



PINELINES



The Monthly Newsletter of the AAUW - Medford Area Branch

www.aauwmedfordnj.com

AAUW's Mission

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research

President's Message

This Saturday is our book & author brunch at Medford Leas. We're looking forward to the charming author of *Lights Out in Paradise* and a lovely buffet complete with mimosas.

At our May dinner, we will be presenting our annual scholarship to Carol Dolan, of Mt. Laurel. See more about Carol in Mary's article below or in this week's Central Record.

We don't actually have a true "installation" to conduct this year, since we had an almost complete turnover of officers last year for the two year terms. There is one new role - many thanks to Bea Chawla for graciously volunteering for the Hospitality Chair starting next year. Thanks, Bea!

We have resurrected the meeting book sale, so bring in your used books to our meetings, starting with the May dinner. Books are \$1 each, helping to fund branch operations.

Thanks to Mary Strickler for volunteering a couple of May evenings to help the Girl Scout Stemmers program. Mary and I will help with activities designed to promote girls' interest in Math.

AAUW-Medford also has several volunteers (Fran Hahn, Rita Manno & Sylvia Teahan) who will participate with the League of Women Voters Running & Winning Workshop to be held at the Alice Paul Institute in the spring of 2012. Look for more info as we go forward.

Mary Ann Brookes

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, May 10, 7:00

Annual Installation and Scholarship Award Dinner – Winner Carol Dolan
Cranberry Hall, Medford

****Also, bring your used books to sell****

Tuesday, May 17, 7:30 pm

Lit Group – *American Wife* by Curtis Sittenfeld
Home of Lynne Poag

Occasions

If you know of a member who is celebrating an event or needs words of encouragement, or a word of thanks, please let Mary Ann or Tricia know so we can send a note or card.

Also, we'd like to include everyone on our birthday list, so please drop a note to either of us.

Birthday greetings

Three of our members are celebrating birthdays in May, Mary Switzer on the 25th, Carol Vahlstrom on the 28th, and Lynne Poag on the 30th. Please join with me in wishing them a wonderful day!

On a personal note, things are beginning to return back to normal. My dad was released from "house arrest" a couple of weeks ago, but has 6 more weeks of outpatient therapy. I hope to be able to make at least one of the meetings in May, if work doesn't interfere. Which is absolutely all I want to say about work. Hope you are enjoying spring, now that it finally seems to be here.

Tricia Reace

Lit Group

Lit Group will be meeting at 7:30PM on Tuesday, May 17th at the home of Lynn Poag in Shamong. Our selection for May is *American Wife* by Curtis Sittenfeld. *American Wife* is a novel about a young woman who falls for the well-to-do, fun-loving, Ivy League son of a political family and eventually becomes First Lady. (Sound familiar?) This fictional portrait of Laura Bush follows her life from childhood on and presents a sympathetic and realistic portrayal.

Please RSVP Lynn at 609-268-7034 to let her know you will be joining us.

Bea Chawla and Rose Mary Bland

Programs

We're hoping all our members will attend the May Installation Dinner on Tuesday, May 10, at Cranberry Hall.

We will be honoring our 2011 scholarship recipient, Carol Dolan, and enjoying a wonderful dinner.

Annual Installation Dinner

May 10, 7 PM at Cranberry Hall

Catered by Zallies Fresh Kitchen

Stuffed Mushrooms, Mini Beef Wellington, Toasted Baguettes with a variety of spreads, Salad and Artesian rolls, Chicken Marsala, Baked Ziti, Grilled Vegetables with Balsamic glaze on the side, Dolci Italiano assorted pastries, brownie tray, and sheet cake

Please mail \$25 per person **by May 2** to June Ramondetta, Treasurer, 119 Bracken Road, Medford, NJ 08055

Lynne & Dian

Scholarship & Fundraising

I am pleased to announce that we have chosen our scholarship winner. It was a tough choice amongst over a dozen excellent applicants. My thanks to Rita Manno, Fran Hahn, Mary Ann Brookes, Lynn Poag and June Ramondetta for their help in making this difficult decision.

Our winner's name is Carol Dolan, Mt. Laurel mother of six. She is a busy wife and mother who manages a job at Samaritan Hospice as well as her studies. She is also one of several students in her family planning for a grand graduation party next year! You all will have a chance to meet her at our May dinner. Please come and say hello.

