



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

Thanks so much to Sylvia Teahan, who has graciously offered to serve as our VP of Membership! Her intelligence, humor and good sense will be a great addition to our Executive Board.

This month's meeting looks to be a stimulating one, with a discussion about government credibility and the public's confidence in our government. Who of us has not been concerned, regardless of party or ideology, with what has been going on, or perhaps not getting done, in our capitols throughout the nation?

Fran Hahn, who is leading our branch's participation in the Running and Winning workshop being driven by the NJ League of Women Voters, reports that the preliminary planning is underway for the event to be held next spring. Please contact me or Fran if you would like to get involved. It will be great to help these young women to be more aware of, and perhaps interested in joining, the political process.

Lit Group will be meeting on Wednesday instead of Tuesday this month due to scheduling conflicts, but we think Major Pettigrew will not mind.

Please remember to bring your used books to the October meeting for sale at the Farmers' Market. See Mary's Fundraising article for details.

I hope to see many of you, along with guests, on October 11 at Cranberry Hall.

Mary Ann Brookes

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, October 11, 7:30

General Meeting – Speaker Dr. James Garnett, professor of public policy at Rutgers-Camden

Theme: Government credibility and public confidence in government

Cranberry Hall, Medford

Wednesday, October 19, 7:30 pm

Lit Group – Major Pettigrew's Last Stand, by Helen Simonson

Home of Sylvia Teahan

Occasions

Birthday greetings

We have a plethora of October birthdays to celebrate!

Please join me in extending best wishes to:

Elizabeth D'Andrea	9th
Ruth Schneider	13th
Pat Spera	16th
Roberta Hyatt	19th
Mary Albee	25th
Nancy Sauer	27th

If you haven't shared your birthday yet, please send it along so we can celebrate you, too.

And please continue to let me or Mary Ann know if any members need a note of encouragement, a card of thanks, congratulations.

Tricia Reace

Lit Group

Our next lit group meeting will be on **Wednesday**, October 19th, 7:30PM at the home of Sylvia Teahan. Please note that the 19th is a Wednesday, the day after our usual meeting night.

Our October selection is a charming first novel, *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand*, by Helen Simonson.

In this comedy of manners, Major Pettigrew tries to prevent his relatives from selling a pair of valuable hunting rifles which are family heirlooms. His Pakistani neighbor, widow Jasmina Ali, proves to be an unexpected ally and a great consolation. Publishers Weekly calls it: "a vastly enjoyable traipse through the English countryside and the long-held traditions of the British aristocracy."

Call Sylvia at 609-953-1477 to RSVP and for directions.

For Women Online

For some valuable insight and tips for professional women at work, see the article:

[6 Workplace Skills Women Can Learn From Men](#)

Note from the Treasurer's Desk

If you haven't already done so, please send your dues payment or bring it to the meeting. Thanks!

June

Programs

Dr. James Garnett, professor of public policy at Rutgers-Camden

Theme: Government credibility and public confidence in government

"Public trust in government is at an all-time low, and the sight of elected officials sealing themselves off is not going to help increase it," said William Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and cofounder of the nonprofit group promoting bipartisan cooperation in government. He made this statement in September after noting that only 56 percent of U.S. House members held open town halls during the August Congressional recess. There was a decline of about 159 meetings from last summer--659 in 2009 to about 500 this summer.

A recent Gallup Poll showed that 87 percent of American voters disapproved of Congress and the gridlock that has become commonplace in its chambers.

James Garnett, professor of public policy at Rutgers-Camden and our guest speaker for the October 11 meeting, will address these issues and more as he engages us in discussions of government credibility and public confidence in government (or the lack thereof!).

Please join us for an insightful exploration of this aspect of civic engagement and its importance in maintaining our representative democracy.

Lynne Poag and Dian Hatrick

Public Policy

Note to members of Medford Area AAUW Branch: All past and present articles in this column are the expressed views of AAUW National. They are drawn directly from AAUW Washington Update, the national on-line newsletter.

