

Ravenna Mosaics to be brought to life by Mary Anne Anderl

by Caroline O'Neil

Mary Anne Anderl gives a new meaning to the term "life-long learner." For her latest program at an AAUW December fundraiser, she will bring to life the magnificent mosaics of Ravenna that were created by artists to decorate the insides of churches, palaces, and mausoleums built in that Italian city from 400-600 A.D.



"Sometime in the distant past, I saw pictures of those mosaics and was dazzled," Mary Anne said. And so, being Mary Anne, she launched a study of them: their history, their artistry, and their significance.

Having previously given presentations on the Bayeux tapestries, the caves of Lascaux, and the Saxon treasure hoards discovered in the middle 20th and early 21st centuries in the United Kingdom, Mary Anne is well known to most members of our branch and beyond. Her audiences know to expect meticulous research and a keen eye for beauty.

A Rutgers graduate who also holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in English literature from Princeton, Mary Anne focused her studies on the middle and dark ages, and later extended her work to the art of those periods.

The period of interest here began when Ravenna was capital of the Roman Empire in the west. Later it was conquered by the Ostrogoth Kingdom and became the capital of Italy; then the
(continued on page 7)

Board Meeting

Monday, November 25, 7:15 p.m. at Kensington Court, 864 Shrewsbury Avenue, Tinton Falls

Branch Program

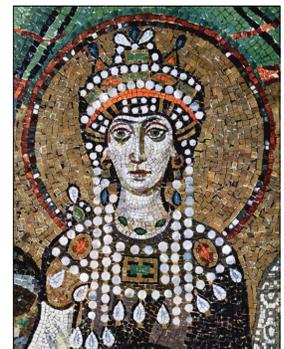
**Annual Fundraising Event:
"The Ravenna Mosaics"
with Mary Anne Anderl, Ph.D.**

Monday, December 2, 7 p.m.
Rumson Presbyterian Church
4 East River Road, Rumson

Admission: \$15 at the door

Please join us for what has become an annual event—a pre-holiday social and cultural event to benefit branch activities. It is open to all, so invite your friends for a fascinating presentation as well as a festive dessert buffet and a sale of novel products handcrafted by women from around the world.

Branch member Dr. Mary Anne Anderl will enthrall us with her presentation about the background and history of Ravenna, Italy, and the beautiful mosaics there. She has done a number of other programs for us, so we know her presentations are informative and engrossing.



Ravenna has an important history in art, literature, and music. Lord Byron lived, loved (!), and wrote there; he was just one among a number of famous writers whose literature honored Ravenna. In music, it currently is home to the annual Ravenna Festival, a prominent classical music event.

Also on this evening, Cecilia Dinio Durkin, owner of Women's Work in Poughkeepsie, NY, and international chair of the Poughkeepsie Branch of AAUW, will be on hand to show and sell the handcrafts to benefit women in developing nations. (See www.womensworkbw.com.)

We look forward to seeing you on December 2!

BRANCH OFFICERS 2013-2014

Co-Presidents	Susan Gelber Joan Spring
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NetWorks is published monthly except January, July, August, and September by the Northern Monmouth County Branch of AAUW. Items for the February issue are **due on January 9** to: Nancy Butler, Editor.

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 use of the branch e-mail 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*.

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

SAVE THE DATE!

Mary Higgins Clark, a favorite author of fans around the world, has agreed to join us for a fundraising luncheon on **Thursday, May 8, 2014**, at the Molly Pitcher Inn.

We'll hear about Ms. Clark's life and work, enjoy a delicious meal with friends, and raise scholarship funds for women pursuing higher education.

The price is \$75, a portion of which is tax deductible. Information about reserving tickets will follow after the holidays. This promises to be a very special event, so put it on your calendar today and invite a friend!

Presidents' Message

At this season of giving, our branch has undertaken a new project under the leadership of **Betty Randall**. Thank you, Betty, for suggesting and chairing it. At our general meeting on November 4, our member and speaker **Mary Gatta** clearly pointed out the financial need of many in Monmouth County. As you may know, the food banks and food stamp programs do not supply paper products, detergents, and most toiletry articles. We now will be collecting these items at our general meetings, and Betty will distribute them to the organizations that will give them out. (See page 6.)

