



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Online Calendar at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

- 4 Trekkers:** *Time TBD - Sunday afternoon Village of Fishkill Historical Walk*
Organizer: Peggy Kelland (297-0507)
Coordinator: Karen Haynes (297-5700)
- 5 Word Games:** *2:00 pm*
Hostess: Barbara Van Itallie (462-3924)
Coordinator: Eleanor Aronstein (462-6452)
- 6 Gourmet: Out & About:** *6:30 pm Tanjore, Cuisine of India, Fishkill*
Contact: Kay Saderholm (229-8545)
Ksaderholm@aol.com
- 7 Board Meeting:** *7:00 pm*
Hostess: Barbara Van Itallie (462-3924)
- 8 Pins & Needles:** *7:00 pm Quilting & Crocheting for Service Projects II*
Hostess: Celia Serotsky (473-8426)
Coordinators: Arlene Seligman (297-0006) & Jane Toll (463-2712)
- 9 Daytime Literature:** *10:00 am*
Book: *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford
The Manor at Woodside, 168 Academy, Pok.
Coordinators: Diana Gleeson (229-8458) & Tiz Hanson (229-9394)
- 10 "The Branch" deadline for January.**
- 12 Movie Night:** *Time TBD by show*
Movie: Group members will be notified the Thursday before - be sure to sign up with Sue.
Discussion: *Eveready Diner*, Rt. 9, Hyde Park
Director: Susan Osterhoudt (889-4469)
Producer: Kim Butwell
- 13 Aventures en Soleil:** *Leave Pok 8:47 am MOMA tour & lunch, NYC - 11:00 am*
Reservations: tour is filled.
Coordinators: Peggy Lombardi (635-9091) & Ruth Sheets (473-6202)
- 13 Bridge I:** *noon - 3:30 pm*
Uno (on the arterial), Lunch (\$15), Bridge
Reservations: Contact Coordinators
Coordinators: Linda Ronayne (897-9745) & Mary Ann Ryan (897-9679)
- 13 Bridge II:** *noon - 3:30 pm*
Uno (on the arterial), Lunch (\$15), Bridge
Reservations: Contact Coordinators
Coordinators: Cathy Kinn cathy@kinn.org & Janet White (462-6675)

Calendar continued on page 2...

*Monthly Membership Meeting
(All members are invited and encouraged to attend)*

Storytelling: A very special holiday program

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

7:00 pm

Poughkeepsie Day School

260 Boardman Road, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Our meeting will be held in the Elizabeth C. Gilkeson Center, a modern one-story building on PDS campus.

- **Delight in an Evening of Stories by Storyteller, Muriel Horowitz**
- **Learn the Ancient Craft of Tapping into Your Own Story**
- **Experience the Power of Sharing Your Story with Others**



Muriel Horowitz

"As a co-founder of the Dutchess Interfaith Council's story circle, every month, I see the power of story to promote peace, understanding and friendship among people of all faiths. During the holiday season, let's gather together to bring forth the spirit of connection and good will through the magical influence of stories." Muriel Horowitz

"We are our stories. That's all that we are.

Our pasts live in stories - not anywhere else.

The future unfurls from stories. All vision is story." Betsy Kroft, Storyteller

"Story is the meaning of everything that exists." Janice Greenworth, Storyteller

Our December holiday meeting will feature AAUW member and storyteller, Muriel Horowitz, sharing stories, telling about her craft, and inviting story sharing among the audience. *To facilitate sharing, she asks everyone to bring an object or photo relating to a family tradition or memory.*

Muriel tells traditional stories from world folklore and her own Jewish heritage, as well as personal stories. She engages listeners wonderfully well by inviting them to interact with her tales. On this evening, she will spark your memories and encourage story sharing, a custom that began with the earliest humans on earth.

Continued on page 8 including directions to Poughkeepsie Day School...

Calendar Continued...

