

AAUW Pittsburgh Branch

The Newsletter of American Association of University Women - Pittsburgh Branch

Visit us at www.aauwpgh.org

Issue No. 33

May 2013

AAUW-PA 84th Annual Meeting April 12-13, 2013

The meeting was held at the Toftrees Golf Resort and Conference Center in State College, Pennsylvania. The theme of the meeting was "Empowering Women".

Friday evening started with a pizza party, a Town Hall meeting, a presentation by National Board Secretary Connie Hildebrand on the state of AAUW and our National Priorities, and a screening of the movie Miss Representation.

After Connie Hildebrand's presentation she got everyone to relax by dancing to a Patty LaBelle tune.

AAUW Pittsburgh Branch members Michele Buford (on the left), State Social Media Coordinator, and Susan Banerjee, were first time attendees. Michele is also the Public Policy, Advocacy, and Diversity co-chair and Susan is the Scholarship Committee chair here at the Pittsburgh Branch.



A continental breakfast was provided Saturday morning then attendees had a choice of four concurrent sessions. Keynote Speaker, Christianne Corbett, co-author of "Graduating to a Pay Gap", discussed the research and findings of her report.

Lunch began with a performance on cello by Kim Cook, Professor of Cello at Penn State University and founder of the Penn State Cello Choir. During lunch an AAUW Funds raffle was held garnering 73 donations for a total of \$1,114.00.

The business meeting that followed included the election of new state officers.

Dessert was served later in the afternoon during the award presentations.



Among the Outstanding Award recipients is Pittsburgh Branch member Susan Banerjee on far right. Congratulations Susan!



Among the Teal Award recipients is Pittsburgh Branch member Michele Buford, back row second from right. Congratulations Michele!



Don't miss the May 11, 2013 meeting . . .

In the month of May the Pittsburgh Branch traditionally holds its annual meeting. This May is no different.

We will be talking about the annual state meeting just held on April 13, 2013.

Voting will take place on the slate for Program VP, Finance Officer, and President. The election will be conducted by Karin Neilson, Nominations Committee Chair and it will be by "secret" ballot. Results will be announced at the end of the meeting. The slate was presented in the April newsletter but if you missed it you can see it again on the next page.

The meeting will be held at the PAA in Oakland located at:

4215 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

(412) 621-2400
www.paaclub.com

10:30 – 11:45 Board Meets
12:00 – 1:00 Lunch is Served
1:00 – 2:00 Membership Meeting

Please R.S.V.P. no later than May 8, 2013 to reserve your seat! Cost of lunch is \$20.00 payable upon arrival. Checks should be made out to "AAUW – Pittsburgh".

For more information email aauwpgh@aauwpgh.org.

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Why it is important to R.S.V.P.?

It is important that if you plan on attending the meeting that you R.S.V.P. by the deadline above. The reason that we ask you to do this is two-fold: (1) we know how many members to expect, and (2) in the event we have to cancel the meeting for any reason we know who to call. Please direct any questions to aauwpgh@aauwpgh.org.

Be a Member Detector!

New members are the lifeblood of every organization, including ours.

We encourage everyone to invite their friends, relatives, co-workers, and neighbors to our meetings throughout the year.



Pittsburgh Branch Election

New officers for the offices of Program Vice President, Finance Officer, and President will be elected this year at our annual meeting held on May 11, 2013.

The Nominations Committee of Karin Neilson (chair), and Gwendolyn Ormes worked very hard during the past couple of months to come up with a slate of one candidate for each office.

Those candidates are Karin Neilson for Program Vice President, Bernie Cerasaro for Finance Officer, and Patricia Byerly for President.



Karin Neilson

Karin is our current Program Vice President and looks forward to 2 more years.



Bernie Cerasaro

Bernie is currently our Finance Officer. She has done a terrific job of keeping track of our finances and making sure that our tax returns are filed on time.



Patricia Byerly

Pat currently serves as Communications Chair and oversees the publication of the newsletter each month as well as keeping our web site current.



