

# The Allentonian

February 2021

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A publication of the American Association of University Women  
Allentown (PA) Branch

*Breaking through barriers!*



## LEADERSHIP

### The A-Team

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*It's time to get  
creative!*

*See page 2...*



Dear fellow branch members,

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus once observed that, "the only constant in life is change." Apropos of this, Julia Brown, our AAUW national president, sent a recent email to the membership proposing a major change to the bylaws. She is recommending that the degree requirement for membership be eliminated, a consideration that has already come up for vote several times in the past. I hope that you will support this important proposal in the upcoming spring election.

When our organization was founded in 1881, there were few opportunities for women to pursue a higher education, although many women did attend two-year teaching schools. AAUW (at the time a small group of college graduates, known as ACA, or Association of Collegiate Alumnae) set as its primary goal the attainment of higher education of women so they could pursue greater opportunity in the workforce, and in a wider range of fields. This founding group of alumnae had before them a formidable task in combating existing prejudices. For instance, it was an accepted notion at the time that the health and fertility of women were threatened by undertaking coursework at the college level. Thankfully, AAUW, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Bureau of Health and Statistics, disproved this myth in 1885.

Times have drastically changed, and AAUW - at its inception a privileged and elitist organization - had objectives that today make only partial sense, when more women (56%) attend college than men (44%), and women now excel in careers once dominated by men.

Our AAUW Board of Directors is proposing that we revisit the original intentions of our founders, and broaden our admission policy to include non-degree holders as well as college graduates. This would prove beneficial in two ways. First, corporations and foundations would more receptive to making financial grants to an inclusive organization than to one that is discriminatory. And, second, this would be an essential step toward insuring that our bylaws and membership requirements reflect our Diversity Statement, which in part states: "In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership." Besides, breaking barriers for women and girls is what we're all about.

For these compelling reasons, I strongly urge you to follow the recommendation of our National Board of Directors and dozens of AAUW leaders throughout the country by voting to support this timely and critical amendment to our by-laws. Voting will open on April 7 and close on May 17, 2021.

In the meantime you are encouraged to express any comments or thoughts on the subject of open membership by visiting the election page on the AAUW website which will remain open until February 5, 2021. The organization always welcomes your feedback.



Sincerely,  
Virginia Delph  
Membership





## Branch Meeting, hosted by the Career Group

### *Dried Flower Arranging*

**February 2 at 7:00 pm, screen-shared YouTube video**

The meeting will be a floral demonstration of how to create a dried arrangement, presented by Barbara Campbell.

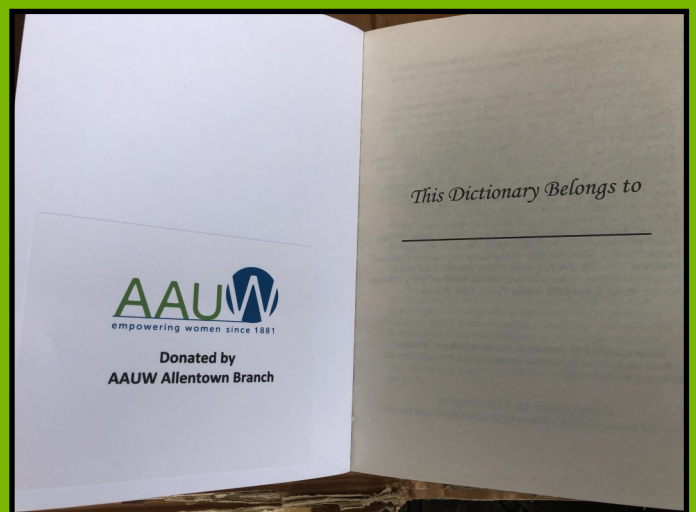
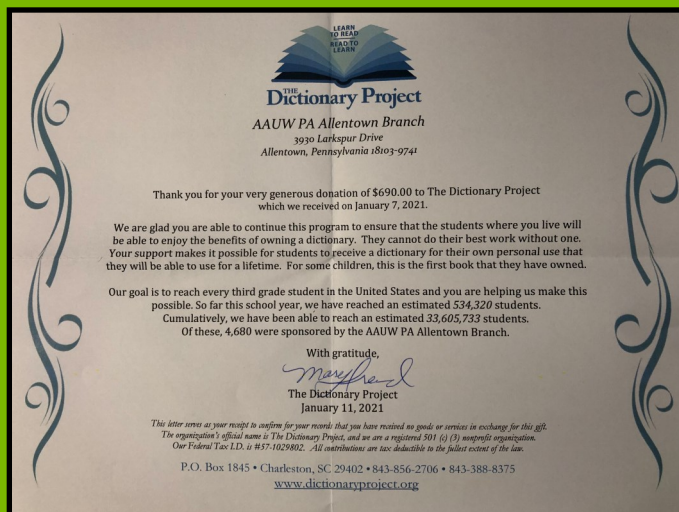
Dried floral materials are natural materials that have been dried and will last over a long period of time. Barbara will make a dried arrangement out of natural materials that can be found in your garden, along the roadside, or can be bought in floral shops, garden centers, or craft stores.



