

Branch Events
Mark Your Calendar

November 5 – Election Day

November 12
Read Between the Wines...7

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November 5, Election Day
Your vote could make a difference.

Our hats are off to branch Public Policy Co-Chairs **Mary Dupuis** and **Dianne Gregg**, who provided an in-depth and valuable review of the November 5 election in the [10/2024 AAUW State College Branch Bulletin](#) (pages 1-3). We deeply value their hard work gathering and synthesizing the information.

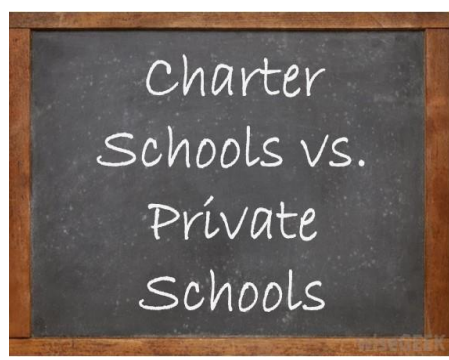
Given that AAUW is a nonpartisan organization, the column refrained from telling people *how* to vote. AAUW is a mission-based organization—*advancing equity for women and girls*—and people can learn about candidates with this mission in



mind. Mary and Dianne refer us to the League of Women Voters Centre County candidate guide for information on individual candidates. Thank you to LWVCC for their fine efforts: [LWVCC Voter Guide](#).

Charter Schools vs. Private Schools

One outcome of our September 26 program on school vouchers was the need to clarify the differences between charter schools and private schools.



In short, charter schools take money directly from the local school district. Private schools that get money from vouchers decrease tax money that could be used by the public school system. In Pennsylvania, there are currently two Tax Credit Voucher programs: ETIC and OSTC. The cost for these was \$50 million in the first year {2001-2002}. According to Education Voters PA slide show shared by Executive Director Sue Spicka at the 9/26 branch program on school vouchers,

[Education Voters PA School Funding](#), the 2024-25 budget for these programs is \$525 million dollars. To learn more about the differences between charter schools and public schools, and how they receive funds, read: [Charter & Private Schools](#). We welcome new members to the Education Committee. **Contact Sue Johnston:** education@aauwstatecollege.org.

Remembering Lily Ledbetter, 1938-2024



A few weeks ago, the women’s rights movement lost a legend, **Lily Ledbetter**, at age 86.

In 1999, Lily Ledbetter was in her 19th year as a tire plant worker in Alabama when she learned that she was earning \$2,000 less per month than her male counterparts. She filed suit. In 2007, her case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court but was denied. She was told she should have filed her claim within 180 days of receiving the first unequal pay check. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg dissented, and in 2009 Ledbetter’s efforts led to passage of the **Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009**, the first piece of legislation that President

Barack Obama signed into law upon becoming president.

Ledbetter remained a national symbol of unequal treatment in the workplace and worked for the next several years as an advocate for women’s rights and pay equity. Ledbetter’s 19 years of unequal pay occurred before the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was enacted, so she never received back salary or other compensation. However, she helped the fight for equal pay achieve a major milestone, and she remains an inspiration today. **Learn more:** [Lily Ledbetter interview with AAUW, 10-15-2024 Lily Ledbetter Dies \(Centre Daily Times\)](#)

OCTOBER LOOK-BACK



October 6-7: Branch sponsors Penn State Forum speaker

A group of AAUW State College board members welcomed Penn State Forum speaker Susan Robinson for a Sunday night dinner prior to the October 7 program.

Pictured from top left: *Carline Crevecoeur, Naana Nti, Michele Crowl, Vijay Varadan. From top right:* *Madison Mushensky (Susan Robinson’s intern), Susan Chyczewski, Susan Robinson, Vasundara Varadan.*



Branch member Carolyn Donaldson (right) served as program moderator.

At the October 7 lunch program, **Susan Robinson** addressed a room of 250 attendees to share her inspirational journey as a legally blind individual, *Leadership: Seeing Possibility and Creating Vision*.

She was high-energy, entertaining, thought-provoking, approachable, and inspirational. In her role as business advisor and as Vice President of the Penn State Alumni Association Board of Directors. Susan empowers others to be their best selves. Check out her **TED Talk**, [Susan Robinson TED Talk](#).

