

NUTMEG NEWS

CONNECTICUT AAUW NEWSLETTER

Fall 2002

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

REFLECTIONS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT WHO WE ARE

AAUW has a mission that states: AAUW promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. We in CT AAUW actively support this mission as well as the Association's Board's vision statement: "A century of commitment to equity and education has led to focusing the efforts of the Association, Educational Foundation, and Legal Advocacy Fund on the development of opportunities for women and girls. AAUW will make a significant impact by removing barriers that prohibit women and girls from reaching their full potential."

What does this really mean for me, the individual AAUW member? How can I be a part of this great vision and mission? How can my branch make these visible to the members and the community? What can I personally do to advance these lofty principles?

These are the questions that we should all be asking each other and ourselves as we begin the 2002-2003 year. As I reflect on my activities for the coming time, I ask myself how well do I contribute to a welcoming environment when our women gather together? Are we working to Get Out The Vote wherever we have influence and in particular, am I helping to get women to the polls on November 5th, especially in Congressional District #2 where CT AAUW has been given a grant by the Association?

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Do we encourage each other to recognize women of achievement? Is this happening in my

Do we encourage each other to recognize women of achievement: is this happening in my branch? Do I know of such women and am I promoting their advancement? Do we mentor women who are working their way to becoming leaders?

AND what about the "girls" that we interact with personally, at work, or in our communities? Are we mentoring young women so that they know that they can do anything they want with their lives? Those of you who know me, realize that this is a particularly strong commitment on my part. Everyday I ask myself: What young girl advanced today because of something that I have done, said, or been? It is so easy for us in AAUW to think that because of everything that we have done over the years that we have won the fight and the problems have been solved. Then we encounter information such as the recent studies which indicate that young women are counseled into vocational training that will yield them careers of lower rate of pay than young men who are encouraged to take the high tech courses. I ask you: Does it sound like our work is done and we have established gender equity for girls?

So as we begin this year, let us renew our courage to challenge barriers with vigor where we find them. Also let us promote achievement of women as well. These are relentless tasks for the women of AAUW. But these are goals worth working towards. Have a wonderful and fulfilling AAUW year and personal life too.

Marcelline A. Barron, President CT AAUW

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Shape the Future

The words I'm about to utter may seem as though they're being put out there for shock effect, but believe me, they're real: If we as members don't do something quickly, AAUW may just shut down and die.

Ridiculous, you say? Well, let's look at some of the facts:

- AAUW has experienced a steady decrease in branch membership—the heart of our organization.
- We've lost some 15,000 branch members since 1995: 6 percent in 1999 and 3 percent in each of the preceding three years.

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Without the branches, our local links, AAUW as we know it would cease to exist. No formal process for helping teen girls; no mentoring of women interested in attending or returning to college; loss of one of the strongest women's advocacy organizations on public policy. And, of course, loss of funding to support EFP fellows and research, as well as loss of funding for LAF plaintiffs.

One of the solutions AAUW has launched to counter this downward trend is our "Shape the Future" campaign. Focus is placed on recruiting baby boomers who are activists and concerned with community issues. Discounts are offered to those who join, and branches that recruit new members are rewarded by receiving free Association memberships.

Our branch leaders can meet the membership challenge by actively and assertively participating in the Shape the Future campaign:

- Set a recruitment goal for your branch that is challenging yet attainable. I am available and eager to assist you in this effort. Then involve your entire branch in meeting those goals, not just the membership chair.
- As previously, focus your efforts for now on baby boomers, women between the ages of 36 and 55, of diverse backgrounds and cultures. Our thinking is that they are close in age to the average AAUW member, care about our priorities, and have more time than most Gen Xers who are deep into new careers or young children.
- Host programs that are likely to attract baby boomers. Keep doing the programs that have proven effective in your community, but spotlight those national AAUW programs that especially appeal to baby boomers: Sister-to-Sister Summits, Transitions Conferences for women considering a return to school, and the AAUW Voter Education Campaign.
- Recruit women who attend these programs or any other AAUW-sponsored event. The key is to ask people to join and give them incentives.
- Offer discounts to individuals who join on the spot. They can save \$10 off Association dues, or join with a friend and split the Association dues—saving almost \$20 each. Discounts are restricted to new or lapsed members whose absence exceeds two years.
- Branch credit is given for new members recruited during branch activities. A branch can earn one free Association membership for every two branch members recruited on the spot or one free Association membership for every three new members-at-large recruited on the spot or after branch activities.

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Please e-mail me at phillipspackage@aol.com for additional information on the specific paperwork required to claim your credits under the Shape the Future campaign. I am also available to be a guest speaker at branch meetings, talking about membership ideas or other related issues. Just give me a call at (203) 795-4698.

