

January 2021

NYS District 1

<https://aauwbuffalo.org>

Vol. CXXIX No. 5



Happy
New Year
2021

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February ADVOCATE

The deadline for each issue of the Advocate is the 10th of the previous month. Submit articles to the editor:

newsletter@aauwbuffalo.org via email by January 10. Please be sure to put "AAUW Buffalo Advocate" in the subject line.



January—The People Who Built Buffalo!

Join us on Zoom Tuesday, January 12, at 7:00 p.m. for
MOVERS AND SHAKERS: Buffalo Gals Who Made a Difference!

Speaker Sandy Starks will present a cross section of people from Buffalo's past, drawn from her experience as a tour guide and later, Interpretive Program director at Forest Lawn Cemetery. Her inclusion of famous contemporary Buffalonians and authors will have us nodding our heads in agreement as we relate to these women.



Join us!

To register, please RSVP to Diane O'Brien at obnfam@roadrunner.com by January 6. The Zoom information will be sent to those who sign up.

And plan ahead for February!

Join us on Monday, February 15 at 6:00 p.m. for a Zoom presentation by Sonya Ealey, recently retired U.S. Border Patrol agent and recruiter. Ms. Ealey will discuss her career as a border-patrol agent, as well as being female in a male-dominated profession.

Contact Lynne Rapin at lmrapin@gmail.com no later than Wednesday, February 10 for sign-in information.

Did you miss our fall programs?

In November we co-sponsored the League of Women Voters program "So We Voted...Now What?" The program was recorded and is now online. The link is on our website:

[aauwbuffalo.org/programs & meetings/branch-programs](https://aauwbuffalo.org/programs%20&%20meetings/branch-programs)

The December program celebrating Buffalo AAUW's history was also recorded and is available on that same page.

THE BUFFALO BRANCH ADVOCATE

is published monthly, September to June, as a bulletin of events for members and as an update on AAUW issues and programs.

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President:

Laurie Eikemeyer

Publisher/Editor:

Betty Preble (interim)

Assistant Editors:

Lee Cohen

Judy Weidemann

Barbara Carier

Laurie Eikemeyer

For prospective or new-member questions, contact:

Membership Recruitment VP
Melissa White,
recruitment@aauwbuffalo.org

Send address changes to:

Mary Crocker
375 Parkhurst Blvd.
Buffalo, NY 14223
database@aauwbuffalo.org

BRANCH BUSINESS

The nominating committee is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for office for the 2021-2023 biennium:

- President: Lilyen Mascellino
- VP, Membership Retention: Dr. Susan McClary
- Operations Treasurer: Mary Bashore
- Chamberlin/FFE Treasurer: Kathleen Santa Maria

Voting will take place in the spring, possibly virtually.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Laurie Eikemeyer

As we usher out 2020 and ring in the New Year, we are at once relieved this tumultuous year is over and possibly anxious about 2021. It has been a trying year, living in a global pandemic which redefined the way we live. COVID-19 has left us with scars. It has confined us to our homes and left us unable to live our lives as we once could. Some of us lost loved ones. We missed lunching with our friends, hugs from our family, and the freedom to meander through a store. But more than that is a sense of hopelessness or depression. How long will this go on? When will we be able to live our lives again?

As summer dawned, we were able to get out a bit. I enjoyed several outings with a small group of friends. But as the weather grew colder, we moved indoors, and COVID-19 infections began to rise. At this writing, one of my friends is in an ICU fighting for his life.

The virus did far more than curb our activities. I have been fortunate enough to remain working throughout the pandemic. We must remember that, as difficult as this time is for us, families are struggling to survive. Childcare has become unaffordable. Parents must do their best to keep themselves and their families safe while they continue to work, or they are unemployed and trying to find ways to provide basic necessities for their families. Small businesses are failing as COVID restrictions limit their business or close them altogether. And as if this isn't bad enough, we watch the daily circus in Washington as our government leaders try to decide how or if they want to provide relief to small business owners and unemployed citizens.

What does 2021 hold for us? On December 8, 2020, there were reports that Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine was rolling out in Britain. I read this news with great optimism. Relief from this insidious virus is on the horizon! According to Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the NIAID, 75% to 80% of the population must be vaccinated in order to achieve herd immunity and stop the spread of the virus. Will this be achieved? Many people are reluctant to be vaccinated. How will the CDC convince enough people to follow along? Dr. Fauci predicts that if enough people get the vaccine, we will be able to return to normal by the third quarter of 2021. This is good news, indeed!

Wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

MEMBER RECOGNITION

AAUW Buffalo Branch member Dr. Bonnie Flickinger has announced that there are now four generations of AAUW Life Members in her family! They include:

- Violet Gordon, great grandmother and branch member
- Dr. Bonnie Gordon Flickinger, grandmother and branch member
- Catherine Flickinger Schweitzer, mother
- Ashley Schweitzer, daughter.

