

May 2024

# CHIPS

*The monthly newsletter of the Westchester Branch of the American Association of University Women, Westchester County, New York*



Westchester AAUW Has Been  
Empowering Women and  
Girls Since 1933



## MAY CO-PRESIDENT MESSAGE

**Abby Hirsch and Marcia Keizs**

Most of us write a last will and testament. We do this to indicate what we want to leave to friends and relatives. These items usually include gifts of monetary value as well as perhaps special pieces of jewelry, artwork, sculptures and other items that are important and meaningful to us. We hope that our children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and friends will appreciate these items and understand the meaning that it all had for us.

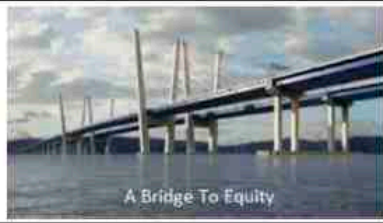
But consider as well that there are other types of items that we can also share. These are our legacies of values, some of which we inherited from our family members and that we wish to pass on to subsequent generations. These might include values such as the importance of family, the importance of education, the importance of community, the importance of social justice, the importance of volunteerism, to name just a few. Have you considered spending some time brainstorming a list of your values? This exercise will be important in identifying what those values are and how you have shared them with family and how you plan to continue to share them with family members now and in the future.

It is interesting to see how we spend our money since this does represent our values. Some spend money on expensive cars, jewelry, or other merchandise. Others may choose to donate money to charities that for instance feed the homeless; or organizations like Doctors Without Borders, who heal the sick in war-torn locations; or the KIND Foundation, a branch of UNICEF that builds and donates desks to deserving school children. There are so many organizations that we are propelled to support because we so value their mission and their work. The decision of what organization to support is purely personal, driven by our own personal and family values.

Community is also very important to most of us. Our community may include involvement in a church, temple, civic organizations and of course our own AAUW. Here, we share the value of being part of a group that is important to us, and we both give and receive support, as well as spend quality time in interest groups and Branch Meetings with people who share our set of values and pursue activities in which we have a shared interest.

Our AAUW Branch has two different book clubs, an art interest group and a poetry interest group. Where did our appreciation for these groups come from? I remember as a little girl reading the Bobsy Twins as my mother would be in the kitchen preparing dinner. After I finished each chapter, she would ask me what I read, and we would discuss it. As I got older, my mother took me to the library and introduced me to authors who were not being taught in school. These included James Baldwin, Richard Wright and others who had been condemned by the House of Un-American Activities during McCarthyism such as Pearl Buck, Arthur Miller and Howard Fast. I do hold on to these lessons and values today.

As an organization, we share many values. For instance we continue to raise funds to provide scholarships to WCC students; we support the intentional exposure of teenage girls to learn more about the possibility of leadership in the public policy setting through our collaboration with The League of Women Voters in executing the Running and Winning event annually; and we have been at the forefront of encouraging more young women to enter STEM careers through our benchmark program, Girls for STEM. Many of our monthly Branch programs also support our values as we come together to discuss the contributions of Black women in our county, the importance of women in higher education and our commitment to see the ERA amendment pass next November. *(Cont. on page 2)*



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

**VISION:** Equity for All

**OUR VALUES:** Intersectional. Inclusive. Intergenerational. Empowering. Though we are nonpartisan, we are not values-neutral: We fight to remove the barriers and biases that stand in the way of gender equity. We train women to negotiate for pay and benefits and to pursue leadership roles. And we advocate for federal, state and local laws and policies to ensure equity and end discrimination.

**BRANCH OFFICERS**

**Co-Presidents**

Abby Hirsch & Marcia Keizs

**Program Co-Vice Presidents**

Diana Lennon & Teresa N. Neal

**Membership Co-Vice Presidents**

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Susan Appel & Elaine Weiss

**Corresponding Secretary**

Susan Ferris Rights

**Co-Treasurers**

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**CHIPS Editor**

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**Branch Web Site**

[westchester-ny.aauw.net](http://westchester-ny.aauw.net)

**State Web Site**

[www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org)

**National Web Site**

[www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)

**Facebook**

AAUW Westchester NY

Bridge Photo from NY State Thruway Authority

(Cont. from page 1) So as we consider our legacy of “possessions” to our family through our wills, let us also consider the legacy of values that we wish to pass on, not only to our family, but also to our broader community, wherever that may be. At AAUW we can be proud of the work we do in advancing women and girls. From our meetings and programs we learn a great deal from one another as we think about and share our values. Through this message, we invite you to think about the legacy of values that you wish to leave, and consider now how best these may be memorialized and conveyed.