Many thank yous are in order for our excellent November program. We begin with our superb speaker, Mary Gatta, and program vice presidents, **Annette Benanti** and **Barbara Iwanski**, who arranged the program and speaker. **Carol Walther** secured and set up the room at the Shrewsbury Presbyterian Church, while **Karen Topham** provided and set up the refreshments. **Marian Wattenbarger** read the speech in support of raising the minimum wage that she had given at the press conference at the Asbury Park train station. She also provided a wonderful visual demonstration of the disparity between the salaries of men and women. **Pat Miller** wrote a letter to the *Asbury Park Press* in support of the increase (it was not published) and attended the rally to support Marian. **Harriet Moore** collected money for the Legal Advocacy Fund; thank you to all who contributed.

In October, rather than the usual Fall Focus, AAUW-NJ held a 24-hour retreat in Atlantic City that was attended by 110 members. This was a chance to meet many mem-



Treats at the November meeting: whole donuts "for men only" and cut donuts for women represent the hourly wage gap of women earning \$.78 compared to men's \$1.00.

bers from the southern part of the state; the camaraderie was outstanding. This successful event was organized and run by our own **Barbara Williamson** and Freehold Branch past president Carol Cohen. In addition to Barbara and both of us, Pat Miller and Marian Wattenbarger (who is the treasurer of the AAUW-NJ Charitable Trust) also attended. We are pleased that our branch is actively involved in the goals of national and state AAUW.

At this time, as we begin the holiday season, whatever you celebrate, we wish you a wonderful holiday filled with much peace and joy, and a new year filled with good health and happiness. Happy 2014!

Joan Spring
Susan Gelber
Co-Presidents



Study, Action, Interest Groups

Advanced Spanish Conversation

Meets: 1st Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Contact: Anita Damien

Some of us are native-born, and others are Spanish majors from American universities. We serve brunch, followed by different programs about Spanish culture. We have a covered-dish supper with our spouses in late spring. Call for meeting details.

Art History

Meets: Contact chair

Contact: Mary Anne Anderl

We meet to study and discuss global art of all periods and genres through member presentations and visits to museums, galleries, and outdoor art exhibitions. New members are welcome!

Drama

Meets: Contact Chair

Contact: Marjorie Levy

We study plays, classical and modern, and attend performances when feasible. This year we are subscribing to

Two River Theater in Red Bank. Prospective members are welcome to attend a meeting and/or join the group for a matinee or weekend performance. Call or e-mail chair for details.

French Conversation

Meets: 2nd and 4th Thursdays, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Contact: Kate Wellauer

Our group enables women with a good knowledge of the French language to maintain their fluency through conversation with other members, many of whom are native-born speakers. Others were educated in France or were French majors at American universities. We all strive to improve our skills, meeting on a rotating basis for lunch at a member's home. We encourage more AAUW members to join us. Call or e-mail chair for meeting details.

French Intermediate

Meets: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon

Contact: Anne Morrison

This group offers an opportunity to those with some experience in French to read, write, translate, and speak the language. French culture, customs, and current events are topics for our lively discussions. New members are very welcome! Call/e-mail for meeting details.

German Conversation

Meets: Twice a month on Mondays, 9:30-noon

Contact: Aline Ashkin

Our members come from German-speaking countries or have learned to speak German as an additional language. Our common goal is to improve our German language skills. We read about/discuss current events, contemporary German literature, and stories of common interest as suggested by members. Call for meeting details. New members are welcome.

Insights

Meets: Tuesday, December 10, 7:30 p.m.

Topic: *The Girls of Atomic City: The Untold Story of the Women Who Helped Win World War II* by Denise Kiernan

Meets: Tuesday, January 14, 7:30 p.m.

Topic: *My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor

Contact: Ruth Hodum

This *nonfiction book group* focuses on current issues, with special attention to topics affecting women and books written by women. New members are very welcome! Contact chair for location.

Book Corner



We've recently seen Oprah Winfrey unclutter her life by means of an auction that netted her leadership academy \$600,000. The Insights Book Group had just finished *Stuff: Compulsive Hoarding and the Meaning of Things* and couldn't help but ask: What compelled Winfrey to buy so much stuff in the first place? The authors, Randy Frost and Gail Steketee, offer readers in-depth psychological profiles of hoarders that illuminate the pull possessions wield on most of us.

