



*Equity For All*

Nov. 2024

## Calendar of Events

**Meet Dani McClain**  
Monday, Nov. 4 at 7:00 pm

► Middletown High School  
Community Room, 601 N. Breiel  
Blvd.

*Author Dani McClain will discuss  
the writing of her book, We Live  
for the We: The Political Power of  
Black Motherhood and update us  
on her new projects.*

**Holiday Bazaar Preview for  
Members Only – Thurs., Nov. 7**  
6:00 – 7:30 pm

**Annual Holiday Bazaar**  
No. 8, 9, 15, 16 9:00 – 4:00  
Nov. 17 12:00 – 4:00

► 2204 Central Ave., Middletown

*Come work and/or shop at our  
annual holiday bazaar to help  
raise funds for scholarships for  
local girls and women.*

**Turning the Holidays Upside  
Down: Author/Artist Beth Gully**  
Monday, Dec. 9 at 7:00 pm

► Middletown High School  
Community Room, 601 N. Breiel  
Blvd.

*Author and Ambigram artist Beth  
Gully will talk about her writing  
and her work with graphics and  
publishing. She will have copies  
of her books available to  
purchase.*

**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.

## Meet Dani McClain, Award-Winning Advocacy Journalist

**Monday, November 4 at 7 pm (1<sup>st</sup> Monday)**  
**Middletown High School Community Room (and Zoom)**  
**601 North Breiel Blvd., Middletown**

Our November branch meeting will feature author Dani McClain, who will discuss her book, *We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood*. McClain's book is the product of interviews with mothers on the frontlines of movements for social, political and cultural change who are grappling with the same questions about how to raise safe, healthy, well-adjusted children.

Following a child's development from infancy to the teenage years, *We Live for the We* touches on everything from the importance of creativity to building a mutually supportive community to navigating one's relationship with power and authority.



*We Live for the We* is an essential handbook to help us imagine the society we can build for the next generation. Copies of McClain's book will be available for discounted purchase at the meeting.

Dani McClain reports on race, parenting, reproductive health and crisis issues. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *TIME*, *The Atlantic*, *Ebony*, *Harper's BAZAAR* and a host of other media. She is a contributing writer at *The Nation* and served as the Cincinnati Public Library's Writer-in-Residence from 2020-2021. In addition to discussing her book, McClain will tell us about her new projects and answer audience questions about her work.

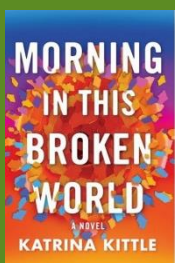
Copies of McClain's book will be for sale. Those who purchase a copy will have an enlightening read and be prepared for State AAUW's Saturday morning "Coffee and Convos" online discussion on March 15. State board member Naykishia Darby will host that book discussion. Our own Middletown AAUW book club will discuss the book in February.

## Joy Luck Book Club

Thurs., Nov. 14 at 7 pm  
\*\* Note date change\*\*  
Becky Ward's home

*Morning In This Broken World*  
– Katrina Kittle

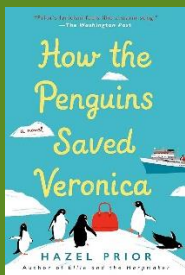
A poignant, life-affirming story of an older widow and a young family who come to rely on each other during the early days of COVID-19. Written by Dayton's own best-selling author Katrina Kittle.



Thurs., Dec. 19 at 7 pm  
Chris Buchert's home

*How the Penguins Saved Veronica*  
– Hazel Prior

A heart-warming story about a wealthy grandmother who is looking for the right cause to which she can leave her fortune. She travels to Antarctica after viewing a documentary on penguins and reconnects there with her estranged grandson.



## Gearing Up for This Month's Holiday Bazaar



Following fast on the heels of a successful book sale is our Annual Holiday Bazaar. This is a great place to pick up high-quality decorations for this festive season, as well as buy gifts for your friends and family. Be sure to spread the word to everyone you know!

The final day to accept donations is Saturday, Oct. 26 from 9 am to noon.



There will be a members-only preview on Thursday evening, Nov. 7. The sale itself takes place two weekends at 2204 Central Ave., Middletown. Stop by Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8/9 and Nov. 15/16 from 9 am to 4 pm or Sunday, Nov. 17 from noon to 4 pm.

