



# Nutmeg News

CT AAUW bi-annual  
newsletter

CT AAUW  
Winter 2005

**Upcoming Dates - Watch  
for more details to come!**

## MESSAGE FROM REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Greetings! Hope that this winter finds you in good health and a sense of commitment to equity. Despite all of the work that we do and have done over the years, equity is still an issue!

This past October 16<sup>th</sup> we had a wonderful Regional Conference at Wellesley College Club. The weather was great, the leaves were beautiful, and the speakers were awesome.

The report that Dr. Erkut gave of her research on high school sports and young women's sexual behavior was very enlightening. We had two terrific workshops on Leadership and the Educational Foundation. Lunch was excellent—both the food and the fellowship. We heard an outstanding report from Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux about her research, which the Foundation has supported. We wrapped up the day with a lively Membership Dialogue and Town Hall.

After much reflection, I have decided to place my name in nomination again for your Regional Director. The election will take

place in D.C. at our next convention, which is taking place at the Omni Shoreham Hotel June 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>. Please consider attending and go to our website [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) to obtain details about the convention.

In closing I share with you two quotes that I try to use in living my life:

“Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood.” *Madame Curie*

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

**Marcelline A. Barron**  
PO Box 320307  
Fairfield, CT 06825-0307  
203-255-8395 (work)  
203-259-5919 (home)  
203-255-8273 (fax)  
[mbarron@fairfield.k12.ct.us](mailto:mbarron@fairfield.k12.ct.us)

**\* International Women's Day** 3/8

**\* Veteran Feminists of America Conference—Radisson in Cromwell** 4/16

**\*CT AAUW Annual Convention Stamford Marriott** 4/30

**\* AAUW National Convention Washington, DC** 6/24



## LOWER CT VALLEY BRANCH—Welcomes Other Branches to Attend Programs

Our branch fundraiser will be held on Saturday, April 2 at the Dock and Dine Restaurant in Old Saybrook. There will be a silent auction preceding the lunch at 11:30. The speaker for the program will be Jennifer Young-Hall, who titles her talk, “Women of Nepal, Their Struggles and Successes.” She will, as part of the program, display some of the beautiful items that are handcrafted by these women. The cost is \$30.00 and reservations and information are available from Gretchen Underhill, [justghia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:justghia@sbcglobal.net), or (860) 526-5975.

On April 13, Julie Velasque-Runk, an Educational Foundation American Fellow will speak at our branch meeting. Julie titles her talk “And the Creator Began to Carve Us of Cocobolo: Historical Ecology of Wounaan Forest Use in Eastern Panama.” Her work incorporates culture, environment, and history as it explores the Wounaan people and their place in eastern Panama, including myths that endure, even with conservation and development in the region. The program will take place at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook at 7:30 p.m.

We are hopeful that other branch members will join us for these programs that support the Educational Foundation. Additional information about the Connecticut Valley Branch may be obtained from Ann-Marie Rooney, membership chairperson, at [amrjmr@comcast.net](mailto:amrjmr@comcast.net)

## Convention Reminders from Carol Virostek – Program VP

Our annual convention, co-hosted by the New Canaan and Norwalk-Westport branches will be held on April 30<sup>th</sup> at the Stamford Marriott. At the convention, one (1) member from each CT AAUW Branch will be honored for her outstanding service as a branch member. Branch presidents should select your nominee and send her name to me via email or snail mail by **Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Please include a short paragraph (5-6 sentences) to be read aloud at convention stating why she has been chosen. You may use the citation on the certificate as a guideline in your selection process.

### *Honored Member Award*

*...for her dependability, leadership, creativity, compassion, resourcefulness and willingness to walk the extra mile in promoting positive change, equity, education and self-development for women over the life span.*

In keeping with another tradition, please prepare a basket, this time with a “feminist” theme, to be raffled off as an EF/LAF fundraiser. Our conference theme “**Purpose, Empowerment, and Progress**” can be a guide. You might consider the ever changing and expanding roles and images of women; the impact of Title IX; feminist pioneers, leaders, and foremothers; issues women have tackled successfully and those that are still a challenge. Just use your imaginations. It’s always a treat to experience the creative energy that goes into the baskets that are donated for this very important fundraiser.

Please feel free to contact me with any question at: [CRVirostek@aol.com](mailto:CRVirostek@aol.com) or 860-828-5416



### **UNFPA is the largest**

multilateral reproductive health and family planning organization in the world, working in more than 140 countries at their invitation to help women have healthy pregnancies, survive childbirth and plan their families. UNFPA's efforts are integral to HIV prevention; they are a leader in working to end female genital mutilation, violence against women and obstetric fistula; and UNFPA strives for equal rights to food, education, opportunity and health care.

There are 166 countries that provide financial support to UNFPA to continue its invaluable work - but the United States is not one of them. Since 2002, the federal government has blocked the money that Congress has appropriated each year for UNFPA. But we know Americans support this life-saving work. And while our government is not doing what it should, WE CAN.



