



*Equity Now*

**APRIL 2024**

**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](mailto:worbismm@gmail.com) for a link.

## Safe Haven Farms: A Community of Choice

**Monday, April 8 at 7 pm**

(ZOOM only to avoid Solar Eclipse traffic)



Janie Rattman, Executive Director of Safe Haven Farms in Butler County, will join us on a Zoom call on Monday, April 8, to explain the work of this non-profit organization.

Safe Haven Farms has provided residential and daytime programming to adults with autism and other developmental disabilities since 2010. Participants enjoy daily art and music therapy, fresh air, nature hikes, working in the garden and caring for farm animals.

Janie is a graduate of Morehead State University and has worked with many organizations in Butler County. She says that her current position has allowed her to lend her leadership, fundraising and marketing talents to Safe Haven Farms. As the parent of an autistic adult, she is prepared and willing to be a champion for adults and children with special needs.

## Summer Garage Sale Work Is Beginning

WOW! The tables are filling up fast with interesting items to sell to raise funds for scholarships and local programming. Work days are scheduled at our sale site at 2204 Central Avenue in Middletown from 9:30 to 11:30 am on Wednesday, April 10; Friday, April 19; and Tuesday, April 30. More dates may be added.

Our regular work schedule ramps up in May, so mark your calendars to come help when you can on Tuesdays, Thursdays and/or Saturdays from 9 am to noon, beginning May 2.

We will advertise donation drop-offs starting May 7 and continuing to May 23. Members may drop off donations whenever there are workers at the sale site or you may contact Chris at [tcbuch@yahoo.com](mailto:tcbuch@yahoo.com) or 513-292-0420 for an alternate time. Print the poster (see email attached) to start giving them to your friends!

## Calendar of Events

**Deadline for payment of Cincinnati Music Hall Tour: Saturday, April 6**

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

▶ ZOOM ONLY

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

**Garage Sale Work Days April 10, 19, 30 at 9:30-11:30am**

▶ 2204 Central Ave., Middletown

*Members can bring donations for the garage sale when they come to work. Additional work days will be scheduled soon.*

**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.*

**AAUW Scholarship & Awards Dinner Monday, May 13 at 6:00 pm**

▶ Kristen Mulligan's home

**Annual Garage Sale May 31, June 1, 7 and 8**

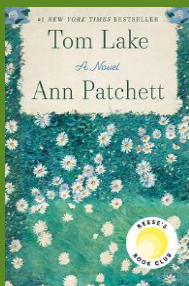
▶ 2204 Central Ave., Middletown

## Joy Luck Book Club

Thurs., April 18 at 7 pm  
Jan Runkle's home

### Tom Lake – Ann Patchett

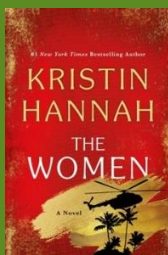
This New York Times bestseller is a meditation on youthful love, married love and the lives parents lead before their children are born. Both hopeful and elegiac, it explores what it means to be happy, even when the world is falling apart.



Thurs., May 16 at 7 pm  
Virginia Palmer's (new) home

### The Women – Kristin Hannah

*The Women* is an intimate portrait of a young nurse who enlists to serve in Vietnam, with the backdrop of a nation divided by war and broken by politics. It is about heroism, the brutality of war and PTSD, but also about the sustaining value of close female friends.



## April AAUW State Conference in Wilberforce

The month of April presents us with several different opportunities to participate in AAUW activities. One of those is the Statewide Annual Meeting and Convention on Saturday, April 13, 2024 from from 10 am to 3 pm. There is still time to register online for either the in-person event or virtual participation.

The in-person conference will be held at Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio. Central State is Ohio's only public historically Black university (HBCU). Those attending the conference will be able to visit the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center on campus.

Delegates will represent the branch by voting on state officers for 2024 – 2026, as well as a proposed change in bylaws that would allow every member to vote in the future. Branch awards will be presented for the Model Branch Award, Communications and Diversity, and we have already received confirmation from AAUW Ohio Diversity Chair Sally Dye that our branch was approved for this year's Diversity Award!



