 **The AAUWL** EARLY FALL 2021

Newsletter for the Danbury Area Branch of

American Association of University Women

Editor: Toni Kenner Pepe

***The mission of AAUW is advancing gender equity***

***through research, education and advocacy****.*

**President’s Letter** *by Julia P. Horne*

It is with heavy heart we know that one of our staunch, dedicated members, ***Rosemary*** ***Woolwich,*** has passed away. Rosemary was an educator in the Danbury Public Schools for many years, served as our AAUW president from 2004-2007, and has been involved in several other civic activities. During her tenure as our president, Rosemary created the Science/STEM award that is given to a fifth grade girl who shows a propensity for the sciences and mathematics. This award is still given to students in the Danbury Public Schools.

I am sure many of us recall having our final June meetings at her home in Bridgewater, followed by Elliott cooking hot dogs and hamburgers on the grill. What fun times we shared. We will all miss Rosemary, but we will always remember her life and the devoted service she rendered to the Greater Danbury Community.

Your **Branch Board of Directors** held a Zoom meeting on September 9. Below are some highlights. Further information about several of the items appears in this AAUWL.

First, **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR AAUW DANBURY AREA BRANCH.** September 19, 2021 marked 81 years of dedicated service to the Greater Danbury community**!**

**AAUWL newsletter:** A special thanks to Toni for the newsletter. It is the glue that keeps us all connected.

**Treasurer’s Report**: approved to move money to a new CD. Wendy agreed to help with the Scholarship Committee. We have 27 active members at this time. We are waiting for the 7 people who have not yet renewed.

**Mah Jongg Tournament**: will be held on Sunday, November 14th at The Amber Room.

**Book Group:** meets every 2nd Monday. If interested in joining, please contact Marge G.

**Public Policy Update**: Pay Equity, STEM Pilot Program for girls grades 9-12 is encouraging young women to participate.

**October Meeting:** will be a joint meeting with the League of Women Voters of Northern Fairfield County.

**Gourmet Club**: you will be receiving dates.

**Book and Author (May 21, 2022):** We are looking for an author. We discussed **Martha Hall Kelly**, author of ***Lilac Girls*** and ***Sunflower Girls***. If you have an author to suggest for this event, please let us know.

I hope all of you are doing well. Let’s keep checking on each other and continue to stay safe in these uncertain times**.**

**My Years as Danbury Area Branch President 2007-2011** *by Julia Horne*

During my 2007-2011 tenure as president of our AAUW Branch, my most special memory is when our Danbury Branch hosted the AAUWCT Spring Conference at the Ethan Allen Hotel. Since several members lived hours away from Danbury, several opted to make reservations for Friday night to avoid the Saturday morning traffic. Our members planned some engaging games and activities as well as some delicious treats for the guests who stayed overnight. More than 100 AAUW members from across the state attended the Saturday event. Our Mayor Mark Boughton and Dr. Schmotter, President of WCSU, came and extended a warm welcome to the AAUW members. Our morning session was followed by a delicious buffet lunch located in the large reception area of the hotel. The afternoon business session continued and the event culminated with an outstanding presentation from the Athena Club, named for the powerful Greek female goddess. More than 30 middle school girls and their teacher from the Bridgeport Public School system presented a program with the focus on STEM education and careers. This indeed was a successful and outstanding Spring Conference.

**October 14 4 pm virtual Public Policy meeting** *Sophie Godward & Toni Pepe*

We are pleased to announce that, following the pattern of the last several years, this meeting will be cosponsored by AAUW, Danbury Area Branch and the League of Women Voters of Northern Fairfield County. We have much in common as members of long established, respected, nonpartisan, and effective organizations. The focus of this meeting will be on each organizations’s key priorities in public policy and how members can make a difference at every level through informed advocacy. Members will receive an invitation with more details and the policy priorities of both our groups in early October.

Voter registration is always high on the list for the League. Here is a message from ***Mary Consoli*** for LWVNFC: *As the Coordinator of Voter Service for the League of Women Voters of Northern Fairfield County, I am very excited to let you know we are participating in the National Day of Voter Registration on September 28, 2021. Four public libraries in Bethel, Brookfield, Danbury and New Fairfield, along with both WCSU campuses, have agreed to host voter registration tables. These registration events will be held in each location from noon until 6:00 pm, with volunteers scheduled in 3 hour blocks from noon until 3:00 and 3:00 until 6:00.*

**Gourmet Lunch Group** *by Anne Hill*

Our gourmet lunch group will begin to meet again on Wednesday October 27 at noon at Los Andes Restaurant (Latin American cuisine) at 33 Crosby Street in Danbury. All are welcome. Please call to let me know you are coming. My number is 203-792-1475.

Gourmet lunch takes place on the fourth Wednesday of the month except for November when it is on the third Wednesday.

**AAUW DANBURY AREA BOOK GROUP 2021-22**

The AAUW Danbury Area Book Group meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 12 noon.  Members bring their lunch and the hostess provides drinks and dessert.  Please notify the hostess several days in advance if you are attending the meeting.  New members are always invited.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2021/ Hostess Marge Guerin

Present: Toni Pepe, Peggy Vallerie, Sophie Godward, Patricia Villella, Edith Sherman, Marge Guerin

This was the first meeting since March, 2020, the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.  It was wonderful to see everyone in person again, yet it was also a productive business meeting.  From the many titles recommended, three were selected for the upcoming months.

OCTOBER 11, 2021/ Hostess Toni Pepe 203-830-9030

*Band of Sisters*by Lauren Willig

A group of young women from Smith College risk their lives in France at the height of World War I in this sweeping novel based on a true story.

NOVEMBER 8, 2021/ Hostess Patricia Villella 203-470-4204

*The Body Keeps the Score* by Bessel Van de Kolk, MD

Numbing may keep us from suffering in the short-term, but long-term is another matter.  “…though the mind may learn to ignore the messages from the emotional brain, the alarm signals don’t stop.  The emotional brain keeps working, and stress hormones keep sending signals to the muscles to tense for action or immobilize in collapse.  The physical effects on the organs go on unabated until they demand notice when they are expressed as illness.  Medications, drugs, and alcohol can also temporarily dull or obliterate unbearable sensations and feelings.  But the body continues to keep the score.”

DECEMBER 13, 2021/ Hostess Marge Guerin 203-746-7404

*Miss Benson’s Beetle*by Rachel Joyce

It is 1950. London is still reeling from World War II, and Margery Benson, a schoolteacher and spinster, is trying to get through life, surviving on scraps. One day, she reaches her breaking point, abandoning her job and small existence to set out on an expedition to the other side of the world in search of her childhood obsession: an insect that may or may not exist—the golden beetle of New Caledonia. When she advertises for an assistant to accompany her, the woman she ends up with is the last person she had in mind. Fun-loving Enid Pretty in her tight-fitting pink suit and pom-pom sandals seems to attract trouble wherever she goes. But together these two British women find themselves drawn into a cross-ocean adventure that exceeds all expectations and delivers something neither of them expected to find: the transformative power of friendship.

Other Suggestions:

 NOVELS:

*The Lincoln Highway* by Amor Towles

            *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

            *The Four Winds* by Kristen Hannah

            *My Life with Bob*by Pamala Paul

            *The Giver of Stars* by Jo Jo Moyes

ART:

  *The Forest Lover* by Susan Vreeland

HISTORY:

 *The Children’s Blizzard*by Melanie Benjamin

ESPIONAGE/SPY:

*The Cellist* by Daniel Silva

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