



NYS District 1

# Buffalo Branch Advocate

February 2008  
<http://aauw.buffalo.edu>  
716-559-3037



## Freedom Crossing The Underground Railroad in Greater Niagara

at the Castellani Art Museum  
of Niagara University

### AAUW Buffalo Branch February Program: Exploring the Underground Railroad

Saturday, February 9, 2008 at 11:00 a.m.  
Special Guided Tour of "Freedom Crossing:  
The Underground Railroad in Greater Niagara"  
Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University  
\$3 per person

*Join us for an optional lunch after the tour  
at Apple Granny's, 433 Center Street in Lewiston.*

(In case of bad weather, alternate date is February 16, 2008)

*"When I found I had crossed that line I looked at my hands to see if I was  
the same person. There was such a glory over everything...and I felt as if I was in  
Heaven."*

*Harriet Tubman*

#### Highlights:

- Pg 1 - February Meeting
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The deadline for each issue is the 10th of the previous month. Articles received after that will not appear in the next issue.

Please send articles to Betty Preble via e-mail:

**betty.preble@gmail.com**

Please also contact her if you would like to receive the *Buffalo Branch Advocate* via e-mail.

Learn about the inspiring local history of the Underground Railroad on Saturday, February 9, 2008 with a special guided tour of "Freedom Crossing: The Underground Railroad in Greater Niagara," at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University. Our tour guide will be Denise Easterling, owner of Underground Railroad Tours by Denise, who will give us a dramatic accounting of the many people who risked their lives to cross the treacherous Niagara River to freedom in Canada. Appearing in period costume as "Queenie Rivers," Ms Easterling will bring this compelling history to life. She has done extensive research on the Underground Railroad in Western New York, most recently serving as an interpreter at Murphy Orchards in Newfane. Denise was a research consultant working with the Castellani Art Museum during the planning and creation of "Freedom Crossing."

**Freedom Crossing: The Underground Railroad in Greater Niagara** is part of the New York State Heritage Trails initiative. The regional interpretive center, open since September 2006, has attracted hundreds of visitors from Western New York and Canada, as well as school groups and community organizations.

The Niagara River was often the last crossing for people escaping slavery in America. From the early 1800s until the end of the Civil War in 1865, thousands of people passed through western New York as they traveled to freedom in Canada. The Underground Railroad, a secret network of people who assisted those escaping slavery by providing money, food, clothing, and temporary shelter, made this journey possible. The unique geography of the Niagara region, the people who risked their lives for freedom, and the lasting heritage of their ancestors are intertwined in the story of the Underground Railroad in the Greater Niagara region.

**More information and registration form on page 7.**

# President's Message

I recently purchased a new cell phone. Now, for many of you, this may seem to be a fairly mundane activity. However, it was a decision for me-- one that I arrived at after hearing my good friend tell me that my phone was ancient. (That good friend was Judith Anderson, by the way. You all can ask Judith about my dinosaur at the May luncheon.) Another friend of mine insists that my cell phone certainly must have been one of the first-- ever. Clearly, that's not the case, so those arguments weren't what persuaded me. I actually decided on a new phone because I needed a new battery-- and, admittedly, the battery was probably worth more than my cell phone.

I really don't use a cell phone a lot-- which you know if you've ever called the number. I rarely check the voice mail. I really can't understand why I'd routinely need to talk at dinnertime or why I'd need something attached to my ear running through the airport. I don't really need to take pictures, to send e-mail, or wash dishes by phone. (Okay I made that up!) Really, I only want to send and receive a phone call or two. (Some are probably wondering whether I really am technologically fit to chair *Tech Savvy* next month!)

There is a point to this little "coming of age" story in 2008 cell phone land: The day after I placed the order for my new phone, I learned that it was already *obsolete*.

I was talking with two co-workers about their children's Christmas gifts. One co-worker commented

about the meteoric rise of the new *iPhone*, and the fact that "nobody wanted *last year's top product*." (It wasn't a great time to mention that somebody just did buy last year's top product!)

Well, it's a good thing that I'm not tech-crazy, or I would have a complex by now. As I sit here cell-phone challenged, I'm just glad some things are timeless.

It seems to me that February is a great month to turn our thoughts to that which is timeless and is not subject to the whims of today's populace: RESPECT, EQUALITY, OPPORTUNITY, COMMON GROUND, HOPE. These are principles and ideals that do not change with time.

