

9th Annual Scholarship Luncheon

We are looking forward to a day filled with sunshine for our **9th Annual Scholarship Luncheon** at the scenic **Beacon Hill Country Club**, on Wednesday, April 30.

Eighty-eight attendees will honor Mai Cleary, co-founder of *Oasis*, and Reverend Joyce Phipps, pastor of Old First Church and immigration attorney.

Anastasia Rubis, New Jersey author of *Oriana*, the story of the trailblazing Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci, will be our guest speaker. The book will be for sale at the luncheon.

Our raffle baskets are ready to be assembled with many beautiful items and gift cards generously donated by Monmouth County businesses. Special thanks to the study groups for their creative baskets, including outstanding photographs from **Marilyn Baldi**. Thanks, too, to the many committee members who came together to make this day a success.

Save the Date!

May Branch Meeting
Thursday, May 29, at 7:00 p.m.
Shrewsbury Historical Society
419 Sycamore Ave.
Shrewsbury, NJ 07702

"Advocacy for Women in Education"
Our mission stands firm. AAUW remains
strong as a tireless advocate for women in
higher education.

Presidents' Message

Dear Friends,

It's spring in NJ! The sun seems brighter, days are longer, and there is color everywhere. It gives me a feeling of hope in this very shifting and volatile world. Marian remembers her family's first spring in NJ when her first son was born, and each day as husband Blake came to the hospital, he would tell her how beautiful NJ was in the spring. When they drove home from the hospital along the GSP, they enjoyed the center median filled with blooming trees in 1971. There are now beautiful trees wherever we look, and we hope that wherever you are you can enjoy the beauty of spring.

The riots of color in spring make me think of the scene in *The Wizard of Oz* movie when Judy Garland opens the door from the grey Kansas into the Technicolor Oz. Leafless trees and winter skies have their own beauty, but Spring is my favorite season.



Many of us know *The Wizard of Oz* as one of the most famous movies to popularize Technicolor early on. Many of us have read the Oz books by Frank L. Baum; however, you may not know of the feminist writer, lecturer, and suffragist who was the inspiration. Many of us learned, I certainly did, that the Oz books are an allegory for bimetallism and about the struggle between the farmers and the government. This may have been a useful tool for learning history. However, the inspiration was quite different.

Frank L. Baum was a feminist and took his inspiration and encouragement from his mother-in-law, Matilda Gage. She was the inspiration for the strong female characters at the center of the books – the witches of Oz. Matilda Electa Joslyn Gage was an author and an activist and was one of the youngest speakers at the Syracuse National Women's Rights Convention. The Matilda effect, the term for the phenomenon when women are denied the credit for scientific achievements, was named in her honor.

Born in 1826 to abolitionists in Cicero, NY, Matilda Gage was well educated. Her family's home was a stop on the Underground Railroad and she continued this when married.

Matilda Gage was a prolific writer and gave many speeches. She also co-founded the National Women's Suffrage Association and co-wrote *The History of Women's Suffrage* with Elizabeth Cady-Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. Matilda was known as a "firebrand" – one example that is quite memorable is when she interrupted the ceremony to unveil the Statue of Liberty. Matilda sailed up in a rented boat with a bullhorn to loudly protest the portrayal of liberty as a woman when women were denied rights in their own country.

Gage fought not only for women's rights but also worked for Native American rights. She railed against the brutal oppression of Native peoples. She admired matriarchal governments and wrote about the power of women with the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. (I, Heather, previously wrote about the

Haudenosaunee Confederacy in an earlier NetWorks letter.)

Gage wrote an extensive treatise on witch hunts after she was denounced as a heretic and witch by male critics. *Woman, Church and State* details the centuries of witch hunts and persecution of thousands of people, largely women, for crimes "which never existed save in the imagination of those persecutors and which grew in their imagination from a false belief in woman's extraordinary wickedness."

Baum had been a struggling actor when he married Gage's daughter, Maud. He had tried his hand at many different and failed careers. A dreamer with a big imagination, he was encouraged by Gage to write and publish the stories and poems he told to his children. While living with Frank and Maud, Gage and Baum discussed many topics. As a fierce feminist, Baum, directly influenced by Gage, served as secretary of the Aberdeen Women's Suffrage Society and used the local paper he owned to write editorials for women's rights and suffrage.