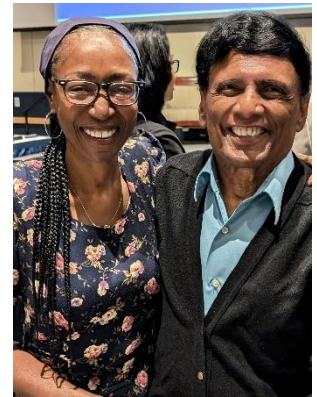


Branch Members at the Forum

The Penn State Forum Lunch is a terrific way for branch members to reconnect.

Left: Leslie Laing, Dina Liberatore, and Sally Kalin.

Right: Carline Crevecoeur and Vijay Vardan.



Twenty-two AAUW State College members attended the Forum lunch. **Seated:** Carolyn Donaldson, Sally Kalin, Susan Robinson, Molly Kunkel. **Standing:** Sherry Crassweller, Naana Nti, Nancy Weinreb, Carol Hodes, Eileen Smith, Sue Johnston, Laura Miller, Angela Hughes, Carline Crevecoeur, Rebecca Mugridge, Dina Liberatore, Michele Crowl, Pat Nicholanco, Linda Higginson. **Not Pictured:** Suzanne Kerlin, Leslie Laing, Connie Schroeder, Vasundara Varadan, Vijay Varadan.

October 8 Puzzle Palooza – a people pleaser with lots of pieces



Kerry Smith, Gail Agans, Mary Ellen Slavinkas, and Mary Ann Blair had fun building “Succulents.”

There was nothing puzzling about the October 8 *Puzzle Palooza* branch membership event; it was great good fun and a chance to meet and welcome three brand new AAUW State College members: **Gail Agans, Kerry Smith, and Kim Hamilton**. The event was held at member Connie Schroeder’s house. After a potluck, we broke off with four puzzle tables and a couple of rounds that were alternately fun and challenging.

The group was joined by some special guests. First, University Women’s Club President **Joanne Bennett** attended, and it was nice to compare notes on the two groups. We were also joined by two local women, **Gail McCormick** and **Christina Bennett**, who run a great quarterly puzzle swap in town.



Joanne Bennett, Sophie Penney Leach, Susan Chyczewski, and Gail McCormick found sweet success with “Donuts & Coffee.”

Gail McCormick has her own special version of celebrity. She happens to be the reigning Pennsylvania champion for speed puzzling; she recently competed in the World Jigsaw Puzzle championship held in Spain. Learn more about Gail:

[Gail McCormick, Pennsylvania Speed Puzzle Champion.](#)



Seated: Connie Schroeder, Mary Ann Blair, Joanne Bennett, Chobi DebRoy, Gail McCormick, Susan Chyczewski. **Standing:** Carline Crevecoeur, Kim Hamilton, Christina Bennett, Mary Ellen Slavinkas, Gail Agans, Amy Wilson, Laurel Zydney. **Not pictured:** Sophie Penney Leach, Kerry Smith.

DIVERSITY CORNER



Naana Nti, Community Diversity Group Vice-Chair; **Kerry Wiessman**, Program Moderator, Centre LGBT+ Board Chair; **Carol Eicher**, Community Diversity Group Chair.

October 10: CDG-Cultural Empowerment for Women lunch embraces community involvement

The October 10 Cultural Empowerment for Women lunch, co-sponsored by AAUW State College and the Community Diversity Group, cast a light on *Making a Difference Through Community Engagement*. At individual lunch tables, attendees explored what motivates engagement, benefits of volunteering, and ways to make new connections. It was enlightening!

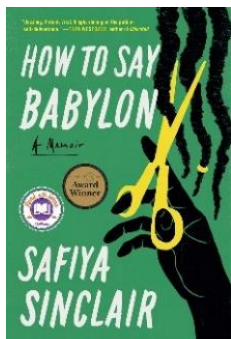
October 27: Branch members join United Nations of Central Pennsylvania for annual celebration: *Weaving a Sustainable Future*

The annual United Nations Association of Central Pennsylvania Celebration began with a combined reception and second-hand clothing pop-up that tied to the theme of sustainability. After dinner, program speaker **Dr. Aydin Alptekinoglu** shared the dangers of the global fashion supply chain. This topic is a fascinating and very concerning issue that deserves far more attention: <https://unfashionalliance.org/>.