Retention

Now that you've utilized all of the recruitment techniques outlined above, here comes the tough part: keeping the new members active and interested! At one time or another, we've all probably joined a group or organization where we never really understood what our role was supposed to be. In other words, we didn't feel useful. **Don't allow that to happen to your new members!**

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Find out what their skills and interests are...and put them to work. If they're apprehensive about chairing a project, pair them up with an enthusiastic seasoned member who will serve as her mentor. If you don't see a new member at a meeting, call her and say you missed her. (No browbeating, however!) Don't wait until she's missed multiple meetings before getting in touch. She may feel that

until she's missed multiple meetings before getting in touch. She may feel that since no one cared enough to follow up, you won't miss her if she never returns.

And if you do lose a member, try to do an "exit interview". Find out why she's resigning. If it's for reasons other than relocation, discuss possible alternative involvement, such as becoming a Member-at-Large.

AAUW is the premiere women's organization promoting equity for all women and girls. Let's do all we can to ensure its rich future!

Jeannette Phillips, Membership Vice President

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EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The AAUW Educational Foundation has just sent out a letter announcing that \$4 million was awarded to 293 women all over the world which include:

- 77 American Fellowships to women scholars writing their dissertations or conducting postdoctoral research
- 62 Career Development Grants to women preparing to reenter the workforce, change careers, or seek upward mobility in their present careers
- 58 International Fellowships to women from a broad range of countries for one year of graduate or postgraduate study in the U.S.
- 28 Community Action Grants to individuals and AAUW branches and states as seed money for programs for non-degree research projects that promote education and equity for women and girls
- 43 Selected Professions Fellowships to women in science/technical disciplines and professions that have traditionally been male-dominated
- 16 Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellowships, etc. Four of these women are studying in Connecticut, and I have sent their names to the branch EF chairs. If anyone wants more information on these awards, please email seharkness@hotmail.com.

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Breaking news from the Bridgeport branch is that it is establishing an International Fellowship to honor Leonette Wishard, a woman who is celebrating her 100th birthday on October 11 and who has dedicated her entire life to helping women and girls. More information about this fellowship will be sent out to all of the branches as soon as I

receive it.

In connection with this newly established Connecticut Fellowship, I am encouraging members to consider giving to the Educational Foundation at the \$100 or higher level in 2002. The Charter Oak State College fundraiser netted over \$10,000 in 2001 for the Foundation, and this event is not taking place in 2002. In 2001 about 30 members gave at this level. Wouldn't it be fitting to have 100 more women give at this level in 2002 to kick off the new Fellowship! Please seriously consider this suggestion in your giving plans.

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PUBLIC POLICY

Mission Statement of AAUW Public Policy: Basic to all AAUW Public Policy effort is the understanding that true equity requires a balance between the rights of the individual and needs of the community. AAUW Public Policy advocates for continues efforts to attain our goal of equity for women and girls.

What AAUW Public Policy does:

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1. Shares information with the membership

2. Forms formal and informal collaborations and coalitions

3. Follows progress of legislative bills in both State and Congress

4. Informs members of AAUW of legislation threatening to our goals of equity for women and girls and asks for their action by writing or phoning their elected representatives.

5. Demands a response from our elected representatives to account for legislation that threatens equity or survival of our democratic process.

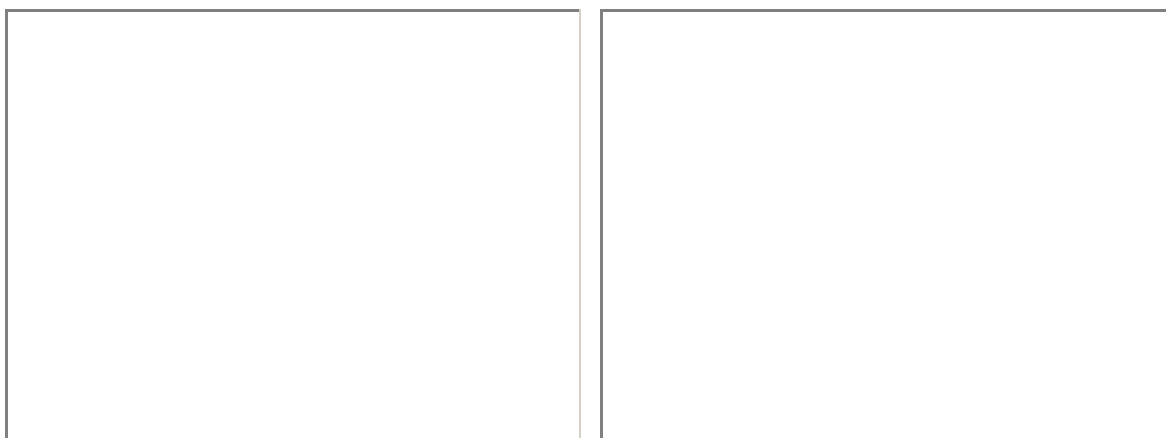
Report from Public Policy Committee Co-Chairs

The next year will have two areas of emphasis for the Public Policy Committee. The first issue will be the Congressional elections in November.