Thank you for your support of AAUW!

WE WILL NEED HELP!

As you can read below, there are several branch scholarships with applications due in early January. Guess what—committees will be needed to go over those and choose the winners!



Working on one of these committees is one of the most rewarding experiences you can enjoy in AAUW. It brings a new faith in our next generation. We know that we will probably not be able to meet in person as committees, but our chairs will be working on ways to converse and connect safely.

If you'd like to join in the fun, please contact either the scholarship director, Rosaleen Nogle (rnogle@buffalosewer.org), or the individual scholarship chairs (see pages 3-4 of your roster for contact info.)

MENTORING GIRLS

Member Karen Kurdziel (kkurdziel@ktufsd.org) has begun work on an initiative for high school girls. It will focus on Leadership and Mentorship. Students will be introduced to AAUW's mission and vision of equity for all. If you have interest in helping to give input to its development or sharing your career choice, contact her.

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINES!

The scholarships (women only) all have a **January 11, 2021 deadline**. Applications are available on our website: <https://AAUWBuffalo.org>.

- [Women Entering College Scholarships](#)
- [Olga Lindberg Scholarships](#)
- [Catalyst for Change Scholarships](#)
- [Jacquie Walker Scholarship](#)

If you know of anyone eligible for any of these, please direct her to our website.

KEEP YOUR ROSTERS UP TO DATE!

If your information is incorrect, please notify Mary Crocker:
database@aauwbuffalo.org

We have one change this month. Please add to your roster:

Donna Fitzgerald has rejoined! 389 Starin Ave, Buffalo, 14216, 837-6058, BoFitz@roadrunner.com. Welcome back, Donna!

CONDOLENCES

Bill Powers, a faithful helper at the Annual Book Sale, died on September 4, 2020. For many years Bill washed the windows of the sale site in preparation for Opening Day and helped work with the book dealers on the first day of the sale. His efforts were much appreciated. We will miss his helping spirit and send our sympathy to his wife, Suzanne, and their three sons.



Branch member **Suzanne Taeger** passed away November 19 after a short illness. Suzanne had been a member of the AAUW Buffalo branch since 2015 and served as our newsletter editor from 2018 until 2020.

Besides producing beautiful newsletters, Suzanne, with the help of her husband, Mike, assisted with our book sale and sorting. She also attended Happy Wanderers activities and was active in the "Clueless" book club.

She will be greatly missed. Please keep her husband, Mike, daughter, Mandy, and son, Kurt, in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

Memorial gatherings will be delayed until COVID restrictions are lifted.

HISTORY BUFFS—CAN YOU HELP?

While doing research for the December program, a treasure trove of memorabilia was unearthed, including a scrapbook produced for our branch Centennial celebration in 1990 and many newsletters from the latter part of the 1900s. Copies of the newsletters are also housed in our archives at UB, but it would be great to have all of these pieces available online. If you have a scanner and are willing to scan them in, we'd love to have your help. No hurry—just scan at your leisure. Please contact [Betty Preble](#) if you can help. THANKS!

**AAUW BUFFALO BRANCH
ELECTED
BOARD MEMBERS 2020-21**

PRESIDENT

Laurie Eikemeyer

VP PROGRAM

Lilyen Mascellino

VP MEMBERSHIP

RECRUITMENT

Melissa White

VP MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

Jean Hubbard

SECRETARY/PARLIAMENTARIAN

Diane O'Brien

CFO

Rosalind Kochmanski

BRANCH TREASURER

Mary Bashore

EAP TREASURER

Lynne Rapin

FUNDRAISING TREASURER

Mary Crocker

CHAMBERLIN/FUNDS FOR

EDUCATION TREASURER

Kate Collins

SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

Rosaleen Nogle

INTEREST GROUPS

Judy Huber

THE HAPPY WANDERERS

We will take January off, hoping to resume in February depending on Corona -19. Mary Ellen Shaughnessy at 885-3292 or feeley@roadrunner.com

WNY CULINARY ARTS

Everything is on hold until we can once again safely meet in restaurants. Barbara Libby at 836-8303 or bplibby1@verizon.net

DINNER BY THE BOOK

When: Wednesday, Jan. 20 at 6:30 p.m,

Where: Marilyn Carmichael will invite you by Zoom to join the discussion.

Book: *The Electrifying Fall of Rainbow City* by Margaret Creighton.

Facilitator: Mary Bashore

Discussion Leader: Marilyn Carmichael

RSVP: Marilyn Carmichael at 875-6817 or mcarmichael45@aol.com

CLUELESS MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

When: Wednesday, Jan. 27 at 12:30 p.m.

Where: Paula Salamone will invite you by Zoom to join the discussion.

Book: *Knowledge* by Martha Grimes

Discussion Leader: Mary Georger

RSVP: Paula Salamone at 479-1088 or salamonepaula@yahoo.com

AAUW-NYS Wants YOU!