### **Dictionary Project**

The dictionaries were delivered to Central Elementary School on January 14.

Thanks to Cathy Kane for submitting these photos.



## AAUW Allentown Branch A Team Meeting Jan 5, 2021



**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM. Zoom meeting lead by Peggy Tyson.

**Members Present:** Cathy Kane, Lesley Lojko, Susan Nenstiel, Karen Peiffer, Bev Tisdale, Judy Trach and Peggy Tyson

**Minutes:** Minutes of October 27, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Motion to accept by Peggy and second by Bev. Passed.

**Finance Report:** No activity since last meeting. \$25,918.47 in account.

**Membership and Dues:** Dues increases: in 2022 will increase by \$3 (\$62), 2023 by \$5 (\$67) and 2024 by \$5 (\$72). Current State dues are \$10 and Branch dues are \$15. Also, AAUW Board proposal to be voted on in the Spring to open membership and not require degrees to become a member.

**Program:** On Jan 12 at 7:00 PM, Nicole Jensen from Pinebrook Family Answers will speak with us on Zoom about the Leaving Jail Program. No February program as of now. Judy is looking into having Ethel Drayton-Craig speak to us about her family history in the Lehigh Valley in March.

**Website:** Still not updated. Susan will check with State President, Ann about web support.

**Public Policy:** Lesley asked the question whether our branch should focus on Education or Pay Equity. After some discussion, the A Team agreed that the branch should focus on Education.

### **Branch Updates:**

*Book Corner* – the Lehigh County Assistance Office is still closed to in- person clients.

*Dictionary Project* – Cathy is in touch with Central Elementary School and will be ordering both the Student Dictionaries and Spanish-English dictionaries tomorrow. There are approximately 105 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade students. Susan will print up labels to place inside the dictionaries. We are unable to give our dictionary presentation in person this year as the students are learning virtually. We were offered the opportunity to make our presentation via Zoom but declined. The teachers and staff will work to get the books to the students.

*Dan Schantz*– They have decided to stop their barcode fundraiser where we earned \$2 for every \$10 spent. They are continuing with other fundraisers like Monthly Madness coupons which we did before but we decided to put that on hold for now due to COVID.

### **New Business:**

State Awards: *Outstanding Woman Award* to Cathy Kane; *Gateway to Equity*: Pass; *Member Making a Difference*: Pass; *NCCWSL*: unless we know a student who would benefit from attending NCCWSL in May, we will give what is in our budget to State who will award it to an applicant. Susan will follow up with State.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned 7:30 P.M.

**Next A Team Meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 7:30 PM Zoom. Peggy will chair.**

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Kane – Recording Secretary

*In Memoriam*



Marjorie Dent and Virginia Kiefer, two of our long-time branch members, passed away in December.

We also want to offer our condolences to Judith Trach, whose mother, Martha Getchell, died in December.

## Public Policy

Lesley Lojko, Chair

### FROM OUR STATE PUBLIC POLICY CHAIRS COMES THE FOLLOWING:

“We will continue to work with Education Voters PA, <http://educationvoterspa.org> to monitor what is happening with charter schools and with PA Schools Work, to monitor what is happening with school funding, <https://paschoolswork.org>.

