



Equity Now

FEB. 2025

Calendar of Events

**Women Helping Women:
Healthy Relationships**
Monday, Feb. 10 at 7:00 pm

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

Kathy Stockman, prevention educator, will talk about maintaining healthy relationships in the workplace.

**Meet Elizabeth Slamka,
Middletown's 1st Latina Mayor**
Monday, March 10 at 7:00 pm

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

Middletown's mayor, Elizabeth Slamka, will discuss the challenges of her job and plans for the city.

Meet AUUW's PENS Writers
Monday, April 14 at 7:00 pm

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

During National Poetry Month, learn the history of our branch's writing group. Hear from the members as they share their writing lives and a bit of the work they have accomplished.

**AAUW Scholarships/Awards
Dinner & Officer Installation**
Monday, May 12 at 6:00 pm

► Mulligan's Garden, 218 South Main St., Middletown

Join us at the historic home of member Kristen Mulligan to dine, meet our newest scholarship winner(s) and install officers for our 100th anniversary program year.

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.

Women Helping Women: Healthy Relationships

Monday, Feb. 10 at 7 pm

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

In February, our branch will hear from Kathy Stockman, an advocate for victims of sexual violence. She worked as a Prevention Educator with Women Helping Women for more than a decade. During that time, she taught young people in middle and high schools throughout Burkett County how to develop healthy relationships among their peers.



Kathy Stockman

Kathy will speak to us about how we can maintain healthy relationships in the workplace and other communities. She is currently creating prevention programming for various audiences, including parents and faith-based communities.

Kathy lives in Cincinnati with her husband Mark. They have two adult children and two dogs.

"AI" Was Topic of January Meeting



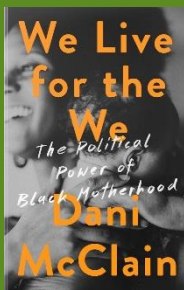
John Burke and Jessie Long led a discussion of artificial intelligence at our January branch meeting. They also shared interesting results of research they conducted among Miami University students and faculty about the adoption of AI in the classroom setting.

Joy Luck Book Club

Thurs., Feb. 20 at 7 pm

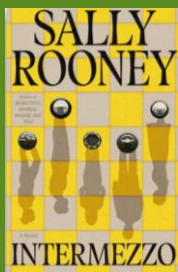
We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood – Dani McLain

Dani McLain – journalist, mother and speaker at our November 2024 branch meeting – writes about how to raise a black daughter in a today's society. This book will also be discussed at AAUW Ohio's Coffee & Conversations on March 15 at 9 a.m.



Thurs., March 20 at 7 pm
Intermezzo – Sally Rooney

This global bestseller is a moving story about two brothers in Dublin who face grief, love and family entanglements.



Thurs., April 17 at 7 pm
How To Read a Book – Monica Wood

It sounds like self-help, but it's actually a novel about a retired English teacher who runs a book club at the local prison.



Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Debbie Worbis
(dworbis@gmail.com)

We hope you are all facing this freezing weather with fortitude. In spite of the cold, many of you joined us in person for January's stimulating program exploring some of the benefits and problems of artificial intelligence, and others joined us via ZOOM. We look forward to another good turnout for our next meeting on Monday, February 10, at Middletown High School's Community Room.

In December we received the happy news that our AAUW Middletown Branch achieved three stars in AAUW's Five Star Program for fiscal year 2024. We received stars for Communications & External Relations, Programming, and Governance & Sustainability. The email from the Deputy Director of Advancement extended congratulations to the branch and included this explanation: "The Five Star Program is designed to honor branches that align their work with AAUW's strategic priorities in areas such as Advancement, Public Policy & Advocacy, Governance & Sustainability, Programming, and Communications & External Relations. Earning three stars is an incredible accomplishment, and we are thrilled to celebrate this success with you." Thank you to all who contributed to this achievement.

Each year both the national and Ohio AAUW organizations send extensive forms to be filled out, with many questions about our activities and efforts in all of these areas. Then they evaluate our answers and the examples we send in to determine what recognition we should receive. We often have programs or special events that may not perfectly reflect these categories but nevertheless are of interest to our members, and so we continue to look for a healthy balance between local interests and state/national goals.