During this month's reflections of my African-American ancestors and their many contributions, I am happy that regardless of our personal genealogies, we can *all* join the celebrations as we focus on those ideals that know no boundaries of race, gender, or other factors. Isn't it great to know that some things are just timeless?

Looking forward to seeing you at The Castellani in February,

*Tamara*



## Board Meeting Highlights

### November -

A report was given about the programs. Teresa Gessner passed out a report on Public Policy and urged us to contact our local representatives.

### Educational Accounts and Charitable Projects

The budget was passed as presented by Leona Barback. We are still looking for a site for next year's Book Sale.

### December -

The upcoming programs as well as December programs were discussed. We need to think about nominations for emerging leader. \$100 was donated to the Museum of Disability history.

### Education Accounts and Charitable Projects

All applications and packets have gone out to various schools for the Velma Cobb Scholarship.

THE BUFFALO BRANCH ADVOCATE is published monthly as a bulletin of events for members and as an update on AAUW issues and programs.

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For prospective or new member questions, contact VP Membership Recruitment, Bev Schwiegerling. (schwieg@roadrunner.com, 652-7182)

For renewal questions, contact VP Membership

Retention,

Kristin Bojanowski (kaybee74@gmail.com, 873-7387) or Michelle Norris (mnorris@mtb.com, 877-5484)

AAUW *advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.*

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## Diversity Committee - ¡Adelante!

The ¡Adelante! Book of the Month Club is a component of AAUW's diversity outreach program. It is designed to get members thinking about issues of social justice. In honor of Black History Month, the Diversity Committee encourages members to read the February Book Selection, *Native Guard* by Natasha Trethewey (2007 Pulitzer Prize winner for Poetry).

Growing up in the Deep South, Natasha Trethewey was never told that in her hometown of Gulfport, Mississippi, black soldiers had played a pivotal role in the Civil War. Off the coast, on Ship Island, stood a fort that had once been a Union prison housing Confederate captives. Protecting the fort was the second regiment of the Louisiana Native Guards — one of the Union's first official black units. Trethewey's new book of poems pays homage to the soldiers who served and whose voices have echoed through her own life.

The title poem imagines the life of a former slave stationed at the fort, who is charged with writing letters home for the illiterate or invalid POWs and his fellow soldiers. Just as he becomes the guard of Ship Island's memory, so Trethewey recalls her own childhood as the daughter of a black woman and a white man. Her parents' marriage was still illegal in 1966 Mississippi. The racial legacy of the Civil War echoes through elegiac poems that honor her own mother and the forgotten history of her native South. *Native Guard* is haunted by the intersection of national and personal experience.

*Sylvia Volk & Nancy Langer*



## AAUW-NYS Convention Reminder



Keep the dates in mind - April 25-27, 2008. Many details next month!



1. Anyone interested in helping with the **March 8 International Women's Day Dinner** should contact Lillis McLean, (873-7467 or [lillismclean@hotmail.com](mailto:lillismclean@hotmail.com)) or Judy Weidemann, (655-3649 or [JWeide7170@aol.com](mailto:JWeide7170@aol.com)).
2. **BookSale** assistance is always needed. Please see pg 5.
3. **Tech Savvy 3** is coming up on March 15 and many hands are needed, both before and the day of the event! Contact Tamara Brown, 649-9871 or [TBforAAUW@cs.com](mailto:TBforAAUW@cs.com).
4. Our branch historian would like **documentation on last year's programs** - contact Donna Fitzgerald, 837-6058.
5. The **Transitions** Conference - Sat, April 12 - needs workers. Please contact Sandra Bush, 867-3631 or [swbush@email.com](mailto:swbush@email.com).
6. Michele Maddox, our College/University Relations Director, is trying to recruit **college/university affiliate AAUW members**. Contact her, 882-2925 or [maddoxm@dyc.edu](mailto:maddoxm@dyc.edu).
7. **AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING OPPORTUNITY**

The after-school ENERGY Tutoring Program, serving 20 students in grades 2-6 Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons, is looking for tutors. Can you give 90 minutes on a Tuesday or Wednesday to benefit students from many different countries? Tutoring greatly benefits the students and can be a wonderful source of satisfaction for you, especially if you choose to come at 4:15 pm and share a supper with the students.