At this writing the last fund-raising event of the season is just ahead. I am delighted to report that we have sold enough tickets to put us over the top with our financial goal for the year. In next month's newsletter I will have a complete financial report. At the moment not all the expenses associated with the Champagne Brunch have been reported. Thanks to all of you who have supported our efforts.

Mary Strickler

AAUW Ballots Are in the Mail!

Actually you have most likely already received that big white envelope containing your ballot and voter information.

Ballots and voter information guides for AAUW's first every-member election were mailed to all members on April 15. You must be a current member in good standing in the [AAUW member services database](#) in order to vote. [Online voting](#) begins May 1 and ends June 17 at 9 p.m. EDT. Paper ballots must be postmarked by May 31 at 11:59 p.m. EDT. See the [One Member, One Vote](#) website and the [election FAQs](#) for more information.



Membership

Rewards! Why do we seek them, and how do we receive them? Rewards come in many forms and fashions, and this year I feel truly "rewarded" by the fact that we have added many new members to our branch. My original goal was to add 5 new members during this AAUW season. As of April, 2011, we have added 9 new members this season!! Though our Medford Branch has gone through many changes over the years, we have been a resilient group. While many such organizations have seen a decline in their ranks, our branch can celebrate the fact that we have made an effort to attract new members and it certainly has been "rewarding!"

On that note, please join me in welcoming our very newest member, Marcia Shearer. Some of you may have met Marcia at our April general meeting. Marcia comes to us as a dual member from the Camden County branch where she is a board member. We hope to see Marcia at many more of our meetings and events in the future! Please introduce yourself and welcome her onboard.

As our season comes to a close for another year, I want to thank those members who have made an effort to help spread the word about AAUW and became Ambassadors for our Medford branch. If you know of friends, relatives, neighbors or colleagues who may be interested in attending a meeting or joining, please send their name along to me so that I may contact them.

Thanks for all you do for Medford AAUW branch!

Sylvia Somers

~ In the Spotlight ~

This month I am concluding the season with the membership "spotlight" sharply focused on two members: [Lorraine Rocco](#), one of our new and very interesting members, and [Rita Manno](#), our Public Relations Chair. Rita does a marvelous job of shining the "spotlight" on our branch and its activities throughout the year--I thought it was time to shine the light on her!! Please join me in

welcoming Lorraine to our branch, and also please let Rita know you appreciate her work!

Lorraine Rocco

Along with all the lovely flowers, Spring has also brought us another new member -- Lorraine Rocco! As a young woman, Lorraine admits that one of her fondest desires was to join AAUW!! However, at the time she had completed only one year of college. Just a few years later when her two children were in school, she began to work on completing her degree, taking classes part-time at night and on weekends at Glassboro State College, now known as Rowan University. It took 10 years of hard work and persistence, but she managed to complete her Bachelor of Arts degree, after which she taught elementary school in Maple Shade for 17 years. Her interest in writing led her to enroll in classes at Villanova and Northeastern University, but completing her Master's degree remained only a wish.

During the mid-1980's Lorraine wrote human interest articles for several local papers, including the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Sadly, while involved in writing her first novel, her husband passed away in 1999. Putting aside the unfinished novel, she authored a non-fiction book entitled, *The Years Gone By - - a "yearly snapshot of the people, places and things that captured the public's attention from 1950 - 2000,"* which was published in 2007.

Not to be deterred from completing her original project, she finished her first novel, *Secrets of the Heart*, a family saga set on Long Beach Island, which was published in 2009. Since then, Lorraine has made a Power Point presentation for each book, and for the last 2 years she has been busy presenting these to nursing homes, retirement communities, and women's groups both in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. I'm sure many of us would be interested in her presentations!

And, this year, Lorraine has finally fulfilled her long-time dream of becoming a member of AAUW, and we are incredibly lucky that she chosen our branch. Please join me in wishing Lorraine a very warm welcome to our branch!

Rita Manno

In the Right Place at the Right Time

Rita Manno has stumbled into opportunities going well back to college days.

She earned her undergraduate degree in English at Canisius College in Buffalo and was fortunate to get an invitation to study at the University of Exeter in England. She went on to the University of Wisconsin, Madison, for her M.A. in English and then off to teach in a community college in Boston.

It didn't take long to realize that she was not made to be up in front of students who in many cases were older than she was. A very short teaching career. But that was good. With no job, she was free to follow an always there but sometimes hidden passion: journalism and writing. Moving to New Jersey with her husband Don, a lawyer in Cherry Hill, opportunities opened up at several regional papers, including the Courier-Post. Inspired by the iconic movie, *All the Presidents Men*, Rita spent the 1980s as a general assignment reporter, then a political reporter and then editor.