Online Calendar at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org

- 13 Bridge For Beginners:** noon - 3:30pm
Uno (on the arterial), Lunch (\$15), Bridge
Reservations: Contact Coordinators
Coordinators: Donna Reichner Mintz &
Betsy Vivas (485-2379)
- 13 Cuisine:** 6:30 pm (Note date change)
Burmese Cuisine
Recipes: Betty Olson (BettyOlsonHomes@aol.com)
Hostess: Nancy Smith (691-7547)
Coordinator: Barbara Van Itallie (462-3924)
- 14 Mah Jongg:** 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Hostess: Barbara Lemberger (635-8516)
Coordinator: Amy Schwed (462-2269)
January - March: Gerry DiPompei (635-2050)
- 14 Membership Meeting** See right column, Page 1.
- 15 All those books...:** 7:00 pm
Book: *Hounds of the Baskervilles*
by Arthur Doyle
Hostess: Dina Gleeson (229-8458)
Coordinator: Kim Butwell (698-1855)
- 19 Manderley Literary Society:** 7:30 pm
Book: *How to Be an American Housewife*
by Margaret Dilloway
Hostess: Celia Serotsky (473-8426)
Coordinator: Ellie Burch (297-7828)

Happy Holidays to all!

Art on the Go: *No December meeting!*

Coordinator: Mary Coiteux (226-8275)

Contemporary Literature: *No December meeting.*

Coordinator: Ann Wade (229-5267)

Tee Off *Play will continue in June, 2012.*

Coordinator: Terry Schneider (849-1122) &
Gerry DiPompei (635-2050)

Women's Personal & Professional Development:

No December meeting!

Coordinators: Kim Butwell kim_butwell@ml.com &
Jacqueline Goffe-McNish mcnish@sunydutchess.edu

LOOKING AHEAD

Feb 3: Save the Date! CTAUN- Committee on
Teaching About the United Nations.

Mar 8: International Women's Day Walkway Walk

Apr 1: Third Annual Writer's Tea!

See page 4, *Author, Author!*

Apr 20-22: AAUW-NYS Convention. Woodcliff
Hotel & Spa, Rochester. Plan to come, this
one will be special for Poughkeepsie AAUW.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Geeta Desai *297-7589* geetadesai@optonline.net

I'm looking forward to December's Membership Meeting, to its festive holiday air and the program on "story-telling." What you will hear is bound to intrigue you and may even awaken something deep within your being.

Indigenous societies around the world believe that stories passed on from one generation to the next shape us and importantly, shape how we are perceived by others. In these societies, the story-teller holds great sway particularly over the way women are perceived: If the story-teller is a strong woman, her stories help women envision themselves as powerful and persuade men to perceive them as such. If on the other hand, the story-teller is a man who speaks about women as "weak or needy"; women are rendered powerless by those very images.

As it turns out, modern societies are not that different. Stories continue to play a critically important role in shaping the lives of women. In America, women's rights to vote, education, employment and gender equity have been influenced by the prevailing narratives about women at various times in the history of our country. AAUW's research supports the hypothesis that women and girls fail to achieve their fullest potential when they are subjected to popularly-held negative narratives. For example, girls tend to shy away from Science, Technology, Engineering and Math because they have heard that they don't have an aptitude for these subjects. In AAUW's latest report on sexual harassment, girls more than boys are sexually harassed and victims of these acts routinely underperform in school. Sexual harassment in schools is so pervasive that onlookers accept it as one of the historic narratives of the grade-school experience. More on page 4. Full report at www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org Resources/Research.

My grandmother intuitively understood the power of stories and for the first sixteen years of my life, she regaled me with tales from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata that depicted fierce women warriors and stories about the early days of India's independence when women played a major role in framing the country's constitution. But the stories that I loved best were the stories about her journey from a little girl in rural India to the woman who would argue persuasively on behalf of India with the British Viceroy, at dinner, in his home. She wanted me to be fearless, so she sewed each story into the fabric of my being, careful to fill up all the empty spaces that might otherwise foment doubt and uncertainty.

Given the importance of stories in the lives of all women, it seems to me that we should try and control the narrative to the extent possible. We can do this by sharing our own stories of personal challenges and triumphs, happiness and loss, fault and redemption with our daughters and our grand-daughters. So, come to the Membership Meeting to learn the art of effective story-telling so that we, too, can sew our stories into the lives of the women we love the most.

THE MIGHTY MACS MOVIE

Linda Ronayne, Immaculata College Class of 1962

Many sports movies follow the underdogs who overcome obstacles and defy expectations to succeed but not many are about women.

“The Mighty Macs,” currently in local theaters, tells the story of a group of such underdogs, beating the odds, but this time they are women. The film is about a small Catholic women’s college, Immaculata, outside Philadelphia in the 70s which became the birthplace of modern women’s basketball. It is my alma mater.

