

Advancing Equity for Women & Girls



Middletown Newsletter

November 2016

SIXTH ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11 & 12 from 9:00-3:00

4312 Walton Ct. – Middletown

LAST DROP OFF SATURDAY will be this Saturday, November 5th. Please bring your donations between 10:00am-2:00pm.

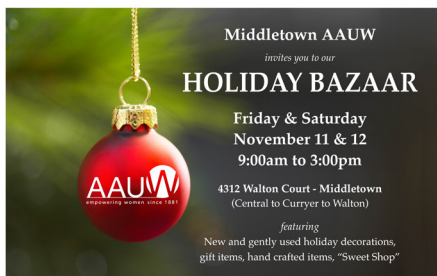
WORK DAYS will be Monday & Tuesday, November 7 & 8, from 9:00am-12:00noon. Please come at your convenience to help price and make last minute preparations for the sale.

SWEET SHOP donations to be delivered Thursday, November 9, the door will be open at 9:00am.

PREVIEW SALE for Branch members will be Thursday, November 9, from 6:00-8:00 pm. This is a good time for members to see the event, have some hot cider and sample the treats, fellowship with other members - just a fun time and shop if you like.

SPREAD THE WORD that we have a nice collection of new/gently used holiday items, a delicious SWEET SHOP filled with homemade goodies and items to be re-gifted.

CONTACT Rose at 513-424-1969 or edrosegrau@cinci.rr.com if you have questions or need special drop off times.



Calendar of Events

Monday, November 7, 9-12

Tuesday, November 8, 9-12

Holiday Bazaar Work Days

Thursday, November 10, 6-8pm

Branch Holiday Bazaar Preview

Friday & Saturday

November 11 & 12

Holiday Bazaar

4312 Walton Court, Middletown

Monday, November 14, 7pm

Branch Program & Meeting

Central Connections

Tuesday, November 15, 7pm

Voluntary Simplicity

Thursday, November 17, 7pm

Joy Luck Book Club

Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a

Family and Culture in Crisis

by J.D. Vance

Lynne Rentschler's home

December 8 - 14

Light Up Middletown



Volunteer with Light Up Middletown

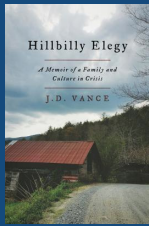
Santa needs our help! We will be volunteering at Light Up Middletown from Thursday, December 8 through Wednesday, December 14. Two shifts (5:45 to 8:00 pm and 7:45 to 10:00 pm) of two people are needed each evening. A sign-up sheet for volunteers will be passed at the November and December branch meetings, or you can contact Cari Hillman (chillman@midpointelibrary.org or 513-705-8511) to reserve your volunteer time.



November Meeting on Silent Witness Project

We will meet on November 14 at 7:00 pm at Central Connections, located at 3907 Central Avenue, in order to learn more about the Silent Witness Project. The Silent Witness Project is a traveling memorial to victims of domestic violence, meant to increase awareness and education about the impacts of domestic violence.

“Joy Luck” Book Club



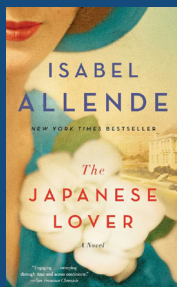
November 17 at 7 pm
 Lynne Rentschler’s home
Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis by J.D. Vance

Close to a unanimous member choice, Hillbilly Elegy is a powerful memoir of growing up in a “Rust Belt town” [i.e., Middletown!] written by a poor white boy who went on to join the U.S. Marines and graduate from Yale Law School. It has ignited a broad discussion of what it’s like to grow up poor and white in America.



Next Month’s Book Club

December 15 at 7 pm
The Japanese Lover by Isabel Allende
 Need host



New York Times bestselling author Isabel Allende has written “a magical and sweeping” (Publishers Weekly, starred review) love story and multigenerational epic that stretches from San Francisco to Poland and blends time from past decades to present day. This selection was suggested in our February meeting.



Nita Driscoll, Middletown Branch President

AAUW Middletown Branch celebrated 91 years in October and still going strong—thanks to dedicated members like you. AAUW National has a New Anniversary Pin Campaign—presenting Member Anniversary Pins to commemorate and celebrate members who have reached their 5,10,20,30, or 40 years. 50 year member pins are sent directly along with a special certificate. At the October Branch meeting I was pleased to present 4 of our members with a pin. The members are: Barbara Balsmeyer 5 years, Judy Florence 5 years, Betty Jo Baker 10 years, Rebecca Ward 20 years. Congratulations to all!

October was National Domestic Violence Awareness month and in keeping with this topic our speaker for November is Mary Krueger, a National Director of the Silent Witness Project. Mary was a speaker at the State convention in 2014 which I attended. The Silent Witness Project deals with domestic violence and is a memorial to women and girls whose lives have been ended at the hands of a husband, an ex husband, partner or a stalker. The Silent Witness International is active in 50 states and 23 countries.

Please plan to attend and invite your friends to this Branch meeting. Our speaker is coming from Bowling Green, Ohio. Let’s have a good attendance and show our support. Remember to vote!

