

News from the Northwest

November/December, 2020



Newsletter of the Northwest Suburban Branch

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

Our Vision: Equity for all.

We're Still Here and We're Still Busy!

We still are not able to meet face-to-face, and we probably will not be able to do that for a long time, but our branch is not just sitting around doing nothing – which would be pretty easy to do! Several of our members did the virtual tour of the Illinois Holocaust Museum with the Ruth Bader Ginsburg exhibit, which we talked about during our virtual meeting in October, with Fran Kampwirth as our discussion guide; and our co-president, Wendi Thourson, spoke to us about the virtual women's art exhibit at Oakton Community College.

November, of course, started with the election on November 3rd and many people went to the polls, although a huge number had already voted by mail or by early-voting in their local communities. From then on, we waited for states to complete the ballot counting, even though it soon became apparent how the vote was going. Now, as a new era begins, we need to continue to be activists working to support the positions and legislation that benefit women. We did have a virtual meeting in mid-November, when we were invited to join the Jane Addams branch for a presentation on *Women Filmmakers and Movies*, a most interesting program.

Now we celebrate Thanksgiving – in a much different way from the usual – and then move into the holiday season. Our holiday gathering will be on Friday evening, December 4th, at 7:00 p.m. – virtual, of course! Prepare some goodies for yourself and join us for an evening of socializing and fun. Dress as you'd like – we'll only see what you're wearing above the waist – and eat whatever you want, whether it be something healthy or something decadent! We'll socialize for a while and then we'll see how good your memories are as we play several rounds of *Herstory Trivia*, with questions prepared for us by our co-president, Elaine. Invite a friend who might be a potential member of our branch to "join" you, each of you at your own computer or phone. As always at our December gathering, we will promote our Oakton Community College scholarship. If you have not already made a contribution to the scholarship for this year, why not do it now? Remember, our goal is to be able to give \$1,000 each year to a woman with financial need who is returning to school after a break in her education. Contributions may be sent to our treasurer, Megan McGaughey, 153 Babcock Drive, Palatine IL 60074-5561.



*We are thankful for good friends,
good health, good homes
and enough food.*

FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS

Dear Friends-Members,

We are recovering from all the activities and challenges of *Getting Out the Vote in 2020*, and hope that the new president and vice-president will prioritize equal rights, pay equity, public education, and access to affordable healthcare. We're looking forward to AAUW members being activists in 2021: contacting our representatives about paid sick leave, fair social security benefits for widows, the equal rights amendment, restoration of Title IX protections, and freedom from gun violence legislation. **And, how exciting to see a glass ceiling broken** as a woman, Kamala Harris, is finally elected as vice-president!

As we approach the holiday season, we will miss being together in person, but hopefully we can meet online via Zoom. In November we had two online programs: ***AAUW Fellows and Grantees***, and ***Women Filmmakers and Supporting Women Artists***. If you missed the programs, the program recordings are on the AAUW Jane Addams website, <https://janeaddams-il.aauw.net/>.

On Friday evening, December 4th, at 7:00 p.m., we will socialize online as a branch and get acquainted. You'll bring your own beverage and snacks. We'll begin by each sharing something we might not know about yourself. Next, we will play four rounds of *Herstory Trivia* (with prizes for each round!). Remember all those programs we viewed on WTTW about outstanding women, the book discussion of *The Only Woman in the Room*, and *The Suffragists/The Vote* PBS series, and the book *The Woman's Hour*? We have so many women trailblazers that the history textbooks have omitted, but we need to remember!

You will receive the link for our holiday party a few days prior to the event. Watch your email for it!

The holiday season can be stressful, not to mention during a pandemic. Let's reach out to friends and family to wish them well and ask them if they need help with anything. If you want to send a holiday greetings card to other branch members, remember the address list is on our website Members Only page. Access it at:

<https://nwsuburban-il.aauw.net/members-only/>

The password is "equitynw"

We are thankful for each of you joining us in advancing the AAUW mission of women and girls, and we wish you well during this holiday season! Let us know if you have any ideas for programs or if you need support in any way.

