

**JANUARY PROGRAM** "Living in Liberty"

It's happening here in Pittsburgh': Pennsylvania ranks 9th in new cases of human trafficking. It's happening here in Pittsburgh. It's happening in the communities around the city. It's a lot more prevalent than I think people realize. So many people don't know what human trafficking looks like.

*Living in Liberty* is one of the organizations that works to combat human trafficking in Southwestern PA by supporting survivors on the streets and in our safe homes as well as providing community education about the realities of commercial sexual exploitation in our city. Their work is supported by their Repurposed Thrift Store and is sustained by the efforts of over 150 faithful volunteers

Elizabeth Echevarria is the founder and CEO of Living in Liberty, a Pittsburgh-based nonprofit focused on providing services for victims and survivors of sex trafficking in Western Pennsylvania. Elizabeth is an amazing warrior with a servant's heart. She became interested in the issue of sex trafficking over a decade ago when she lived in the D.C. metro area. Living in Liberty was founded in 2012 by Elizabeth Echevarria to restore dignity, freedom, and a new life to victims of commercial sexual exploitation by creating a safe, secure, loving, and nurturing community where healing occurs and a new life begins. This presentation will explore Elizabeth's work.

**January Program**

Saturday, January 11, 2025

Location: La Roche University

Ryan Room

9:30 A.M. Social

10:00 A.M. Program

11:00 A.M. Branch Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81299701647?pwd=2W0CZi23vAze54Cepr0xET3uts23Zl.1>

Meeting ID: 812 9970 1647

Passcode: aauw

**Speaker:** Elizabeth Echevarria

**January Community Service Project****La Roche University Pantry**

**How do I donate?** Donated items can be optionally brought to branch meetings or board meetings and special interest groups such as morning book group, evening book group, IPOD's, Bridge group and Lunch bunch. If you belong to more than one group you only need to donate once.

Here is the list of some ideas: Shampoo for men and women, Toothpaste, Pads, Hormel microwavable meals, Cereal, Protein bars like Nature Valley, Tuna/salmon packets, Pepperoni packages, Fruit cups, Juice – apple is most popular, Popcorn, Tide pods, Spaghetti Sauce, Instant oatmeal, Pepperoni Slices, Chickpeas, Canned corn and Powdered milk.

## January at a Glance QUICK REFERENCE CALENDAR

### Jan 07, Board Meeting

At Linda Joy's House

### Jan 10, 1:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch *Olive Garden Italian Restaurant*

40 McIntyre Square Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

### Jan 10, 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. IPODs

June Maier is hosting

### Jan 11, 9:30 a.m. Branch Meeting

Program "Living in Liberty"

**Speaker:** Elizabeth Echevarria

Location: La Roche University, Ryan Room

### Jan 14, 9:30 a.m. Morning Book Group

*The River We Remember by William Kent Krueger*

Facilitator: Janis Kapadia

Hostess: West View Hub

### Jan 20 1:00 p.m. Evening Book Group

*The Secret Life of Sunflowers by Marta Molnar and Dana Marton.*

Facilitator: June Maier

Hostess: Joyce Ruzanik

***\*Please note time change and the change in book selection***

## Save The Date

**Great Decision starts Feb 1, 2025**

**May 31, 2025 Authors Lunch**  
***For The Love of Books***

## Viewpoint Articles

We encourage all of our members to submit articles to the Viewpoints. If you have something to include in our newsletter the deadline is the **25th of each Month**. Please send to Debbie Rosenfelder in word format at [rosenfelderd@verizon.net](mailto:rosenfelderd@verizon.net)



If I do not have it by 5 P.M. on the 25th of the month it may not make the Viewpoints

## WEB SITE



Don't Forget Me...  
I'm always here!  
I'm your Branch AAUW Website:  
<https://aaunorthhillspgh.org>  
Stay informed!

Webmaster: Susan Banerjee

## President's Message

Happy New Year, I hope everyone had a fun, peaceful, and wonderful holiday season.

We ended 2024 with our holiday lunch celebration at Wildwood Country Club. A nice afternoon was enjoyed by the twenty-six members who joined us for lunch.



We begin 2025 looking forward to another exciting year. Always remember, you're never too old to set another goal, dream a new dream, or try new things.

As I reflect over the past year, I am amazed at all we have accomplished. Our membership VPs, Francie Cech & Jennifer Schwoebel, have been hard at work. Membership is growing and I am extremely happy to welcome all of our new members. Our club will only continue to excel and our future look bright because of the wonderful ladies we have, the varied talents of each one of you, and the willingness to do so much for others makes us the branch we are.

