



Equity Now

FEB. 2024

Calendar of Events

Matters of the Heart
Monday, Feb. 12 at 7:00 pm

▶ Zoom Only

Our speaker will be Christi Herr from Premier Health Partners in Dayton. She will talk about heart risks, signs and symptoms to which women should pay attention to protect their health and wellness.

CASA: Community Volunteers Advocate for Children in Need
Monday, March 11 at 7:00 pm

▶ Kettering Health Center
Community Room, 6147 SR 122

Sharon Flynn, Butler County Recruitment/Outreach Manager, will discuss how Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers help child victims navigate the court system and act as their advocates.

Safe Haven Farms: A Community of Choice
Monday, April 8 at 7:00 pm

▶ Kettering Health Center
Community Room, 6147 SR 122

Speaker Janie Cochran will explain the work of this non-profit organization, which offers residential, day and community services for adults with developmental disabilities.

Music Hall Tour & Lunch
Saturday, April 20 at 1 - 4 pm

▶ Cincinnati Music Hall,
1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati

Lunch at a restaurant in Over The Rhine, followed by a 2:30 pm tour of historic Music Hall.

Program Note: Members will be sent a Zoom invite through email. Non-members who wish to participate should contact Mel Worbis at worbismm@gmail.com for a link.

♥ Matters of the Heart ♥

Monday, Feb. 12 at 7 pm

Zoom Only

Appropriately titled for American Heart Month and Valentine's Week, a presentation titled "Matters of the Heart" will focus on women's health, with educational tips on heart risks, signs and symptoms for women. It will also show how relationships impact heart health and wellness.



Christi Herr

Our presenter will be Christi Herr, a Wellness Engagement Specialist for Premier Health Partners in Dayton, Ohio. Christi is a licensed physical therapist and national board-certified health and wellness coach.

Christi believes that connection, education, and encouragement enable one to make better decisions towards maximizing their health and wellness.

She holds a B.S. degree in Physical Therapy from the University of Toledo, a M.S. degree in Physiology and Biophysics from Wright State University, and a Health and Wellness coaching certificate from the Mayo Clinic.

How Will You Vote On Proposed Change To AAUW Bylaws?

The AAUW Board of Directors and Governance Committee has recommended that members vote to adopt an amendment to the national bylaws. The purpose of the amendment is to open membership to include more diverse backgrounds and bring new perspectives to the organization. The proposed amendment would eliminate the degree requirement for membership and align membership practices with the mission of advancing equity for women and girls.

Members were given the opportunity to submit their opinions about these changes before 5 pm on Friday, January 26, 2024. Voting will begin on April 3, 2024. Members should have received an email with a link to the 2024 proposed bylaws changes where you can read and study the complete amendment. If you did not receive the email, you can search "AAUW 2024 proposed bylaws changes" and it should take you there.

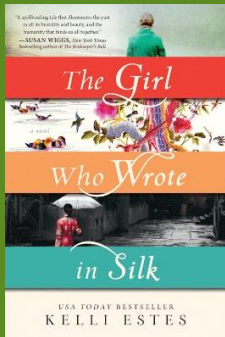
We encourage our members to check out this proposal and submit your vote – whether for or against – in time to make your voice heard.

Joy Luck Book Club

Thurs., Feb. 15 at 7 pm
Becky Ward's home

The Girl Who Wrote in Silk – Kelli Estes

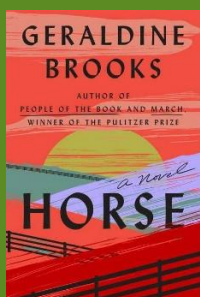
The Girl Who Wrote in Silk is a dual-time period novel that takes place in present-day Seattle and the nearby San Juan Islands 130 years before. It explores how a delicate piece of silk interweaves the past and the present, reminding us that today's actions have far-reaching implications.



Thurs., March 21 at 7 pm
Jan Runkle's home

Horse – Geraldine Brooks

Winner of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, *Horse* is the remarkable true story of a record-breaking thoroughbred in Lexington, KY. Written by Pulitzer Prize winner Geraldine Brooks, the novel moves from Kentucky in 1850 to New York City a hundred years later, then modern-day Washington, D.C.



Empowering Women in Art

AAUW Annual Art Contest: Time to Submit and/or Vote for Your Favorite

AAUW's annual art contest is officially under way, and members are invited to [submit a high-res image](#) of their original painting, photography, sculpture, collage or other artwork. Submissions will be accepted through January 31, 2024. Your work could be among the winning entries!

Starting February 5, AAUW members will select their favorite entries via ranked-choice voting. The winners will be featured on a collection of notecards sent to all members this spring. The back of each card will include the winning artist's biography, a fact about AAUW, and a highlight of the artist's local branch affiliation, when applicable.