The film recounts the story of a sad women’s basketball team, which under serious lack of resources and a burnt out gym, rose to win three national titles against powerhouse teams in 1972, ’73 and ’74. Coach Cathy Rush, now a member of the National Basketball Hall of Fame, was 22 at the time.

These were the first college women’s basketball championships played in the United States. The Mighty Macs have the distinction of playing the first nationally televised women’s game as well as the first to play outside the United States and the first to compete in Madison Square Garden.

Back in the 1960s women seemed to go to college, get married, work for three years, have a family and never work again. These women challenged the traditional roles and obligations surrounding their lives and changed women’s basketball forever. These trailblazers produced four All Americans players. Many went on to coach college teams, some became doctors and one a 1992 U.S Olympic coach.

The faculty of nuns in the story are played by the original team members. Ellen Burstyn plays the College President and Carla Gugino, the coach, Cathy Rush who has a cameo role as a bank teller.

With a little poetic license, it is a true story and a nice family movie, inspiring to young women to persevere and follow their dreams. It was filmed in large part on the beautiful campus which is now co-ed Immaculata University.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU TO MOVIE NIGHT!

Pat Dogil *545-5441*

A standing ovation for Kim Butwell and Sue Osterhoudt for volunteering the Movie Night Interest Group to provide refreshments for our October 19th presentation by The Northern Dutchess Symphony. Bravo to Movie Night members for the outstanding musically inspired refreshments, menu board, and table decorations.

HOLIDAY GIFT WRAPPING

Betty Harrel *462-2141*

The *Leading to Reading* project is again sponsoring a **Holiday Gift Wrap at Hudson River Lodging**. The center on Route 55 (opposite Page Lumber) provides short-term housing for those who are returning to school, developing job skills, and working to live independently. Each year, AAUW members wrap donated gifts for the 100+ children who reside there. In addition, the project provides a new book for each child. We always have a great time and create a colorful mountain of wrapped gifts. We just received a generous donation of wrapping paper, ribbon and bows. To sign up, pack up ONE ROLL of wrapping paper, scissors, tape, and gift tags and contact one of the following coordinators:

Friday, December 9 10:00 am -12:00 noon

Patty Cerniglia pattycerniglia@optonline.net or 298-7655

Thursday, December 15 10:00 am -12:00 noon Ellie Burch
reburch@verizon.net or 297-7828

We hope to see you there!

“HATS OFF”

Mary Coiteux *226-8275* mcoiteux@frontiernet.net

An expression of admiration for someone's achievement or contribution and our acknowledgment for it.

“Hats Off” and congratulations to **Wendy Maragh Taylor** and her husband Joseph on the birth of their daughter, **Leah Grace Garmai Taylor**, on October 24, 2011. Baby, mother and father are all doing well.

NEW INTEREST GROUP

A new interest group is being formed in 2012.

“World Travelers” Interest Group

Building cultural awareness through travel.

Activities:

Monthly media travel presentations by members

Sharing information and travel experiences

Asking / answering travel questions

Travel networking

This group will interest both women who travel the world and those who would like to travel. The group will share experiences, desired destinations, travel resource materials, and personal travel tips.

Please contact me ASAP if you would like to be on the e-mail list for this group.

Please include: name, address, phone, e-mail

Send to jntt@msn.com

Many thanks! Jeanette Cantwell, coordinator

ANOTHER AAUW SUCCESS!

Betty Harrel *462-2141*

The Barnes and Noble Book Fair, sponsored by the *Leading to Reading* project, was a great success!



- Over 25 members volunteered to read, tell stories, do crafts, greet shoppers, and paint faces.
- **Karen Orloff** (see photo above), children's author and Poughkeepsie Journal writer, read some of her books and signed them for eager readers.
- Members, along with two high school volunteers, painted creative designs on children's faces.
- Supporters "shopped 'til they dropped" and helped us **earn over \$550**. The money will be used to distribute more books to needy children in our community.

Thanks to **Linda Roy and Judy Linville**, our enthusiastic coordinators, we had a fun day, increased AAUW visibility, and supported our community outreach. Plans are already being made for our next event to be held in the Fall, 2013!

AUTHOR! AUTHOR!

