



Easton (PA) Branch

The Easton Edition

Easton, PA Branch Newsletter

CALENDAR

Newsletter Deadline

Saturday, February 15

Branch Meeting

Saturday, February 1

Board Meeting

Monday, February 3, 7 pm

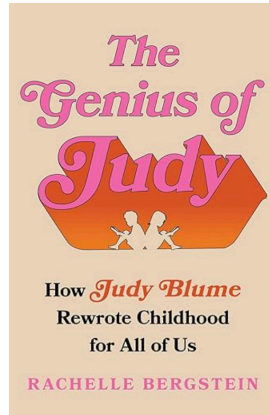
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2025

The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill; the willingness to learn is a choice.

Brian Herbert, Kevin J. Anderson,
Dune: House Harkonnen



Community One Read
Saturday, February 1, 1 pm
Palmer Library

The Genius of Judy: How Judy Blume Rewrote Childhood for All of Us
by Rachelle Bergstein

Many of us had a childhood before Judy Blume's books came along, but we are living in the world that she rewrote. This is a chance to talk about not only Judy Blume and her books, but also the attempts today to go backwards, by banning books like hers.

The link below will take you to a PBS News Hour interview with Judy Blume that aired in 2023 and is available now on YouTube. It lasts a little less than 8 minutes.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q51jT_qam_I

This program is open to the community. Join us and add to the discussion.

From the Presidents' Pen

Welcome to 2025.

There is so much news as the end of President Biden's term nears. Much of what he is doing, I feel should have been done long ago...and how much justice will be done away with in the new administration. In my mind, that makes it even more important to be a member of AAUW, a women's organization that has consistently stood up for the rights and equality of women. We must support the positive actions that National tries to take on behalf of all women. Two actions that particularly stand out to me are the ratifications of the Equal Rights Amendment, long overdue, and the interpretation of Title IX just published in the Department of Education directive which, if upheld, "will alter the way many schools plan to pay their athletes in the future revenue-sharing world of college sports."

Welcome to 2025.

There are exciting programs planned for February and beyond. Our February program, on February 1 at the Palmer Library, will be a discussion of Rachelle Bergstein's book, ***The Genius off Judy***. Did you read the Judy Blume books as a child or did your children read them? What were your reactions, what were their reactions? What impact did these books have? Come, join the discussion and bring your friends.

Our annual **Evening at the Williams Center** takes place in March. Before the event, Phyllis Finger is hosting a tapas get together at her home. As we have no fundraiser scheduled this year, please consider making a donation to our scholarship fund and/or to our Girls Recognition Night program. This year, our branch is awarding five scholarships of \$3,000 each to local high school graduating seniors and/or to women whose college education has been interrupted but are now ready to resume their education.

Please volunteer for the fourth year of our popular **Girls Recognition Night** on May 1.

February is **Black History Month** and I suggest watching The Six Triple Eight movie on Netflix. This is another story based on true events in World War II that most of us know nothing about. I do remember a lot from the 60's and how difficult it was for a friend of mine from Guyana to travel in this country. And even in the 70's, learning how a Peace Corps friend, married to a Ghanian, had to adjust travel to Florida always keeping the color barrier in mind to protect his wife. Just a few of my reflections and not just in the month of February.

Lisa and I will not be continuing as co-presidents next year. A nominating committee has been formed and committee members will be making calls. Please consider how you can step up and contribute so that our branch may continue our exciting programs and good work in the community.

Warmly,

Fran

PUBLIC POLICY CONVERSATIONS – FEBRUARY 2025

Questions about why women are less likely to use Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) were being debated in business publications as the New Year rolled in. Artificial Intelligence adopters are disproportionately men, a disconnect that could exacerbate the gender pay gap, Bloomberg Businessweek reported. A July Federal Reserve Bank of New York consumer survey found the existence of “an economically and statistically significant A.I. gender gap.” In the early days of the Internet, it was men who dominated. More recently, research shows that women are significantly less likely than their male counterparts to use financial technology – or fintech – products. But the generative A.I. gap is noteworthy because of the extent to which this particular technology is already radically and rapidly transforming the labor market.