This program takes place during 4:45-6:15pm at Westminster Church, 724 Delaware Ave., Buffalo (between North and Summer Sts.) If interested in additional information and scheduling a "look-see", contact the ENERGY Director Kathy Vitagliano at 884-9437, ext. 122. *Sylvia Volk, Tutor*

## Buffalo Branch Study/Interest Groups - Schedule for the Month

Study groups are an excellent way to form friendships, network, educate and have fun. If you are interested in joining any of the groups below, please see the "contact" person associated with that group. For further information please contact Yvonne Curry, study group coordinator: 716-553-3925 - von104@sprynet.com.

### Group: American Biographies

When: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 at 1:30 pm

Where: Eggertsville Library, 4622 Main St., Snyder - reserved room

Book: *Mothers of Invention*, by Drew Gilpin Faust. Dr. Faust, author of this social history of women in the confederacy is the new president of Harvard and a well recognized historian. Reviewer Lillis McLean.

Coming up -

March 11: any biography of Margaret Sanger (Marion Reed's *Her Life in Her Work*, Madeline Gray's *Margaret Sanger, A Biography of the Champion of Birth Control*, Ellen Chesler's *Woman of Valor: Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement in America*) - reviewer Sue Oliver

April 8: *The Nine*, by Jeffrey Toobin - reviewer Myra Menti

Contact: **Jean Sylvester**: 838-6780

Contact: **Lillis McLean**: 873-7467

### Group: Clueless Mystery Book Club

When: Thursday, February 27, 2008 at 5:30 pm

Where: Friendly's 4350 Maple Road, Amherst

Book: *The Escher Twist*, by Jane Langton

Contact: **Stacey Johnson**: 885-2486 or jhnsn@buffalo.edu

### Group: Current Events

When: Thursday, February 7, 2008 at 5:30 pm

Where: Unitarian Universalist Church, Main Street, east of Youngs Road

Topic: State and local issues

Contact: **Suzanne Grossman**: 837-8769

### Group: Dinner by the Book

When: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at 5:30 pm

Where: Plaka Restaurant, 2904 Delaware Ave, Kenmore

Facilitator: Leona Barback

Discussion Leaders: Margaret Fischer & Leona Barback

Book: *The Namesake*, by Jhumpa Lahiri

Contact: **Marilyn Carmichael**: 875-6817

### Group: Green Thumbs Garden Study

When: Thursday, February 14, 2008 at 7:00 pm

Where: Anna M. Reinstein Memorial Library, 2580

Harlem Rd, Cheektowaga, across from St. Joseph Hospital

Topic: Growing Degree Days relating to disease/pest management

Contact: **Janet Fowler**: 884-8698 or Janalanf@aol.com

### Group: Gourmet Food Interest Group

When: Saturday, February 23, 2008 at 10:30 am

Where: The Globe Market, 762 Elmwood Avenue (between Breckenridge and Auburn), Buffalo, NY 14222

RSVP (for head-count only) to Sylvia at sylviafolk.aauw@yahoo.com or 881-1424 by Feb 16.

Join us for a private AAUW tour of the market and their specialty items and support the regional "Locavore Movement." The Globe Market is a specialty food shop featuring artisan cheeses and a retail section for gift baskets and specialty items from all over plus an eat-in café and a catering operation.

Contact: **Sylvia Volk**, 881-1424 or sylviafolk.aauw@yahoo.com

### Group: Knitting Group

When: Thursday, February 28, 2008 at 2 pm

Where: Wegman's - Sheridan Drive @ International Drive and Evans Road

Topic: Bring your knitting!!!

Contact: **Karen Howard** 480-3652 or kkhoward@roadrunner.com



## STUDY and ACTION:

**Education and Equity** will meet on Tuesday February 5, 2008 at The Plaka Restaurant, 2904 Delaware Ave, Kenmore at 6 pm. Our topic is **The Challenge of Local Charter Schools**. Lenore Tetkowski will present the results from the work that the League of Women Voters conducted on Charter Schools. Ms. Tetkowski has been, and still is, a leader in the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara. As Chair of LWV's Charter Schools Monitoring Committee since 2000, she has "visited most of the local

charter schools; chaired panels on Charter Schools open to the public"; interviewed many officials. "After years of monitoring our local charter schools as they began to open, our Buffalo committee convinced the New York State League to undertake a statewide study, which culminated in last year's consensus. Now we continue to be informed and can take action when appropriate." We encourage you to attend this informative session. Please RSVP Stacey Johnson 885-2486.