Voting will take place at the annual membership meeting in May so please be sure to attend and support the candidates.

Shape the Future Event: Teacher Appreciation

By Michele Buford



Branch members Susan Banerjee & Michele Buford



Branch president Shari Muench with co-principal and Trina Hall



AAUW Pittsburgh hosted its first Teacher Appreciation Reception for Propel Montour in Kennedy Township on April 4, 2013 from 5 to 7 pm. Thanking teachers for all they do to help prepare our future was in the foremost of our minds as we served administrators and staff recipes from our cookbook. Along with celebrating all they do for students, AAUW Pittsburgh decided this would be the perfect opportunity to "Shape the Future" and offer discount memberships to the staff at Propel Montour.

With almost half of their staff in attendance, it was truly an honor for all of us to interact with these very special individuals. As a token of our appreciation, the staff was given tumblers filled with pencils and gift bags of personal goodies. Everyone had a great time and truly enjoyed our cookbook recipes. We raffled off one of our cookbooks and the lucky winner was very excited to win.

The principals spoke for a few minutes to thank their staff and to encourage our partnership with them in promoting AAUW's mission and making our community better than ever! It was truly a night of appreciation and encouragement for both Propel Montour and AAUW Pittsburgh! We are looking forward to partnering with them in the fall for a STEM event involving staff, students, and parents.



Special thanks to Shari Muench, Bernie Cerasaro, Marci Henzi, Trina Hall, Michele Buford, Pat Byerly, Susan Banerjee, and Karin Neilson.

Update on VAWA

On March 7, 2013, President Barack Obama signed a reauthorization of the legislation.

"All women deserve the right to live free from fear," the president said in his remarks before signing the bill. "That's what today is about."

The reauthorization, which includes expansion of protections to gay couples and Native American women, passed the House last month after over a year of partisan disagreement over its renewal.

It was ultimately approved by the House by a vote of 286 to 138, with a minority of Republicans joining Democrats to support it.

The bill passed the Senate earlier in February by an overwhelming majority.

"This victory shows that when the American people make their voices heard, Washington listens," President Obama said.

If you are interested in the entire bill text please go to:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s47/text>

Source:
<http://firstread.nbcnews.com/news/2013/03/07/17226287-obama-signs-violence-against-women-act-reauthorization?lite>

How Congress Voted

With the following you can easily track how congress votes on bills and resolutions.

<http://www.govtrack.us/>

This is also an interesting site:

<http://www.opencongress.org/>

2013 AAUW National Election

All AAUW members are eligible to elect candidates for the AAUW Board of Directors and to vote on other items of business, including the proposed Public Policy Program and amendments to the AAUW Bylaws. Refer to the voter guide beginning on page E-1 of the spring/summer issue of the *Outlook*.

This year, voting will take place online. To vote online:

1. Find your member ID and voter PIN on the back cover of the spring/summer issue of the *Outlook*. The two numbers are located to the left of your address on the outside of the magazine.
2. Go to www.aauw.org/onevote, click on Vote, and log in with your member ID and password. (If you haven't already created a password, the system will prompt you to do so.)
3. Enter your voter PIN to access your ballot.
4. Click on the VOTE button to cast your ballot.

Everyone is encouraged to vote online. However, you may request to have a paper ballot mailed to you between April 1 and May 2 by sending an email to connect@aauw.org or call 800-326-2289. Save your "Outlook" because you will still need your PIN number from the cover. Paper ballots must be postmarked by May 17.

Online voting deadline is June 10, 9 p.m. CDT.



AAUW MISSION

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

About AAUW

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.

Because AAUW is a 501(C)(3) charitable membership organization, most of your national dues are tax deductible on your personal federal income tax return.

Help Wanted

Newsletter Editor

Wanted . . . a branch member with some writing skills and creativity who has 8-10 hours a month to write and publish the branch's **The Newsletter of American Association of University Women - Pittsburgh Branch**



Anyone interested should contact Pat Byerly.