Gloria Ghedini *635-8612* gloriaghedini@cs.com

It is not too early to mark your calendar on April 1, 2012 for the Third Annual Writer's Tea! The selected authors will undoubtedly appeal to all our members, as each genre is different: a biography, poetry, and an authentic World War II story. Our authors are:

Eamon Grennan, *Out of Sight: Newly Selected Poems*

Sheila Isenberg, *Muriel's War: An American Heiress in the Nazi Resistance*

Suzanne Vromen, *Hidden Children of the Holocaust*

Spotlight on Suzanne Vromen!

Bonnie Kieffer *297-4245*
bikpro5000@aol.com

Consider this scenario: You, as a young child, are torn from your family, compelled to live with strangers along with other children for an indefinite period of time in an unknown place, and all this done in secret. You must adapt to a totally foreign lifestyle with a new language, a new daily routine, new caretakers in a time of great fear and worry about your absent family. How would you feel? What would you do? How would you cope?



Continued on the next column...

Spotlight on Suzanne Vromen! Continued...

This is the scenario which repeatedly occurred in Belgium in the 1940's when the Nazis attempted to round up and exterminate Jewish children and which Suzanne Vromen so vividly relates in her book *Hidden Children of the Holocaust: Belgian Nuns and Their Daring Rescue of Young Jews from the Nazis*. Jewish children in Belgium were taken by the Resistance to Catholic convents to save them from death. Ms. Vromen interviewed twenty eight adult children, eight nuns, one priest and two members of the Resistance who willingly told their story of sacrifice, heroism, and survival. This book is, up to now, the only one in English to address at the same time the experiences of hidden children, the nuns who sheltered them, and Resistance members in Belgium. The interviews, transcribed and translated by Ms. Vromen, examine the lives of all those who were involved in this rescue and how they coped, some well, some not, in these difficult times.

Suzanne Vromen is professor emeritus of sociology at Bard College, where she co-founded the Women's Studies program and directed it for eight years. Her research interests include social theory, gender, identities of Jewish-American women and, in connection with this book, collective memory with an emphasis on commemorations. Her education includes Licence es Sciences Sociales and Premiere Licence es Sciences Economiques, University of Brussels, Belgium; MSc, urban planning, Columbia University; MA, PhD, sociology, New York University.

AAUW PUBLISHES NEW RESEARCH

"Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School"

The findings are widespread sexual harassment of students in grades 7 to 12

Nearly half of 7th to 12th graders experienced sexual harassment in the last school year, according to a study released on Monday, November 14, 2011. 87 percent of those who have been harassed reporting negative effects such as absenteeism, poor sleep and stomachaches.

On its survey of a nationally representative group of 1,965 students, the American Association of University Women, a nonprofit research organization, defined harassment as "unwelcome sexual behavior that takes place in person or electronically." Over all, girls reported being harassed more than boys — 56 percent compared with 40 percent — though it was evenly divided during middle school. Boys were more likely to be the harassers, according to the study, and children from lower-income families reported more severe effects.

The complete report is available from our website www.aauwpoughkeepsie.org under Resources/Research for you to download and print. If you would like to receive a hard copy report, please contact Connect2AAUW at 800/326-2289 or send e-mail to connect@auuw.org.

ATHENA AWARDS - AAUW SHINES

Margaret Nijhuis *635-8612* NijhuisMJ@gmail.com

On Sunday, December 4, 2011, 12:00 - 3:00 pm at The Grandview, 176 Rinaldi Blvd, Poughkeepsie; three AAUW members: **Maureen Crush, Marcine Humphrey and May Mamiya** will be honored as nominees for the Athena Award. In addition, AAUW member **Cecilia Dinio-Durkin** will be the keynote speaker. This is truly a day that Poughkeepsie AAUW will shine.

Contact the Dutchess Regional Chamber of Commerce for reservations. The deadline is November 28. Tickets are \$75 and can be purchased by calling Karolyn Osborne at 845-296-001 ext. 104 or email: karolyno@dcrcoc.org - credit cards or checks are accepted.

LITERARY NOTES

Diane Browne-Sterdt browruf@yahoo.com

ARE WE THE STORIES WE TELL?

Wendy Martin is a professor of English Literature and the author of many reviews on American women writers. Ms. Martin has edited two excellent books of short stories by American women written between the mid-forties and 2004. These stories, "important strands in the fabric of fiction" (to quote the editor) are by writers of African, Caribbean, Chinese, Japanese, Hispanic, North American, Native American, Jewish-European and Pan-Asian traditions. The titles of the two books are "We Are The Stories We Tell" and "More Stories We Tell."