*The New Westchester Symphony Orchestra  
Join us for a musical spring interlude! Westchester County musicians will present a concert to welcome spring while highlighting the orchestra's outstanding female musicians.*

**MAY BRANCH MEETING**

**Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.**

**Greenburgh Public Library, 300 Tarrytown Rd,  
Elmsford and via Zoom.**

Visit [www.greenburghlibrary.libcal.com](http://www.greenburghlibrary.libcal.com) to register for in-person or virtual to receive the Zoom link.



The New Westchester Symphony Orchestra offers amateur instrumental musicians in and around Westchester County an opportunity to build musicianship in a supportive, noncompetitive setting while practicing and performing significant orchestral and ensemble

works. They are a non-audition community orchestra that welcomes musicians of all ages and abilities. .

Maestro Steven Huang is the Music Director and Conductor of the New Westchester Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted orchestras and operas across the country and throughout the world. At the age of twenty-one, he served as Music Director of the Bach Society Orchestra of Harvard University, where he received his undergraduate degree. While at Harvard, Mr. Huang also directed the Lowell House Opera (the oldest continuously running opera company in New England). Most recently, he successfully concluded a sixteen-year appointment as Associate Professor and Director of Orchestras at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where he brought the program to new achievements. Widely respected as a music educator and conducting pedagogue, Mr. Huang is the founder and director of International Conducting Masterclasses, Inc., which has trained scores of conductors over the

**SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR SPRING FLING!**

**The new date for the Westchester AAUW Spring Fling is June 12 at 5 p.m. at St. Andrews Golf Club in Hastings on Hudson. Details will be announced soon!**

**CURRENT ISSUES  
MAY 3RD AT 10 AM  
VIA ZOOM**



This month we will be discussing “Edgemont secession” and “Albany Shenanigans”, as well as other topics.

Come join this informative forum.

If you are interested and would like to join us, contact Ellen Leuner.

**There are times when one of our members is dealing with an illness, a loss, or another personal crisis.**



If you know of a member who should receive our well wishes or support, please send the information to our corresponding secretary, Susan Ferris Rights at [susanferris123@gmail.com](mailto:susanferris123@gmail.com)



**TUESDAY MORNING LIT GROUP**

The Tuesday Morning Lit Group will meet in May 14 at 10 a.m. via Zoom. There has been a change in plans: our book will be The Frozen River, an historical novel, by Ariel Lawhon. Our discussion leader will be Susan Ferris Rights.

Please contact Wilma Gitchel if you'd like to join us.

**EVENING LITERATURE GROUP**

The Evening Lit Group will meet on Wednesday, May 1 at 6 p.m. at The Lexington Square Cafe in Mt. Kisco. Barbara Wright will lead the discussion of The Weight of Ink by Rachael Kadish. Please contact Marsha Savino by phone, e-mail or text to let her know if you plan to attend.

If you have questions about this group phone Ellen Eschmann, the group leader. New members are welcome.

**ART INTEREST GROUP**

On Thursday, May 16 the Art Interest Group will visit the Neuberger Museum of Art for a private tour of their special exhibition celebrating the museum's fiftieth year.

If you would like to come, email Shelli Pines.

**Have  
You Seen  
Our Web Site?**

**[westchester-ny.aauw.net](http://westchester-ny.aauw.net)**

Board minutes are posted on the Web Page.

**JOIN AAUW  
WESTCHESTER BRANCH**

Membership is open to anyone with an associate or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from an accredited college or university. To join, please complete this form and send a check payable to AAUW Westchester Branch to the address below. Dues for a new member are \$98 for the first year of membership, a \$10 reduction from regular membership dues, which are \$108/year. When you join the Westchester Branch of AAUW, you also become a member of the AAUW New York State and National organizations.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City:State:Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

College/University, Degree, Graduation Year:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

To join send a check to: Westchester AAUW, 455 Tarrytown Rd. #1354, White Plains, NY 10607 or to get more information go the Westchester AAUW Website ([westchester-ny.aauw.net](http://westchester-ny.aauw.net)).

## WOMEN IN THE MILITARY Submitted by Selena Barron

My grandson recently married a lovely woman who grew up in a home where women in the military were admired and honored. Her mother became a doctor while in the military service and remained in the service throughout her career. Her two younger sisters graduated from military colleges and are each serving in the Space Corps. To become more familiar with women in active roles in the military, I turned to military history.

Harry S. Truman, 75 years ago in 1948 signed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act which allowed women to serve as regular members of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. As of 2021 women constituted 17.3% of the active-duty force, about 231,741 members and 21.4% of the National Guard and reserves.

