



Equity Now

DEC. 2023

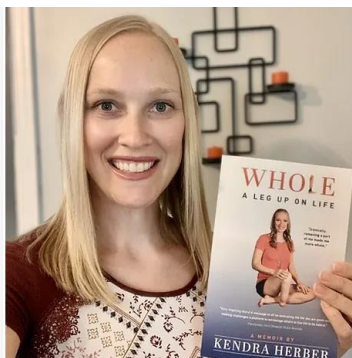
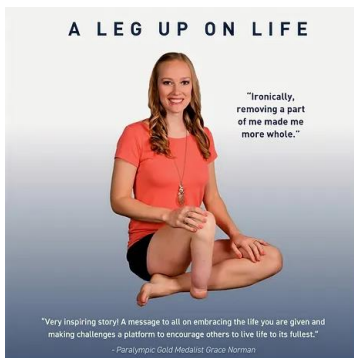
**Program Note:** Members will be sent a Zoom invite through emails. Non-members who wish to Zoom should contact Mel Worbis at [worbismm@gmail.com](mailto:worbismm@gmail.com) for link.

## Book Talk with Kendra Herber

Monday, Dec. 11 at 7 pm

Kettering Hospital Community Room,  
6147 State Route OH-122 in Middletown and Zoom\*

We will return to Kettering Health Center's Community Room for our meeting on Monday, December 11, at 7 pm, when we welcome author Kendra Herber to talk about meeting the many challenges of life as an amputee, teacher, mother, author, and triathlete. Kendra will have copies of her book, *Whole: A Leg Up On Life*, available to purchase.



## Holiday Bazaar Scores Fundraising Success

AAUW Middletown's annual Holiday Bazaar grossed \$7,452 this year. Committee chairs – Chris Buchert, Carol Schul, Erin Eldredge and Rose Grau – thank all who helped in some way, from donating goods to arranging merchandise, working the sale and helping with clean-up.

“All the trees sold, jewelry flew off the tables, dolls were a big hit, strings of electric lights found new homes, and Christmas decorations disappeared,” Chris reported. “Shoppers had a great time browsing and finding new treasures. Very few people walked out without buying something, and some shoppers gave extra donations. Children found gifts for their loved ones. Workers shopped when they weren't busy. The two weekends were a time of fellowship and selling.”

Some unsold items were donated to the First United Methodist Church Pantry, and fabric leftovers were sent to Thread Up Oxford. One Way Farms picked up the remaining items. Once again, our “store” at 2204 Central looks clean and ready for our next fundraising project. Thanks again supporting our mission to raise money towards giving scholarships for years to come.

## Calendar of Events

**Book Talk with Kendra Herber**  
Monday, Dec. 11 at 7:00 pm

► Kettering Hosp. Community Room, 6147 St. Rt. OH-122

*Author Kendra Herber will discuss the many challenges of being an amputee and becoming a teacher, mother, author and triathlete. She will have copies of her book available to purchase.*

**PENS Writing Group**  
Thursday, Dec. 14 at 1:00 pm

► Miami U. Middletown's Gardner Harvey Library Rm 123 (see page 3)

**Joy Luck Book Club**  
Thursday, Dec. 14 at 7:00 pm

► Chris Buchert's home (see next page)

**Gun Safety Review**  
Monday, Jan. 8 at 7:00 pm

► Kettering Hosp. Community Room, 6147 St. Rt. OH-122

*Branch member Carolyn Dell Patrick will present the Be SMART program, a framework for keeping communities safe. Be SMART was launched in 2015 to promote responsible gun ownership in order to reduce child gun deaths.*

**On Women's Health**  
Monday, Feb. 12 at 7:00 pm

► Zoom Only

*Our speaker will be a representative from The Well, a Women's Wellness Center in Kettering, Ohio. The Well is dedicated to providing true healthcare to all, with a specialty in whole-person nutrition and care for women, babies and children.*

## Joy Luck Book Club

Thurs., Dec. 14 at 7 pm  
Chris Buchert's home

### First Annual Book Swap

One of the joys of being in a book club is discovering what ELSE people are reading each month. This is your opportunity to bring a book that you loved reading during 2023 and are willing to part with, talk about it at our gathering, and pick up someone else's favorite that she brought. Come prepared to share why you chose this particular book and why you'd recommend it to a friend. If you do a great job, we might just choose it for the group to read in 2024!