Fourteen branch members were in attendance, pictured: Emily Esposito, Michele Crowl, Naana Nti, Angela Hughes, Grace Hampton, Sally Kalin, Della Bube, Betsy Manlove, Sophie Penney Leach, Jackie Esposito, Connie Schroeder, Leslie Laing. **Not Pictured:** Cindy Hahn, Amy Miller.

¡ADELANTE! Book Club: Thursday, November 14, 2:30 pm



Our book club is modeled after the AAUW Diversity Outreach for Impact Program, featuring diverse cultures in both fiction and nonfiction offerings. The next meeting will be on **Thursday, November 14, 2:30 pm**.

We will discuss *How to Say Babylon: A Memoir* by Safiya Sinclair. Learn more: [How to Say Babylon](#). New members welcome. Contact info@aauwstatecollege.org to participate. **Join Zoom: [November 14 meeting](#)**
Meeting ID: 841 7831 7587; Passcode: 442630

Schlow Library to hold program on emotional health for women of color: Wednesday, November 6, 7:00 pm



Join Schlow Centre Region Library for *Thriving, Not Surviving: Emotional Health & Authenticity for Women of Color*, a workshop offering women of color practical strategies for navigating work-life balance while prioritizing mental and emotional health. Explore techniques to reduce burnout and increase mindfulness. Chántelle Adanna Agbro will lead the in-person workshop virtually from her home in Los Angeles. She is an international award-winning author, speaker, actress, poet, and educator.

This program is made possible by a grant from the AAUW-State College Branch.

Learn more and register today: <https://www.schlowlibrary.org/events/3213>

Diversity Committee: *Naana Nti (Chair), Carline Crevecoeur, Denise Rupert, Malu Tejada, Sophie Penney Leach, Maria Schmidt, and Carmen Vanderhoof*

OUT & ABOUT

Ten Thousand Villages seeks shoppers and volunteers for November 21-23 sale



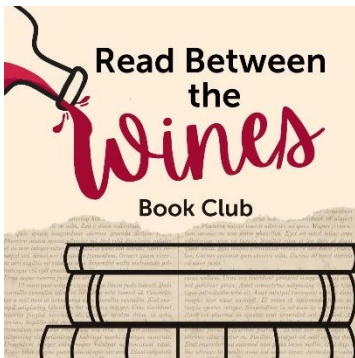
Ten Thousand Villages will hold a three-day holiday sale **at the Unitarian Fellowship on November 21, 22, and 23**. Since the store has closed, this will be an opportunity for the local community to support international fair trade and shop for the holidays. The sale will include a wide variety of artisan goods, coffee, chocolate, tea, and

heirloom quality rugs. **Thursday and Friday sale hours are 10 am-6 pm; Saturday, 10 am-5 pm.** The sale will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 780 Waupelani Drive.

Volunteers are needed to assist with the sale! Sign up today at [Volunteer November 21-23](#)

MEMBERSHIP FOCUS

Read Between the Wines: Tuesday, November 12, 5:00 pm



Come enjoy a discussion of *The Diamond Eye*, a historical novel by Kate Quinn that follows the true story of Mila Pavlichenko, a WW II sniper. The book delves into her journey from student to soldier, weaving action, espionage, and a touch of romance. Please RSVP your plans to attend to [Susan Chyczewski](#) by **November 9**. Susan's address and parking directions will be provided when you RSVP.

Join us for a branch gathering, Tuesday, December 10, 5:30-7:30 pm



Great news! We have scheduled our AAUW State College Holiday Gathering at [University Wine Company](#) for **December 10, 5:30-7:30 pm**. Mark your calendar today! Join us for an evening filled with food, drinks, laughter, and great company. Festive attire, ugly sweaters are welcome.



We are excited that Taproot Kitchen will cater the event. Learn more about Taproot at [Taproot Kitchen](#). Their watchword is "everyone has a place at the table," bringing local ingredients to create artisan dishes that highlight the flavors of the season.