### **In Honor of International Women's Day on March 8 Meet the Challenge - Add Your Voice and Your Dollar**

"We have an idealist goal - but I know Americans are up to the challenge," said Jane Roberts, cofounder of 34 Million Friends. "UNFPA has a vision, and so do we. Your generous support so far has enabled UNFPA to provide much-needed services. Will you help us again? Will you help us find those who have not yet given to 34 Million Friends of UNFPA?"

In the two weeks before International Women's Day (March 8), we urge you to RAISE MORE VOICES by passing this message along to friends, family, neighbors, co-workers - anyone you think will support this great effort.

Help us find at least 10,000 American women who will raise at least \$10,000 to provide reproductive health services - safe motherhood, contraceptives and HIV prevention - to our sisters in the world's poorest countries.

Let them know that they can go to [www.34millionfriends.org](http://www.34millionfriends.org) and make a contribution or send to 34 Million Friends of UNFPA, PO Box 5343, Denver CO 80217-5343. Help us spread the word with those who would be willing to add their voice and help us Meet The Challenge.

On March 8, 2005, the world will celebrate International Women's Day. The occasion is marked by women's groups around the world, is commemorated at the United Nations and is designated as a national holiday in many countries.

The idea of an International Women's Day began at the turn of the century and is a reminder of the decades of struggle by women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. Today, these same ideals hold true and are even further expanded upon in the areas of health and rights. International Women's day in the 21st century is an opportunity for women of all ethnicities, cultures and religions from all over the world, to celebrate their day and to look forward to their future.

**PRESENTING HELEN SHEEHY**  
**11th ANNUAL BOOK AUTHOR BRUNCH**  
**AAUW STORRS-WILLIMANTIC BRANCH**

**Saturday, April 9, 2005 at 11:30 a.m.**  
**Eastern Connecticut State University**  
**President's Dining Room, Hurley Hall**

**TICKETS: \$20 PER PERSON...INCLUDES A BUFFET BRUNCH**  
**DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS: APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>**

Born in Oklahoma and raised in Oklahoma and Kansas, Helen Sheehy lives in Connecticut. She has worked in the theatre, written about the theatre and taught theatre for three decades.

Ms. Sheehy's latest book is the biography of Eleonora Duse, who revolutionized the art of acting. This book was nominated for the Connecticut Book Award in biography and memoir in 2004. Her other books about women in the theatre are *Eva Le Gallienne. A Biography* and *Margo: The Life and Theatre of Margo Jones*

**Book Sales by Heart of Gold Books, Tolland**

Please make your check payable to AAUW Storrs-Willimantic.  
 Mail to Sue Harkness, 322 Ashford Center Road, Ashford, CT 06278, **OR**  
 call 860-429-2822, **OR** email seharkness@earthlink.net

You may call or email your reservation and pay at the door for your convenience.

Number of reservations @ \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_ per person

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**I cannot attend and am enclosing my check to the AAUW Educational Foundation (tax-deductible).**

**SLATE OF OFFICERS – Voting at State Convention, 4/30**

**Jeannette Phillips – Nominations Committee Chair**

**Co-Membership Vice Presidents: Dawn Boulanger & Ann-Marie Rooney**

**Dawn** is currently Co-Vice President of Program for the Lower Connecticut Valley Branch. She is a graduate of McGill University in Montreal, and first became involved with the Canadian Federation of University Women in 1972. Upon moving to Ridgewood, NJ in 1980, she joined the Northwest Bergen Branch of AAUW, serving in several offices including President. After also living in Toronto and Singapore, she and her husband have retired to Essex, CT. Dawn's career has included several executive positions in housing in such organizations as Habitat for Humanity and Ecuhome Corporation in Toronto. Wherever she has lived she has always looked for AAUW or CFUW as "the common thread along the way".

**Ann-Marie** has been a member of the Lower Connecticut Valley Branch since 1999, and is currently Vice President of Membership. She also organizes 4 dinner party socials each program year. Professionally, she has been in education, and is now a real estate broker. She is a graduate of SUNY-Oswego, and grew up in Staten Island. She and her husband love to travel. One of their two grandsons lives in Paris, thus providing a good excuse to go there!

**Educational Foundation Chair: Audrey Scotti**

**Audrey** is a long-time member of the CT AAUW Board of Directors, and a strong advocate for women's issues. She is being nominated for a second term as EF Chair. In addition to filling that position for the past two years, she also serves as our representative on the Coalition for Choice. **[CONTINUED ON PAGE 5]**

**TELL ME MORE**

**Check It out!**

Political organizers on the left looking for fresh ways to motivate their base turn to the Chicago-based Creative America Project, which is recruiting and training artists to run for local office in 2006. In 2005, the project is planning to hold training sessions in Boston, New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Champaign, Madison, Cheyenne, Phoenix and San Francisco. For more information visit:

[www.creativeamerica.us](http://www.creativeamerica.us)

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## Promoting Education and Equity for Women and Girls

