

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It's hard to believe that we are already halfway through our AAUW year. I am pleased that board meetings as well as monthly program meetings have taken place as planned. Our book club members meet monthly and the work on the book sale continues.

As 2020 wraps up, there are some things we can do as AAUW members on the national level as we enter into 2021.

- We have just experienced an unprecedented electoral process. To ensure

our right to vote, contact your representatives to endorse passage of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which works to protect voter rights.

- The rise in COVID19 cases has had an additional negative impact on working women who are called upon to leave their jobs at a higher rate than men in order to provide childcare and homeschooling. Contact your senators to urge them to act on the Heroes Act, which would provide additional funding for education and childcare.
- Go to AAUW.org to learn more about two issues that all members will be voting on in 2021. To be better informed, locate 2020 Continuing Series on the webpage and then find:
 - August 25 – Policies and Practice;
 - September 22 – Board Town Hall – Dues and Education Requirements.

In addition, I'd like to mention a few things we can do to stay connected locally.

- Support the book sale – Our first phase of the sale will be an on-line venture. Contact Fran Rasmussen if you haven't already signed up to help move books on December 12.
- Reach out to AAUW friends. An Honorary Life Member, Mary Lou Rhodes's daughter reached out to me recently. Please read the article featuring her on p.2. I'm sure that Mary Lou, as well as other members, would appreciate a card or note especially during the holidays.
- Roberta Carver has convened the nominating committee for 2021-2022. The committee welcomes suggestions for new officers. I also urge you to be open to being nominated for an office. Being president this year has been a rewarding learning and personal experience for me.

I will close this final 2020 message with the announcement that we will not be able to hold our Holiday Luncheon. This year it is COVID restrictions, not the weather, that is the culprit! The board is hopeful that the spring will be kinder to us and that we will all find a safe way to gather and celebrate.

I wish you all the happiest holidays, with peace and health in the coming new year. We are lucky to have each other.

Cindy Donaldson, President

COMING EVENTS

Dec 2 2:00 p.m.	Book Group Zoom
Jan 11 1:00 p.m.	Board Meeting Zoom
Jan 12 Noon	Branch Meeting Zoom

THERE WILL BE NO DECEMBER BRANCH MEETING

HONORARY LIFE MEMBER, MARY LOU RHODES

Mary Lou's daughter, Suzanne Draayer, sent us this lovely picture of her mother taken just recently.

Mary Lou resides in Arizona, close to her daughter. Earlier this year due to COVID, Suzanne was able to visit with her mother only twice a week via Face Time. Since August, Suzanne has been able to visit her mom in person once a week.



Mary Lou loves to read her *Transylvania Times* and *AAUW Newsletter* and receive correspondence from friends. If you would like to write to her, Suzanne will bring your well wishes to her mom when she visits.

Mail may be sent to her at:
Mary Lou Rhodes
c/o Suzanne Draayer
1905 W. Tortolita Mt. Circle
Tucson, AZ 85755

2021 AAUW-NC PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

Margie Maddox, AAUW-NC Public Policy Chair, is scheduling a Zoom meeting in the near future with branch representatives. Conversations will focus on developing priorities which branches can adopt as "action" issues. Discussion issues will include:

- NC Public Schools: Further privatization through charter schools and vouchers continues to threaten adequate funding for traditional public schools in NC.
- Medicaid Expansion: Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, North Carolina's uninsured rate was approximately 13 % (1.1 million people). At least 500,000 North Carolinians would be eligible for coverage through Medicaid expansion.
- ERA: Last January, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the ERA, and the US House voted to remove the deadline for its passage. The current US Congress has prevented the ERA from being added to the US Constitution. The NC-ERA Alliance is making plans to push North Carolina to become the 39th state.
- Unemployment Insurance: This program has been ruthlessly downsized. As jobs continue to evaporate during the pandemic and federal funds run out, this issue remains a topic to monitor.
- Paid Sick Days and Paid Leave: The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, passed in March by Congress, provided paid sick days and paid leave for working people for limited purposes during the pandemic. Unfortunately, companies of 500+ employees were exempted. Before the pandemic, more than 1 million workers in North Carolina could not participate in this option.
- Women's Health Concerns: Several other women's groups in NC (NARAL, Planned Parenthood, NOW and NCWU) have their own priorities and are voicing concerns about health care needs, domestic violence, pay equity, paid maternal/family leave, etc.

As the coming year progresses, AAUW NC may want to more actively support these efforts.

Karla Atkinson, Chair, Public Policy Committee

Book Group

On Wednesday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m. we will discuss *The Radium Girls* (the dark story of America's shining women) by Kate Moore on Zoom. Contact Carol Carrano for more information.

NEW MEMBER

Cindy Rehm, moved to Brevard from Connecticut four years ago. Her education includes a BS and MS in Art Education from Central Connecticut State University and 6th year study at University of Hartford.



Cindy had an extensive career in art education and consulting locally, statewide and nationally.

She currently displays her mixed media art in the Lucy Clark Gallery.



AAUW BREVARD CONTRIBUTIONS

Donations made since the October newsletter

Brevard College Scholarship Endowment

Donor:

John & Carol Carrano
Patty Stark

In Memory of:

Mo Howard

Blue Ridge Community College Endowment

Donor:

Harriet Walls

In Honor of:

Betty Runion

If you or your family members are looking for a gift idea, please consider contributing to one of the AAUW college endowments. Link to the necessary forms at: <http://brevard-nc.aauw.net/donate/>

DID YOU KNOW?

The CARES Act changes deducting charitable contributions made in 2020. Previously, charitable contributions could only be deducted if taxpayers itemized their deductions. However, taxpayers who don't itemize deductions may take a charitable deduction of up to \$300 for cash contributions made in 2020 to qualifying organizations. For the purposes of this deduction, qualifying organizations are those that are religious, charitable, educational, scientific or literary in purpose.

See <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/how-the-cares-act-changes-deducting-charitable-contributions>

