



Equity Now

JUNE 2024

AAUW Scholarship & Awards Banquet

Here are some photos from the lovely end to another successful year of programming and fundraising. Special thanks to Kristen Mulligan for sharing her historic home and garden on South Main Street with us on a warm May evening.



Members Jackie Lankfer, Robin Becker and Anita Shew enjoy dinner al fresco.



Calendar of Events

Annual Garage Sale

June 7-8 from 9 am to 4 pm
All items 50% off.

June 9 from 12 to 4 pm

▶ 2204 Central Ave., Middletown
All items 75% off.

Watch your email this summer for news about our upcoming programming year and first branch meeting in September.

Photos Needed!

We plan to add small photos of members to our annual program booklet this year. Please send a photo of yourself to Sharon Williamson if she has not already grabbed one at the May banquet or garage sale.

▶ Please have someone take a "headshot" of you (focus on the face) against a blank, white or light-colored background.

▶ Send the highest resolution (i.e., largest MB) file you can for clarity.

▶ Email to sharon.p.williamson@gmail.com or text to 937-623-8077 by June 30.

Got questions? Email or text Sharon at the numbers above.

Group Installs New Officers for 2024-25



Here are the new officers who were 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 Natalie Carter



New member, Natalie Carter, is a graduate of Western Kentucky University, with a B.S. in Health Care Administration. She currently resides part-time in Newport, Ky., about 45 minutes from Middletown. She and her husband Kent also live in Pikeville, on the far eastern side of Kentucky, with Hershey, their dachshund. Natalie and her husband have two grown sons: Benjamin, who is an attorney in Lexington, and Jack, who is working on his PhD in Spanish Linguistics at UCLA.

Natalie worked as a paralegal and substitute teacher during her time in Eastern Kentucky. She was secretary of the AAUW Mingo-Pike branch in West Virginia for over 10 years. Natalie has also served as AAUW State Membership Vice President in West Virginia.

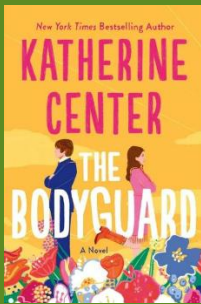
Natalie plans on joining branch meetings through Zoom until she and her husband can make their full-time move to the Northern Kentucky area. She looks forward to then attending meetings in person and participating in branch activities.

Joy Luck Book Club

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.



Thurs., July 18 at 7 pm
Sharon Williamson's home

Israeli/Palestinian Author Roundtable

At a time when war in the Middle East is on many of our minds, we thought it might be interesting and valuable to hear from women in the region. So in July we ask you to read a book of your choice by an Israeli or Palestinian female author. It can be fiction, non-fiction, poetry, whatever. Come prepared to share something about the book and why you chose it.



Scholarship Winner and Student Volunteers Honored at Banquet



Marshall High School, represented at the banquet by Mark Mayes and Jeremy LaVoie, was the recipient of this year's named gift to the AAUW National Fund. They pose here with member and former Marshall teacher Mel Worbis. Marshall students regularly help our branch with the set-up and tear-down of fundraising sales.



(L to R) Scholarship winner Gianna Frongia is introduced by program co-chair Margie Homan. Gianna, who attended the banquet with her mother, will start at the University of Dayton in the fall.



Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Debbie Worbis
(dworbis@gmail.com)

As we enter the summer months, our garage sale is once again successfully generating funds to sustain our scholarship program and other endeavors, and members are working on plans for the 2024-2025 program year. Many thanks to all of those who contribute to the work of our branch.

In news from the national board, they have announced that the open membership initiative failed to pass by a slim margin. Changes to AAUW's bylaws require a 2/3 majority (66.6%) to pass. In this vote on opening up the membership, only 65.1% of the AAUW members that voted approved the measure, so the membership requirements will remain the same.

The national website also states that the branches and states must update their bylaws based on the 2023 member-approved bylaws revisions by June 30, 2026, so we will be reviewing our Middletown Branch bylaws this year. Please contact me if you are interested in working on that revision.

Finally, on a personal note, I want to thank the many members who have reached out to offer support after the fire at my daughter's home. Your many kind deeds and solidarity have really helped us to face the ordeal and remain positive!

Summer Garage Sale in Final Weekend

Once again, AAUW's garage sale is proving to be the best place in town to get quality household items at bargain prices!

The sale was very busy the first morning of May 31, with about 30 to 40 people waiting for us to open at 9 a.m. Customers were steady throughout Friday and Saturday of the first weekend. The team anticipates a busy weekend on June 7 – 9 as well, with everything 50% off on June 7 and 8 and 75% off on June 9. Thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to make the sale a success.

Calling All Writers: Join PENS

Our AAUW Branch "special interest" writers' group continues to meet at *Gardner Harvey Library (GHL) on the Middletown Campus of Miami University (MUM). We meet in conference room #123. Our meeting dates and time: 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month, 1:00-2:30 p.m. We encourage each other, give each other constructive feedback, and provide an incentive to **put pen to paper and WRITE!**

Our format is to bring a piece of your own writing to share (verbally) with the group (5 minute time frame/each writer). Anyone who has a passion for writing is welcome to join our writers' group. Call or email Becky Ward if you have any questions: beckward@gmail.com or 513-424-8409.

Meet New Member Cleda Klingensmith



Originally from Pittsburgh, Cleda says she arrived in Middletown nine years ago "after a long and winding road with no discernible destination." Her goal was to relocate to Ohio so her only child could get in-state tuition at Miami University. Due to a series of coincidences and flukes, she ended up in a condo in Middletown, "regretfully within laundry range of the school." Son Kenny has since graduated and lives in Memphis, but we're glad she decided to stay.

Cleda has a B.A. degree in Speech Pathology/Audiology from the University of Pittsburgh. She also attended the Urban and Regional Planning graduate program at Eastern Michigan University. She has a lifelong interest in historic preservation and restored a house built in 1875.

Her wide ranging interests have led her into a variety of jobs, including 7 years as the foster program manager at a animal shelter in Pittsburgh. Since coming to Middletown she has worked as a nanny for the children of an ER doctor, a school bus and motor coach driver and census enumerator. She has also spent nearly five years as a substitute teacher, primarily in the Monroe Junior High School.

Cleda sings in the Middletown Civic Chorus and enjoys attending both school and community theater productions.