Next Voluntary Simplicity Gathering

Voluntary Simplicity will meet on Tuesday, November 15, 2016. We will meet at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Barb Balsmeyer, 260 Seminary Drive, Mount Pleasant Village. Seminary turns off Britton Lane. Please RSVP to Barb Balsmeyer, barbbalsmeyer@cinci.rr.com or 513/402-7374.

The topic for our November meeting is *Sensitivity and Simplicity--Dealing With Families*. If you would like to be the discussion leader for our November meeting, please contact Becky Ward (424-8409 or beckward@gmail.com) or Carolyn Smith (513/360-0128 or csrsmith48@gmail.com).

The mission of Voluntary Simplicity is: *To serve as a support group to continue exploring ways to move toward a sustainable lifestyle, simplifying life, being sensitive to our families, the environment, and the world around us.*

Named Gifts Nominations

Nominations for AAUW Educational Foundation Named Gifts are currently being accepted. Please send names, along with brief biographies and AAUW accomplishments to Cari Hillman, AAUW Funds Chair, at chillman@midpointelibrary.org. All attendees will vote for this year’s honorees at our November branch meeting.

Public Policy News

A quick note on election protection: Anyone encountering a problem voting early or on election day can call the Election Protection hotline, 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683), staffed by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights.

Please be aware that the potential for a "rigged" election is next to zero. The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition reassures voters that Ohio's many layers of safeguards built into the voting process insure that it is fair and accurate. Voters with concerns can call the hotline number above.

In this issue:

- Issue of the Month: Reviving Civility
- Legislative update: What to expect in the lame duck session
- Charter schools: ECOT revelations
- Gender By Us Toolkit
- Feedback on your election activities
- Reviving Civility

It's been a long and contentious election season, one that has split families and friends. Somehow, we need to find ways to come together, find common ground, and heal our divisions. I've mentioned the National Institute for Civil Discourse before; the institute notes that incivility in America has reached epidemic proportions and makes the case that our democracy depends on civil behavior. Now you can find a program there that encourages citizens to adopt standards of conduct and offers a downloadable toolkit with concrete steps for helping to revive civility in our campaigns and our everyday lives. Standards of conduct are also suggested for candidates and the media. You can find this at www.nicd.arizona.edu/revivecivility. AAUW members are generally models of civil behavior; the toolkits can help us to encourage others to be civil as well.

Legislative Update: Lame Duck

The General Assembly will be returning to the Statehouse after the election with a limited agenda. (All bills not enacted by the end of the year will die; any bill still requiring action will have to be reintroduced in the new session starting in January.) Because the Constitutional Modernization Commission has been slow to come to agreement on a congressional redistricting amendment, we can expect a major push from advocates for action by the legislature. We're looking at an amendment similar to that adopted last year that will change the redistricting process for the General Assembly.

It's also likely that there will be a push to pass the 20-week abortion ban, Senate Bill 127. It passed the Senate in 2015 and has been sitting in the House Community and Family Advancement Committee. Opponents argue that the bill does not provide enough exceptions, including for rape and incest. The American Gynecological and Obstetrical Society and the American Medical Association oppose the bill because it places limitations on treatment for serious conditions. Ohio Right to Life is the major proponent of the bill.

Two bills that were highlighted at the Women United for Change event last April are targeted for action by advocates: House Bill 362, which would increase the penalties for strangulation in domestic violence cases and House Bill 392, which would authorize protection orders against intimate partners. Both bills have passed the House without any opposition and are awaiting action in the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. You'll hear more about these as details become known.

Charter Schools: ECOT Revelations

The Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT), already involved in a state lawsuit in which it could lose millions of dollars, is now faced with more evidence that its students are not logging in for classroom work. The Columbus Dispatch has reported that in a sample of 699 students, as many as 70% missed so many unexcused days that they would be truant under state law. Of the sample, the median student missed 30 school days last school year. Regardless, ECOT has billed the state for more than double the actual time students spent in class. Even worse, ECOT received F's on the most recent state report cards, meeting only one of 28 standards in math, reading and other subjects by grade level.

Gender BY Us Toolkits

The Women's Fund of Central Ohio has a project for us. Similar to AAUW's program in a box, the organization has prepared toolkits that encourage conversations on gender norms. Noting that gender norms are the root of many issues facing women and men and that the expectations society has for the behavior of women and girls impacts women's economic self-sufficiency, the Women's Fund is asking groups and individuals to participate in small group discussions using the toolkit. The goal is to create positive change by raising awareness about the impact of gender norms. You can download the toolkit at www.womensfundcentralohio.org/gender-by-us. If you have questions, the email address is genderbyus@womensfundcentralohio.org.

Election Activities Feedback

How did your branch respond to the challenges of this election? Did you endorse a candidate for the state school board? Did you distribute the AAUW voting records? Did you participate in candidate forums and were your questions answered? Please give us your feedback—email me at kgraauw@yahoo.com. We need to know what works for you to be better prepared for the next election. Your comments on other activities are welcome as well.

Karen Rainey, AAUW Ohio Public Policy Chair
kgraauw@yahoo.com