Matilda Electa Joslyn Gage passed away before the completion and publication of *The Wizard of Oz*. But her legacy lives on in the fourteen World of Oz books she inspired.

We live in a different time when doors have been opened to women because of the work of Matilda and her son-in-law, among other historic feminists. However, during most of our lifetime women have continued to work to open new doors, including more representation in elected positions.

~

To achieve that goal, our branch was again part of a coalition of local organizations to support women in politics with the annual Running and Winning Workshop held this year on April 8th at Monmouth Regional High School. This workshop is for young women who are high school juniors in northern Monmouth County. The students had the opportunity to meet Women in Government who currently hold public office or who are part of the staffs of current officeholders. These

women come from both major political parties as well as some who run for non-partisan positions on school boards and in some communities.

Meeting with the Women in Government in their small working groups stands out as one of the things the students find most meaningful about the day. The others include working with students from other high schools (they work in groups of four made up of students from different schools) and the opportunity to make a presentation to the entire group at the close of the workshop.

Three of the observations the students made on their evaluations about the final part of the day stood out to Marian and we want to share them with you.

"I thought the presentation to the school board was the most important as it directly allowed me to take a stand on an issue and collaborate with others." - from a Communications High School student

"I found the school board program most interesting since many of the girls spoke about issues I have been talking about and hearing the solutions and input they have." - from an Ocean Township High School student

"The presentations because it pushed me out of my comfort zone." - from a Henry Hudson Regional High School student

The sponsoring organizations are the League of Women Voters of Monmouth County, who invited others to join them in beginning this program in 2007, AAUW Northern Monmouth County Branch, the Junior League of Monmouth County, the Red Bank Chapter of Hadassah, and the Central Jersey Club, the most recent to join as a sponsor. These groups collaborate and work together to offer young women a unique experience that includes the opportunity to see the value of collaboration. To date we have provided that

experience for close to a thousand young women. I hope this has piqued your interest and that next year some of you will become part of the team that makes Running & Winning possible.

~

Our meetings and events and our support of local women and girls could not happen without volunteers from the branch who serve in a variety of positions.

Running and Winning is only one of many activities this branch sponsors during the year. The Used Book Sale and the Scholarship Luncheon come immediately to mind, and they only happen because our members support them with their time and talents. The *NetWorks* you are reading relies on those willing to produce it most months of the year.

The nominations committee is working hard to fill positions for the executive board for next year. We ask that you strongly consider saying yes to serving on the board if you are asked to accept a position as an officer of this branch for the next two years - ***your support is valued and needed.***

Happy Spring!
Marian and Heather



For more on Matilda Gage visit:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-feminist-inspired-witches-of-oz-180985334/>
<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/matilda-joslyn-gage>
<https://www.matildajoslyngage.org/>

Read *Women, Church, and State* :

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45580/45580-h/45580-h.htm>

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership Is Everyone's Responsibility

Congratulations to our newest *Honorary Life Members*: **Nancy Butler and Betty Randall**. Both have paid dues for 50 years and as a result, no longer have to pay National, State or Branch dues. Our branch now has a total of 16 Honorary Life Members!

National has raised their dues \$2.00 a year for the upcoming 2025-2026 year for Regular members which means that dues will be \$100 for National, State and Branch dues starting April 1, 2025, for our members. Dues notices will be mailed to all members in May, so please do not pay your dues on the National website as this complicates the work for our treasurer.

We will be doing the *Shape the Future* membership campaign at the Scholarship luncheon on April 30. A new member can join AAUW for \$63.00 instead of the new membership rate of \$100.00. This membership will extend to June 30, 2026. Bring a friend(s) and encourage them to join and share in this great savings. Cash or check only.