Central State University



National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center

Speaking of diversity, our Diversity Chair Amanda Adkins-Ricci shares these links for your interest. Read this *New York Times* article entitled "How Unconscious Bias in Health Care Puts Pregnant Black Women at Higher Risk."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/12/health/pregnant-black-women-bias.html>

Check out this link to a workshop on Implicit Bias to be held by the Montgomery County ADAMHS Board Monday, April 22, 2024 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/implicit-bias-workshop-04-22-24-in-person-tickets-804203663807>



## PENS: Pursue Your Muse

Our PENS group meets the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month at Gardner Harvey Library on the MUM campus. Come join us in Room 123 from 1:00 to 2:30 pm. Our April dates will be April 4 and 18. Bring a piece of your writing to share with the group (5 minute time frame for each writer). We have been meeting for six years and have shared a lot of words! **All writers are welcome to join PENS and pursue your creative muse. We would love to hear your story.** Please email or call Becky Ward with any questions: [beckward@gmail.com](mailto:beckward@gmail.com) or 513/424-8409.



## Letter from Our Leader

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

This year April is an important month for national, state and local AAUW members. I've mentioned the state convention in a separate article, but here I want to review the national and local opportunities to participate.

Nationally, voting begins on April 3, 2024, on the proposed changes to the National AAUW Bylaws. These changes state that the sole qualifying requirement for membership would be support of AAUW's purpose. If you have not already gone online to read more about the reasons for this proposal and the changes that accompany it, then view 2024 Proposed Bylaws Changes, make up your mind and submit your vote for or against the changes before the deadline of 12 pm on May 15.

Locally, our usual program on the second Monday has been changed to an online-only program due to the high volume of traffic that is anticipated because of travelers coming from outside of this area to view the total solar eclipse. Our program about the non-profit organization Safe Haven Farms will still begin at 7 pm on April 8, and members will receive the link to join via Zoom. Along with the link, you will be asked to vote on the proposed slate of branch officers for the 2024-25 program year.

In addition to our regular program, we have a special event coming up this month. Those who have made their reservations with Margie Homan by April 6 will be meeting for lunch and then touring the Cincinnati Music Hall at 1241 Elm Street on Saturday, April 20. After lunch in the Over the Rhine section of Cincinnati, members and their guests will meet at 2:30 for the tour.

We hope you will all participate in some way this month, especially by voting your preference in regards to the proposed national membership requirements.

## Ballot of Officers for 2024-25 Program Year

Here is the proposed slate of officers for AAUW Middletown Branch's next programming year. You will be asked to vote on them via email in April.

**President:** Debbie Worbis

**President-Elect:** Marjorie Homan

**Secretaries:** Becky Hamner and Marcia Miller

**Communications Co-Chairs:** Virginia Palmer and Judy Florence

**Finance Co-Chairs:** Jackie Webster and Katie DeVilling

**Membership Co-Chairs:** Eleanor Yeager Stewart and Marti Kreps

**Program Co-Chairs:** Mary Millard and Mel Worbis

## 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

## Cincinnati Music Hall Tour on April 20

Cincinnati Music Hall, built in 1878, is the home of Cincinnati's ballet, symphony orchestra, opera, pops orchestra and the May Festival Chorus. In 1975 it was recognized as a National Historic Landmark for its distinctive Venetian Gothic architecture.

Our branch will tour the hall on Saturday, April 20, at 2:30 pm. The tour will last 75 minutes. Enter at the south end door of the building at the door marked "SCO Box Office." Check-in begins 15 minutes before the tour. Please feel free to bring guests, but you must pay prior to the event. Music Hall is ADA accessible.



### **DEADLINE FOR RESERVATION & PAYMENT: SATURDAY, APRIL 6**

This is earlier than listed in our program book, but at the request of Music Hall.

#### **Tour cost is \$11.00**

Make out check to "AAUW Middletown" and mail it to:  
AAUW Middletown, PO Box 118, Middletown, OH 45042  
Must be received by April 6.

Or you can drop off a check or cash to Margie Homan at her home (1409 Highland St. in Middletown). Call before coming: 513-518-3897

Sorry, no refunds after reservations are made.

## Successful Fundraising Means Scholarships Now and in the Future

AAUW Middletown is pleased to announce that we have deposited \$5,600 into our Spendable Funds account at the Middletown Community Foundation (MCF). This will fund our budgeted \$4,000 in renewable college academic scholarships in 2024. The additional \$1,600 will fund our annual unrestricted donation of \$800 each to Miami University Middletown and Cincinnati State for support of their students' urgent financial needs.

The Middletown branch continues to build an Endowment Fund at MCF with the goal of allowing us to continue funding our scholarship programs into the future, even if the branch is not able to generate the funds externally to do so. This year, we were able to deposit an additional \$10,000 into the Endowment Fund, which puts us about halfway towards the projected amount needed to reach our goal.



Our branch members continue to work diligently on three annual fundraisers: the garage sale in June, book sale in September and holiday bazaar in November. We are all grateful for the generous donations of books and household items we receive from the community for these events, as well as for the many local residents who shop at them.

## March Branch Meeting Highlights

Our guest speaker at the March branch meeting was Sharon Flynn, Outreach/Recruitment Manager for PARACHUTE CASA Butler County. CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. CASA volunteers advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Their goal is to find them safe, permanent homes.



The group is always looking for more volunteers. CASA asks for a commitment of 6 to 8 hours a month. Volunteers go through a criminal and CPS background check and must have the desire, patience and heart to work with children and families.

Six-week training sessions (30 hours) are held in the evenings to accommodate work schedules. You can volunteer at [www.parachutecasa.org](http://www.parachutecasa.org).



## Scholarship Banquet Highlights Year on May 13

The highlight of our AAUW branch's programming year is the scholarship banquet, to be on Monday, May 13, at the lovely and historic home of Kristen Mulligan at 218 South Main Street in Middletown.

Our chapter works hard each year to raise funds for high school scholarships, hardship funds for older female students, and to send fifth and sixth grade girls to the BeWise STEM Camp. The banquet is where we celebrate those scholars, honor outgoing officers and welcome incoming officers.

We are delighted that Kristen Mulligan has graciously offered to host our event. We plan to eat in the garden on a beautiful May evening. In case of rain, we will move inside to enjoy the Victorian interiors of this beautiful home. The outdoor banquet will be a delicious, elegant catered buffet, with tablecloth and center pieces. So please dress appropriately (hats, sunglasses, insect repellent).

A local chef and his daughter will prepare Chicken Caprese (marinated chicken breasts roasted with tomato, fresh mozzarella and basil, drizzled with balsamic glaze), mashed potatoes, salad, vegetable medley, and bread with oil for dipping. Dessert will be fruit and cookies. Drinks are unsweetened iced tea and lemonade.

Parking is limited on the street, so please carpool or get dropped off, if possible. The driveway is reserved for handicapped members and the caterer's truck. The Welcome Committee will be out front of the house to greet you and point you to the party. Sharon Williamson will be taking photos to be used in our program book.

Co-chair Margie Homan says to come with a party heart and make a new friend!



Monday, May 13, 2024 at 6:00 pm  
218 S. Main Street in Middletown

Last Day for Reservation and Payment: **May 6**  
Cost is \$20 per person.

Make out check to "AAUW Middletown" and mail it to:  
AAUW Middletown, PO Box 118, Middletown, OH 45042  
Must be received by May 6.

Or you can drop off a check or cash to Margie Homan at her home  
(1409 Highland St. in Middletown). Call before coming: 513-518-3897  
Sorry, payments are not refundable.

Be sure to make any reservations for scholarship recipients or guests.