The Pennsylvania school funding lawsuit will go to trial in 2021. Want to know how much your school district is underfunded per student? You can find state wide data for your district at [Fund Our Schools](#).” (The above comes from the state chairs. I have been unable to locate this information as this goes to “press.” I will do my best to locate these sites for next month’s news. If you find them please let me know.)

While this year’s level of state aid was “very positive” for school districts given the financial challenges facing the state, the report said, if funding remains flat for another year, [districts that rely most heavily on state aid](#) will be especially challenged. State funding increases for public schools are distributed through a formula that directs more money to the neediest districts; if there is no increase, then those districts don’t see any greater share of state dollars.

**At our most recent A-team meeting we agreed that we should concentrate on the education issues that have been raised by our state public policy chairs.**

The following issues are included under the heading of “education” that is a major part of our national organization’s mission:

- Gender bias in schools
- The STEM gap
- Sexual misconduct in schools
- Title IX
- Higher education and other career pathways



Let's welcome our newest member, **Elizabeth Garnto**. She is a past recipient of an AAUW education grant, and earned a BA in Business Administration from Muhlenberg in 2007. She currently is employed by Beirne Wealth Consulting Business. Elizabeth is interested in helping with branch program planning and becoming a member of the Career Women's Study Group. Contact info: [Elizabeth.garnto@gmail.com](mailto:Elizabeth.garnto@gmail.com)

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:** Thursday, March 11, 7 pm via Zoom

The March branch meeting will feature a presentation by Dr. Edith Drayton-Craig on the Drayton Family, one of the oldest Black families in Allentown.

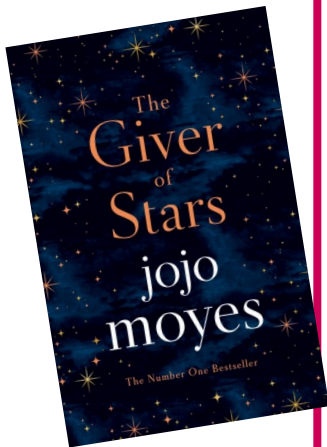
### Women's Literature Group

*The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes

Zoom meeting

Join in on February 18 at 2:00 p.m.

Zoom meeting will be arranged by Cathy Kane, who will help anyone learn how to participate. Call her at 610-428-1833.



### Literature of the Past and Present

Leader: Annette Bonstedt (610-395-5974)

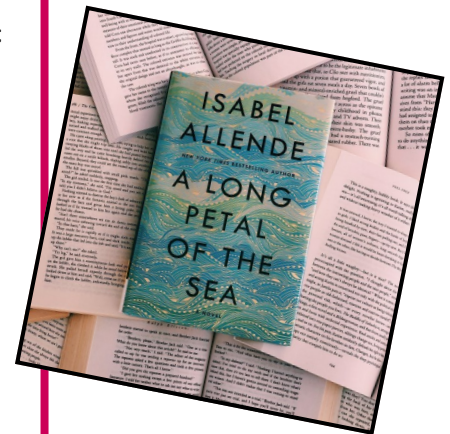
Thursday, February 18, 12:00 pm

Zoom book group meeting

Book: *A Long Petal of the Sea* by Isabel Allende

Reviewer: Karen Peiffer

If attending, please contact Cathy Kane by e-mail [ckane@yahoo.com](mailto:ckane@yahoo.com) or phone 610-428-1833.



### *The Allentonian*

Please submit news and announcements to the editor, Kathy Osmond, at [kosmond@fastmail.com](mailto:kosmond@fastmail.com)  
Deadline is February 15 for the March issue. Check the website for updated information and to read *The Allentonian* online.  
Allentown Branch Website: <http://allentown-pa.aauw.net>

Allentown Branch email address is: [aauwallentown@yahoo.com](mailto:aauwallentown@yahoo.com)  
National Website: [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) State Website: [aauw-pa.aauw.net/](http://aauw-pa.aauw.net/)

AAUW Member helpline: 800-326-AAUW

#### AAUW MISSION STATEMENT

*AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.*

#### AAUW DIVERSITY STATEMENT

*In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.*

#### AAUW LAF/EF

AAUW LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND [aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources/](http://aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources/)  
provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sexual discrimination.



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