## HOW TO PREVENT IDENTITY THEFT Buffalo Branch Meeting, April 8, 2008

“Few crimes have made people more anxious more quickly as the sudden onslaught of identity theft. It’s in the newspapers every day and on the news every night. People are worried that someone’s going to run up charges on their credit cards or fleece their bank accounts while their backs are turned. And there’s some reason to worry: All a thief has to do is steal something as basic as a Social Security number to become a real public enemy. And while these crimes are relatively easy to commit, investigating and prosecuting them are complex and time-consuming matters. So it’s up to all of us to be identity-smart and make sure we keep this crime from spreading. It’s up to all of us to prevent identity theft.” *Al Lenhardt, president and CEO, National Crime Prevention Council*

Kim M. Baglio, Senior Special Agent, United States Secret Service coordinates the Identity Theft Task Force with the US Attorney’s Office in the Western District of NY. She is a long-standing member of the International Association of Financial Crimes Investigators and is the current President of the WNY Chapter. Ms. Baglio conducts numerous public education trainings throughout the year to various community groups and to area banks, credit unions and casinos regarding Identity Fraud/Theft and Genuine/Counterfeit Currency.

On April 8, 2008, from 6:30 to 8:30PM, at Christ United Methodist Church, 350 Saratoga corner Harlem, Snyder NY, Kim will address a meeting on strategies to protect your identity from being stolen. Bring your concerns and questions so all of us can learn ways to deal with this destructive crime. Registration is \$15.00 by March 30, 2008 - a light (catered) meal will be served. For questions, call Diane Silvestro, 631-3349 or [belvoir6@hotmail.com](mailto:belvoir6@hotmail.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Number \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check payable to: AAUW – Buffalo Branch

**Deadline: March 30, 2008** Mail to: AAUW c/o Diane Silvestro, 6 Belvoir Road, Amherst NY 14221



## Book Sale Corner

### Book Sale Job Postings

**Needed: Person to assist with publicity.** No experience necessary. Help provided. Be a part of this dynamic community endeavor!

**Needed: Member to assist treasurer** during the Book Sale; handle large sums of money.

Contact: Judy Clare, 633-1294 or Pat Baker 634-6640

### BOOK SALE NEWS

During the holiday meeting, the Book Sale Committee was pleased to present Gilda's Club with an old issue of Life Magazine featuring Gilda Radner on the cover. Only having one archival copy, they were happy to receive a second copy for members to browse.



Through the efforts of our Honorary Chair, **Jacquie Walker, Channel 4 is featuring our Book Sale on its web site: [www.wivb.com](http://www.wivb.com).** If you have a photo from a previous book sale, it can be posted on their site also. Contact Judy Clare at [clare273@cs.com](mailto:clare273@cs.com)

Sorting continues Tuesday mornings at the Kensington-Bailey site. Starting Feb. 2nd we will also sort Saturday mornings. Call Pat Baker, 634-6640, if you will work on Saturdays.



**The American Association of University Women  
Buffalo Branch**

Presents

The Seventh Annual International Women’s Day Celebration and Discussion

**Modern India: Sacred Cows and High Tech Businesses**

*As a country how does India reconcile its vastly disparate realities?  
More than an economic paradigm, it is a cultural one.  
True equity would require a cultural change. Can this be done?*



Samuel’s Grande Manor

8750 Main Street

Clarence, New York

Saturday, March 8, 2008, 6 p.m.

The speaker will be: **Geeta Desai**

Ms Desai is an organizational development consultant who has worked in Asia and the United States. She has been responsible for creating organizational systems including management information and technology support to help businesses and non-profits grow.

She is a women’s advocate and has given a number of papers on the status of women. She specializes in speaking engagements to enhance dialogue on women’s equity here and abroad.