In addition, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of our fundraising team, and the generosity of our members and community, we were successful in our fundraising initiatives over the past year (2024). We were able to award 2 La Roche scholarships last year. Hopefully our 2025 spring fundraiser, *For the Love of books* will be as successful.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication and generosity of each member of our branch. Your support, whether through volunteering your time, contributing funds, or advocating for our causes, makes a tangible difference, so I encourage each of you to continue to actively participate and share your ideas.

Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment and support. I am honored to serve as your President and look forward to achieving more success together in the coming year.

***WE HAVE A GREAT YEAR PLANNED!***

*Debbie*

**Empowering women is key  
to building a future we want.**

Amartya Sen

## Membership

### Let's Keep Growing Together!

In this season of reflection and gratitude, I have found myself sharing my appreciation for AAUW with several friends. When asked why I hold my membership so dear, I am quick to explain that I equate my experience to being on a road trip with wonderful women. Smart, funny, caring women who share a destination of equity for all women. Every single woman on this road trip brings something of value and importance to the journey and I am wiser because of them. Knowing the ever increasing importance of this pursuit of equity and justice has made me more appreciative than ever of my connection to the women in AAUW.



On this note, I am thrilled to welcome five more women to our NHP branch:

Susan Ayers, Deanna Finley, Linda Jordan, Judith Kuperstein, and Annahid Samiljan. We are thrilled that you have chosen to join our "road trip to equity" and look forward to spending time with you in the coming years!

AAUW is a community of more than 170,000 members standing strong for gender equity and please know **your membership matters!** AAUW has been transforming women's lives for more than a century, and we need to continue to raise our collective voices to address some of the most crucial issues of our time. **Please ask a friend** to join us when we gather together on January 11<sup>th</sup> to learn about "Living in Liberty" and as always, work together to support women.

We look forward to seeing you and working with you in 2025,  
 Francie Cech and Jennifer Schwoebel  
 Membership V.P.'s  
 AAUW NHP

### January 2025 Financial Report – June Maier

(as of December 13, 2024)

CHECKING		SAVINGS		9-MONTH CD	
Beginning Balance	\$8084.78	Beginning Balance	\$3,836.50	Beginning Balance	\$3,082.75
Deposits	\$938.00	Transactions	\$0.00		
Expenses	\$395.00	Interest Earned	TBD	Interest Earned	TBD
Ending Balances	\$9417.78	Ending Balances	\$3,836.50	Ending Balance	\$3,082.75
<b>CHECKING + SAVINGS + CD = \$16,337.03</b>					



## January Happenings

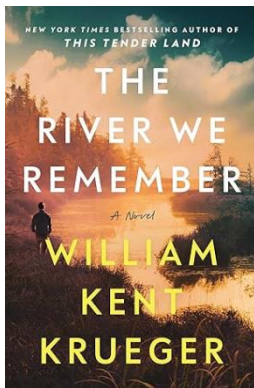
### Lunch Bunch

#### **Olive Garden Italian Restaurant 40 McIntyre Square Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15237**

Olive Garden is an American casual dining restaurant chain specializing in Italian-American cuisine. They have great Lunch specials



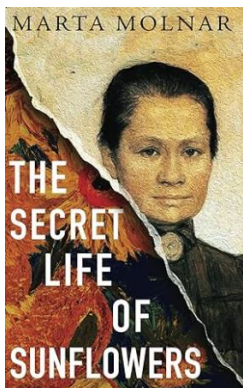
### **Morning Book Group     *THE RIVER WE REMEMBER* by William Kent Krueger**



On Memorial Day in Jewel, Minnesota, the body of wealthy landowner Jimmy Quinn is found floating in the Alabaster River, dead from a shotgun blast. The investigation falls to Sheriff Brody Dern, a highly decorated war hero who still carries the physical and emotional scars from his military service. Even before Dern has the results of the autopsy, vicious rumors begin to circulate that the killer must be Noah Bluestone, a Native American WWII veteran who has recently returned to Jewel with a Japanese wife. As suspicions and accusations mount and the town teeters on the edge of more violence, Dern struggles not only to find the truth of Quinn's murder but also put to rest the demons from his own past.

Caught up in the torrent of anger that sweeps through Jewel are a war widow and her adolescent son, the intrepid publisher of the local newspaper, an aging deputy, and a crusading female lawyer, all of whom struggle with their own tragic histories and harbor secrets that Quinn's death threatens to expose.