## End of Year Giving

Please consider making a donation to the Middletown Community Foundation's AAUW Scholarship Fund. Your donation will further the efforts of the AAUW Middletown Branch by supporting local scholarships for 7th and 8th graders STEM camp programs and the scholarship funds for traditional and non-traditional college students.

You may donate online at the Foundation's website at [mcfoundation.org](http://mcfoundation.org). Select "Donate Now" button at top of screen, then type "AAUW" in Search bar at bottom.

If you prefer mailing your donation, please send a check payable to "Middletown Community Foundation, AAUW Scholarships" to 300 N. Main Street, Middletown, Ohio 45042. Your donation is a great way to support local students!

## Update on Middletown Schools Brings Out Large Crowd



Dozens of AAUW member turned out last month for our branch meeting with Deborah Houser, Middletown City School District's first female Superintendent in its 170-year history. Ms. Houser spoke passionately about the district's vision, called "Passport to Tomorrow," which is a six-year plan to help inspire students to develop transferable work-force skill sets, leading to life-changing career opportunities upon graduation.





## Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Debbie Worbis  
([dworbis@gmail.com](mailto:dworbis@gmail.com))

December is a great month to celebrate diversity, as this month contains such holiday celebrations as Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and the winter solstice, to name a few. Not only do people celebrate diverse holidays, but the manner of celebrating varies greatly around the world.

Our diversity statement admits “no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.” That statement does a pretty good job of including many of the ways that we categorize people, and these labels reflect many of the ways that we meet and relate to each other. Yet true diversity is best reflected in individuals, each having different life experiences, strengths and weaknesses, medical histories, family and occupational roles, talents, etc.

While it is probably safe to say that AAUW members share a common belief in the importance of education and equity for women, I believe that the real strength of this group lies in the individual interests, experiences, and talents that each member brings. At a time when the news is full of political divisiveness and growing anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, we hope we can emphasize empathy and support for others and highlight diversity in a way that destroys the prejudices that cause people to attack individuals whom they don't even know.

In a lighter vein, our guest speaker this month is an excellent representative of many groups. On her Facebook page, Kendra Herber describes herself as an author, model, para-triathlete, speaker, amputee and English teacher, and I would add mother and wife to her list. I consider her to be an excellent representative of the power of a positive attitude and perseverance, and I hope that everyone will join us to hear her speak and perhaps buy a copy or two (think of holiday gifts) of her book.

## PENS Group To Meet Once in December



Our AAUW Branch “special interest” writers’ group continues to meet at Gardner Harvey Library on the Middletown Campus of Miami University. We meet in conference room #123. In December we only have one meeting, Dec. 14, from 1:00 – 2:30 pm.

We encourage each other, give each other constructive feedback, and provide an incentive to **put pen to paper and WRITE!** Our calendars are filled with holiday events. If you are stuck for an idea, describe a favorite holiday memory from your childhood, or begin a gratitude journal with entries to share at a Christmas family gathering. Everyone has a story to tell. Come join us to share yours. Call or email Becky Ward if you have any questions: [beckward@gmail.com](mailto:beckward@gmail.com) or 513-424-8409.

### 2023- 2024 LEADERSHIP

**President:**

Debbie Worbis

**Secretary:**

Becky Hamner

**Finance Chairs:**

Katie DeVilling, Jackie Webster

**Membership Chairs:**

Marti Kreps

Eleanor Yeager Stewart

**Communications Chairs:**

Judy Florence, Virginia Palmer

**Program Chairs:**

Margie Homan, Mel Worbis

**Public Policy & State Liaison:**

Carolyn Smith

**AAUW Funds:**

Erin Eldridge

**Scholarships:**

Cari Hillman, Maria Langendorf

**Diversity:**

Amanda Adkins-Ricci

**Garage Sale & Holiday Bazaar:**

Chris Buchert, Erin Eldridge,

Rose Grau, Carole Schul

**Book Sale:**

Libby Abele, Sharon Dowden,

Tina Newlin

**Newsletter Editor/**

**Joy Luck Book Group:**

Sharon Williamson

**PENS Writing Group**

Becky Ward