For many hoarders, their stuff defines them and limits successful relationships or experiences beyond the confines of their collections. We learned that one in ten people suffer from the hoarding disorder, and that Winfrey's need for possessions is most likely an outward sign of success and affluence—a public display—while, for the hoarder, saving things is a private identity. For any of us who knows a hoarder, *Stuff* offers a perspective, and for the general reader, the book helps us form and justify our own attachment to objects.

—Cathy San Filippo

Literature

Meets: Thursday, January 16, 1 p.m.
Topic: *The Mill on the Floss* by George Eliot
Contact: Regina Sieben

Our group selects *literary fiction or an occasional memoir* to read during the year. A different member acts as a leader each month and presents background and critical appraisal of that month's selection. We welcome new members. Please contact chair for meeting details.

Writing Group

Meets: December meeting: contact chair
Meets: Thursday, January 23, 12:30-3:30 p.m.
at Caroline O'Neil's, West Long Branch
Contact: Caroline O'Neil

This group consists of people interested in all kinds of writing, such as memoir, poetry, fiction, or essays. Members vary from those who write all the time to those who are just beginning, some working on longer pieces, some experimenting with a variety. The meeting begins with a journal exercise, followed by lunch. Then

we listen to and discuss pieces or parts of pieces brought in by various members, or more finished pieces circulated and read in advance. Come and see for yourself. New members are welcome. Contact Caroline for information.

Membership

Coffee and Conversation for New & Prospective

Members: We invite all new and prospective members to an afternoon of "Coffee and Conversation" about AAUW and our branch activities. It will be held on Sunday, January 26, at 3 p.m. at the Shrewsbury Historical Society, 419 Sycamore Avenue (in the Municipal Complex). Watch for an invitation in the mail in early January.

We welcome three new members to our branch:

Marilyn Baldi, **Sandi Dalton**, and **Liz deBeer**. Please add their contact information to your yearbook, and introduce yourself to them at the December branch meeting. Sandi is a former AAUW member of the Freehold Area and Fort Lauderdale, FL, branches.

Marilyn Baldi Retired teacher
Kean University Photography

Sandra (Sandi) Dalton Financial planner
Clemson; Monmouth Univ. Tennis, running, flute, dog

Elizabeth (Liz) deBeer Retired teacher; freelance
Univ. of Penn; Rutgers writer/editor
Reading, writing, education, social justice

We also have two renewed members: **Helaine Tockerman** and **Georgina Villa**. Please add their contact information to your yearbook.

Helaine Tockerman Teacher
Boston U.; Monmouth U.

Georgina Villa

If you need a ride to a branch meeting or activity, please call one of us.

Mary Lea Burden
Laura Noll
Membership Co-VPs

Communication Committee Seeking Skills

The Communication Committee is working to develop new ways for NMCB members to communicate with one another and with others who might be potential members or collaborators. We have a great committee and hope to identify others who can help with specific projects.

If you are a writer or photographer, or have graphic design skills, please let us know. We look forward to hearing about our members' hidden (or not so hidden) talents. Contact either of us to let us know how you can help us share the AAUW-NMCB story.

Vickie Snoy
Marian Wattenbarger
Communication Co-VPs

Legal Advocacy Fund Update

AAUW Mourns the Passing of Jacqueline Livingston, One of the Cornell 11: In 1981, a group of women from Cornell University asked AAUW for help in their anti-discrimination lawsuit against Cornell. The group claimed that Cornell had violated anti-discrimination laws by denying them tenure in favor of less qualified candidates. Heeding the call to support gender equality, AAUW stepped forward, and the Legal Advocacy Fund was born.

The group known as the Cornell 11 eventually won a settlement from Cornell. One member of this group was artist and professor Jacqueline Barrett Livingston Brisette, who died this past June. We celebrate her work as an artist and an activist, and we honor her legacy through LAF's ongoing pursuit of equality.

Do You Know Your Rights? The LAF section of the AAUW website offers information about your legal rights. Explore the new [LAF Employee Rights and Information Center](#) through the [Know Your Rights at Work](#) resource page, and learn about the laws that govern your rights in the workplace. Go to [Know Your Rights on Campus](#) to learn about your rights as a student, student athlete, or faculty member.