Ms. Martin defines the short story as the genre that conveys most compellingly the changes in women's lives over the past six decades. Within a frame of only twenty pages or less, the multicolored richness and variety of women's lives can be captured. Ms. Martin reports that once female authors entered the literary marketplace after World War II, they were able to convey their disappointments, their disillusionments, and their discoveries of strength to the world beyond that of their personal experiences.

A story entitled "The Abortion" is by Alice Walker, one of the most revered African-American short story writers, Ms. Walker is mystified by black Americans' mistreatment of other black Americans, and writes of the mystery and beauty of ordinary life. She portrays, in both heartbreaking and uplifting ways, the importance of family relationships in a racist world and the efforts to conquer death through love. Every character in her stories inspires both grieving and hope. Ms. Walker feels that writing about women from her culture helps us to understand them and to accept them as part of ourselves.

Jhumpa Lahiri of India captures the poignancy of loss, especially of the familiar, in a move from one culture to another. In the beautiful story, "A Temporary Matter," a couple loses a child, and the author conveys their emotional

Continued in the next column...

ARE WE THE STORIES WE TELL? Continued...

states through light, colors, and the the fragrant ingredients in Indian cooking. The woman of this story moves through despair, anger, hope, tenderness, pain and finally a grieving and great loneliness. It is all portrayed memorably by Ms. Lahiri.

Joyce Carol Oates, a white, atheistic, writer, has always felt that her stories (such as the riveting and haunting "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?") should provoke feelings and sympathies that women don't anticipate or even want. Ms. Oates' writing is notably provocative, and often about adolescent girls at volatile times in their lives: their emotions undefined, their sexual awakenings overwhelming.

The story by Joyce Carol Oates in Ms. Martin's collection is an American Gothic tale, with horror elements, focusing upon the powerful effects of pop music on girls and their dreamlike, dangerous vulnerability.

While stories by Gish Jen, Anne Beattie, Eudora Welty, Maxine Hong Kingston and Sandra Cisneros all lend their grace to the "...Stories We Tell" books, I will limit this piece to two more brief examples. There could be volumes to write, but not in just one *Branch* issue!

Paule Marshall, of West Indian (Barbados) descent, is a notably powerful writer who sees women as caught up in duels with white men... duels of ambition, love/hate and differentiating oneself from the enemy. In her gripping story, "Brooklyn," one character in such a duel gains power and life force, while the other dies. The woman's shield is the ending of her cautious silence in the academic world of white male professors, and the speaking of the language of her familial elders.

Grace Paley once said that she wrote mostly short stories because her life was "too interruptible." An Eastern European Jewish New Yorker, she was known as a great writer and troublemaker. The personal is the political in her pungent stories, which are witty and sexy, and her meditations on marriage, anti-war activism and focus upon the struggle of women in immigrant communities. Her stories are in both collections, and they reflect upon the anger of love, along with issues of class, race and gender.

Are we the stories we tell? Ms. Martin dedicates one of the books to her husband and daughter, "for making it possible for me to have both love and work in the world." Her literary efforts have been inseparable from her evolving into a complete woman/person. She has written that the various authors have named, defined and judged their own experiences, and aim to help their readers do the same. As Ms. Martin wrote, "It is only through knowing one another that we can know ourselves."

Both books can be purchased from www.Amazon.com, as well as ordered from Barnes and Noble. They were published by Pantheon Books, in 1990 and 2004.

PUBLIC POLICY

Doris Kelly mscw12@aol.com

The elections are over for this year. Most of the signs have been removed. Hopefully, you all voted for the candidates whom you felt would do the best job. Voting is one way to improve what is happening in our society. Lobbying our representatives is another way to try to make changes.

Today, across the country, Americans are fighting back against what they perceive as injustice. Some are taking stands in the voting booth and some on the streets.

- **In Ohio**, Issue 2 was defeated. A "yes" vote would have meant approval of a law, Senate Bill 5, which limits collective bargaining and expands the no-strike standard from safety forces to all 359,000 government workers in Ohio. It was defeated by a 63 percent to 37 percent margin.

- **In Mississippi**, the voters rejected a state constitutional amendment that would have defined a fertilized egg as a person. It would have turned all abortions, without exception for rape, incest, or the health of the mother, into murder under state law. Many popular forms of birth control would have been banned, and it would even have created legal suspicion around miscarriages.

