



Middletown Newsletter

April 2019

## Welcome Spring with April Program

Jeff Michel, executive director of Keep Middletown Beautiful (KMB), will present the April branch program on Monday, April 8 at 7 pm at the Thatcher Temple Arts Building Conference Room, 5 N. Main Street. Michel's topic, Keep Middletown Beautiful and Earth Day Preparation, is just in time for Earth Day 2019 on April 22nd.

Jeff Michel is a local landscape designer who moved here in 2006 volunteering to clean up our parks. Today, working with the Public Works Department of Middletown, the KMB organization cleans up and beautifies several parks and right-of-ways throughout the Middletown region. This year's focus will be on the renovation of Smith Park and 20 community (neighborhood) cleanups throughout the city of Middletown.

The Thatcher Arts Conference Center sits beside last year's book sale site and was in the process of renovation during the 2018 book sale. Come enjoy Michel's program and a reinvigorated downtown building. Several free parking areas are available nearby.

## Come on Down to the Members Only Used Book Sale

On Tuesday, April 9, all AAUW members are invited to come shopping at our 63rd Used Book Sale. This year we are located at 2024 Central Avenue (just to the left of Stefano's). We will be open from 4 until 7 pm – just for you. This will give you a good opportunity to buy the best books. You will also see and understand how the books are organized this year. Plus, you will be able to sign up for shifts to actually work at the sale which starts on Thursday evening, April 11, and goes until 5 pm on the following Sunday.

We have lots of good books. We are in a very accessible location. There is plenty of off-street parking. Most of all, we have lots of room indoors; browsing/buying should be very comfortable this year. If you are unable to come shopping on April 9, but can help us out during the sale, please call Tina Newlin at 424-1120 to sign up. All of us need to encourage our friends and family to shop the book sale!

## Slate of 2019-20 Officers

Here is the slate of officers for the Middletown AAUW Branch to be voted on at our April 8th meeting. Thanks to all who agreed to step up to leadership and our nominating committee Jackie Lankfer and Anita Shew.

President - Chris Buchert

Co-VP Program - Michelle Piepgrass & Kristen Mulligan

Co-VP Membership - Paula Cohen & Jackie Lankfer

Corresponding Secretary - Ginny Palmer

Recording Secretary - Becky Ward

Co-Financial Officers - Katie DeVilling & Katie McNeil

## Calendar of Events

### Women Enriching Lives Luncheon April 6

Speaker: Thane Maynard,  
Cincinnati Zoo  
Majors Event Barn, Monroe

### April Branch Program Monday, April 8, 7 pm

Keep Middletown Beautiful and  
Earth Day Preparation  
Thatcher Temple Arts Building  
Conference Room  
5 N. Main Street

### 63rd Annual Book Sale Tuesday, April 9, 4-7 pm

Members Only

### Thursday, April 11

Presale \$7 Entry Fee

### Friday-Sunday, April 12-14

### Great Decisions

### Thursday April 11, 1-2:30 pm

The United States and Mexico:  
Partnership Tested  
Gardner Harvey Library

### Thursday, April 25, 1-2:30 pm

State of the State Department  
and Diplomacy  
Gardner Harvey Library

### PENS Writing Group

### Wednesday, April 10, 9:30 am

Marita Stueck's house

### Thursday, April 25, 9:30 am

Marita Stueck's house

### Joy Luck Book Club

### Thursday, April 25, 7 pm

*Becoming*—Michelle Obama  
Host: Lynne Rentschler

### LOOKING AHEAD

### Annual Awards Dinner and Officer Installation

### May 14, 6:30 pm

Browns Run Country Club

### Joy Luck Book Club

### Thursday May 16, 7 pm

*Case Histories*—Kate Atkinson  
Host: Ginny Palmer

### Voluntary Simplicity

### Tuesday May 21, 7 pm

Topic: Being Our Best Selves  
TBD

## "Joy Luck" Book Club

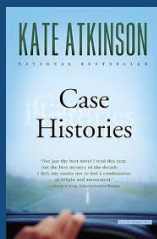
**April 25 at 7:00 pm**  
***Becoming* – Michelle Obama**  
**Lynne Renstchler's home**



This is the autobiographic memoir of former first lady Michelle Obama. A work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Mrs.

Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work.

**May 16 at 7:00 pm**  
***Case Histories* – Kate Atkinson**  
**Virginia Palmer's home**



This is the first book in Atkinson's popular Jackson Brodie Mysteries series, called "the best mystery of the decade" by Stephen King. When private investigator

Jackson Brodie follow three seemingly unconnected family mysteries in Edinburgh 30 years after the first incident, startling connections and discoveries emerge.