## State Members Connect at Fall Summit

Sharing resources among AAUW members throughout Ohio was on the agenda of the Fall Summit held on September 28. Middletown branch members attending included Debbie Worbis, Carolyn Smith, Margie Homan and Lynne Rentschler.

Rush Rogers, AAUW Ohio Program Chair, enlisted members for a panel discussion on how we communicate and connect through all levels of AAUW. She also engaged attendees with a webinar on [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) titled "It's My Vote: AAUW Priorities in the 2024 Election." Over lunch, AAUW colleagues exchanged ideas and best practices.



In the afternoon, attendees watched a video created by campaign consultant Erin Czerniak (left), president of the Toledo AAUW branch and former AAUW Ohio Public Policy Chair. Erin talked about the current election season, public policy and the Ohio State Legislature. She noted that how we talk about the election matters and shared data-informed messaging guidance from Galvanize Action. In particular, she spoke about what's resonating with voters this cycle.

Erin promoted a list of websites that can help AAUW members think about voting issues that match our mission. Here are a few you might look at:

- It's My Vote: an AAUW guide to getting out the vote
- The Matriots: an organization dedicated to putting women into elected office
- Judicial Votes Count: a report card on social policies of Ohio judicial candidates
- Red, Wine, & Blue: suburban women who work together to defeat extremism





## Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Debbie Worbis

[dworbis@gmail.com](mailto:dworbis@gmail.com)

As I look back on a very full fall program so far this year, I am grateful to be part of such an active branch. I just attended an interesting tour of the Butler County Warbirds Museum, which I finished by staying to watch the video on the history of the WASPs (Women Airforce Service Pilots) of World War II. The video was a good reminder of how hard women have had to fight to have their abilities and contributions accepted and recognized. For those who weren't able to attend, I highly recommend that you check it out.

On Saturday, September 28, Carolyn Smith, Margie Homan and I attended AAUW Ohio's Fall Summit in Worthington, Ohio, while Lynne Rentschler and others from around the state attended online. AAUW Ohio Program Chair Rush Rogers led the attendees in a discussion on how our branches communicate and connect, and we exchanged ideas on how to attract and retain new members. We also received information about election issues and state policies. Even if you weren't at the summit, you can listen to "It's My Vote!: AAUW Priorities in the 2024 Election" on YouTube. The 2024 Voter Issue Guide is available online in English and in Spanish.

Our fundraising efforts this fall have already covered our scholarship needs with the book sale proceeds, and holiday bazaar preparations are coming along well. If you haven't signed up yet to work, check with our co-chairs to see when you are needed. Remember that our special member preview will be on Thursday, November 7 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm.

Finally, be sure to catch our program with author Dani McClain on Monday, November 4. (That's the first Monday of the month, not our usual second Monday.) We will meet at Middletown High School, where Dani will have copies of her book to sell. We encourage you to invite a guest or two to join you there.

In conclusion, there's a lot going on this November! I invite you to exercise your hard-earned right to vote, as well as join us in person or online for our November meeting and then the Holiday Bazaar.

## Members Learn About History of Women Airforce Service Pilots

On Saturday, Oct. 19, a group of members and guests from our branch had a great time visiting the Butler County Warbirds exhibit at Middletown Regional Airport to learn about the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) of World War II.



Tim Everhart, one of the co-founders of this museum, had a lot of stories to share about the items in the museum and the retired war planes.

WASPs were civilian women who helped transport all types of planes throughout the war. There is a video on the WASP program that points out how these women were not recognized as military members at the time, even though they worked for the military.



## Meet Our Members

# Spotlight on Retiring Book Sale Co-Chairs

Tina Newlin and Libby Abele started working on AAUW Middletown's Book Sale almost from the moment they joined the organization. Through their leadership, a dedicated book sale committee and a team of volunteers, AAUW has raised tens of thousands of dollars to fund scholarships for girls and women in our community. We want to recognize their years of service as they hand over the reins to new leaders coming on board to chair this important program.

From more than 50 years working on the sale, Tina has a lot of memories. She mentioned that AAUW used to sell books outside of a grocery store in the old Middletown Shopping Center, storing them in carts that they would wheel into a nearby truck to store overnight. Selling books outdoors in mittens was a hard job, so they looked for a better venue.