Elaine & Wendi

NEWS FROM THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

We are doing all that we can to stay connected via the Internet and have joined other groups to provide informative and interesting programs. We will add others to our list as they become available and will provide the links that you need to access them. As we gather virtually, we at least have a chance to see and greet each other.

Friday, December 4, 7:00 p.m.: Zoom Social: Herstory Trivia Game.

A virtual holiday social event promoting the Oakton Community College Scholarship; *Herstory Trivia Game* with questions about historical women of achievement and shows we watched and discussed virtually. Invite a friend! There will be prizes!

Wednesday, December 9, 7:30 p.m.: Caring, Sharing, and Dreaming

The Jane Addams Branch invites us to join this meeting. As 2020 comes to an end, let's talk about it and look forward. Please register in advance if you would like to attend:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZloc-yurTMvEt20KVnhWaYAA9fkPJusqGtc>

Friday, January 15, 7:00 p.m.: Good Mental Kung-Fu: How to Keep Your Calm in the Chaos

Thursday, January 21, 7:30 p.m.: Title IX Update

Thursday, February 25, 7:00 p.m.: Program to be announced, but save the date!

A BIT OF TRIVIA

(Who knows when you might need to know this?) Courtesy of our co-president, Elaine Fisher:

Maria Tallchief: Elizabeth Marie “Betty” Tallchief was an American ballerina. She was considered America’s first major prima ballerina. She was the first Native American to hold the rank and is said to have revolutionized ballet. Almost from birth, Tallchief was involved in dance, starting formal lessons at age three. She was born on January 24, 1925 in Fairfax, OK and died on April 11, 2013 in Chicago.

NEWS FROM STATE AND NATIONAL

State Convention - As you may expect, it will be virtual this year. We plan to follow tradition and hold the meeting beginning on Friday afternoon and resuming on Saturday. You will be receiving more information, but we are looking at mid to late April weekend dates.

Greatest Needs Fund - As the calendar year winds down, branches and individual members are considering donations to funds. Please remember that AAUW scholarships and fellowships are very well funded and will be granted far into the foreseeable future (about \$4 million each year). As you know, however, AAUW works to address the urgent needs such as Title IX and healthcare protection as well as economic security for women and girls. The Greatest Needs Fund allows our national organization to support advocacy efforts based on our mission statement. We urge you to support the Greatest Needs Fund.

ERA Advocates Focus on Senate and First 100 Days

By AJ Conroy, ERA Illinois

At the start of 2020, Virginia became the final state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. The resolution went to the National Archivist for certification. This ministerial task is proscribed by federal statute and this process was followed by Nevada, Illinois, the archivist and every state that ratified the “Madison Amendment” in the 90’s. This time, a lawsuit prevented that from happening.

Although the original lawsuit, brought by Alabama, South Dakota and Louisiana, was voluntarily dismissed in March, legal wrangling continues with two parallel lawsuits against the Archivist – one brought by private parties and the other between states.

Meanwhile, the US House of Representatives voted on February 13 to remove the time limit for ratifying the amendment. The resolution is now before the Senate as S.J.Res. 6. There is a small window of opportunity during the lame duck session.

At this point, there are three possible outcomes:

- The Senate votes to remove the time limit, and the Supreme Court defers to Congress using the political question doctrine.
- The Supreme Court directs the Archivist to certify ratification without Congressional action. The ERA would then become part of the U.S. Constitution.
- The Supreme Court decision dismisses the ERA, and advocates must restart the ratification process.

While the composition of the Senate is uncertain, who chairs the Judiciary committee and who serves as the senate majority leader exercises near complete control of what matters come for a vote. The upcoming Georgia runoff elections are of great interest to equality advocates who believe there are already the requisite votes to remove the deadline. The roadblock has been getting a senate vote.

What can advocates do now? Put the week of January 24 on your calendar and write a letter to the editor for the one-year anniversary of ratification. For details, visit VoteEquality.US/write4rights. Today, call our senators about voting for #SJRes6.

**We hope to see you soon at one or more of our
Zoom opportunities!**