### **Evening Book Group     *The Secret Life of Sunflowers* by Marta Molnar and Dana Marton**



When Hollywood auctioneer Emsley Wilson finds her famous grandmother's diary while cleaning out her New York brownstone, the pages are full of surprises. The first surprise is, the diary isn't her grandmother's. It belongs to Johanna Bonger, Vincent van Gogh's sister-in-law.

Johanna inherited Vincent van Gogh's paintings. They were all she had, and they weren't worth anything. She was a 28 year old widow with a baby in the 1800s, without any means of supporting herself, living in Paris where she barely spoke the language. Yet she managed to introduce Vincent's legacy to the world.

The inspiration couldn't come at a better time for Emsley. With her business failing, an unexpected love turning up in her life, and family secrets unraveling, can she find answers in the past?

## Public Policy

### National:

#### **CEO Gloria Blackwell was interviewed regarding: What Happens if the Education Department Is Dissolved?**

**The problem:** [Bill S.5384](#) was introduced in November to the 118th Congress calling for the Department of Education's abolishment.

**Why it matters:** The department plays a critical role in protecting civil rights, providing financial aid, and supporting students with the greatest needs. Its elimination would jeopardize funding for low-income schools, special education programs, and make higher education a riskier bet for students. Watch the viewpoints for more updates

### State:

#### **How did Women Candidates Fare in the 2024 Pennsylvania Elections?**



In our Congressional races, two seats changed hands, from Democratic to Republican. One of those losses was by a woman, Susan Wild, who was replaced by a man. Our Pennsylvania delegation now consists of ten Republicans to seven Democrats, including four women out of the 17, down from five. All four are Democrats.

In the US Senate race, Sen. Casey conceded, switching the seat from a male Democrat to a male Republican.

You already are aware that for President, the male candidate defeated the woman candidate for the second time.

The picture in our Pennsylvania Legislature is brighter for women, particularly when considered over time.

In the Pennsylvania Senate, 18 of the 50 members are women, evenly split at nine per party, for a total of 36%. Democrats added one woman to move up to nine members, which is 40.9% of the 22 Democratic Senators. Republicans' nine seats account for 32.1% of their 28 members.

In the Pennsylvania House, Republicans hold 101 seats. After this election, they have two less women, dropping from 27 to 25 seats, for a current 25.7% of their caucus. Democrats have 102 seats, maintaining their one seat majority. One woman moved from the House to the Senate, and another did not run again, but two new women won, keeping Democratic women's numbers at 36 seats, for 35.3% of their caucus. A woman, Joanna McClinton, is Speaker.

According to Represent, an organization dedicated to supporting women Democratic Legislative candidates, the percentage of Democratic women members of each body has doubled in the last 10 years that Represent has been active. In 2014, women held 16 of the Democrats' 92 seats, for 17.9%. In 2014, women held only four of the Democratic Senate seats, for 14.8%.

In these worrisome times, we should remember that persistence pays off.

--Dianne Gregg and Mary Dupuis, Public Policy Co-Chairs

## Diversity

## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast

Join us at the 25th Anniversary of the  
Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast  
January 20, 2025



*"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."*

**Angela Reynolds, PhD, Speaker, CED, YWCA Greater Pittsburgh**

**Door opens at 8:00 a.m. | Breakfast served at 8:30 a.m.**

LA ROCHE UNIVERSITY, Zappala Campus Center Square  
9000 Babcock Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237

**Adult Tickets: \$20.00**

**Student (K-12) Tickets: \$15.00**

**Deadline:** Reservations and payment required by January 15, 2025

Questions: [peischl@comcast.net](mailto:peischl@comcast.net)

If you would like to donate to a food service project, please bring a non-perishable food item. An online registration option for the event is available at [bit.ly/LaRocheMLK](http://bit.ly/LaRocheMLK).

**Make check payable to North Hills Anti-Racism Coalition and mail to:  
MLK Breakfast, c/o J. Peischl, 8244 Coach Court, Allison Park, PA 15101**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please list additional names on the reverse side

Address

City Zip Code

Email 

Number of Adults

Number of Students

### Organization

I/We plan to attend, enclosed is the registration fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am unable to attend. Enclosed is my donation \$

           I/We would like to participate in a service project following the event.