Give a Grad a Gift



AAUW members can give recent college graduates a free, one-year AAUW (national) membership within two years of graduation, at no cost to you or them. State and local dues are just \$21.

Expose the grad to the power that comes from belonging to a national women-led organization of more than 150,000 members and supporters who believe in and advance equity and education for women and girls.

Expand their networking opportunities through career development opportunities and community action projects.

Keep them current on the events and people that affect their life as they receive *Mission & Action*, *AAUW Outlook*, Action Network alerts, and more.

Increase their buying power with access to member only discounts.

Please see Pat Byerly if you would like to give a grad a gift.



The branch is always looking for ideas for fund raisers to raise money for the Scholarship Fund and the branch's operating fund.

Do you have an idea for a fund raiser?



Do you have an idea for a program? Is there something you would like to see a program on? If so, don't be shy. Send your ideas to Karin, our Program VP at:

aaupgh.programVP@gmail.com

She will welcome your input.

Pittsburgh Branch Officers and Board

Elected Officers

President, Dr. Shari Muench
aaupgh.president@gmail.com
Program Vice President, Karin Neilson
aaupgh.programVP@gmail.com
Membership Vice President, Trina Hall
aaupgh.membershipVP@gmail.com
Finance Officer, Bernie Cerasaro
aaupgh.financeOfficer@gmail.com
Recording & Corresponding Secretary, Marci Henzi
aaupgh.secretary@gmail.com

Appointed Chairpersons

Communications/Web, Patricia Byerly
aaupgh.communication@gmail.com
Public Policy, Advocacy & Diversity,
Gwendolyn Ormes
aaupgh.publicpolicy1@gmail.com
Michele Buford
aaupgh.publicpolicy2@gmail.com

Supporting Liaisons and Committees

Public Relations Liaison, Rosemary Martinelli

Scholarship Committee Chair, Susan Banerjee
aaupgh.scholarship@gmail.com

Nominations Committee (2012-13), Karin Neilson and Gwendolyn Ormes

SAVE THE DATES

AAUW National Convention – June 9-12, 2013

AAUW-PA Summer Retreat in Lewisburg – July 13, 2013



AAUW Pittsburgh Branch annual trip to our archive at the Heinz History Center – July 27, 2013



AAUW Western District Meeting in Erie – September 7, 2013



AAUW Beaver Valley Branch **KITCHEN TOURS** – September, 28, 2013

AAUW Pittsburgh Branch Blood Drive – fall 2013.

We are working with Chatham University to sponsor a blood drive. Volunteers will be needed to pass out refreshments. More details will follow.



STEM Event at Propel Montour planned for September-October 2013

Letters to the Editor

Do you have something you want to say? Well, here is an opportunity to let everyone know what you think. If you have something you want to speak out about please say your piece in an email to Pat Byerly at aaupgh.communication@gmail.com and watch for it to be published in future issues of **The Newsletter of American Association of University Women - Pittsburgh Branch**.

Gun Violence/Gun Control

By Patricia Byerly

On March 20, 2013, I attended a meeting of the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, INC (LWVGP). Their focus was on Gun Violence and I thought I would share with you what I learned.

President Obama's Plan includes (http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/wh_now_is_the_time_full.pdf):

1. Closing background check loopholes to keep guns out of dangerous hands.

Most gun owners buy their guns legally and use them safely, whether for self-defense, hunting, or sport shooting. Yet too often, irresponsible and dangerous individuals have been able to easily get their hands on firearms. We must strengthen our efforts to keep guns from falling into the wrong hands.

2. Banning military style assault weapons and high capacity magazines and taking other common sense steps to reduce gun violence.

We need to do more to prevent easy access to instruments of mass violence. We also need to provide law enforcement with additional tools to prevent gun violence, end the freeze on gun violence research, make sure health care providers know they can report credible threats of violence and talk to their patients about gun safety, and promote responsible gun ownership.