One of the ways we try to recognize the many contributions of our local members is through Named Gifts to the AAUW Educational Foundation in honor of their exemplary service. We welcome your suggestions of names for this year's honorees.

Of course, we fund our work with the income from our sales, and the search for a new sale site continues. Carole Schul has been discussing possible locations with property owner Keith Alexander, and if other members have any tips on potential locations, your input is welcome.

Finally, a nominating committee will soon be contacting members about serving as branch officers. If you want to learn more about AAUW and get better acquainted with other members, this is an excellent opportunity.

Interested in helping plan our 100th anniversary?

Plans are getting underway for our branch's centennial. Join us Feb. 6 at 7:30 pm if you have ideas or energy to contribute this project. Contact Margie Homan at homan.margie@gmail.com for a link to the Zoom session.

PENS Network Extends Beyond AAUW

After a busy holiday, arctic cold, travel, falls on ice, winter health setbacks, and political upheaval, our “special interest” writers’ group is looking forward to sharing our writing pieces as we get started on the New Year 2025. We meet the first and third Thursdays of the month from 1:00-2:30 p.m. at the Gardner Harvey Library, Room #123, of Miami University’s Middletown campus. **Our next meeting dates will be Feb. 6 and 20.** Contact Becky Ward if you have any questions: beckward@gmail.com or 513-424-8409 Bundle up and come share your story!

In this issue, one of our PENS writers, Brian Homan, shares his story about his motivation to begin writing. Brian is the husband of member and president-elect Margie Homan.

Why I Write by Brian Homan

I remember my first library card. A medium blue heavy cardboard piece with ruled lines and my name at the top. Under my name was a cryptic note written in cursive. I now know that it said, in my mother’s handwriting, “NO RECORDS.” Our record player at the time was an old, hand cranked victrola with a needle so big it could cover two tracks at once.

The amazing thing was that I had a library card in first grade. My mom was an avid reader, often making three trips a week to the building in the middle of library park. She started taking me with her in the 1950s. It was a six block walk from our apartment downtown to the park. Later years it was a two-mile journey one way. Mom did not drive but kept up her personal journey to Mecca just the same.

Raising five boys, her solitude was found in books of all kinds. She could discover the treasures of King Tut with Carnarvon, research polio with Salk, or solve mysteries with Chandler. My being inquisitive and imaginative coupled with my early growth of intelligence earned me the nickname “Little Professor.” Reading became my escape. I was often harassed as dumb or stupid because of an undetected hearing loss. I was often told to “pay attention or open up my ears.” I learned what I did not catch in the classroom by reading. That blessed habit led to my inventing characters and writing stories. I was often the hero.

Thanks to my wife Margie and the kindness of Becky Ward and the others in PENS I have reawakened the world I can make up. It is a joy to me when my PENS cohorts laugh at the right time and offer positive criticism or suggestions. I am glad to be a member of PENS.

Do You Know a Girl Who’d Like to BeWISE?

Applications and flyers are available now for BeWISE Camp, which is supported by funding from our Middletown branch. This summer’s residential STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Camp will be held June 15 - 20, 2025 at Muskingum University. The camp is for girls who will enter 7th or 8th grade in the fall.

Director Jessica Kuhner wants members to know that the camp is NOT just for students receiving a scholarship. Interested students may also apply directly to camp. The cost is \$625 for room, board and educational materials. The camp **application deadline is April 30, 2025.** Our scholarship committee will be distributing information along with scholarship applications to area schools.

If you know of any eligible Ohio girls who would enjoy this camp but don’t live in our area, feel free to request more information to share with them.

Meet New Member Roseanne Williams



Roseanne Williams is originally from Houston, Texas. She moved to West Chester 18 years ago and fell in love with being able to experience four seasons with her daughter, son and husband.

Roseanne attended Kennesaw University in Georgia, but is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati with a B.S in Criminal Justice.

During her time in Ohio, Roseanne has worked as a fashion manager, pharmacy technician, and substitute teacher for Lakota schools in ESOL classes. Currently she is a building substitute instructor with Butler Tech.

Roseanne spends her time as vice president of her HOA, curating items for her booth of vintage home decor/tableware at the West Chester Antique Center, reading crime novels, gardening and playing with her dachshund Henry. She and her husband also enjoy supporting the local civic theaters of Hamilton and Fairfield.