## Carolyn Smith, Middletown Branch President

Out of the blue and it is spring. Soon the heat through the sunroom window will fuel my reading and writing, replacing the fireside where I sit now. I've read eleven books since the new year, a sure sign that reading gets me through the winter.

Some of those have been for AAUW book club. How I enjoyed our March meeting and discussion of Barbara Kingsolver's *Unsheltered*. She took on so many issues in that book: climate change, marriage, the roles of women, prejudice, millennials, and, of course, what it means to be unsheltered.

The book started me thinking about the many issues and projects of our Middletown AAUW. We impact the community and each other in so many ways. Here are some things that happened just in March:

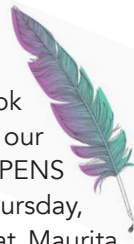
- The Joy Luck Book Club met at Marianne Zsiska's house.
- At the March branch meeting, set up by Nita Driscoll, Dr. George Sehi taught us about Women Walking West. A hospitality committee provided refreshments.
- The nominating committee, Anita Shew and Jackie Lankfer, put together a slate of officers to be voted on at the April meeting.
- Board members met, finalized plans for the April meeting, and discussed numerous topics related to running an organization.
- Members wrote newsletter articles and editor Suzy Tadych created another issue of our award-winning newsletter. Corresponding secretary Ginny Palmer reviewed and distributed it. By the way, our newsletter was cited as the number one in the state! Congratulations to everyone who submits information and to Suzy for your wonderful consistency.
- Ten members attended the Southwest Ohio AAUW Spring Summit where we met with three state officers and members from four other branches. Sessions focused on financial literacy and advocating for women's pay equity and financial security. Member Katie McNeil led a discussion of new Title IX policy. Carolyn Smith was co-chair of the event. Chris Buchert and Katie DeVilling served as treasurers. The branch received STARZ awards and communications awards.

- A large group lunched at Applebee's and toured the David & Nancy Wolf Holocaust and Humanity Center at the Cincinnati Museum Center.
- Members attended two March Great Decisions discussions hosted by Katie McNeil at the Gardner Harvey.
- The PENS writing group met twice and shared writing that showed a growing sense of confidence and adventure.
- The book sale committee worked every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday gathering, sorting, and pricing books for the annual sale. They can use your help as we enter the final few days of pricing .and still need volunteers to work the event April 11-14.
- Voluntary Simplicity toured Schaefer's Farm Market to learn about Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and met with member Beth Crout for discussion afterwards.

This list does not include emails, phone calls, or even small meetings such as the one between Robin Becker, Katie McNeil, and the Title IX coordinator at Miami University. I write this to remind us all that our organization is rich in opportunity and a complex operation. Every project is immensely rewarding and stressful in planning. The challenge is to continue doing our good work and to look for ways that simplify, lessen stress, and invite participation by others. What routines can we as a branch simplify? Are the state and national organizations complicit in the stress we feel in local branches? How do we best use the talents of each branch member to continue with the AAUW mission?

I look forward to seeing you soon.

## PENS



Our schedules continue to be filled with book pricing and book sale, and we have adjusted our meeting days and time accordingly. In April our PENS group will meet on Wednesday, April 10, and Thursday, April 25, 9:30-11:00. The time for We meet at Maurita Stueck's home, 132 Northwestern Avenue, Monroe (Mount Pleasant campus). Our format is to **bring a piece of writing to share with the group** (5 minute time frame/each writer). We are a supportive group and have shared written pieces across all genres. All writers are welcome to come pursue your creative muse! Please email or call Becky Ward with any questions: [beckward@gmail.com](mailto:beckward@gmail.com) or 513/424-8409.

## Southwest Spring Summit Brings Branches Together

The March 23 AAUW Southwest District Spring Summit brought members together to study topics related to pay equity and women's finances. State policy co-chair Rush Rogers presented *Women in Debt: Issues and Solutions*. AAUW Ohio President and state officer JoAnn Benseler gave updates on the state and presented awards. Lunch, hosted by Joan Elder of the Springfield branch, gave members time to talk with each other and look at issues of financial education and women's advocacy.

We reviewed *The Two-Minute Activist*, an online system in the AAUW website that sends your support of particular AAUW supported issues to the appropriate law-makers. The *Two-Minute Activist* may have had some hand in the recent passage in the U.S. House of Representatives of the Pay Day Equity Bill.