3. Make schools safer – provide more counselors, less bullying.

We need to make our schools safer, not only by enhancing their physical security and making sure they are prepared to respond to emergencies like a mass shooting, but also by creating safer and more nurturing school climates that help prevent school violence. Each school is different and should have the flexibility to address its most pressing needs. Some schools will want trained and armed police; others may prefer increased counseling services. Either way, each district should be able to choose what is best to protect its own students.

4. Increase access to mental health services.

As President Obama said, "We are going to need to work on making access to mental health care as easy as access to a gun." Today, less than half of children and adults with diagnosable mental health problems receive the treatment they need. While the vast majority of Americans with a mental illness are not violent, several recent mass shootings have highlighted how some cases of mental illness can develop into crisis situations if individuals do not receive proper treatment. We need to do more than just keep guns out of the hands of people with serious mental illness; we need to identify mental health issues early and help individuals get the treatment they need before these dangerous situations develop.

The White House has a web site dedicated to doing something about gun violence <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/preventing-gun-violence>. The content on the site is too much to duplicate here but the following is an excerpt from that web sites.

President Obama said, "We won't be able to stop every violent act, but if there is even on thing that we can do to prevent any of these events, we have a deep obligation, all of us, to try."

Most gun owners are responsible and law-abiding, and they use their guns safely. The President strongly believes that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual right to bear arms. But to better protect our children and our communities from tragic mass shootings, there are common-sense steps we can take right now.

While no law or set of laws will end gun violence, it is clear that the American people want action. If even one child's life can be saved, then we need to act. Now is the time to do the right thing for our children, our communities, and the country we love.

Lucille Pranter-Holliday from Pittsburgh United talked about the state's Lost and Stolen Hand Gun Ordinance (<http://www.ceasefirepa.org/issues/lostorstolen>). According to Lucille and this web site: If a person discovers that his or her firearm has been lost or stolen, he or she should report it missing to the police within a reasonable period of time. Lost or stolen handgun reporting is a reform designed to crack down on straw-purchasers -- people who buy guns, and then sell them illegally to people who can't buy them on their own. It's commonsense. If you car was stolen, you'd report it missing - wouldn't you? The problem is that this law is on the books at the state level but local municipalities are not permitted to enforce it. Only the state of Pennsylvania can!

The web site further informs us that: Most guns used in crimes were once bought legally, and then through theft, straw purchasing, or trafficking, make their way into the hands of criminals. By requiring missing handguns to be reported, police can begin looking for a lost or stolen handgun before it winds up at the scene of a crime. Even though citizens overwhelmingly support requiring lost or stolen firearms be reported missing to the police, our state has refused to seriously consider this commonsense reform. In the absence of action by the state, dozens of communities across Pennsylvania have taken matters into their own hands by adopting the reform as local law, or passing a resolution demanding the state address this issue.

Recently, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved a measure that would make the practice of illegally buying a gun for someone else a felony, and increase penalties for the crime. The measure which addresses a practice know as straw purchasing, passed the committee by 11 to 7. So where do we go from here?

Sen. Bob Casey, who has long opposed new gun laws, has changed his views in the aftermath of the shootings in Newtown, CT and would support bills to ban assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition clips. He says that if the bills come before the Senate, he'll vote for them.

So how does Sen. Pat Toomey feel about gun control:

He is a "proud" supporter of the Second Amendment.
He voted YES on prohibiting suing gunmakers and sellers for gun misuse.
He voted YES on decreasing gun waiting period from 3 days to 1.

Sen. Pat Toomey has been quoted on several occasions as saying "My idea of gun control is a steady aim". He has been working recently on some reform.

Other Sources: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/08/us/politics/bipartisan-bill-straw-gun-purchases-senate.html?_r=0
http://www.philly.com/philly/news/politics/congressional/20121219_Sen_Casey_changes_stance_on_gun_laws.html
http://www.philly.com/philly/news/politics/congressional/20121219_Sen_Casey_changes_stance_on_gun_laws.html
http://www.ontheissues.org/domestic/Pat_Toomey_Gun_Control.htm
<http://www.keystonepolitics.com/2012/12/pat-toomey-flashback-my-idea-of-gun-control-is-a-steady-aim/>