A Goldman Sachs forecast predicts that A.I. could automate up to the equivalent of 300 million full time jobs globally over 10 years. Analysis by economists at the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) looking at self-reported data, shows the A.I. gender gap may be explained by varying levels of trust in technology. “Women are generally more concerned about the negative consequences of sharing data,” they wrote, while men “see greater benefits for their job opportunities and lower risks from the use of gen A.I.” Sander van’t Noordende, CEO of the world’s largest employment agency Randstad, told Businessweek, “The way technology is today you can’t afford to check out. Pay should be based on productivity. And A.I. – simply put – is a productivity booster.”

The jobs most likely to be disrupted by generative A.I.–or even render redundant--are also the jobs disproportionately held by women. Analysis done last year by the UNC Kenan Flagler Business School found that eight out of 10 women or about 59 million individuals in the US workforce, are in occupations that are “highly exposed to generative A.I. automation, compared to about six out of 10 men.” **Top of the list of exposed jobs are office and administrative support roles.** Authors of the UNC analysis wrote, “As the saying goes, you won’t be replaced by A.I. You will be replaced by someone who knows A.I.” But empowering women with digital literacy could potentially be a really important way of closing the gen A.I. gap. The issue is, learning something new takes time, Heather McCullough, a senior fellow at the Aspen Institute, said. “And time is not something that many women have in abundance.” she added, “The truth is, regardless of gender, gen A.I. can be a massive tool for economic mobility...I just hope that women recognize that. The potential is too big to ignore.”

At the end of November a Deloitte report found the share of women using or experimenting with generative A.I. had tripled in 2024 from the prior year, compared to a 2.2 times increase for men. This helped narrow the gender gap. Deloitte’s authors predicted that despite the persistent generative A.I. gender divide, women are poised to eclipse men in its use – as early as 2025 in some countries. Businessweek’s reporter for this story is Josie Cox, author of “Women Money Power: The Rise and Fall of Economic Equality.”

Lilly Gioia

Volunteers Needed for GRN

Girls Recognition Night is taking place on May 1st at the Nature Nature Center in Easton. We need volunteers to help with specific duties - seating the girls and their parents, handing out programs and name tags, helping with refreshments and clean up.

This is a special event honoring 7th grade girls for their excellence in the STEAM areas. Please consider volunteering for one of the duties listed above. It's always fun to feel the excitement of the girls and see the pride in their parents' eyes as their daughters receive their certificates and a small gift.

Contact Fran Kennedy at frankenn@yahoo.com. and say YES!



Acronyms

STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math

GRN - Girls Recognition Night



Holiday Celebration

Members and their spouses gathered at the home of Claire and Paul Degan on December 8, 2024 to celebrate the holidays and enjoy the company.. A variety of finger foods including a tray of yummy desserts were served. The weather cooperated as it was a sunny day. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to socialize in this relaxed and cordial atmosphere. Claire and Paul shared their love of collecting antiques with interested members. It was a wonderful start to the holiday season.

Dates to Remember

- February 1 - **Branch Program**
- February 2 - Ayn Rand Day
- February 7 - **Wear Red Day**
- February 14 - Ferris Wheel Day
- February 19 - Chocolate Mint Day
- February 27 - National Chili Day

Evening at the Williams Center and Tapas Event

Join us on March 28th as we celebrate our Evening at the Williams Center, an event we use to raise money for our scholarship fund. As this is our only fundraiser this year, we encourage you to come, enjoy the company of fellow AAUW members and friends, watch the amazing dance company Flamenco Vivo and make an additional donation to our scholarship fund.

Prior to the performance, we will gather at the lovely home of Phyllis and Ellis Finger for tapas as we enjoy the company, the food, and the always stimulating conversation.

RSVP for this evening by using the flyer below:

**Annual Evening at the Williams Center
Friday March 28, 8pm
Flamenco Vivo**

Flamenco Vivo has commissioned Patricia Guerrero, internationally acclaimed flamenco dancer-choreographer and winner of the 2021 Spain National Dance Award, to create QUINTO ELEMENTO (Fifth Element), a new evening-length work set to an original score of live music by GRAMMY®-nominated composer Jose Luis de la Paz. QUINTO ELEMENTO explores ether, that which we do not see yet is ever-present, the essence that makes up the space around us. By drawing on her deep knowledge of traditional flamenco structure and daringly deconstructing its rules, Guerrero seeks to extract the essence of flamenco itself, its invisible fifth element, and make it tangible to audiences.