For more information on submitting artwork or to view last year's art gallery, please visit the [AAUW Art Contest page](#) or search on "AAUW art contest."

January Alerts Branch to Issues of Gun Safety



Visual aids teach how to Be SMART



Connie Griffis and Carolyn Dell Patrick

Branch members Carolyn Dell Patrick and Connie Griffis are working hard in our community to help reduce child gun deaths by training people how to store their guns safely. The program they presented is called Be SMART. The acronym reminds us all to:

- Secure all guns in your home and vehicles.
- Model responsible behavior around guns.
- Ask about the presence of unsecured guns in other homes.
- Recognize the role of guns in suicide.
- Tell your peers to be SMART.



Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Debbie Worbis
(dworbis@gmail.com)

This is our first newsletter since the December issue, so I want to mention the most recent programs that we have enjoyed. In January, local members Carolyn Dell Patrick and Connie Griffis presented a really informative program about the need to reduce child gun deaths, explaining the BE SMART gun safety program and even supplying free child-safe locks for guns.

In December, speaker Kendra Herber talked about her life as an amputee, English teacher, author, speaker, model, wife, mother and para-triathlete. Many were impressed by Kendra's perseverance and training as she prepares to participate in the Paralympic qualifier race in Miami, Fla., in March.



Kendra (at left) speaking to the December branch meeting

If you would like to follow Kendra's progress, her website is at KendraHerber.com. Her book *Whole: A Leg Up On Life* can be ordered through Amazon. Those who expressed the desire to sponsor Kendra may make out a check to her and send it to me to deliver. (Note: She is not a 501(c)3 organization, so donations are not tax deductible.)

Looking forward as we begin a new calendar year, change seems to be a frequent theme. New Year's resolutions might require us to make a change in our habits. We've wondered if our branch needs a Venmo or PayPal account to increase our sales, or if we should keep our cash only policy. Will large retail stores continue to exist much longer, or will we have to eventually order everything online? What kinds of changes will improvements in artificial intelligence bring? And so many more come to mind.

Most of us have learned to adapt to new kinds of technology as new inventions appear, but some changes are easier than others. As you think about your vote on the proposed bylaws amendment, consider what you believe will best help our organization to continue its work toward advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

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

[Update from Diversity Chair Amanda Adkins-Ricci](#)

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the News

A recent report from leading consulting firm [McKinsey & Company](#) offers a lot of data to support DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) efforts. Being "woke" makes good business sense, and diverse companies financially outperform less diverse companies.

The study reports "a striking new finding is that leadership diversity is also convincingly associated with holistic growth ambitions, greater social impact, and more satisfied workforces."

This article from [The Week](#) reports on backtracking of diversity programs in corporate America and other DEI trends, citing the McKinsey study mentioned above.

[Update from Public Policy Chair & State Liaison Carolyn Smith](#)

Support the Healthy Families Act through AAUW's Two-Minute Activist

In January 2022, AAUW National put out a Quick Facts sheet on the status Congressional legislation promoting paid leave for American workers. The sheet describes the Healthy Families Act, which would require companies with 15 or more employees to allow those workers the chance to accrue seven days of paid sick leave yearly. Those days could be used for personal health, school visits or the care of other ill family members.

The details of the act are spelled out in Senate Bill 1664, introduced by Bernie Sanders on May 17, 2023. Since then, the bill was discussed in a Senate committee meeting on June 21, 2023, and placed on the Senate's legislative calendar on July 18, 2023. You can read or download the full text of the bill at govtrack.us.

Now listed as one of the issues in AAUW's Two-Minute Activist, the Healthy Families Act begs for our attention. According to AAUW National, "Too many American workers are forced to face the choice between a job and their health or the health of a loved one every time they get sick or a family member needs care. That's because at least 34 million private-sector workers — nearly one-third of the workforce — don't have access to paid sick days."

Members who sign onto the AAUW national website will find a TAKE ACTION button on the home page. Choose the Two-Minute Activist from the TAKE ACTION page and click on "Healthy Families Act." From here, you can take action in support of this bill. While you are at it, look at the other issues under Two-Minute Activist as well.

In our study groups and meetings, we learn so much about the needs of women and girls. The Two-Minute Activist will help each of us make a difference.



PENS: Feel Empowered to Tell Your Story

After a busy holiday, our Special Interests writers' group is looking forward to sharing our writing pieces as we get started on the new year of 2024. We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month.

Our next meetings will be February 1 and 15 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. in conference room #123 at Gardner Harvey Library on the Middletown Campus of Miami University (MUM). Bundle up and come join us to share your story!

Call or email Becky Ward if you have any questions: beckward@gmail.com or 513-424-8409.