

## OUR BRANCH IN THE COMMUNITY



This is a winter like no other...we are isolated and held hostage to a dangerous virus. But we are social beings and the urge to be with others and to engage in social action is an intrinsic part of who we are...so what can we do right now – that is both safe and socially engaging? We can look for ways to make life a bit better for others.

Looking around the community, we see many worthy efforts – which we could support. The Junior League of Schenectady and Saratoga Counties is collecting feminine hygiene products for women and girls who need them. (See page. 2)

Our [regional food bank](#) and [food pantries](#) also welcome donations. City Mission is always grateful for donations of canned goods or good produce. When you honk your horn, someone will come to your car to take your donations into the building.

If you have clothing, household items, furniture books or toys that you would like to donate consider City Mission, Goodwill, Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity, Schenectady Home Furnishings, Things of My Very Own, Bethesda House YWCA, etc. Some of these organizations even will pick up your items.

If you have extra children's books or toys (perhaps your grandchildren have outgrown them), consider donating them the YWCA, Northeast Parent and Child or the library. If you're ready to donate your books, consider donating them to the library (when donations are accepted again). The money raised from their sale goes to support our library programs.

Right now, suggesting that you consider tutoring a child is probably not a good idea...but vaccines will come and there will be a time when we can actually be with others safely. This has been a lot year for a lot of students. If you are a retired teacher, or if you have the skills to work with children, consider volunteering as a tutor.

The American Red Cross has a constant and ongoing need for blood and platelet donations.

Volunteering or helping out makes us feel good and brings good to our community.

~**Eleanor Aronstein**

### OUR AAUW-Schenectady Branch Grant

This year our AAUW-Schenectady Branch \$500 grant, in partnership with the Schenectady City School District Educational Foundation, went to Amy Egnaczyk, a 5th grade teacher at Keane Elementary School in Schenectady. Amy requested the grant so that she could purchase an individualized online math program for her 5th grade students.



This online program helps students learn and increase their fluency with math facts which will then transfer to them solving more challenging math concepts. By engaging the students, it helps boost their confidence in math.

Since this program is individualized, it works for students with different needs, skills and goals whether they are at grade level, at-risk or have special needs. Students are able to log into their accounts in school, at home or during afterschool programs, making it accessible for all students.

With the money left over from her grant, along with some of her own money, Amy was thrilled to buy books for her classroom library at A Second Look, the Friends of Schenectady County Public Library's used book store in ViaPort, Rotterdam.

Our grant contribution to this deserving teacher will be impacting students for years.

~**Robin Eddy**

## A WAY TO SUPPORT LOCAL WOMEN AND GIRLS

As you might have seen in the Gazette, the Junior League of Schenectady has a program that provides feminine hygiene products to women and teen girls in our area who need them most. I thought this would be an important program for AAUW to support at this time. Here is the Gazette's article: <https://dailygazette.com/2020/12/28/junior-league-seeks-donations-of-feminine-hygiene-products-bought-through-unused-hsa-fsa-funds>

I called Denise Murphy McGraw, the Junior League's President, and she was appreciative for any help AAUW could provide. The donated products go to our local battered women's shelters, homeless shelters, the YW, etc. If you're interested in supporting this program, you could either buy the products or send a check. They have a source where they can get the products for a lower cost. Thanks to those of you who have already donated to this important cause.

Your donated products or checks can be dropped off at 1177 Rosehill Boulevard in Niskayuna, 12309 or 116 Park Place in Schenectady or you can reach out to Junior League President Denise Murphy McGraw at [jsspresident@gmail.com](mailto:jsspresident@gmail.com)/518-339-4535 to arrange for another convenient drop-off or a pick-up location. If you send a check, add AAUW in the Memo line so they know you are from AAUW.

As we look ahead to 2021, may it be a healthy and happy new year for all of us.

~ **Robin Eddy**

## MEMBERSHIP

### 2021 – A Year of Catching Up

AAUW struggled through 2020 as did other organizations. We tried to keep connected through zoom meetings and telephone contact with members. You are all so important to us and we appreciate your contributions in making our Branch what it is to today.

This year we had to develop creative ways to keep AAUW significant in our lives even though we were basically shut down. Robin Eddy produced a Connections e-mail that suggested opportunities where we could find interesting events to connect to through the internet or outdoor activities. Our book club continued to meet on zoom to discuss their current books, some groups just got together on zoom to chat and share experiences. It has been a tough year but somehow we have been able to stay connected. We look forward to 2021 when we can once again meet together, learn from our general meetings, share meals and enjoy our study and interest groups. Until then we support our mission of promoting the welfare of women and girls. We are making gains but there is still much to do.

Keep Well and Keep Safe,

~ **Bobbi Richardson & Jackie Mendini**

## DIRECTORY CHANGES

Ellie Rowland  
200 The Glebe Blvd. #4013  
Daleville, VA 24083  
1-540-591-2310  
[rowland.gene2@gmail.com](mailto:rowland.gene2@gmail.com)

Reba Mehan [mehan@protonmail.com](mailto:mehan@protonmail.com)

Pat Buczkowski 518-372-3893 (No cell)

Julie Burges 518=280=8058

Mary DeLory [mdelory0718@gmail.com](mailto:mdelory0718@gmail.com)  
(No land Line)

Pat Gregory [patgregory62@gmail.com](mailto:patgregory62@gmail.com).

## PROFILES OF WOMEN



While sorting books in the library, I came across a book titled **Wild Women of the White House, The Formidable Females Behind the Throne, On the Phone, and (Sometimes) Under the Bed**, by Autumn Stephens. Quoted from the back cover: “Rollicking and revealing, the author, Autumn Stephens, provides an eye-opening journey into the realm of the eclectic sisterhood whose outrageous words and deeds have rocked the fusty old foundation of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.” The book profiles our first ladies in a concise and somewhat humorous tone. It points out their idiosyncrasies, strengths and influences they had over their husbands.

It was not until 1849 that the term First Lady was used and was first used to refer to the deceased Dolly Madison. Martha Washington was referred to as Lady Washington.

Among the more brazen women of the White House was Abigail Adams, a feminist forerunner. She raised the question of inequality early on in letters that she sent to her husband, in 1776, while he was meeting with the Founding Fathers to form the new democracy. She wrote, “Remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors!” She warned we “are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not ourselves be bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representations.”

When John Adams was selected as a delegate to the Continental Congress, she insisted on being addressed as Mrs. Delegate as she reasoned, “should we not assume your titles when we give you up our name?” In her letters she challenged the myth that male dominance was divinely proclaimed. “Let each planet shine in their own orbit.” she wrote. “God and nature designed it so—if man is Lord, woman is Lordess—that is what I content for.” Hurrah for Abigail. We are still fighting these battles today. The book is both enlightening, humorous and inspiring. Remember this as we paraphrase Abigail, Let every woman shine in their own sphere. This is what AAUW is all about.

~*Bobbi Richardson*

## SHARING RECIPES

Are you tired of cooking the same recipes over and over while stuck at home during this pandemic? Let's share our (1-2) recipes you think others will like and I will put together a cookbook and send it out with via email (as soon as it is done) or with our next newsletter

If you could retype your recipe(s) so I could copy, paste and format all the recipes the same, that would be GREAT!

If you can't do this, take a photo or scan the recipe and I'll copy it and paste it in the cookbook. Please make sure that the writing is easy to read.

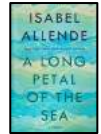
Send your recipes to me at [rjeddy321@gmail.com](mailto:rjeddy321@gmail.com) or ...

Robin Eddy  
1222 Hempstead Road  
Niskayuna, NY 12309

## STUDY AND INTEREST GROUPS

Our Study and Interest Groups are not meeting in person at the moment. However, the Modern Lit Group has invited our members to their Zoom book reviews. If you would like To join them for one or more of their book reviews or even join their group, contact **Mary Delory** at [mdelory0718@gmail.com](mailto:mdelory0718@gmail.com) so that she will send you the zoom link you will need to use to join the meeting. You don't have to read the book to listen to the discussion. The group meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 1:00-2:00 p.m.

February 9: ***A Long Petal of the Sea*** “ by Isabel Allende “richly imagined portrayal of The Spanish Civil War”.



March 9: ***The Night Watchman*** by Louise Erdrich. Based on Erdrich's grandfather who carried the fight against Native dispossession from N. Dakota to Washington D.C.



## IT'S AAUW'S ART CONTEST TIME!

### Calling All AAUW Artists

It's that time of year again! AAUW's 12th annual art contest opens January 6, and your work could be among the winning entries.

To enter, [submit your photography or a digital photo](#) of your painting, drawing, sculpture, collage or other form of art through the AAUW website. All entries are accepted, but we encourage you to look through your portfolio for works that speak to AAUW's mission.

AAUW members will select their favorite entries via ranked-choice voting. Winning entries will be featured on a collection of notecards sent to members in the spring. The back of the cards will include the winning artist's biography, a fact about AAUW and a highlight of their local branch affiliation when applicable.

This year's winners could include someone from your branch or state, so spread the word through your member communications!

For more information on submitting artwork or to see last year's art gallery, please visit the [AAUW Art Contest page](#).

## GET YOUR NEWSLETTER IN COLOR – Just a click away!

If you're currently getting your newsletter in the mail and would like to get it in color, the ability to click on links and get it delivered in to your email days earlier, email Faith Weldon and she will update your delivery status.

[fpweldon@gmail.com](mailto:fpweldon@gmail.com)

## COVID-19 INFORMATION

We are all looking forward to when we will be able to get the Covid-19 vaccine.

**These websites will keep you informed.**

- To find out if you are eligible and where you can go to get the vaccine, go to this website and scroll down to the bottom of the page. Click on [eligibility status](#).  
<https://www.schenectadycounty.com/vaccine>
- For current information on [symptoms, prevention, testing, NYS's progress, know your rights](#), etc. <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>
- An [interactive graph](#) to compare Schenectady with other counties Interactive graph here:  
<https://covidactnow.org/share/17046/?redirectTo=%2Fexplore%2F17046>

## Three Ways to Avoid COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

While vaccination details are getting worked out, here's what you can be sure of:

- You can't pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine. **That's a scam.**
- You can't pay to get early access to the vaccine. **That's a scam.**
- Nobody legit will call about the vaccine and ask for your Social Security, bank account, or credit card number. **That's a scam.**

Ignore any vaccine offers that say different, or ask for personal or financial information.

Learn more at

[ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams](https://ftc.gov/coronavirus/scams)



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## VISIONS

### Schenectady Branch Newsletter AAUW

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

**Editor** Faith Weldon and Robin Eddy  
**Circulation:** Pat Terry

Website: [schenectady-ny.aauw.net](https://www.schenectady-ny.aauw.net)

## AAUW's Strategic Plan

**Mission:** To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy

**Vision:** Equity for all

**Values:** Nonpartisan, Fact-based. Integrity, Inclusion and Intersectionality

### Our Focus

- Education & Training
- Economic Security
- Leadership

<https://www.aauw.org/who-we-are>

*AAUW  
Schenectady Branch  
Faith Weldon  
27 Brittany Oaks  
Clifton Park, NY 12065*



***Member Benefits***