I would like to support this event as a sponsor at the below level:

\$100.00 Freedom	\$75.00 Equality	\$50.00 Peace	Other
100%	0%	0%	0%
90%	10%	0%	0%
80%	20%	0%	0%
70%	30%	0%	0%
60%	40%	0%	0%
50%	50%	0%	0%
40%	60%	0%	0%
30%	70%	0%	0%
20%	80%	0%	0%
10%	90%	0%	0%
0%	100%	0%	0%
0%	0%	100%	0%
0%	0%	0%	100%

*Epinephelus septentrionalis* (Jenyns) - Juveniles and Adults - North Carolina - 1944 - Chesapeake Bay, Virginia - North Carolina - 1944 -  
 Connecticut - Delaware - North Carolina - Virginia - West Virginia - Maryland - Pennsylvania - Virginia - Kentucky - Tennessee - Mississippi -  
 and Louisiana - the North - 1944 - Cape Cod Bay

## Great Decisions 2025

We hope your new year includes being part of our Great Decisions Program!

This annual program examines the most critical global issues facing America today, put forth by the Foreign Policy Association. Our program includes visiting speakers who share their understanding of these issues as well as group discussion.

AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh is very proud to once again sponsor this educational outreach program. Our sessions will once again take place at La Roche University (or via Zoom) on Saturday mornings in February and March from 9:30 – 11:00 am. The 2025 Great Decisions briefing books will once again be available at the La Roche Library for those that wish to purchase one. The books will not be available until the middle of January, and we will be posting a notice on our AAUW website, and Facebook, with additional information closer to that time.

Our schedule for February will include:

- 1) **Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>- Our topic will be:**  
***China Relations*, and our speaker will be Dr. Mark Haas from Duquesne University.**
- 2) **Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup> – Our topic will be:**  
***American Foreign Policy in the Middle East*, and our speaker will be Professor Ross Harrison from the University of Pittsburgh.**
- 3) **Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> – Our topic will be:**  
***Future of NATO*, and our speaker will be Dr. Soren Fanning from Robert Morris University.**

**(Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> – to be announced)**

Great Decisions is a wonderful way to warm up your brain in Winter, and we look forward to growing just a little bit smarter with you each and every Saturday!

Francie Cech  
Fran Bogos  
Sr. Rita Yeasted





## The Spring La Roche Literary Society Presentations

The La Roche University Literary Society invites the community to two engaging presentations led by distinguished authors and historians this spring.

These free events offer an opportunity for guests to engage in scholarship, discussion and a deeper exploration of literary and historical topics. Both presentations will be hosted in the Ryan Room of the Zappala Campus Center at La Roche's campus in McCandless Township.



### **Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. Carleton Young: "Voices from the Attic: The Williamstown Boys in the Civil War"**

Author and historian Carleton Young has spent over a decade unearthing the story of two Civil War soldiers after discovering an enormous collection of letters in his family attic. In his book, "Voices from the Attic: The Williamstown Boys in the Civil War," Dr. Young shares the remarkable story of two brothers who served in the celebrated Vermont Brigade within the 6th Corps of the Army of the Potomac. This presentation will explore the surprisingly detailed and insightful letters that preserved the brothers' personal histories as well as a powerful narrative of the Civil War.

Dr. Young has undergraduate degrees in economics from Westminster College and in English from Point Park University, a Master of Arts in history from Ohio University and his Ph.D. in the history of education from the University of Pittsburgh. For 37 years he taught AP American history at Thomas Jefferson High School in Pittsburgh. He also has taught classes as an adjunct professor at the Community College of Allegheny County, the University of Pittsburgh, Eastern Gateway Community College and in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Carnegie Mellon University.

### **April 4 at 7 p.m. Thomas White '97: "The Witch of the Monongahela: Folk Magic in Early Western Pennsylvania"**

Award-winning author Thomas White '97 will discuss his book, "The Witch of the Monongahela: Folk Magic in Early Western Pennsylvania." This presentation will explore the legend of Moll Derry, a woman said to possess mysterious magical powers in the hills and hollows of Fayette County, Pennsylvania. Known as the Witch of the Monongahela, she has captivated writers and folklorists for over two hundred years and is featured in tales like the Lost Children of the Alleghenies and Polly Williams and the White Rocks.

Mr. White is the university archivist and curator of special collections at Duquesne University. He is an adjunct lecturer in Duquesne's History Department and an adjunct professor of history at La Roche University. He is the author of several books chronicling and preserving Pennsylvania's folklore, legends and obscure history.

The Literary Society, initiated at La Roche in the early 1980s, serves as a forum for scholarship and discussion on literature and related issues, fostering a vibrant exchange of ideas and community engagement. The upcoming presentations continue the Society's tradition of offering opportunities for dialogue and learning.

For more information, please contact Sister Rita Yeasted at 412-536-1216 or [rita.yeasted@larocheedu](mailto:rita.yeasted@larocheedu).

## Search for New Officers



January is the period in which our nominating committee begins its search for new officers. This year we need to fill the offices of Membership and Finance for two-year terms, beginning July 1, 2025.