In the afternoon Dr. Molly Helmlinger, Sidney-Shelby County, showed members the details of the AAUW Work Smart program. Each of us can make a difference in the lives of working women. Go online to the national website and take this short course in negotiations. Then encourage women you know in the work force to do the same.

Katie McNeil, assisted by Michelle Abrams of Lebanon-Mason and Robin Becker reviewed Title IX Updates. Proposed rollbacks in Title IX protections will keep this issue at the forefront of AAUW policy.

Attendees gave the program high marks but wished for more time for breaks and talking with members from other branches. The district meetings across the state have more than doubled the number of participants in events beyond the branch.

The program was planned by Elaine Nishwitz of Sidney-Shelby County and Carolyn Smith.



## Support for VGIF

Our branch received a letter from VGIF asking for donations for their work throughout the world empowering women to solve problems affecting their communities. VGIF was originally called the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund. Gildersleeve was well-known as the only woman to sign the United Nations founding charter on behalf of the United States.

AAUW is a partner of VGIF. If you are interested in learning more about VGIF as they celebrate their 50th year of women's leadership building, please check out their website, [www.vgif.org](http://www.vgif.org).



Top left: Dr. Molly Helmlinger (Sidney-Shelby County), Katie McNeil (Middletown), Michelle Abrams (Mason-Lebanon), Robin Becker (Middletown) Bottom left: Meeting co-chairs Carolyn Smith (Middletown) and Elaine Nishwitz (Sidney-Shelby County) Right: Morning speakers Nancy Stellhorn (State President), Rush Rogers (State Public Policy Co-Chair), and JoAnn Benseler (STARZ Awards and BeWise Camp Coordinator)

### AAUW Dues

The AAUW fiscal year runs from July 1 – June 30. Middletown AAUW will pass out membership invoices at the April branch meeting and collect checks at the April and/or May branch meetings.

National dues are still \$59.00. State remains at \$11.00 and our Middletown branch dues are \$10.00. Total is \$80. Lifetime members do not pay National dues. They owe \$21. Honorary lifetime members do not pay national or state dues. They owe \$10.

Make checks payable to Middletown AAUW. Please send checks and Branch Membership Renewal Form to PO Box 118, Middletown, OH 45042 or give to Chris Buchert or Katie DeVilling – Finance Officers.

If dues are not received by the May meeting, you will be contacted and reminded to send in your dues. Finance officers MUST receive dues by June 15 to meet national deadlines. Contact the Finance officers if you do not intend to renew your membership for next year.

**Dues for the 2019-2020 are as follows:**

- National: \$59.00 (\$46.00 is tax deductible)
- State: \$11.00 (paid lifetime members only pay state, local)
- Local: \$10.00 (used for our Middletown branch)
- TOTAL: \$80.00 due at May Meeting

**PAYABLE AT THE MAY MEETING OR MAIL TO:**

AAUW Middletown Branch  
 P.O. Box 118  
 Middletown, OH 45042



### AAUW Middletown Branch Membership Renewal Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

**AAUW ANNUAL JUNE GARAGE SALE**  
**Friday and Saturday, June 7 & 8 – 8:00-4:00**  
**4312 Walton Court – Middletown, OH**

**DONATIONS NEEDED** – Invite your family, friends and neighbors to contribute.

A checklist for your convenience –

- \_\_\_ Linens: sheets, towels, pillows, blankets, bedspreads, tablecloths, placemats, rugs
- \_\_\_ Kitchen items: dishes, flatware, baking items, pots and pans, glassware
- \_\_\_ Small appliances: mixer, toaster, coffee maker, crock pot, can opener, blender
- \_\_\_ Games, puzzles, toys, children’s books
- \_\_\_ CD’s, DVD’s, records
- \_\_\_ Shoes, purses, hats, scarves, jewelry
- \_\_\_ Tools of all kinds
- \_\_\_ Decorative items: pictures, vases, wreaths, pottery, lamps
- \_\_\_ Sport equipment: golf, fishing, tennis, bikes
- \_\_\_ Furniture
- \_\_\_ Garden tools
- \_\_\_ Craft and office items
- \_\_\_ Electronics, if they work and are complete
- \_\_\_ Antiques and collectibles

**PLEASE NO** – clothing, large TV’s or large exercise equipment

**DROP OFF SATURDAYS:**

- May 18 – 10:00-2:00
- May 25 – 10:00-2:00
- June 1 - 10:00-2:00

Contact Rose for information or to schedule a different drop off time at 513-424-1969 or edrosegrau@cinci.rr.com.

**AAUW Middletown Branch Officers**

**Branch President**

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