University Wine Company is located at 540 Misty Hill Drive off Rte. 45 between Atherton Street and Pine Grove Mills. From the intersection of South Atherton and Rte. 45, travel 1.4 miles to Misty Hill Drive and turn left. The winery is the first left up Misty Hill Drive.

Members are welcome to invite guests to this event. The cost for all to attend is **\$20 per person**, which includes dinner from Taproot, with one exception. **As a special welcome, the \$20 cost to attend is waived for members who joined the branch this year.** The winery offers both alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, and attendees are on their own for that.

Please RSVP your plans to attend to [Carline Crevecoeur](#) by **Tuesday, December 3**, and bring cash or a **\$20 check made out to "SCAUW" to the event.** (Only one "A" in "SCAUW")

NEW MEMBER WELCOME

Laura Miller - deld322@comcast.net



Twenty-five years ago, we moved to State College from the York area with our two young sons. I started with the University and have held several positions through the years; currently I am with the Office of Physical Plant. I have a bachelor's degree in engineering and a PhD in education. Everyone in our family has at least one Penn State degree, and We Are...

My hobbies include reading and crocheting and, of course, most things Penn State. My husband recently retired, and we have taken up bicycle riding and being very lazy at the pool. I also have two Siamese cats that

help run my life.

I previously served on an AAUW STEM committee, and hope to re-engage with them to help young women advance into those fields.

Jennifer Rose - jrose146@outlook.com



Hi! I have been a resident of State College for 11 years and currently work remotely as a PR and Communications Manager for the School of Business at Western Governors University, an online, nonprofit, accredited university. Previously, I worked at Penn State in external communications for seven years and before that as a journalist for 10 years. I have a master's degree in public affairs reporting and a bachelor's degree in communication studies.

I joined AAUW as a way to advocate for women's equality and to serve as an example to and help change the future for my young daughter.

Eileen Smith - eismi2000@hotmail.com



My husband, Steve, and I met at Penn State in 1970. I was an education major and later got my graduate degrees in psychology and counseling at Arizona State University. We married in Titusville, Pa., in 1974 (my hometown), and moved to Phoenix, Az., where we made our home until 2024 when we retired. I was a school psychologist, teacher, and guidance counselor and taught graduate classes in psychology at Northern Arizona University and Arizona State University.

We had been returning annually since our graduation in 1972 to our State College home for summer and fall and decided that it was time to sell our home in Arizona and make State College home base. We plan to spend the cold winter months in Naples, Fl. I was an AAUW member in Phoenix and am looking forward to becoming involved

in AAUW in State College and meeting new friends. We love State College and are excited and happy to be amongst people who share our sentiments and interests.

Engagement opportunities



Whether you are a longtime member or have joined the branch recently, if you are not currently “engaged” with the branch, or would like to shift directions, we need you!

There are several committees behind the scenes, planning branch programs, holding membership events, assisting with the Used Book Sale, selecting scholarship recipients, and doing much more. Check out the list of engagement opportunities today: [ENGAGEMENT](#)

Time to renew your AAUW membership?



Time to renew your AAUW membership? Members receive an email renewal notification from AAUW the month prior to the renewal date.

RENEW ONLINE through AAUW National – respond to the email reminder from National or go to [AAUW Membership](#) on National’s webpage where you will be asked to reset your password.

RENEW BY MAIL – go to https://aauwstatecollege.org/join_aauw_membership/ and click on “Join by Mail” at the page bottom. Print the form and send with a check to address listed.

QUESTIONS? Contact Membership VPs [Susan Chyczewski](#) and [Carline Crevecoeur](#).

BOOK BEAT

Donations are steady for Used Book Sale: May 17-20, 2025



Our workshop leads are reporting that book donations are steady, and on par with last year! The workshop is open 24/7 for donations and staffed at the following times: **Mondays, 6-8 pm, Tuesdays/Wednesdays, 9:00 am-2:30 pm.**

If you have books to donate, check out [Book Donations](#) first. The workshop is located off 2197 High Tech Road. High Tech is directly across from State College Airport.

AAUW BEYOND the BRANCH

Regional AAUW conference brings 140 AAUW members together



The September 2024 AAUW Regional Atlantic Conference—with attendees representing AAUW branches from 13 states—was a success. It attracted about 140 people, and attendee assessments were overwhelmingly positive. Pennsylvania will likely host the regional conference in 2026, possibly in the Philadelphia area. Fingers crossed!