Out of nowhere came an opportunity to be part of the administration of the first woman Governor in New Jersey. Despite her love for journalism, the chance to be press secretary to Governor Christie Whitman was too powerful to ignore. Rita spent two years there and then four more as communications director for the state Commissioner of Health. Never intending to be a long term state worker, Rita left to join a brand marketing agency, Princeton Partners, as VP of public relations in 2001. After years of a three-hour round trip commute, she decided to open up a Public Relations business in her home office in 2007.

The quality of life decision proved to be the right one. It opened up time to become involved in the community, including AAUW and NJAWBO, the women's business owners' organization. She also now writes feature articles for local papers. Today, Rita lives with husband Don and 10-month-old Cleo, a 90-pound Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, in the Tamarac section of Medford. They could not be more proud of their daughters - Rebecca, a physician at Johns Hopkins University

in Baltimore and Kimberly, a health and business consultant in Washington. Two granddaughters, Cici, 5 and Aliza, almost 4, give Rita and Don great joy and a deep desire to make the world better for them.

Sylvia Somers

Public Policy

Tax Rate Has Declined for Richest Americans

As debate continues over the best ways to tackle deficit reduction, much of the focus has been on [cutting spending](#) rather than increasing revenue. However, President Obama said last week that he intends to allow existing tax breaks for the wealthy to expire, bringing in an additional \$1 trillion over the next 12 years.

Over the past few decades, Americans in the highest income bracket have paid [fewer taxes](#) over time, dramatically reducing the money taken in by the federal government. The average federal income tax rate for the 400 highest adjusted gross incomes in the US has declined from 26 percent in 1992 all the way to 17 percent today. Thanks to excessive tax breaks, almost half of all households will pay no federal income taxes at all, according to the Tax Policy Center.

House Leaders Under Scrutiny for Spending Amidst Budget Cuts

After weeks of playing chicken with who can cut the most from the U.S. budget, House leaders have approved a [\\$500,000](#) contract (at \$520 per hour) to defend the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act. The move comes in reaction to the president's instruction for the Department of Justice not to defend a key part of the 1996 law. Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) has proposed taking funds from the Justice Department's budget to [neutralize](#) the "burden of defending DOMA."

AAUW [believes](#) that discrimination against any class of persons has no place in our country. Unless and until LGBT persons are able to enjoy the same rights and freedoms as their heterosexual counterparts, America's promise of equal justice under law will remain unfulfilled.

Lynne Poag



2010/11 Executive Board

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Tina Wetterau

Scholarships

Mary Strickler

Literature Group

Rose Mary Bland

Bea Chawla

Hospitality

Rotating Members

Public Relations

Rita Manno

Newsletter Coordinator

Mary Ann Brookes

[See 2011 AAUW Dues memo and form next page](#)



2011 AAUW Dues

I am happy to report that our dues are staying the same as last year. Our annual dues will remain at \$65.00 (\$49 for national, \$10 for state and \$6 for our local branch).

The AAUW dues are composed of three elements: They are national, state and local as shown below. We are happy to report that our dues for the 2011-2012 year will remain the same as last year.

Dues:

National	\$49.00
State	\$10.00
Local	\$ 6.00

<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$65.00</u>
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Since national and state dues are due in August, on July 31st we will be having a drawing to select the name of one lucky "paid-up" member and will refund her LOCAL dues.

You will be able to pay in person at the Author Brunch on April 30th or at our last meeting in May (thus saving postage for you as well as the branch.) Of course, if you prefer to mail in your payment, you can send it to:

June Ramondetta, Treasurer, 119 Bracken Road, Medford, NJ 08055

Thank you in advance and GOOD LUCK in the drawing!

June Ramondetta



NAME: _____ BIRTHDAY _____ (Day and month only)

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Email address: _____

Please check if you are a life member: _____

If you are a dual member with another branch, please indicate the branch name: _____

**AAUW-Medford Area Branch
May 2011**

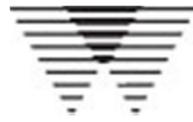


*The **American Association of University Women** promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. In principle and practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership.*

*The **AAUW Educational Foundation** provides funds to advance education, research and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change.*

*The **AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund** provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.*



 AAUW

The logo for the American Association of University Women (AAUW), consisting of a stylized triangle of horizontal lines to the left of the letters "AAUW" in a serif font.

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