Suzanne Young-Mercer

AAUW-NYS Nominating Committee Chair

We are seeking nominations to fill Leadership Board positions for the AAUW-NYS 2021-2023 biennium. The open positions are:

- Vice President of Public Policy
- Vice President of Membership
- Treasurer
- Secretary

If you are interested in AAUW leadership at the state level, position descriptions and applications are available on the AAUW-NYS website. If you have questions, contact Suzanne at:

diversity@aauw-nys.org

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Judy Weidemann

You all understand why this column has not appeared for the past months. Many of the cultural organizations are offering programs via the internet. For example, the Burchfield Penney has an array of fine programs that you can access through your computer. Go to the Burchfield Penney website, <https://www.burchfieldpenney.org/>, and click on Burchfield Connections. Every first Thursday of the month the BP Book Club meets and is available. A local author(s) is featured and you do not have to read the book before attending. However, you must register for the program. A link will be sent to you after you register.

The Case for Critical Thinking

Marian Deutschman

President-Elect Biden has promised to unify the country. How does he reach people who didn't vote for him? To reach the divided voters, addressing their anxiety, fears, and paranoia, he needs to find and target those who are critical thinkers. Critical thinkers should be able to objectively analyze and evaluate an issue before they form a judgment.

Do the voters understand the issues? Although we had a record voter turnout in November, many people express a clear disinterest and disdain for the political process and for understanding the issues. Critical thinking is a disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing and evaluating information gathered from many sources including observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication. Those who still believe there was fraud in our election, despite the lack of evidence and the many court decisions, raise questions regarding their ability to think critically. Many Republicans take the president at his word and publicly support the non-existent fraud.

Our new president needs the cooperation of media so that readers, viewers, and those who are followers of the news online have access to facts that they can trust and judge critically. Journalists are taught to tell both sides of the story to be fair and even-handed. President Trump's attacks on media, calling them enemies of the people, did not instill confidence in news media. Some of what we read is fact; some of it is opinion disguised as fact, and some is propaganda. We need to be able to distinguish which is which before we choose to believe it.

Many Americans stopped trusting the media even before Donald Trump starting calling them out as "fake news." It must be acknowledged that this name calling worked to his advantage because fact-checks of his misleading assertions were disregarded by loyalists as fake news.

We're more divided than ever and more distrustful of the "other side" of the news. Where is the self-disciplined, independent, open-minded thinking?

America is suffering from an increase in anti-intellectualism and anti-science. Critical thinking is desperately needed to solve problems and build solidarity. We must start by embracing it in our schools and classrooms because the world desperately needs good judgment to deal with the issues we face. Critical thinking is the foundation of strategic thinking and creative problem solving.

At this writing, 34 states have broken records in recording the number of COVID cases. Many people need economic relief and jobs. Many industries that usually rebound when the economy recovers may stay depressed for years. We need to get our economy back on track.

Our image to the rest of the world has suffered with the accusations of fraudulent elections, the cornerstone of our democracy. China is attempting to steal

our vaccine research. We have so many problems left for President Biden and his administration to solve. He is appointing well-qualified, experienced cabinet members. He must create the conditions for them to succeed and trust them to do so. He needs to apply the principles of transparency, truth, and trust to help ensure their success and his own.

In 2008, when Barack Obama was elected president, a satirical newspaper ran this headline: "Black man given nation's worst job." Joe Biden is faced with a tough clean-up job. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was able to do it but he had Congressional support. Republicans need to cooperate, but they may suddenly rediscover their aversion to budget deficits and big spending. Where are those critical thinkers who understand the issues and can put pressure on their elected officials when we need them?



DATES TO REMEMBER

Please check our website for last-minute information.

All upcoming programs via Zoom:

- Wednesday, Jan. 6, 6:00 p.m.—Board Meeting
- Tuesday, Jan. 12, 7:00 p.m.—Branch Program (see p. 1)
- Wednesday, Feb. 3, 6:00 p.m.—Board Meeting
- Monday, Feb. 15, 6:00 p.m.—Branch Program (see p. 1)

Deadlines:

Monday, Jan. 11—application deadline for branch scholarships.

BOOKSALE WORK ON HOLD UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!
NO DONATIONS ACCEPTED AT THIS TIME!
Next sale **PLANNED** for June 2-6, 2021

The Zoomed programs have been great! We urge you to tune in on your computer, tablet, or smartphone!

AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For almost 140 years we have worked together as a national grassroots organization to improve the lives of millions of women and their families.

Mission: *To advance equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.*

Vision: *Equity for all.*

Values : *Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and intersectionality.*

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.



If there are asterisks by your name, you're either a local AAUW national member or someone who has expressed interest in joining. We'd love to see you as a branch member.

Moving? Please contact Mary Crocker 716-838-2796



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