Co-Membership Directors:

Mary Lea Burden maryleaanddon@verizon.net

Judy Kramer drjudykramer@gmail.com

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

**Margaret Mead
Pioneering Anthropologist
& 1978 AAUW Achievement
Awardee**

PUBLIC POLICY NEWS AND RESOURCES

"While the environment for higher education is under relentless attacks, our mission stands firm. AAUW remains strong as a tireless advocate for women in higher education."
[CEO Gloria L. Blackwell in *AAUW: Mission & Action* email newsletter]

AAUW Election 2025

It's time to vote! The election ends on May 13, at 5 p.m. ET. Hopefully, you received an email on April 14 with voting details. For information on the candidates, ballot initiatives, and

proposed changes to Public Policy

Priorities, please visit

<https://act.aauw.org/MemberVote2025>

Fellowships and Grants Announced

Fellowships and grants for 2025-26 have been announced! More than \$5 million will go to 230 exceptional fellows and grantees to achieve their academic and professional goals or lead community-based projects that empower women and girls. Congrats to all!

And your support continues to be vital to increasing higher education access and opportunity for women.

AAUW Speaking Out on Equity

- CEO Gloria Blackwell was featured in a [special insert to the Los Angeles Times](#), warning that dismantling diversity, equity, and inclusion programs is a direct attack on women in STEM.
- AAUW continues to lead on workplace equity, calling on the Department of Labor to preserve staffing at the Women's Bureau and OFCCP. Our pay equity research was [featured in USA Today](#), and Gloria highlighted our work on a podcast and LinkedIn Live, reinforcing the urgent need

for economic justice. [Check out more AAUW in the News.](#)

Resources for Members

- **Defending Equity: Strengthening Our Collective Impact Series**
Amid growing attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion, AAUW is taking action. This series equips members with key policy updates, advocacy strategies, and tools to strengthen our impact. [All recordings for the series are on our YouTube channel.](#)
- **AAUW's Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative**
From expert-led sessions on salary negotiation and financial literacy to leadership development tools you can use right away, these webinars are designed to help you earn more, lead with confidence, and close the gender pay gap for good. There will be FREE Work Smart, Smart Start, and Money Smart seminars in May. [Explore our upcoming webinars and register today!](#)

And, of course, don't forget: [Two-Minute Activist](#)

Nancy Butler, Public Policy Director
Nanbutler64@gmail.com

Study Group News

Dear Friends,
Interested in joining an established Study Group? Check with the Chairs in the groups listed below. Those attending are required to be members in good standing. Guests may attend three meetings before being required to join AAUW. Here are your possibilities.

Susan Gelber, Study Group Director
(H) 732-936-0070
(C) 732-895-9333
ssginnj@aol.com

Art History

Thursday, May 22, 11:00 a.m.
Zimmerli Museum at Rutgers University
71 Hamilton St., New Brunswick, NJ, 08901

Docent tour at 11:15; then there will be time for independent exploration.

Info regarding lunch and parking will be forthcoming. **Open to all Branch members.** \$10 per person, cash only contribution for the docent tour payable to the co-chairs before the tour at 11:15 a.m.
RSVP REQUIRED. Deadline May 15.

Let's plan to carpool. If you can drive and take passengers, please let us know. Thanks.

Featured exhibit:

Indigenous Identities: Here, Now & Always - 97 living artists representing over 74 Indigenous nations and communities across North America; includes painting, works on paper, photography, ceramics, beadwork, weaving, sculpture, installation, and video.

This exhibition, curated by the legendary and recently passed artist, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, celebrated its opening on February 1, which featured a welcome video from Quick-to-See Smith's son, Neal Ambrose-Smith. Watch on the website: <https://zimmerli.rutgers.edu/>

If you have any questions, contact the co-chairs:

Joan Fructer 848-459-8765
jjtt22@optonline.net
Barbara Withers 212-662-3263
baw.withers@gmail.com

French Conversation

Our group enables women with a good knowledge of the French language to maintain their fluency through some language structure reviews and conversations with other members on different topics. Upon the recommendation of our members, we have

now added a literary component to some of our meetings.

To keep up with the needs of our members, we will be meeting once a month (the second Thursday at 7:30 p.m.) through Zoom.

Members are encouraged to participate (orally or written) at the monthly meetings.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, please contact the chair for further information. Newcomers are always welcome.