Tickets are \$30. A portion of each AAUW ticket goes towards local scholarships. Spouses and friends are welcome. Please reserve tickets by March 15.

Please send reservations by March 15 to: Rosemary Baker. Make checks payable to: AAUW Easton Branch

Order Form: Evening at the Williams Center March 28, 2025

Name _____

Tickets for Flamenco Vivo _____ (qty) @ \$30 each

Additional Donation for Scholarship Fund _____

Total of check enclosed: _____ (payable to AAUW Easton Branch)

Will you be attending Tapas prior to the event at the Finger's _____

In Memoriam



On New Year's Day, our friend and AAUW member Helen Pearson passed away, aged 97. Below is an extremely condensed account of Helen Pearson's long and accomplished life, with attention to her academic and professional interests.

She grew up in a home across from Nevin's Park, where she sledged, and ice skated as a child. After graduation from Cedar Crest College, she married and had four children. While the children were in public school, she earned a degree in Speech and Hearing from the former East Stroudsburg State College and went on to serve as a clinical director at the Helen Beebe Speech and Hearing Center in Easton.

After earning three master's degrees including Speech and Hearing, Counseling, and Pastoral Counseling, Helen worked as a Community Chaplain at Easton Hospital and was a Hospice Chaplain for the Visiting Nurse Association of Easton. Thereafter, Helen continued her lifelong love of learning with the pursuit of a Master of Divinity degree from Moravian Theological Seminary. She then was ordained at St. John's UCC on Morgan Hill at the age of 70 where she served as Assistant Pastor. Helen continued serving as a visiting pastor before retiring in her 90s. She also facilitated numerous book club organizations and was a proud member of the scholarly Fortnightly Club organization.

Sound Program Photos



Interest Groups

The Easton Branch has several interest groups created to stimulate discussions, encourage networking and support the community. If you have ideas for additional groups, let us know. Every group looks forward to new participants. Call if you are interested in joining a group.

Book Discussion

Chair: Susan McNamara



February 17, 2:00 pm
Hostess: Susan McNamara
Lethal Legacy by Linda Fairstein

International Relations

Chair: Fran Kennedy



February 25, 2:00 pm
Hostess: TBD
Topic: Women Leaders in Asia and the Pacific

Bridge

Chair: Rosemary Baker



Contact Rosemary for date and time. New members welcome.

Out To Lunch

Chair: Claire Degnan



All members welcome.
Date: TBD
Location: TBD

Mah Jongg

Chair: Randi Blauth



February 10, 1:30 p.m.
February 24, 1:30 pm
Hostesses: Toni, Susan

Tapas Dining

Chair: Phyllis Finger



Date: March 28, 5:30 pm
Hostess: Phyllis Finger

Stitch and Be

Chair: Toni Hoffman



February 6, 2:30 p.m.
Hostess: Susan McNamara

Science

Chair: Susan McNamara



Date: March 20, 1:30 pm
Hostess: Susan McNamara
Topic: **The Song of the Cell** by Siddharta Mukherjee
Part 2: The One and the Many
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Walking Group

Chair: Fran Kennedy
Every Friday 9 am

American Association of University Women

AAUW National	800.326.2289	www.aauw.org
Easton Branch		easton-pa.aauw.net
Co-Presidents	Lisa Spitale, Fran Kennedy	easton-pa.aauw.net/contact/
Membership Team	Carolyn Connors	easton-pa.aauw.net/membership/
Easton Edition	Toni Hoffman	easton-pa.aauw.net/contact/

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

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to members to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national orientation, disability, or class.

The AAUW Funds include the Educational Opportunities Funds (formerly a part of the AAUW Educational Foundation) which help us to advance equity for women and girls through programs such as American and International Fellowships and Community Action grants.

AAUW Funds also include the Legal Advocacy Fund which provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sexual discrimination, the Leadership Programs Fund (formerly the AAUW Leadership and Training Institute), the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund, and the Public Policy Fund.

AAUW
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED