



Equity Now

MAY 2024

AAUW Scholarship & Awards Banquet

Monday, May 13 at 6 pm

218 South Main Street, Middletown

NEW: Reservations and payment due by May 1

The highlight of our Middletown branch's programming year is the scholarship banquet, which will be held on Monday, May 13, at the lovely and historic home of Kristen Mulligan.

We hope that several recipients of our scholarship funds for various schools and the BeWise STEM Camp will be in attendance. The banquet is also where we honor outgoing officers and welcome incoming officers.

The outdoor banquet will be an elegant catered buffet. Please bring hats, sunglasses, insect repellent as necessary.

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, take photos and point you to the party.

Group Tours Historic Music Hall in Cincinnati

On April 20, fifteen branch members and guests toured historic Cincinnati Music Hall, home to five of the city's performing arts groups. The in-depth tour took us backstage, past the extensive music library and into several special rooms used for donor events and other meetings.



(Left to right front) Mel Worbis, Debbie Worbis, Sharon Williamson, Virginia Palmer, Margie Homan. (Back) Carolyn Dell Patrick and Mel's husband.

Calendar of Events

Garage Sale Work Days
Tuesdays, Thursdays and
Saturdays starting April 30
from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

► 2204 Central Ave., Middletown

Members may bring donations for the garage sale when they come to work. We are no longer advertising for donations due to the amount of material already collected.

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

► Kristen Mulligan's home at
218 South Main St., Middletown

See article at left.

New deadline for reservations and payment is May 1.

Annual Garage Sale
May 31, June 1, 7 and 8
from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

June 9 from 12:00 to 4:00 pm

► 2204 Central Ave., Middletown

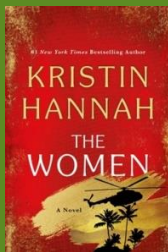
Note: Extra sale day added on Sunday, June 9. All items 75% off.

Joy Luck Book Club

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

The Women – Kristin Hannah

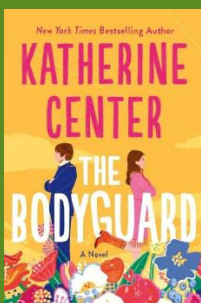
The Women is an intimate portrait of a young nurse who enlists to serve in Vietnam, with the backdrop of a nation divided by war and broken by politics. It is about heroism, the brutality of war and PTSD, but also about the sustaining value of close female friends.



Thurs., June 20 at 7 pm
Nita Driscoll's home

The Bodyguard – Katherine Center

This is a light-hearted romantic comedy involving a female Executive Protection Agent (a.k.a. bodyguard) who is assigned to protect a male Hollywood star from his tenacious stalkers. She's got his back, he's got her heart, and they've both got a secret.



Four Attend State Convention in Wilberforce

Middletown branch members Chris Buchert, Carolyn Smith, Sharon Williamson, and Debbie Worbis attended AAUW Ohio's state convention on Saturday, April 13, on the campus of Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio. Our branch received an Award for Excellence in Communication through a variety of media outlets and a Diversity and Inclusion Award for programming consistent with the mission of AAUW.

The proposed change to membership bylaws was discussed, and it was said the proposal would make the organization more inclusive. It was suggested that when asked what AAUW is, we should emphasize what we **do**: supporting education at **all** levels and advancing equity for women and girls.

Senator Paula Hicks, representing Toledo, encouraged members to ask their legislators to support Senate Bill 232, about Fair Paycheck Workplace Certification, and Senate Bill 231, for a Pay Equity Hotline. Sheena Barnes from Toledo's Public School Board also shared information about other proposed House legislation. Lisa Weinart led the group in a narrative healing activity.

After lunch Desiree Tims, President and CEO of Innovation Ohio, spoke about voter registration, the importance of getting out the vote, and keeping informed about what's going on in Ohio. Her website, innovationohio.org, provides updates and information on current legislative issues. The organization is non-partisan.

After the meeting ended, we were able to tour the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center. One of the exhibits, titled "The Queens of the Heartland," seemed to be perfect for AAUW consumption, as it features the stories of 30 Ohio African-American women and their influence.



(Left to right) Chris Buchert, Carolyn Smith, Debbie Worbis and Sharon Williamson tour the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center in Wilberforce, Ohio



Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Debbie Worbis
(dworbis@gmail.com)

As I considered which of the many spring activities to include in my column for this month's newsletter, I realized that they all relate to active participation. I was able to enjoy great tours of Cincinnati's Music Hall and Wilberforce's National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center because I signed up for our special event for April and for the state convention at Central State University. I was well rewarded for investing that time.

As we prepare for our scholarship banquet, we know that we are only able to offer scholarships because we have members who work very hard on our fundraising sales. Some donate books and "merchandise" or pick up donations for the sales. Some do the hard work of sorting, setting up, and pricing the items. Some work shifts on the days of the sales, and others arrive as customers. All of these efforts contribute to our fundraising success. Remember to participate as we prepare for the garage sale in June.

Another essential form of participation is voting. We are all aware of the long fight that women waged to earn the right to vote in our country's elections, and our speakers at the state convention stressed the importance of letting our representatives know what we want and voting in the fall elections.

However, as members of AAUW, we are also called to vote on an amendment to the bylaws of this organization, and we have until 12:00 pm on Wednesday, May 15, to get this done. If you need to read more about this, you can find information on the national website. In 2021 most Ohio members did not vote on this proposal. While our Middletown branch had more voters than many other Ohio branches, over half of the members did not vote. Whether you plan to vote for or against the proposed change, take a few minutes to find the email inviting you to vote, then make your voice heard.

For our own branch, all of those who did take time to respond to the email voted to approve the slate of officers proposed for next year. We hope that you will be joining us for the installation of those officers and the scholarship presentation at the banquet on May 13 at Kristen Mulligan's home. See you then!

New Officers for 2024-25 Program Year

The proposed slate of officers for AAUW Middletown Branch's next programming year was accepted. They will be installed at our May banquet.

President: Debbie Worbis

President-Elect: Marjorie Homan

Secretaries: Becky Hamner and Marcia Miller

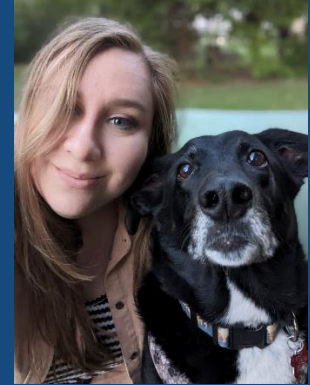
Communications Co-Chairs: Virginia Palmer and Judy Florence

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

Meet New Member Karen Jones



Karen is a Miami Valley native, born and raised in Springboro, Ohio. After graduating from Springboro High School, she attended Wittenberg University, where she studied Business Management, Financial Economics and Music, graduating in 2013. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree in Public Administration from Purdue Global.

After obtaining her Bachelor's degree, Karen worked in Executive Search and Human Resources before joining the MidPointe Library System accounting department in 2018. She currently serves as the Deputy Fiscal Officer.

Karen resides in Liberty Township with her husband, Brad. In their free time, they enjoy attending concerts, playing board games, hiking with their dog, Connor, cooking, and traveling.

Summer Garage Sale Work Gears Up

Spring is bursting out all over, and so is the merchandise for our garage sale! Having collected many items, now it's time to arrange and price. We need your help to get ready for the sale.

Because we already have so many wonderful items, we are changing a few things. First, we are no longer soliciting for more donations. But if someone tells you they have items to give, you may tell them to bring things down when we are working. Secondly, we have added a Sunday sale day when items will be 75% off.

Regular work days begin Tuesday, April 30. We plan to work every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 9 am until about noon. Come for all or part of the time. We will find a job for you.

Co-chair Chris Buchert reminds us, "It is the responsibility of members to spend some time helping get ready for our sales, and then work at them. It takes many hands contributing to raise money for our scholarship fund."

Sign-up sheets for working the sale will be at our May meeting and the sale site. Please sign up for two or three shifts.

Publicity: Be sure to pass out the new flyers to friends, put them up somewhere, and/or post information on the internet.



PENS Members Participate in NaPoWriMo

In April our writers were guided to participate in NaPoWriMo (National Poetry Writing Month) in which we chose to write a poem every day of the month. It was challenging and fun. Anyone who has a passion for writing is welcome to join PENS. We will encourage you to meet your writing challenges and to follow your creative muse.

We meet in conference room #123 at the Gardner Harvey Library (GHL) on the Middletown Campus of Miami University (MUM). Our next meeting dates are May 2 and May 16 from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Our format is to bring a piece of your own writing to share (verbally) with the group (5 minute time frame/each writer). We encourage each other, give each other constructive feedback, and provide an incentive to **put pen to paper and WRITE!** Call or email Becky Ward if you have any questions: beckward@gmail.com or 513/424-8409.

Meet New Member Emily Foote



Emily Foote is the Fiscal Officer for MidPointe Library System. She also serves the Ohio Association of Public Treasurers as their President-Elect and provides bookkeeping support to a small kitchen remodeling business called The Kitchen Place.

Emily has a passion for numbers and bringing an enthusiastic energy to the workplace. She has a collaborative approach to finance that results in high employee morale as staff get to engage in the financial process. Her goal is to bring efficiency to the workplace and end the era of financial gatekeeping that is often masked under compliance.

Outside of the workplace she enjoys spoiling her three cats, traveling with her husband, training for her next half marathon, and having theme parties at home for her friends to enjoy.

Remember to Vote on AAUW Bylaws by Wed., May 15!

For members concerned about taking the “university” out of AAUW, attendees at the state convention learned there have been many changes to AAUW bylaws over the years. They include:

1. At first only graduates from a small list of accredited schools were accepted into AAUW. Also, prospective members were voted on.
2. In 1949 AAUW dropped voting on new members.
3. AAUW then changed to accept any university and opened it up to accept any college degree, not just fields that were traditionally open to women.
4. In 1987 AAUW opened membership up to accept male graduates.
5. In 2005 AAUW decided to accept associate or equivalent degrees.
6. In 2009 the purpose was changed from "the uniting of graduates" to "advance equity for women and girls."

In 2021, 63% of members voted to approve open membership, but a two-thirds vote was required for a bylaws change.

If the open membership proposal is accepted, AAUW's name will not be changed. Instead, we will use just our initials, similar to the YMCA or NAACP whose membership has grown beyond their initial names.

In 2021, most Ohio members did not vote on the bylaws change. Middletown had more voters than most Ohio branches, but still more than half of us did not vote. This time, make your voice heard.

Safe Haven Farms Was Focus of April Meeting



Branch members had a wonderful conversation via Zoom with Janie Rattman Executive Director of Safe Haven Farms, on April 8. The organization provides live-in resident care, an adult day care program, and an equestrian therapy program. The adults who participate in programs on the farm help care for the animals or help grow the crops.

Community members are encouraged to join the CSA to help these programs. There is also a need for volunteers with the organization. If anyone is interested, please reach out to Janie by email at janie.cochran@safehavenfarms.org.

More Photos from Music Hall Tour