During World War II women served as pilots (WASPS), Women Airforce Service Pilots, nurses and intelligence officers. They were not assigned to combat roles. During the Korean War and Vietnam War women contributed to the military effort but not through direct combat. In the 1970s the Women's Army Corps (WACS) was disbanded and women were assigned into the regular army. In 1994 the Combat Exclusion Policy was lifted and women could serve in combat support roles but not in direct ground combat. In 2013 the Pentagon declared that all military positions would be open to women, including combat roles. In 2016 the first woman graduated from the rigorous Ranger School and in 2017 the first woman graduated from the Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course. Women now serve in combat roles in all branches of the military, including infantry, artillery, and special operations forces.

However women still face very real challenges in the military. For example, creating physical standards that are attainable and achievable for all service members is extremely difficult. Gender issues with regard to overcoming stereotypes and achieving acceptance within male units can also be problematic.

One woman stood out in my mind as a symbol of what could be achieved. Dr. Mary Walker was raised by abolitionist parents in Oswego, N.Y.. In 1855, she graduated as a medical doctor. In 1861 she volunteered for the Union Army, working as a volunteer at a temporary hospital in Washington, D.C. She also organized the Women's Relief Organization to assist wounded soldiers and their families. In 1863 her credentials were finally accepted and she became a War Department Surgeon in Tennessee. During the Civil War she often crossed lines to provide medical help to both sides. She was arrested as a spy while assisting a Confederate surgeon with an amputation. She was held in Castle Thunder for four months and then released in a prisoner exchange. She then served at the Louisville Women's Prison Hospital and at an orphanage in Clarksville, Tennessee.



Beyond her wartime work, she became a strong advocate for women's rights and equality for women. Even though she was a civilian and did not have commissioned military service, in 1865 President Andrew Johnson awarded her the Medal of Honor. There are about 3,500 recipients of this prestigious award. She is the only woman! In 1916 after a Congressional review of Medal of Honor Recipients, 911 medals, including Dr. Walker's, were rescinded. She refused to give her medal back and wore it until her death in 1919. In 1977 President Jimmy Carter reinstated her award.

By breaking down barriers for women, selflessly providing medical care to those who were in need on both sides, during and after the Civil War, on battlefields and later in a prison for women, Dr. Mary Walker stands out as a leader who made a very important difference.



### April 10th Branch Meeting

Program panel first row: Renee Parmar (Dean of School of Education, Lehman College), Susan Parish (President of Mercy College), Susan Burns (President of Un. of Mt. St. Vincent), and Laurie Austin (Director of Admissions and Recruitment at Lehman College). Standing: Diana Lennon ( Program Co V.P.) Abby Hirsh (Co President), Teresa Neal (Program Co V.P.) and Marcia Keizs (Co President)



## AAUW DUES RENEWAL TIME!

**AAUW Dues Renewal time!** Thank you all for supporting AAUW. Your support has been vital. Membership in the AAUW Westchester Branch expires at the end of June, so it's time to spring into action and renew. Please remember that your dues are tax deductible except for \$3 which supports the AAUW Action Fund that lobbies for our mission "to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy".

You will notice that there is the "Additional Donation/Contribution" line. If you can make an additional contribution to AAUW Westchester, it will be greatly appreciated.

You may pay via check or online. If you pay via check, please send a check **payable to AAUW Westchester Branch to:**

Judith Kessler, 50 Quail Close,  
Irvington, NY 10533.

To pay online with a credit card, go to our website <https://westchester-ny.aauw.net>.

(Click on the Member tab and select membership renewal). A \$2.75 service charge will apply to defer the cost of using PayPal. You do not need to have a PayPal account. You can sign in as a guest.

**Members \$108**  
**Life Members \$36**  
**New Members \$98**

**Additional**  
**(Donation/Contribution) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Total \_\_\_\_\_**

**Name \_\_\_\_\_**

**FYI: In order for your name to be included in our 2024-2025 Yearbook your dues must be received by July 31,2024.**

Since our Westchester Branch's main source of revenue to support our many programs is our dues [we only keep \$29 of your membership dues – \$72 goes to National and \$7 to NY State], please consider making an additional donation. Either include your donation in your dues check or make a donation on our website [westchester-ny.aauw.net](https://westchester-ny.aauw.net). Click on the Donate button (top right corner) and use your credit card to complete the transaction

Thank you for your continued support of AAUW.



### MAY 2024

5/1	Evening Literature Group	Lexington Square Cafe, Mt. Kisco	6 p.m.
5/3	Current Issues Discussion Group	Zoom	10 a.m.
5/8	Board Meeting		4 p.m.
5/8	Branch Meeting	Greenburgh Public Library and Zoom	5:30 p.m.
5/9	Art Interest Group	Newberger Museum of Art	
5/10	Deadline for submitting for CHIPS		
5/14	Tuesday Morning Literature Group	Zoom	10 a.m.
5/21	Poetry Interest Group	Zoom	1:30 p.m.

*Bridge - every Monday at 11 a.m. in person and/or 1 p.m. online*