branch members studied athletic programs and facilities for girls in the area schools. We promoted education in smaller ways by: donating two camperships to Maine School of Science and Mathematics, collecting reference books for the new Winslow High School, donating money to YMCA for camperships, and sponsoring the Smithsonian Institution's puppet show (*Muppets?*). In 1993 the book *Hostile Hallways, AAUW's Survey on Sexual Harassment in America's Schools* was provided to thirteen area schools. In 1984 we helped establish a rape crisis center. 2016 we supported the Maine New Leadership Program to better prepare women interested in going in politics. Other contributions went to the Maine Women's Fund, gave Christmas presents to senior citizens as well

as guests at Halcyon House, a home for victims of abuse. We offered youngsters the opportunity to attend dance classes. We gave \$100 to Waterville Public Library for books and donated to Literacy Volunteers. We collected \$1168 for the new AAUW headquarters and donated to various National funds in honor and in memory of both members and prominent Maine women. We also donated to the Coretta King Fund.

We couldn't have met our objectives without significant fundraising. One hundred years of minutes celebrate these efforts and give a clear picture of the amount of money raised and the people who supported these efforts, some for many years. In the early years there were rummage sales, one act plays, concerts, marionette shows, and musical presentations. In 1933, the play *Little Women* netted \$190. An annual book, bake, and sometimes plant sale continued successfully for years until its lead advocate became burned out when there wasn't enough support. In 1990 the first annual auction was led by Betty-Jane Meader. This has been in place for 35 years!

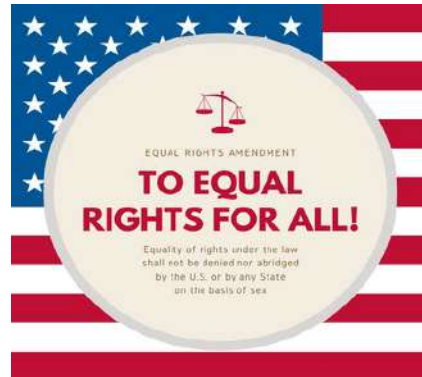
Any 100-year hundred history is bound to include wars. During World War II, branch members served in Civil Defense, Red Cross, and District Warning Committees. They rationed sugar and saved fats and grease. In the late 1940s we sent boxes of clothing to liberated countries. During the Cold war era, our minutes reflect a growing desire for peace. We showed the movie *Beyond War* and many members joined the Nuclear Freeze Movement. In 1983, Samantha Smith, a 10-year-old girl from Manchester Maine, became an international advocate for peace when she visited the Soviet Union and met with Yuri Andropov. Think of our relationship with Russia today. In 1985 we received a grant to hold a workshop on Cooling Conflict which attracted 200 registrants from all over the state. 1991 we staffed a peace booth at the Common Ground Fair. 1994 AAUW issued an action alert that stated the religious right was showing substantial influence in 18 state Republican Parties and we should make our legislators know how we feel on gender issues in education. We, like the suffragettes, began to march. In 1998 we were at the Maine Civil Rights March and Rally. In 2018, members participated in Colby's Take Back the Night Rally. We wore pussy hats and waved our banner at the Women's March. The following year we carried posters in the Maine People's Climate March. We will march again!

As we look at the status of women's rights over the past 100 years, we see areas of great progress and disappointing setbacks. Despite one hundred years of effort, the Equal Rights Amendment has still not been codified as an enduring part of either the Maine or the United States Constitutions. Bills will be presented in Congress and the Maine House of Representatives this year. Like our ancestors we must fight for their passage. We have seen our first woman governor in Maine and our first woman vice president nationally, yet our women leaders are being ridiculed and disrespected, and their lives and those of their families have been threatened. We no longer feel comfortable in our schools, churches, or even our own homes in the wake of Maine's first mass shooting. In 1973 we celebrated the passage of *Roe v. Wade*. In 2022 the Supreme Court ruled, in the *Dobbs Decision*, that the Constitution does not confer a right to abortion. In 1995 there was controversy over why AAUW was not represented at the International Conference for Women in Beijing, China. Our relationship with China is still volatile. We early supported the ecological initiatives. This year Maine has experienced the devastating effects of climate change. In 1972 members attended a Legislative Day at the State House and spoke about day care centers, a minimum wage increase, the environment, adequate funding for education, and ensuring high ethical standards and the prevention of conflict of interest in government. These concerns remain today even in our nation's highest court.

Here we are, 100 years old, continuing despite the fact that we don't have a branch president. Perhaps it is our proud history that keeps us going. Or the enduring legacy of strong, dedicated, women who are passionate about helping others, women with a vision that can help us move toward a better life. Because of Pat Burdic's work, the past hundred years will never be erased. We have a clean slate to create our future. Waterville's history demonstrates the power of women. It demonstrates that by working together and networking with other women's advocacy organizations, we can be successful. It gives us hope for the future.

AAUW-Maine Annual State Convention 2024

Equal Rights for Women: The time is NOW!



Although the Equal Rights Amendment was submitted to Congress 100 years ago, it has never been ratified as an amendment to either the Maine or the United States Constitutions. Come and learn more about the history of the ERA, where we are now, and how we can, individually and as an organization, protect and advance the rights of all women.

Location: Hilton Garden Inn, 250 Haskell Rd., Bangor, Maine 04401

A detailed schedule and speaker bios are attached.

Interested individuals who are not members of AAUW are welcome to attend. Please spread the word and consider bringing a friend.

15 rooms have been reserved at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bangor for Friday night May 31. Cost is \$218.00 including tax. To book a room, call the hotel to register at 207-262-0099. Use the group code AAUWC. All rooms have 2 queen beds, a small refrigerator and microwave, complimentary wifi, and access to the pool and fitness center. Check-in is at 3:00 pm; check-out, 11:00 am. **Note: the deadline to register and reserve rooms is May 15, 2024!** The sooner you register, the easier it is for the planning committee. Committee members appreciate your prompt reply.

For more information contact Beth Clark at 207-341-6309 or clarkbeth100@gmail.com.

**AAUW of Maine Annual State Convention
May 31-June 1, 2024
Hilton Garden Inn, 250 Haskell Rd, Bangor, ME**

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ I plan on attending the Friday events with supper (will order off menu and pay)

_____ I plan on attending the Friday evening events without supper

_____ I plan on attending the convention and business meeting on Saturday. My check for \$35.00 is enclosed

_____ I plan on attending the conference via Zoom (for those who are place bound or unable to travel). My check for \$20.00 is enclosed. (a zoom link will only be sent to those who register for this)

_____ I plan on bringing a guest to the convention. See registration form below.

Do you have any food allergies or issues the planning committee should be aware of? Explain:

Please send registration form, with checks made out to AAUW Maine, to our treasurer: Helene Maraghy, 4 Botany Place, Brunswick, ME 04011. Registration Deadline (received) May 15, 2024.

**Guest Registration Form,
AAUW of Maine Annual State Convention
May 31-June 1, 2024
Hilton Garden Inn, 250 Haskell Rd, Bangor, ME**

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ I plan on attending the Friday events with supper (will order off menu and pay)

_____ I plan on attending the Friday evening events without supper

_____ I plan on attending the convention and business meeting on Saturday, June 1. My check for \$35.00 is enclosed

Do you have any food allergies or issues the planning committee should be aware of? Explain:

Please send registration form, with checks made out to AAUW Maine, to our treasurer: Helene Maraghy, 4 Botany Place, Brunswick, ME 04011. Registration Deadline (received) May 15, 2024

Convention Schedule

Friday Afternoon and Evening Session, May 31 (in person only)

- 3:00-5:00 Room check in; State Council meeting
- 5:00-6:00 Supper (self-pay)
- 6:00-8:30 Branch Service Awards; Documentary: ***Votes for Women: The History of Women's Suffrage through Song***, Barbara Cray will attend if possible; women's rights trivia

Saturday Session, June 1

- 8:30-9:00 Registration and light breakfast
- 9:00-9:15 Social time, sign up for Two Minute Activist and/or Equal Rights Maine
- 9:15-9:30 Welcome: musical selection from Suffs, Carolyn MacRae, Debbie Melvin
- 9:30-10:00 Climate setting and introductions: be prepared to share a short (1 minute or less) example of one way you, or someone you know, promoted the rights of women.
- 10:00-10:45 **Nancy Murdock, Equal Rights Maine, and Catie Reed, Maine Women's Lobby. Making History: The Road to the ERA:** a presentation on the history, current status, and hope for the future of the ERA in Maine and beyond, focusing on how our organizations can collaborate to build a movement for change and promote success.
- 10:45-11:00 Break, check out time for hotel room, door prize
- 11:00-11:45 **Catie and Nancy**, part 2
- 11:45-12:00 Break (stretch break/chair yoga/quick power walk outside), trivia prize
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch, statewide book discussion for those interested
- 1:00-2:00 Annual state meeting: minutes, budget, election of officers, recognitions
- 2:00-2:15 Break (stretch break/chair yoga/quick power walk outside), basket prize
- 2:15-3:00 **Dorcus Ngaliema** shares her perspective as a refugee, immigrant, young woman of color, and political activist, about the rights of women, her work as a legislative aide, and suggestions for communication with legislators
- 3:00-3:05 Statement of commitment to action, closing musical selection to honor the women of AAUW and others nationwide who have fought for equal rights for women.
- 3:05-3:15 Basket raffle drawing
- 3:15-3:45 Zoom tutorial offered for those interested

AAUW-Maine Convention Speakers

Barbara Cray: We will be showing the documentary film *Votes for Women: A History of Women's Suffrage Through Song*. Barbara Cray will join us if she is able. The film tells the story of women's suffrage through historical segments narrated by Nancy Giles (contributor to CBS Sunday Morning) and illustrated with archival images and video from the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and other sources. It captures the heroic efforts of women through songs of the suffrage movement performed by the Portland chorus, Women in Harmony, a group committed to social justice, interspersed with historical accounts. Barbara won the Best Historical Film Award from the Toronto International Women Film Festival.

Nancy Murdock: was studying architecture at Princeton University in 1972, when the ERA finally passed the U. S. Congress. From her perspective, as one of the first female students at that school, it seemed overdue at the time. After retiring, forty years later, from a career as an architect, Nancy co-founded Equal Rights Maine, a grassroots organization committed to informing Mainers and those from other states about the importance of the ERA, to organizing fellow supporters and advocating for passage of both the federal and state Equal Rights Amendments, and to seeing the amendment ratification completed and recognized by the Constitutions of the U. S. and the State of Maine. Nancy lives in Brooklin, Maine with her husband and collaborator.

Catie Reed: Catie joined the staff of Maine Women's Lobby in 2022 as its Partnerships and Programs Coordinator. She is also their liaison to Equal Rights Maine. She formerly worked with Eastern Area Agency on Aging, where she collaborated on age-friendly initiatives and opened the agency's adult community center. Prior to this project, Catie spent more than 10 years at Partners for Peace in the movement to end intimate partner violence. Her work focused on increasing capacity, broadening agency reach to rural populations, and enhancing systems to better respond to domestic abuse. Catie understands the importance of listening to others and values creative thinking that promotes systems change. She believes that when policies and practices are inclusive, they benefit everyone. It is with this belief that Catie envisions a more equitable and just Maine. Catie has a Bachelor's Degree in Gender Studies and Master of Social Work from the University of Maine, where she focused on promoting gender equity through advocacy and systems change. She resides in Bangor.

Dorcas Ngaliema: Dorcas is a Congolese-South African immigrant and refugee who has called Maine "home" since 2014, diving headfirst into community initiatives such as the Boys and Girls Club which helped her to secure funding for her studies at Southern Maine Community College. While at SMCC, she worked to found a student branch of the Southern Poverty Center. She was a Martin Luther King Fellow part of a social justice program co-founded by Rachel Talbot Ross to empower young leaders of color. Dorcas also completed the Maine New Leaders Program. Her journey as a Black woman in the United States has fostered an intersectional feminist perspective, focusing on amplifying the voices and experiences of Black women. Interning with Senators Angus King and Jon Ossoff provided invaluable insights into the political landscape, leading to her current role as staff assistant and intern coordinator for Massachusetts Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley. Dedicated to fostering opportunities for young women and women of color in politics, Dorcas is committed to mentoring and supporting their journey on Capitol Hill.

Bringing Family Members? Places to Visit and Things to Do in Bangor Maine and Surrounding Communities

Orono Bog: Enjoy the beauty and fascination of the plants and animals of a Maine bog. The walkway has colorful signs with explanations of common bog plants and the environment.

Maine Discovery Museum: Open Friday and Saturday 10:00-5:00; \$12 per person, \$10 for seniors and military. The museum exhibits include art, literature, geography, and daily STEAM activities (science, technology, engineering, art, and math). Lots of hands-on fun for children and adults.

Cole Land Transportation Museum: 405 Perry Road, Bangor. Open 9:00-4:00 seven days a week (starting May 1) with displays of a cross section of Maine's land transportation equipment and military memorabilia. June 1, 2024 from 4:00-7:00 will be Night at the Museum with live actors, scavenger hunts, and exhibits - \$5.00 for adults and children free.

Mount Hope Cemetery: The second oldest garden cemetery in the U. S., it was designed for the living as well as the dead. It is beautifully landscaped with gardens ponds, grottoes, and walking paths.

Hollywood Casino: 500 Main St. Bangor, billed as a Vegas style casino.

Stephen King's house: 47 West Broadway, Bangor. Although Stephen King no longer lives here and it serves as an archive of his work, you can view his iconic Victorian mansion and take a selfie in front of the unique fencing that surrounds it. The gate sports a spider, bat, and dragon.

Penobscot River Walk: This paved walkway along the Penobscot River is one mile long, one way. It features beautiful views of the river, sculptures, a public small craft dock, and food trucks.

Paul Bunyan Statue: Stop and have your picture taken with the 31-foot statue of Paul Bunyan located at 519 Main St, Bangor in Bass Park.

UMaine's Zillman Art Museum: 40 Harlow St. Bangor, open 10:00-5:00 pm Friday and Saturday. Its focus is modern and contemporary art. Admission is free.

UMaine's Versant Power Astronomy Center and Maynard Planetarium: Scheduled program May 31, 7:00-8:00 pm: Legends of the Northern Sky. Cost is \$7.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children under 12.

Bangor City Forest: The forest has no fees and is open to the public. There are 17.4 miles of trails, ranging from easy to moderate difficulty, where you can view a working forest and wildlife habitat. June 1 starts Love Maine Trails Month.

Antique shopping: If you like shopping for antiques and second-hand items, there are many places to shop around Bangor. Two that may interest you are the Antique Marketplace and Cafe at 65 Main Street in Bangor and School House Antique Mall at 530 S. Maine St. in Brewer.

Bangor European Farmers' Market: 117 Buck Street, Sunnyside Green House, Bangor. This year-round market has a huge variety to offer including ethnic foods, such as Greek and Mexican, to fresh, local produce, eggs, meat, milk, cheese, and baked goods a plenty! There are also occasionally crafters. Bangor's European Market is open every Saturday, 8:30am-12:30pm

BUDGET 2025

AAUW of Maine	Budget 2025
Revenue	
Dues	1,485.00
State Meetings	1,200.00
Fundraising - campaign	-
AAUW Funds (basket raffle)	400.00
Total Revenue	3,085.00
Expenses	
Officers and Committees	
President	150.00
Board Officers/Committees	100.00
Public Policy	100.00
Achievement Citation	-
State Meetings	1,700.00
Ballroom Rental	
Meals	
Mileage Reimbursement	
Honorariums / Convention	
AAUW Funds	400.00
Miscellaneous	
Sponsorships	400.00
Gifts/Flowers	50.00
Insurance (Director/Officers)	-
Outreach/Tabling Events	-
Travel	
National Convention	-
Communications	
Dawnbreaker	-
Directory/Annual Report	-
Web site	-
Postage	25.00
Zoom Subscription	160.00
Total Budgeted Expenses	3,085.00