



AAUW  
 Breaking through Barriers  
 Schenectady, NY  
 Branch  
 Founded in 1902

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February 2012  
 Vol. XXXII No. 5

# February's General Meeting



**Wednesday, February 15**  
**7 pm**  
**Niskayuna Library**

Join us to view and discuss the documentary, **War Redefined**, from the PBS series, **Woman, War and Peace**.



**Looking at war through women's eyes:**  
 The emergence of women -- necessary partners in brokering lasting peace.

*Invite your friends and relatives to this informative meeting which explores an essential approach to peace.*

*New Initiative: We are planning a film series on women with Proctors Theater. It should start in late February, and we will be e-mailing the information to you. If your e-mail address is not in the directory, please call Maxine Borom at 370-2662 who will let you know when the films will be shown.*

## Mark Your Calendar

### Wednesday, February 1

Board Meeting: 6:45 pm  
 Price Chopper Community Room

### Wednesday, February 15

General Meeting : 7 pm  
 Niskayuna Library

### MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

### Wednesday, March 7

Board Meeting: 6:45 pm  
 Price Chopper Community Room

### Tuesday, March 20(note date change)

General Meeting : 7 pm



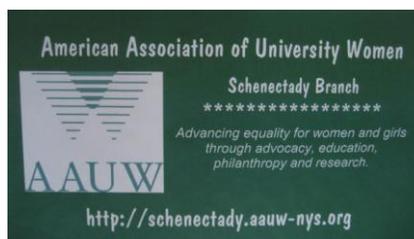
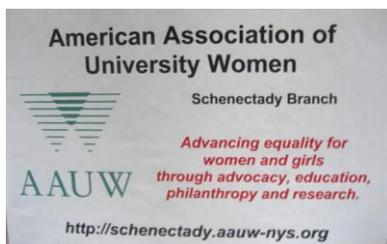
## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

**“Schenectady AAUW Still Relevant in 2012”** Who would have thought that our efforts resonate in much the same manner as they did for AAUW founding members. We may have less “white gloves and tea” events, but we still have fun as we focus our efforts to improve the lives of women and girls in our community and in the world.

Our December luncheon and program was a wonderful success. Many of you who attended, responded quite positively to the AAUW-NYS initiative, “My Sister’s Keeper,” described so effectively by Melissa Guardaro, AAUW-NYS Director of International Affairs. She sparked an interest in us to learn and do more concerning the plight of women worldwide and within our domestic borders. From the response of four Varied Interests Study Group and other members who heard Melissa’s presentation, we will focus on expanding our efforts in support of AAUW–New York State as it moves forward with their “My Sister’s Keeper” efforts. The February program is the result of Melissa’s explanation of this initiative.

The December holiday season seems a distant memory, but our organization provided services to the less fortunate in our community that were very much appreciated. Girls, Inc. thanked us for all our donations collected at our luncheon, and for assistance from Robin Eddy, Arlene Maranville, Marguerite Pileggi, Allie Russo, Elise Russo, and Linda Zuckerman in their Holiday Shop. Thanks also to those of you who planned to help wrap presents from Toys for Tots. (Unfortunately, the presents did not arrive in time to be wrapped.) The Middleburgh Elementary School really appreciated the toys, hats, and mittens donated by us which helped greatly in their efforts to provide warm clothing and toys for each student whose family is rebuilding after the flood. Thank you all for purchasing and donating such lovely things.

Thank you to Robin Eddy for designing and purchasing AAUW-Schenectady Branch business cards, two new and vibrant banners, and a lawn sign for the Varied Interests Group.



(If your group would like a lawn sign to advertise your meeting, please contact Robin.)

The January tour and information about the future of Proctors Theatre makes us more aware of the benefits of our local culture. We are indeed fortunate to have Proctors in our community.

Our nominating committee is at work selecting leaders for 2012-2013. If you are interested in a leadership position or have ideas concerning leadership positions, please contact Pam Haller or Gerri Pinkerton, co-chairs of the nominating committee.

We hope that 2012 is going well for all of you, and we look forward to seeing you at the next general meeting.

**Robin Eddy** [reddy@ny.cap.rr.com](mailto:reddy@ny.cap.rr.com) and **Jennie Pennington** [pennington2276@cs.com](mailto:pennington2276@cs.com)



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Happy New Year to all our members! As we begin 2012, let’s get the year off right by participating in the programs offered by the Schenectady branch this year. Remember there is strength in numbers so the more we participate the stronger we get and the more we learn.

Join a Study and Interest group if you have not done so. Many diverse offerings are there for us to enjoy. Come to the general meetings. Much time and effort is put in to assure us interesting and informative meetings. We look forward to a fulfilling and enjoyable year. See you at the meetings!

**Sondra Grady and Arlene Maranville**

## CROSSING THE LINE

“A student is groped on the way to class”

“Kids call a student “gay” and “faggot” and just won’t quit”

“A demeaning sexual rumor about a student goes viral in cyberspace”

These examples of everyday occurrences in school are cited in AAUW’s recent, groundbreaking research report entitled “Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School”. This report analyzes data collected from a national survey of 1,965 students in grades 7-12. The data show that sexual harassment, either being the recipient, being the witness, or being the perpetrator is a part of everyday life in middle and high schools.

Sexual harassment is considered a unique kind of bullying that involves sex and gender; it includes verbal harassment (unwelcome sexual comments, jokes, or gestures) as well as physical harassment to a lesser extent. Nearly half the students surveyed had experienced some form of sexual harassment; 87% of those students shared that it affected them negatively.

Girls were more likely to be sexually harassed than boys (56 % versus 40%). About one-third of girls reported witnessing sexual harassment versus one-quarter of boys. This survey is important because incidences of sexual harassment are rarely reported; thus, the prevalence of this activity comes as a surprise to many teachers, administrators, and parents.

Sexual harassment negatively affects students in a variety of ways including emotional issues, difficulty sleeping, decreased productivity in school, and increased absenteeism. These effects can create dire consequences for students in terms of graduation rates and, ultimately, dropping out of school.

ASCD, the international educational leadership organization has a major initiative called “Educating the Whole Child”. The five tenets of “The Whole Child” are ensuring that all students are safe, supported, challenged in their school work, engaged, and healthy. Students who are sexually harassed are at a disadvantage when it comes to satisfying these areas and enabling them to have a complete educational experience.

The “Crossing the Line” report ends with some suggestions to address these occurrences: urging administrators to make preventing sexual harassment a priority and ensuring that teachers and guidance counselors know how to respond when they witness sexual harassment or when it is reported to them. Additionally, teachers should receive strategies and protocols for guiding class discussions about this topic. Survey results showed that students were eager to have discussions about the topic, attend workshops, and receive information on the school website including how to respond when they are harassed or when they witness it happening to others.

Finally, the report has recommendations for how parents and other concerned adults can prevent sexual harassment: being good role models, knowing how to support students by listening carefully and respectfully to their children as they discuss these issues, and providing assistance if students choose to report the negative behavior.

The recommendations included community groups taking action against sexual harassment: being guest lecturers at school or meeting with administrators to lend support. AAUW is a perfect organization to continue to address this issue so that our young women (and young men) can feel safe and secure both in school and beyond the schoolyard.

*Elise Russo*



## WANTED

### a GARAGE for our GARAGE SALE

Contact Jennie Pennington [pennington2276@cs.com](mailto:pennington2276@cs.com), 372-7503 or  
Robin Eddy [reddy5@nycap.rr.com](mailto:reddy5@nycap.rr.com), 346-1683 if we can use your garage.

## AAUW POLICY FOCUS FOR 2012

AAUW is committed to promoting women's issues through its public policy program. "The public policy program underscores AAUW's mission of advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research" (AAUW, 2012). The organization informs its members of important policy issues so that they are able to support these issues on the local, state, and national levels. "Issue advocacy isn't just about AAUW lending its name to an issue, or speaking on Capitol Hill. Issue advocacy is about AAUW members and all citizens concerned with equity being knowledgeable and aware of the current status of important issues" (AAUW's FEDERAL POLICY AGENDA, 2012).

During 2012, the public policy principles for action will cover several important areas. These areas are: 1) education is the foundation of our society; 2) all individuals need to have affordable housing, health care, and a clean environment; 3) all individuals have a right to privacy, freedom from violence, and reproductive rights; 4) affirmative action is essential to the well-being of people throughout the world; 5) more international policies to promote human rights, and justice; 6) pay equity and fairness in compensation for all women; 7) the protection of social security from privatization; 8) the improvement of retirement benefits; 9) the vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights; 10) strong enforcement of employment antidiscrimination statutes.

The biennial action priorities will include the support of a strong public school system, the economic self-sufficiency of all women, and the guarantee of equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse society.

Social security, Medicare, and Medicaid will need our support over the next two years. These entitlement programs are essential for a large segment of our population. AAUW will be a major player in supporting these important programs since it advocates for economic self-sufficiency of women. *Linda Rizzo*



## Attention Artists

Here's your chance to enter AAUW's Fourth Annual Art Contest. Submit your original artwork by January 31 at <http://www.aauw.org/contests>.

Members can then vote on the submitted art work beginning February 6.

If you do submit a picture, contact Robin Eddy at [reddy5@nycap.rr.com](mailto:reddy5@nycap.rr.com), and she will notify members by e-mail who hopefully will vote for your work.

Winning artwork will be featured on a collection of AAUW note cards to be released in the spring to all AAUW members.

### ***Please note the following change in your directory:***

Donna Northrup's new email address is [dj1945@gmail.com](mailto:djq1945@gmail.com).



## ***Study and Interest Group Meetings for February 2012***

If you're interested in attending a meeting, contact the leader.



### **Book Exchange I**

Leader: Dottie Potochnik (399-3854)  
No regular meetings

### **Niskayuna Book Exchange**

Leader: Ellie Rowland (370-1958)  
No regular meetings

### **Couples Gourmet**

Leader: Kay Stanczk (583-6904)  
**February 10, 2012, 7 pm**  
Theme: Mardi Gras  
Co-Hostesses: Barbara Piliere and  
Linda Zuckerman

### **Diversity in Schenectady**

Leader: Suzanne Taylor (393-9035)  
**February 10, 2012, 1:30 pm**  
Program: Gail Karl - Whitney Book Store  
Hostess: Gail Karl  
Location: 2513 McGovern Drive, Niskayuna  
Co Hostesses: Sondra Grady and Barbara Aldi

### **Modern Literature**

Co-Leaders: Joan Amell (399-4709) and  
Mary Delory (393-6811)  
**February 13, 2012, 7:30 pm**  
Book: Every Last One by Anna Quindlen  
Reviewer: Dottie Potochnik  
Hostess: Ellie Rowland  
Location: 1249 Sandra Lane, Niskayuna  
Co-Hostess: Joan Amell

### **Mah Jongg**

Leader: Robin Eddy (346-1683)  
**February 13, 2012, 1:30 pm**  
Hostess: Robin Eddy  
Location: 1222 Hempstead Road, Niskayuna  
**February 27, 2012, 1:30 pm**  
Hostess: Arlene Maranville  
Location: 1 Maywood Drive, Scotia  
New members welcomed.



### **Quilting**

Leader: Pat Buczkowski (372-3893)  
**February 28, 2012, 7 p.m.**  
Program: Disappearing Nine-Patch  
Hostess: Toni Walsh  
Location: 113 Alexander Avenue, Scotia

### **Science Topics**

Leader: Winnie Balz (372-3663)  
**February 6, 2012, 7:30 pm**  
Program: Ecological Consequences of Globalization  
Presenter: Julie Burgess  
Hostess: Ellie Rowland  
Location: 1249 Sandra Lane, Niskayuna

### **Scotia-Glenville, Burnt Hills Varied Interests**

Leader: Arlene Gollmer (399-2479)  
**February 12, 2012, 1:00 pm**  
Program: Baptist Health Center Future Plans  
Planner: Grace Mueller  
Location: Baptist Health Center, Scotia

### **Serendipity**

Leader: Jennie Pennington (372-7503)

### **Schenectacy AAUW Bloggers**

The new group gives Branch members a chance to communicate in real time about topics that interest them.  
Contact Jennie Pennington (372-7503)

### **PROPOSED NEW STUDY & INTEREST GROUPS**

**A One-Book Book Group** to read and discuss **Half the Sky** by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. At the Holiday Brunch, speaker Melissa Guardaro informed us of world-wide humanitarian issues involving women and children. She recommended educating ourselves as an important first step. This book was on her list of readings.  
**Singles Gourmet** for single members interested in cooking and gathering to share.

**Bridge** for experienced and novice players.

**Interested?** Contact Marguerite Pileggi:

[margo32650@aol.com](mailto:margo32650@aol.com)





## **Breaking through Barriers**

### **VISIONS**

**Schenectady Branch Newsletter AAUW**  
(published monthly except  
Jan., July, August)

The deadline for newsletter items is the  
1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the month  
prior to publication.

**Editor** Linda Zuckerman

**Circulation:** Nancy Phillips and Joan Welch

### **Co-Presidents**

Robin Eddy and Jennie Pennington

### **AAUW'S MISSION**

AAUW Advances Equity for women through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

### **AAUW'S VISION**

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

### **AAUW'S PROMISE**

By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and educational barriers to so that all women have a fair chance.

**In Principle and in Practice AAUW Values and seeks 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*  
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**C/O Linda Zuckerman**  
**1137 Fernwood Drive**  
**Niskayuna, NY 12309**