- **In Maine**, where the voters have had access to same-day registration since 1973, a referendum was approved to override the repeal by the government that had ended that same-day registration option.

- Civil disobedience has surfaced as another means of trying to end the unfair treatment of many in our society. Many protesters are "occupying" parks in our cities. It's not only Occupy Wall Street. In New York State there are Occupy Poughkeepsie, Occupy Albany, Occupy Kingston, Occupy New Paltz, Occupy Saratoga Springs, and others. These "occupations" have spread across our country like wildfire.

You may ask, "What do they want?" One protester explained some demands: "We should be bailing out the American public -- not corporations -- by raising the minimum wage, bringing jobs back from overseas and improving labor conditions."

They want good jobs and less costly higher education. They want corporations to stop undermining the future and to stay out of government policies. They want more protections for the environment. They want the same things that most of us want and they're willing to jeopardize their physical well-being to make it happen.

Continued in the next column...

Come share the wonderful world of Storytelling!! December 14, 2011 - see page 1 for details.

PUBLIC POLICY continued...

Let's look at 2009-11 AAUW Public Policy Principles for Action

AAUW promotes the economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons. Essential to that well-being are an economy that provides equitable employment opportunities, a livable wage, reduction of poverty, quality affordable dependent care, paid family and medical leave, decent and affordable housing, quality affordable health care; and a clean and healthful environment. We support a Social Security system that provides inflation-protected, guaranteed lifetime benefits with a progressive benefit formula, spousal and widow benefits, and disability and survivor benefits.

Happy Hanukkah!



Merry Christmas!

Happy Kwanzaa!



WOMAN OF THE YEAR RE-CAP

Geeta Desai *297-7589* geetadesai@optonline.net

Thank you so very much to Mary Lou Davis and the members of the Woman of the Year Committee for all the work you did to make this year's *Woman of the Year* event such a success.

I've received many, many phone calls from invitees who were on Ann Armater's list...from her friends, her colleagues and her co-workers. All of them loved the event and expressed the following sentiments:

"That was an inspirational event"

"I'll remember it for a very long time"

"I was honored to be there"

"The AAUW seems like a wonderful organization"

"That was an empowering event for women...wish more women could hear the message"

"Thank you for including me in the event"

Then last night Ann Armater called to say that she could not thank us enough and that the afternoon exceeded her wildest imagination.

So there you have it...Thank you, once again. Bravo!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Amy Schwed *462-2269* amyschwed@optonline.net

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome more than 65 new and almost new members. We “seasoned” members hope all the “newbies” enjoy their memberships and AAUW becomes a great fit into everyone’s lives. Those of you who were able to join us at the New Member Reception on November 9th had a terrific evening and really got to know each other. We had lots of fun and laughter, while discussing many of the items that follow. I’d like you to benefit from thinking about them as well.

Why AAUW?

So - to all our members - take a moment and think about what made you decide to join AAUW. Ponder the concept that good relationships are built upon a mutual give and take. Our Poughkeepsie branch has both a state and national reputation for excellence. This is based upon our ability to provide a large variety of outreach programs which allow us to do good things in the community and initiatives that deal with local multi-cultural and diversity issues. We have many special interest groups which are both social and recreational and terrific monthly meetings which let you meet other members and learn new things. Which of these fit you best? Now, ask yourselves a few questions: What do I want to get from my AAUW membership? What should I get involved with, in order to “scratch my itches”? The answers to these questions tie right back into the mutual give and take we all thrive on, because when we give, we also get!

Big Sister

We are a strong sisterhood who support the idea of equity for women and girls, both in the Poughkeepsie community and within our own branch. Our “personal and professional development group” shows how women help women succeed in every phase of their work and home lives. The concept of our branch fostering a sisterhood of women helping women is what led to the idea of guiding new members as they get involved in the multitude of branch activities we support. We will do this through pairing them up with a “big sister” who is one of our “seasoned” members. She will warmly assist new members in getting to know everyone and helping them be comfortable as they get involved. The more involved everyone gets, the more everyone will enjoy our branch. So once again, the more you give of yourself, the more you’ll get for yourself! We’ve already formed some “big sister”/new member pairs, and many of the women at the New Member Reception felt an ideal pairing would be with the “seasoned” members who suggested they join our branch. We will be contacting those of you who referred new members to see if you’d enjoy being a “big sister.” If you didn’t refer anyone this year, but would like to make a new friend, please contact me and I’ll happily pair you up.