For the starting of odd years, we will be electing a new President, Program VP and Secretary.

The Nominating committee is being formed. June Maier will be chairing this committee and is looking for volunteers.

If anyone is interested in one of these roles or wants to learn about more opportunities to get involved, please reach out to June Maier. If you are in one of these roles and would like to continue, please let June know.

If you are not interested in one of these roles you may want to add your creative talents to one of the following roles: Diversity, Viewpoints, Directory, Lunch Bunch or STEM.

## For the Love of Books

This fiscal year's fundraiser *For The Love Of Books* is scheduled for May 31, 2025.

So, now is the time for each member to ask, "How can I help?" North Hills Pittsburgh AAUW mission mirrors the mission of National AAUW, i.e., "to advance gender equity for women and girls through advocacy, research, and education". This branch cannot meet its goals of awarding scholarships and supporting other initiatives without a successful fundraiser.

What can I do to make this fundraiser a monumental success?" Ways you can help:

1. Make or solicit a gift basket or item for a gift basket.
2. Donate an item (s) (a gift card, tickets, or a food item)
3. Donate the cost of ticket for the event if you are not able to attend
4. Invite guests

We are only doing one fundraiser this year. WE NEED EVERYONE'S SUPPORT!



## December in Pictures

### Morning Book Group

Pauline Edison gave Morning Book Group members all a gift of her knitted scarves



### Holiday Lunch

















**Bridge Group Lunch**

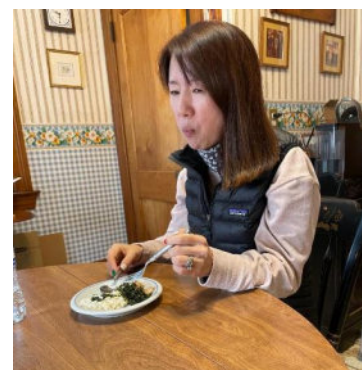




Evening Book Group



IPODS





**MISSION STATEMENT OF AAUW LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND**

*LAF provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.*

**AAUW MEMBERSHIP**

*AAUW, founded in 1881, is open to all graduates who hold an associate's or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.*

**AAUW DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

*In principle and 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, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.*

**BRANCH CONTACT INFORMATION**

President: Deborah Rosenfelder	412-916-9073 or <a href="mailto:rosenfelderd@verizon.net">rosenfelderd@verizon.net</a>
Membership: Frances Cech	412-448-1182 or <a href="mailto:fmcech@gmail.com">fmcech@gmail.com</a>
Membership: Jennifer Schwoebel	412-559-1053 or <a href="mailto:jenniferbmcelroy@gmail.com">jenniferbmcelroy@gmail.com</a>
Viewpoints Editor: Debbie Rosenfelder	412-916-9073 or <a href="mailto:rosenfelderd@verizon.net">rosenfelderd@verizon.net</a>

Branch Website: [aauwnorthhillspgh.org](http://aauwnorthhillspgh.org)

Branch Email: [aauwfam@gmail.com](mailto:aauwfam@gmail.com)

Facebook Page: AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh branch

CONNECT2AAUW: 800-326-2289 or [connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org)

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

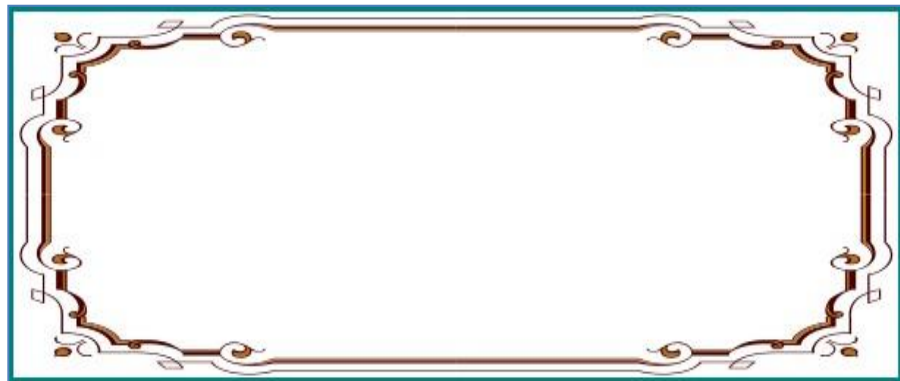
State Website: [www.aauw-pa.org](http://www.aauw-pa.org)

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## Viewpoints

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AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh Branch  
Deborah Rosenfelder, Distribution Manager  
8310 Van Buren Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15237



**Because Equity is still an issue**