Help Keep the Promises of Social Security

Here at AAUW, we think of Social Security as a promise, a commitment that we as Americans make to care for one another across the generations. Although Social Security is among our nation's best and most efficiently-run anti-poverty programs, it's particularly critical for elderly women -- more than half of whom would fall into poverty without it. So, we are interested when good ideas come along aimed at strengthening and improving Social Security.

Well, a new bill recently introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) presents us with a great idea: We can close Social Security's funding gap by lifting the cap on payroll taxes for Social Security purposes.

If it sounds complex, it's not. Right now, 94 percent of Americans pay into Social Security on the basis of their whole salary -- but the wealthiest 6 percent do not. Because the cap for individual income stands at \$106,800, someone who makes that much pays exactly the same amount into Social Security as does a millionaire or a billionaire.

The Keeping Our Social Security Promises Act (S. 1558) would gradually lift the cap so that by 2033, the wealthiest 6 percent of Americans will be on equal footing with everyone else. This plan would extend the full solvency of Social Security for the next 75 years, ensuring that the program continues to help provide retirement security for future generations.

Take Action! Ask your Senators to become a cosponsor of the Keeping Our Social Security Promises Act (S. 1558). You can send a message by visiting [AAUW Two Minute Activist](#).

Women and Children Hit Hard by Increased Poverty Rates

The Census Bureau, in its annual report released on Tuesday, reported that 2010 saw a decline in median household income and the highest increase in the poverty rate since 1993. The number of individuals in poverty rose to 15.1 percent from 14.3 percent in 2009, while the number of families living below the poverty line increased to 9.2 million, up from 8.8 million in 2009.

Increased poverty rates particularly affect women and children; in 2009 adult women were 32 percent more likely to be poor than adult men, with the poverty rate for single mothers reaching its highest rate (38.5 percent) since 1998. 2010 saw women lose health insurance at the highest rate in more than a decade and the rate of impoverished children reach 22 percent.

As Congress reviews President Obama's American Jobs Act in the coming weeks, AAUW strongly encourages Congress to focus on sensible methods for decreasing poverty and unemployment among women and children. This is a vital issue for all Americans, but AAUW believes this is particularly important to women, who are victims of economic insecurity and wage discrimination.

Lynne Poag

Newsletter Note

You may notice a difference in this month's newsletter. Due to technical difficulties, I had to switch to another software program, but tried to stay close to the familiar format. As always, any suggestions are welcome!

Don't forget, you can always see back issues on our website.

*Thanks,
Mary Ann Brookes*

Scholarship & Fundraising

Book Sale

Saturday, October 15th at the Medford Lakes Farmer's Market
8:30 am to 12:30 pm

What we need from you!

- Books to sell (no textbooks, please)
- Customers to buy
- A few more volunteers to help that day

To donate your books, you may bring them to the Oct 11th meeting or call me at (609)267-1665 and I will arrange to pick them up.

Book & Author Brunch

And our next fund-raiser, our second annual Book and Author Champagne Brunch, will be held at Medford Leas on Saturday, February 11th. Our author for the occasion has a familiar name. She is Dr. Lois Ramondetta, June's daughter. She will be coming in from Houston to talk to us about her book, *The Light Within*. More details on this later, but mark your calendars now. You won't want to miss this.

What we need from you!

- Names and addresses of friends, family, co-workers, anyone to whom you think we should send an invitation. We will also welcome mailing lists from other organizations you belong to. You can assure these folks that we will not use their list for anything other than these invitations.

You can bring these names and addresses to the Oct 11th meeting (along with your books!) or forward them electronically to Sylvia Teahan and sylbear2@aol.com. Please ensure that hand-written lists are clearly legible – printing would be ideal.

Thanks in advance,
Mary Strickler

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AAUW-Medford Area Branch



*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.*



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