Continued in the next column...

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS continued...

Phone Chain

We’ve also started a phone chain, to remind members of upcoming meetings and events. We’ve discovered that many members were not aware of either meetings or events. The best way to stay in the “informed loop” is to read *The Branch* each month. The front page highlights whatever is happening of importance that month through the lead article, plus it has a calendar of events for the entire month. The rest of the Branch is equally informative. If you do not want to receive these monthly calls, please contact Kathy Brown at 486-4605 or kabrown@vassar.edu to remove you from the call list.

Suggestions for Change

If you have suggestions for changes you’d like to see occur to make our branch even better than it is, please contact me with your ideas.

NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORIES

Lastly, we’re in the process of distributing the new membership directory. It will have your new name tag inside. Bring it to the next meeting and receive a new holder for it that won’t put pin marks in your clothing! Keep it in your purse so you can bring it to each meeting or event. Also, you might like to keep last year’s directory in your glove compartment as a reference guide. If not, please shred it, as it contains personal information.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving everyone - we have so much to be thankful for!

KUDOS

Amy Schwed *462-2269* amyschwed@optonline.net

Many thanks to the following women who so graciously brought a variety of wonderful refreshments for the New Member Reception on November 9th:

Eleanor Aronstein	Ginny Marcus
Jeanette Cantwell	Margaret Nijhuis
Mary Lou Davis	Shelby Outwater
Cecilia Dinio-Durkin	Linda Roberts
Carol Foy	Kay Saderholm
Betty Harrel	Terry Schneider
Marcine Humphrey	Joanne Scolaro
Peggy Kelland	Jane Toll
Cathy Kinn	Barbara Van Itallie

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed your efforts!
(FYI: the coffee we serve at meetings is always decaf, for your sleeping pleasure!)

Additional kudos to Kay Saderholm, who took it upon herself to get flashlights and stationed herself across from the parking lot, to help women find their way down the dark path to the meeting room - just a few weeks after knee surgery! Jeanette Cantwell waited at the entrance to greet everyone, and show them where we all were. This is a perfect example of initiative and our stupendous sisterhood of women helping women! Thank you both for helping everyone safely make it in.

MEMBERSHIP'S MYSTERY BOX

Amy Schwed *462-2269* amyschwed@optonline.net

Some members have already received 3 chances to win a surprise gift at the end-of-the-year May dinner! They got their raffle ticket chances by attending October's monthly meeting which was the performance by the Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra, the annual Woman of the Year luncheon on November 5th and the New Member Reception on Nov. 9th. Each monthly meeting or annual event you attend will give you another ticket to put in the Mystery Box, which increases your odds of winning one of the surprise gifts. Your next chance arrives at the December meeting! Show up, get a raffle ticket, write your name on it and place it in the Mystery box. It could become a winner!! (Those of you who attended the Woman of the Year luncheon - we have filled out a ticket for you and placed it in the box!)

STORYTELLING: A very special holiday program

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As an educator and storyteller, Muriel knows the power of story to ignite the imagination and enrich the connection between teller and listener.

When asked how she began storytelling, she said, "In some ways, I've been storytelling forever. I've always loved stories of all kinds, and especially those from my Jewish tradition. About 15 or 20 years ago, I took my first storytelling workshop and have been hooked ever since. Storytelling is a connection between teller and listener. I derive great satisfaction and fulfillment from watching listeners react to stories, and I never tire of hearing how my story connects to their lives and memories."

Muriel has been published in the magazine of the National Storytelling Association. She currently serves on the steering committee for the LANES regional storytelling group's annual conference, *Sharing the Fire*, to be held in Albany March 16-18. Her storytelling interests include interfaith storytelling, storytelling to enhance early literacy development, and encouraging people to share memories and collect oral histories.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *To make this evening truly special, please bring an object or a photo relating to a family tradition or memory.*

Directions: Route 9 to Spackenkill Road, in 1.9 miles turn left onto Boardman Rd, Poughkeepsie Day School (PDS) is the first right. Boardman Rd can also be accessed from Hooker Ave (Rt 376), you will be approaching the school from the opposite direction - the school will be on your left just before Spackenkill Road. *Our meeting will be held in the Elizabeth C. Gilkeson Center, a modern one-story building on PDS campus.*

Questions: Barbara Hugo *876-6686* Bhugo2@gmail.com

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In principle and in 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.

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