## Re-Membering Our Collective Journey...

*Carol Buch, CT AAUW President*

**Purpose, Empowerment, Progress...** continues to be our collective AAUW focus. It was first generated at the October 2004 Regional Conference held at Wellesley College and is the title of CT AAUW's Annual Convention to be held on April 30<sup>th</sup> at the Stamford Marriott. **Purpose, Power, Progress** will culminate at the national AAUW convention to be held in Washington, DC June 24th-27<sup>th</sup> 2005. This theme reminds me of the historical focus that's brought to the forefront each calendar year as we honor and celebrate Black History Month and Women's History Month. Once again I'm reminded of the importance of remembering those who have gone before us working valiantly for the lived reality of equity for all members of a free, democratic society. In the same moment, I am reminded of my responsibility, as a recipient of the benefits of these hard won freedoms, to keep the stories of our nation's ancestors alive not only as a source of personal inspiration but as fuel to keep a nation of ongoing diversity energized in its efforts of creating common ground for the purpose of more fully realizing the precious, inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all its people.

Black History Month invites me to ponder the social construction of race and the reality, that despite critical, long-labored breakthroughs in social consciousness, culturally imbedded ideas and attitudes of racism continue to permeate the fabric of our nation. Women's History Month invites me to revisit not only the struggles of our collective foremothers but the struggles of the women of my own blood line whose social realities were shaped first and foremost by the social construction of gender and then more personally by their lived realities within the context of social class as well as racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.

I am reminded that my birthright as a female member of society is membership to a great culture of women... a national and global sisterhood... that extends far beyond the cultural inheritance of my blood line and which represents half of the human population. The idea of women representing half of humanity resonates with angst for me because half of the "voice" of humanity still does not reflect a female consciousness... a consciousness of thought that continues to evolve out of an historical space characterized by patriarchal domination. The historian Gerda Lerner, deemed by some feminist scholars as the "mother" of women's history, states that "when historical conditions are right and women have both the social space and the social experience in which to ground their new understanding of social reality, feminist consciousness develops." I am reminded that the great waves of feminism have realized significant gains for women and girls both locally and globally as I visual the cup of equity partially filled. My inner gaze falls upon the portion of the cup remaining yet to be filled and I am reminded of the ongoing effort that I/we are actively engaged in, not only through

our membership in AAUW, but as participants in a global sisterhood to raise the "voice" of women's consciousness to its rightful place of visibility and power *because equity is still an issue.*

As we continue to share our talents and time through the outstanding work being done by so many of our branches as well as through the coalition groups that many of our AAUW members participate in, let us be mindful that each effort we make in some way is an echoing of the **powerful** "voices" of those courageous women who have journeyed before us whose **purpose** has helped us to **progress** to where we are today. *Because equity is still an issue*, how do we as the women of this time and place in human history working within our branches and/or through our coalition affiliations define our **purpose** and engage our **power** as we work toward a more evolved stage of **progress** for equity not only for the present but for the generations to come?

I invite you to spend some time reflecting upon this theme of **Purpose, Power, Progress** both individually and collectively as well...perhaps at a branch meeting! I'd appreciate hearing your thoughts...email me at [ctaaupres04@yahoo.com](mailto:ctaaupres04@yahoo.com) or snail mail me at 208 Summit Street, Willimantic, CT 06226.

I wish you a **purposeful** and **powerful** spring-time filled with much **progress** toward realizing your goals in promoting educational equity for women and girls, lifelong learning and positive societal change.





**SLATE OF OFFICERS – Voting at State Convention, 4/30**

***..CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3***

**Treasurer: Paula Jean Yukna**

**Paula** is a past president of CT AAUW, and is currently completing a term as Finance Vice President for the Legal Advocacy Fund at the national level. In all of her national positions, she has been instrumental in helping to guide the Association through some difficult financial decisions. She is an attorney, and is a member of the New Britain Branch.

**Recording Secretary: Chantal DeArmitt**

**Chantal** is currently completing a term as Membership Vice President of CT AAUW. She is an active member in the Greater Middletown Branch, where she presently serves as Publicity Chair.

**Nominating Committee Chair: Candy Buebendorf**

**Candy** has served on the Nominating Committee for the past two years, and is completing her second term as Recording Secretary of CT AAUW. She is also the current President of the New London Branch of AAUW. In her professional life she is an educator at the high school level.

**Nominating Committee Members: (2) Stephanie Tercyak-Morgan & Rosemary Woolwich**

**Stephanie** is currently Vice President of Program for the New Britain Branch, and is being nominated for a second term on the CT AAUW Nominating Committee.

**Rosemary** is the current President of the Danbury Area Branch. She is a retired educator specializing in learning disabilities. She has both Bachelor's and Masters degrees from Central CT State University, as well as her Sixth Year Certificate from Southern CT State University. She is past state president of the Council of Special Children, past president of the Danbury Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa, an international teachers' organization.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Jeannette V. Phillips**, Nominating Committee Chair

Committee Members: **Paula Jean Yukna**  
**Betty Urban**  
**Stephanie Tercyak-Morgan**