The meeting is open to the public and we encourage you to bring guests and friends.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \$35/person (Checks made payable to AAUW/EF)

Dinner Choices:

Chicken Samuel \_\_\_\_\_ Stuffed Sole \_\_\_\_\_ Gourmet Pasta with Vegetables \_\_\_\_\_

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

RESERVATIONS and CHECKS TO:  
**Judy Weidemann** (655-3649) or [JWeide7170@aol.com](mailto:JWeide7170@aol.com)  
 21 Nye Hill Road, East Aurora, New York 14052 by March 1, 2008

Please indicate any special needs: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a ride to the meeting - please circle → Yes No

## ***The Underground Railroad was HERE! Did you know...?***

- Because of the Greater Niagara Region's importance as a gateway to freedom, many abolitionists and conductors of national prominence were active here. Harriet Tubman led escaping slaves, including members of her own family, across the Suspension Bridge from Niagara Falls, New York to freedom in Canada.
- Escaping slaves faced an arduous journey, sometimes traveling thousands of miles to the North. They traveled mainly at night—on foot, in wagons, or by train or boat. Some actually were shipped in boxes as freight. Others used disguise, sometimes changing their gender, or even their race, to elude bounty hunters.
- The Fugitive Slave Act was signed into law by President Millard Fillmore, who had served as a Congressman for the city of Buffalo. This new federal law sanctioned the arrest of escaped slaves who had formerly been safe in "free states." During the early 1800s, many escapees made their way to Ontario, Canada, where an Anti-Slavery Act had been signed in 1793. Now Canada became even more important as a final refuge.
- Upstate New York became a hotbed of Underground Railroad activity as escaping slaves made their way to crossing points along the Niagara River. In Buffalo, Niagara Falls, and Lewiston, the river narrows to less than a half-mile journey to the shores of Canada.
- Hundreds of free African Americans were employed to provide the luxurious services offered by the renowned Niagara Falls Cataract House to wealthy tourists. Several nineteenth century newspaper accounts tell of the staff's daring efforts to aid enslaved people who traveled to the hotel as personal servants for their masters.

Please meet at the **Castellani Art Museum at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 9, 2008**. The tour will commence at about 11:15 a.m. After the tour, those who would like to stay for lunch will proceed to Apple Granny's, 433 Center Street in Lewiston, where a reservation has been made. We will order off the menu and have separate checks. If there is a snowstorm, we will reschedule the tour for Saturday, February 16. Call Susan before 9:30 a.m. on February 9<sup>th</sup> to see if the tour has been postponed.

The Castellani Art Museum is situated in the center of the Niagara University campus. **From Buffalo:** Take I-190 North to Exit 25 A (Lewiston). Turn left onto Route 265 N and continue 0.8 miles to the second traffic light. Turn left onto Route 104 W. The entrance of Niagara University is on the left immediately beyond the NYS Power Authority overhead walkway. Look for the large marble building in the center of the campus.

**Reservation form: Guided Tour**  
**"Freedom Crossing: The Underground Railroad in Greater Niagara"**  
**at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please indicate any special needs or whether you need assistance with transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

I will attend the tour (\$3 per person check, payable to AAUW Buffalo Branch is enclosed)

I would like to go to lunch at Apple Granny's after the tour (this is for a head count only)

**Mail to: Susan Clements, 285 LaSalle Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14215**

or you can reserve by phone, 835-1738 or email ([susanjclements@aol.com](mailto:susanjclements@aol.com)) and pay at the door (you must still make a reservation even if paying at the door!). **Deadline February 6.**

*In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class. AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research .*



*AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.*

*The AAUW LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.*

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

**Tues, Feb 5 - VOTE! ☒**

**Tues, Feb 5, 6pm** - Education & Equity (see pg 4)

**Wed, Feb 6** - National Girls and Women in Sports Day

**Wed, Feb 6, 5:30 pm** - Board Meeting, United Way

**Sat, Feb 9, 11am** - Branch Program at Niagara University's Castellani Gallery - see pgs 1& 7

**Sat, Mar 8, 6pm** - International Women's Day Dinner at Samuel's Grande Manor - details pg 6

**Sat, Mar 15** - Tech Savvy 3 at UB

**Sat, Mar 29** - Sister to Sister at Buffalo State

**Tues, Apr 8** - Branch Program - details pg 5

**Sat, Apr 12** - Transitions Conference at the Educational Opportunity Center

**Fri-Sun, Apr 25-27** - AAUW-NYS Convention at Cooperstown, NY

This newsletter was delivered to the William Street Post Office, Buffalo, NY on January 22, 2008.  
Moving? Please contact Freddie Cheek, 716-835-6945.



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Projects AAUW  
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