Chair: Jeannine Maloney 732-747-2806
jeanninemaloney@comcast.net

Insights Into Our Times

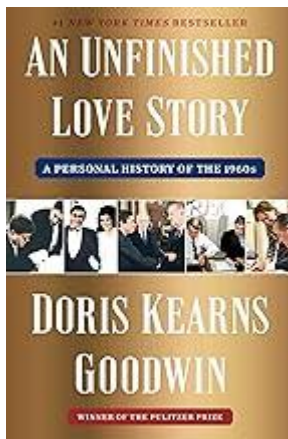
Insights, our non-fiction book group meets for discussion on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June.

Our upcoming book choice and meeting is as follows:

May 13: *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s* by Doris Kearns Goodwin; 2 p.m., at the home of Pat Baroska, Howell. RSVP to Pat at shorebeachgirl@hotmail.com.

New members are always welcome.

Chair: Kathy Olsen, 732-583-6228,
Ncwan2b@aol.com



Russian Short Stories

We have scheduled future Zoom meetings for the third Thursdays of the month at 1 p.m.

Contact Study Group Chair:

Stephanie Rose 732-492-9653

Srose3458@aol.com

Book Sale Book Sale Book Sale

Old First Church
69 Kings Highway, Middletown
Lower Level, outside stairs
732-275-2237

Open: Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Thursdays: 10 a.m. - Noon
(except for holiday weekends)

Donate: Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Thursdays: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Thursdays

If you haven't been to the book sale lately, stop in to see what great items we have. Besides books there are CDs, DVDs, audio books, vinyl records, puzzles, games and cards. We welcome children and have hundreds of books for toddlers through middle school young adult novels. **Stop in to get a bag full of children's books for \$5!**

If you haven't worked at the Book Sale yet, and would like to join in the fun, contact **Kathy Olsen, Ruth Hodum, or Irene Gibson**. We welcome new volunteers. Please help spread the word!

To learn more about the AAUW and the book donation policy, visit aauw-nj-nmcb.org or call 732-275-2237.

NetWorks is published by the Northern Monmouth County Branch of AAUW. Please submit copy to Karen Topham, Editor, kptopham@gmail.com.

The due date for copy for the June 2025 *NetWorks* copy is Wednesday, May 28.

Send address changes, names of prospective members, membership applications and checks, and questions about non-receipt of the newsletter to:

Judy Kramer and Mary Lea Burden, Membership, Co-directors
P.O. Box 398, Red Bank, NJ 07701 aauw.nmcb@gmail.com

Our electronic mailing list enables us to inform you about opportunities for AAUW members that arise too late for publication in *NetWorks*. You can be sure that we carefully evaluate each notice before we send it out.

Please note that the use of the branch email list is for branch activities only. Members wishing to share other information with branch members are invited to submit a notice to the "Networking" column in *NetWorks*.

Something to share? Please send the information to Karen Topham for the next *NetWorks*.

Writer's Corner

From member Judy Kramer:

Back in my day we all had to memorize a poem and present it in the auditorium in 6th grade, and I did "Two Roads diverged in a Yellow Wood....." My friend Dorothy did Wordsworth's poem about daffodils and I have loved it ever since...

Here for you is Wordsworth's poem about daffodils:

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

by William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.





American Association of University Women
Northern Monmouth County Branch
P.O. Box 398
Red Bank, NJ 07701

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. 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. Membership is open to any graduate holding an associate degree or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university. AAUW-NMCB is designated as a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations to the branch, as well as to the national organization, are fully tax-deductible. AAUW is a highly rated charity.

AAUW Used Book Sale



The store is located at:
Old First Church
69 Kings Highway
Middletown

Open: Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
through June.
Thursdays from 10 a.m. to Noon through
June.

Donations: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

(The sale is closed on holiday weekends.)

Have you been missing
AAUW's *Outlook* magazine that used to
arrive in the mail?

Go to www.aauw.org. At the bottom of
the home page, sign up for the
newsletter with your email address and
zip code.

Stay Connected!

AAUW www.aauw.org

AAUW-NJ <https://aauwnj.org>

AAUW-NMCB www.aauw-nj-nmcb.org

Branch phone 732-275-2237

AAUW Action Network www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/



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