You can also find information about filing a discrimination complaint and where to go for legal assistance.

AAUW members can be the first line of defense to protect workers and students from discrimination. As parents, friends, co-workers, and teachers, we can educate others about their rights, their responsibilities, and the ways LAF can help. Know your rights!

Federal Court Rules in Favor of Veterans Seeking Disability Benefits after Sexual Assaults: A federal appeals court recently ruled that a veteran's failure to report a sexual assault is not evidence that the assault did not occur. In *AZ v. Shineski* and *AY v. Shineski*, two veterans sought disability benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder that they said had stemmed from sexual assaults they suffered while on active duty. Relying on the veterans' failure to report as evidence that the assaults never occurred, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims denied disability benefits.

On appeal, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit held that the "VA may not treat a claimant's failure to report an alleged sexual assault to military authorities as pertinent evidence that the assault did not occur." The court recognized that "many service members fear that the act of reporting a rape to military authorities will subject them to personal and professional reprisals." While other courts are not required to follow it, the ruling is promising. The Federal Circuit's ruling recognizes the real barriers to justice faced by survivors of military sexual assault.

AAUW is working to break down those barriers by supporting the lawsuits of survivors and supporting legislation to improve the military's handling of sexual assault.

Harriet Moore
LAF Chair

November Meeting Recap

Mary Gatta, Ph.D., an expert on women and pocketbook issues and an NMCB member, provided a lot of thought-provoking information for those who attended her presentation on November 4. One of the more surprising things we learned was how many women in

Collection for Food Pantries

At the November meeting, we learned that many low wage earners and food stamp recipients are women, and that Lunch Break (Red Bank) and Calico Cat (Middletown) food pantries are in need of non-food items, which are not covered by food stamps.

Those attending agreed it would be a good idea to bring donations of these items to our branch meetings. **Please bring laundry detergent to the December meeting**, and I will deliver it to the pantries.

Betty Randall

Monmouth County live at or below what would be considered a living wage.

Mary introduced us to the informative website (www.wowonline.org) of Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), a Washington, D.C.-based policy and advocacy group that seeks to abolish the current and inadequate federal poverty levels and to adopt their own well-researched Basic Economic Security Tables (BEST). This more realistic index includes not only essential expenses but also emergency and retirement savings.

Mary also addressed the effects of the recent drastic cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which are expected to negatively impact food security for individuals and families nationally.

In response to Mary's presentation, members suggested actions we might take individually or as a

group to make a difference in local women's lives.

Here's what we said AAUW can do:

- Write an article on WOW for the newsletter and also one on SNAP reductions.
- Write our legislators.
- Target legislators most needing encouragement to vote for these measures (e.g., Fair Wage Act and support for fully funding SNAP and other programs that provide food support) for an e-mail blitz by our members.
- Ask members to bring food or toiletries to every meeting for distribution to those needing food support or help to secure other necessities, such as personal hygiene items.
- Check with Lunch Break for most-needed items and e-mail our members with the list before Thanksgiving.
- Participate in a Twitter storm on pocketbook issues and also post to Facebook.

Here's what some of us said "I can do":

- Write my congressperson about the issue of food insecurity.
- Educate students on why higher education matters.
- Visit WOW website – spread the facts locally.
- Get efforts organized to deal with hunger in Keyport.
- Educate Girl Scout troop about food insecurity.

You may have some other ideas. If so, please share them with the *NetWorks* editor, who will add them to the list. Please also let our co-presidents know what you've committed to do.

Marian Wattenbarger
Communication Co-VP

Marian Wattenbarger and Mary Gatta (right of center) join other advocates for raising the minimum wage at the press conference in Asbury Park on October 25.



Upcoming Supreme Court cases of utmost importance to women

Several cases being heard this term by the U.S. Supreme Court are of utmost importance to the rights of women and girls. Reproductive rights, equal educational opportunity, health care coverage, and separation of church and state are among those issues.

AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund Program Manager Mollie Lam and Regulatory Affairs Manager Beth Scott hosted a conference call on October 24 to discuss this term's most significant cases with AAUW members, including:

McCullen v. Coakley: Anti-choice activists challenged a Massachusetts law designed to protect patients at reproductive health clinics from intimidation and harassment. They argue that the law, which creates a 35-foot buffer zone around clinics, violates their free speech rights. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 1st Circuit upheld the Massachusetts law, and the Supreme Court has agreed to hear the case. AAUW joined an amicus brief arguing that the law is constitutional.

Cline v. Oklahoma Coalition for Reproductive Justice:

In 2011, Oklahoma passed a law that prevented doctors from administering drugs used to end pregnancy in any manner that deviated from the FDA label, even though the FDA label was significantly outdated and best medical practices allowed for off-label uses. Because of the restrictions, the law effectively bans nearly all medication abortions in the state. The Oklahoma Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional. On November 4, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it would not hear Cline. As a result, the Oklahoma Supreme Court's ruling that the law was unconstitutional will stand. However, a challenge to a similarly restrictive law in Texas is now before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit, and that case could make its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Under AAUW's Public Policy Program, AAUW strongly supports reproductive choice and access to reproductive health care.

Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action:

Anti-affirmative action advocates in Michigan proposed a ballot initiative that would ban affirmative action in the state. The ballot initiative passed and created Section 26 of the Michigan constitution, which bars any consideration of race, ethnicity, or gender in public university admissions. In the past, the affirmative action cases before the court typically concerned a challenge to the constitutionality of a particular university's affirmative action program. Unlike those cases, the question in

Schuette is whether a state may amend its constitution to ban affirmative action altogether. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit declared the ban unconstitutional, and the Supreme Court heard arguments in the case on October 15. AAUW supports affirmative action programs to increase equity and diversity in education and joined an amicus brief urging the Supreme Court to declare the amendment unconstitutional.

Go to the AAUW [Advocacy webpage](#) for more information on these and other cases involving contraceptive coverage and separation of church and state.

What can you do? The best thing we can all do now is to pay close attention to these proceedings, share our concerns with local legislators and newspapers, and talk about these issues with our friends, families, and associates. Sign up for [Washington Update](#) and [LAF Express](#) for updates.

Arlene Newman
Public Policy VP

Ravenna Mosaics

(continued from page 1)

Byzantine Emperor Justinian took it back. Many public buildings were built in Ravenna during this period because of its importance. They were "very plain on the outside, but decorated with amazing mosaics on the inside," Mary Anne explains. "There were slight gradations in each tile that cause subtle effects, so that their beauty is apparent close up as well as from a distance."

Like the Bayeux tapestries, this art was not without political implications: primarily, the Byzantines were asserting control over all of Italy. Also, Christians were involved in fierce debate over the exact nature of Mary, and these mosaics show her as the Virgin Mother of God.

Since most of us will probably not get to view these mosaics in Ravenna, alas, this program will give us a glimpse of their magnificence. And if Mary Anne's program leaves you longing for more art, you can always join the Art History Study Group, which she chairs, where members present programs on artists or groups or styles, if they wish, or they take part in outings to sites such as the Grounds for Sculpture, Wave Hill, the Ballantine House in Newark, and the Stickley Museum at Craftsman Farms in Morris County.

—Caroline O'Neil



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

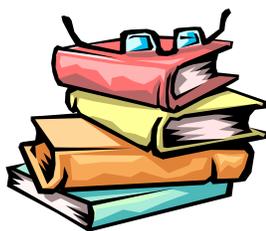
**Monday, December 2, Branch Program:
“The Ravenna Mosaics”
with Mary Anne Anderl, Ph.D.
and Holiday Dessert Buffet**

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. 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 or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

AAUW Book Sale

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



Open: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturdays
Donations: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursdays
To volunteer: Irene Gibson
Information: Viki Mischenko, Chair
732-933-4855

All profits go to local scholarships for women and to the AAUW Educational Foundation for fellowships for women.

Stay Connected!

AAUW www.aauw.org
AAUW-NJ www.aauwnj.org
AAUW-NMCB www.aauw-nj-nmcb.org
Branch phone 732-933-4855

AAUW Action Network

<http://capwiz.com/aauw/home/>



AAUW, AAUW-NJ, and NMCB are on Facebook. Check them out!

Meeting cancellation information:

Listen to 94.3 FM.