Over the years, the book sale has had many homes, including around the fountain at the once-covered downtown mall, a shop behind a barber shop at Kittyhawk Plaza, Art Central Foundation, the former Barnitz Bank building that is now The Windamere Event Center and several sites at the Towne Mall. "We've been in more dirty buildings in Middletown than you can imagine!" said Libby. "Whatever the space is, we figure it out." They both love the space we're in right now and appreciate owner Steve O'Neil's flexibility.



**Tina Newlin (left) and Libby Abele (right)**

Both agreed that the book sale is AAUW's most visible program. "People look forward to the book sale every year. They talk to us about it all year long," Tina said. Libby concurred, saying, "Former scholarship winners and their families come to sales to support us. People came to our last sale from Mason, Hamilton, West Chester, even Kentucky."

They kept thinking that book donations would slack off, now that people are reading more digital books. But that hasn't been the case. "We think we'll get fewer books, but every year we get more donations," Tina said. Attendance is steady, too. "We have some people come every day we're open," Libby explained. They may buy as many as they can carry away, so they return the next day for more...or when they have more cash...or remember that there was another title they wanted."

## Meet Our Members



Originally from South Carolina, Tina Newlin got involved in AAUW back in 1968 when she and her husband Joe first moved to Middletown. She read an article in the newspaper and, as a second grade teacher, knew she wanted to support a project that promoted reading. She continued working on the sale while raising her children and working in the field of early childcare administration.

When asked what drew her to AAUW, Tina said she was attracted by a group of women who all had different backgrounds, were different ages and at different life stages. It wasn't like a sorority where everyone tends to be the same. "These women were role models for me as a young woman coming into a new community," she said.



Born in Ashland, Ky., Libby Abele moved to Middletown in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She taught high school in Franklin for many years, including psychology, criminology, sociology and American government. Libby got involved in AAUW when Tina took her to a meeting after she retired in 2005.

Libby began co-chairing the book sale along with Cindy Grau in 2006 and has continued until now. Tina joined her as Co-Chair later, long with Chris Buchert and Sharon Dowden.

## Help Celebrate Our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In October 2025 our AAUW chapter will turn 100 years old! What a testament to the educated women of Middletown and the area. We are looking for volunteers to help envision ways to commemorate this special occasion.

You don't need to be part of the committee to participate, though. Some tasks can be done from your own home and will be short-lived.

If you have ideas, would like to be on the committee or want to help with selected tasks, please email Margie Homan at [homan.margie@gmail.com](mailto:homan.margie@gmail.com). If you have questions, you may call her at 513-518-3897.

Help us celebrate the past and keep fighting for women. After 100 years, there is still a lot of work to do!

## PENS AAUW's Writers Group More Reasons to Write

The purpose of this special interest group is to provide an incentive to put pen to paper and WRITE! We encourage each other and give constructive feedback. Our format is to bring a piece of writing to share verbally with the group. We all have a story to tell. Come share your story with PENS.

We meet the first and third Thursday of each month from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. in Room 123 of the Gardner Harvey Library on the Middletown Campus of Miami University. The November dates are Nov. 7 and Nov. 21. Call or email Becky Ward if you have any questions: [beckward@gmail.com](mailto:beckward@gmail.com) or 513-424-8409.



### Hear From A PENS Writer: **Marti Kreps**

I enjoy photography a lot, and an added benefit of immersing myself in that hobby is becoming more aware of my visual sense. I've learned to see light in a new way such as how back light, side light, and early morning light affect color and texture of an object or scene.

Writing adds to my awareness of my other senses. I try to listen to nuances in conversation. I look for stories that I want to know more about from the newspaper or from other people. I need to research memories to add facts about time and place. I try to describe feelings and figure out ways to show them without just saying they are wonderful or some other cliché. I like to write memoir and sometimes that creates an epiphany of understanding.

Our PENS group meets twice a month and I find that helps me have a goal to have something ready. There are times when I think I've got nothing, but then something comes. It is a very affirming group, as sometimes I think my piece (usually two or three pages) came together well, but sometimes not, and they can always find something good to say. Personally, I've challenged myself to get better by reading and taking a creative writing course online but none, of that is necessary. PENS is a way to feed my creative self.