Connecticut has received a grant for a major effort to get out the vote and to help voters understand the issues at stake in the 2nd Congressional District. AAUW goals are in jeopardy in this close race which affects not only the Congressional district but also the State of Connecticut and the nation. We ask for member support for our efforts in New London. Volunteers from all over the state will be needed to help with mass mailings and phone calls. Connie Bennett is the contact person in New London and Sandra Kreske of the Bridgeport Branch is the Public Policy committee convener who is working with National. The money from National is a help, but it is the enthusiastic help of members that really counts.

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The New London Branch will be mailing the voter guides on Saturday, September 28th from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Waterford Library. Any volunteers who want to help at the Waterford Library should send names and telephone numbers to Connie Bennett, e-mail: clfbennet@snet.net or phone: (860) 886-4782. Any length of time anyone can come and help accomplish this huge task is *most* appreciated.



Connie Bennett networks at the kickoff meeting for the "Get Out the Vote" Project while President Marcelline Barron confers with Gail Nordmoe.

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Our other emphasis will be to develop member-driven public policy focus on issues for 2003-2004. Members will be asked to participate in a survey of priorities through their branches. These will then be collated by the Public Policy Committee and

presented to the State Convention in April 2003.

Brochures will be distributed to all branches by September 2003. The Committee would like to see all Branches represented at our monthly luncheon meetings, which are held in a central part of the state. If

Branches do not have a formally appointed representative we invite any interested Branch members to come to at least one of the meetings and report back to their Branches. We want to hear from you! All we ask is that you call or email Mary Jane or Willadean so we can notify the restaurant of the number attending.

Co-Chairs: Mary Jane Janick: Phone: (203) 438-6736

Email: HFJMB@aol.com

Willadean Hart: Phone: (203) 227_3093

Email: HWHinc@aol.com

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HISTORIAN

The 20th Century is gone but its history should not be lost. Each branch can help to preserve its history by culling important items from its files and bringing them to the January 25, 2003 State Board meeting. We will take responsibility for depositing them with the archivist at the Thomas Dodd Archives, University of Connecticut.

The following categories of records are appropriate to include:

- Board minutes
- Membership booklets
- Materials relating to the implementation of special projects/programs
- Fundraising information
- Special recognition/awards/grants

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Please place materials relating to each category in a separate folder, identified by category and year. Place all materials being submitted in a box, labeled with the name of the branch.

Gloria Stewart and Eunice Waller, Co-Historians

Looking for Connecticut Impressionist Paintings

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Connecticut is the home of a group of artists living in the late 18th - 19th century who were painting Impressionist paintings in and around Connecticut including **John Twachtman, J. Alden Weir, Theodore Robinson, Childe Hassam, Leonard Ochtman, Ernest Lawson, Elmer MacRae, Robert Reid, and others**. You may, in fact, find many of Connecticut's landmarks within the colorful paintings of these world-renowned artists. The following museums are part of the Connecticut Art Trail that is a unique partnership involving ten museums and historic sites: The Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Bush-Holly Historic Site in Cos Cob, Weir Farm National Historic Site in Wilton, Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme, Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London, the collection of Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Co. in Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington and New Britain Museum of American Art.

Let's plan to visit a couple or a few of these museums to learn more about Connecticut Impressionism. You may e-mail me if you are interested at LGEFineArt@yahoo.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

LAURA G. EINSTEIN, Cultural Events Chairperson

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NEWS FROM THE BRIDGEPORT BRANCH

Mark your Calendars!

On the afternoon of **November 17, 2:00PM**, at 3030 Park, our branch will present

"the'-concert" (pronounced tay-conser , with pinkie inthe air) to benefit the Leonette Wishard International Endowed Fellowship to be established with the AAUW Education Foundation in Washington. Mezzo Soprano Debbie Hereld, accompanied on the piano by her husband Richard, will entertain us with selections that range from opera to musicals. A reception will follow the performance.

Our Leonette celebrates her 100th birthday in October. She has always been ahead of her time in promoting education for women, and she richly deserves to be honored with a national fellowship. All members are invited to the kick-off fundraiser. It's going to be a super party you don't want to miss! Ticket information and further details in the next newsletter— *Bep Breslaw*

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...that's all, folks!

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