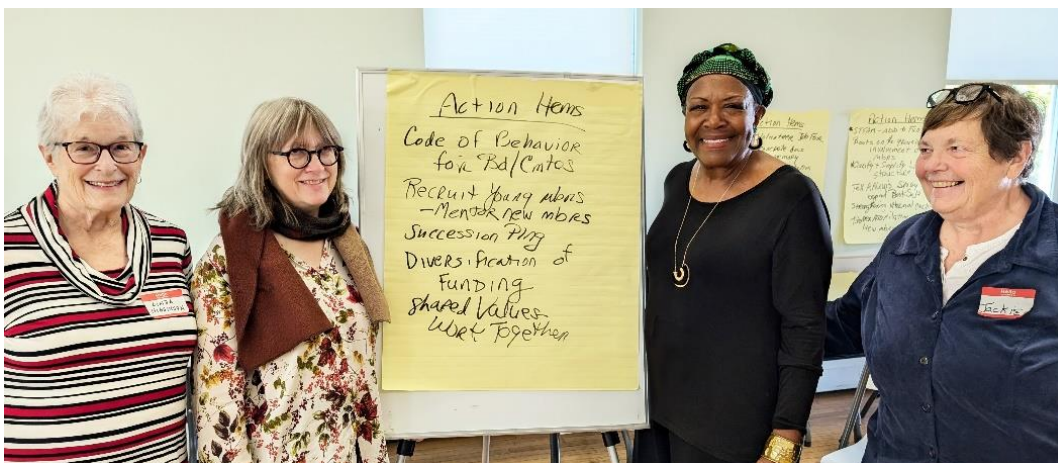
AAUW Pennsylvania to host June 28 retreat in State College



The biennial AAUW Pennsylvania one-day retreat will be held in **State College on June 28, 2025, at the Wyndham/Mountainview Hotel**. Branch member **Pam Fuller** will facilitate discussions on 1) cultivating leadership and 2) increasing engagement with AAUW's mission. Stay tuned for ways we as branch members can help to facilitate the meeting.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Branch leadership retreat held October 19



The Strategic Planning Task Force worked behind-the-scenes to organize a board retreat on implementing the strategic plan. Pictured: Linda Higginson, Lee Carpenter, Grace Hampton (chair), and Jackie Esposito.

Not pictured: Ann Echols.

The Strategic Planning Implementation Task Force, an ad hoc committee of the branch board, held a retreat for branch leadership on October 19. Fourteen board members were in attendance.

Committee chair Grace Hampton set the tone of the retreat when she introduced two



Grace Hampton introduces the Talking Stick and Sankofa.



key concepts, the *Talking Stick* and *Sankofa* (left).

The **Talking Stick** is a tool used in Native American councils to promote respectful and effective communication. The person holding the talking stick has the floor and is the only one allowed to speak, ensuring that everyone has equal time to speak and that no one interrupts or speaks over one another.

Sankofa is a concept that originates in Ghana, based on the proverb “*It is not wrong to go back for that which you have forgotten.*” It is

represented by a bird with its head turned backwards while its feet face forward carrying a precious egg in its mouth.

During the retreat, board members addressed two components of the current branch strategic plan: communication and finances. It was an informative and beneficial experience. Once feedback from the retreat is drawn up, conclusions and recommendations will be shared.

Hats off to the task force for organizing the retreat. Led by **Grace Hampton**, the Task Force includes **Lee Carpenter, Ann Echols, Jackie Esposito, and Linda Higginson.**

Monthly board meetings open to membership



Branch board meetings are open to all members and are a great way to learn about what is going on and to offer your input. To catch up on branch business, review the minutes from the last board meeting:

[10/14/2024 Meeting Minutes](#)

The next branch board meeting will take place **via ZOOM** (only):

Monday, November 11, 11:30 am–1:00 pm

Meeting link: [Nov 11 Board Meeting](#)



***Branch Bulletin* dates**

The next *Branch Bulletin* will be issued **December 2**. The submission deadline is **Monday, November 25**. Please send items to editor [Connie Schroeder](#).