

# News from the Northwest

**June, 2022**



**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.***

## **A NEW YEAR BEGINS!**

There won't be horns and fizzing champagne, but our new year will be here in just a few days! AAUW's fiscal year begins on July 1, and so our branch looks forward to plans for the coming year, having had our annual meeting at the end of May. We were so pleased to have several of our newer members present at that meeting.

Reports were given, the proposed bylaws amendments were adopted, and we held an election for two of the open positions among our officers. President Elaine was reelected, and will continue to do her usual fantastic job, and we have added a new secretary, Diane Forsythe. Although Diane is now living in Wisconsin, she is often in this area and is also able to join us virtually for any meeting. Our officers are:

President: Elaine Fisher

Vice-President: Open

Secretary: Diane Forsythe

Treasurer: Karen Heckmann.

Though not an elected officer, Irene Jinks will continue as editor of our newsletter.

Now that we are in a new program year, we are working on plans for upcoming meetings. We hope that we will soon be able to meet face-to-face regularly, but until that happens, we will continue to be virtual, with, perhaps, a group gathering outdoors while the weather is still good.

Remember, this year is an anniversary year for our branch. We were organized in 1947 under the same name as we have today, Northwest Suburban Branch of AAUW, and so we will celebrate our three-quarters century of work for women!

**NORTHWEST SUBURBAN BRANCH**

**Founded in 1947**

**CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF ACTIVISM IN 2022**

## **FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

June signals the beginning of summer, the end of the school year, graduation celebrations for some families, and anticipation of vacation travels. June is also the time we renew our AAUW membership which uses a new process starting this year. See the detailed instruction article, "How to Renew Your Membership." If you want help, call me and we'll figure it out together.

In May, we had our branch annual meeting with a nice luncheon at the Elks Club; our branch officers for the coming year were elected, and the bylaws amendments were approved. See the meeting minutes in this newsletter.

Another May AAUW event was our state convention held in Lisle/Naperville. It was a motivating and informative event. Here are some highlights:

On Friday evening, we heard from our new national CEO, Gloria Blackwell, and we viewed and enjoyed an award-winning documentary about Lusia Harris, **Queen of Basketball** (view on YouTube.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPFkcoTfr7g>

Saturday's program included several interesting speakers, the annual business meeting, and awards and updates.

Julie Strauss, Ph.D spoke about **Social Media: How is it Transforming our Democracy?**

Julie received her Ph.D in American Politics from Northwestern University. Her dissertation examined the unique role women members of Congress have had on public policy. The changes in the impact of social media, how emotion is being used to lead people to causes and possibly poor leaders is a possible threat to democracy. Her talk certainly started us thinking about how we react to social media.

Deborah Caldwell-Stone addressed **Challenges to Intellectual Freedom: It's More Than Book Banning.** Deborah is the Director of the American Library Association's *Office for Intellectual Freedom* and Executive Director of the *Freedom to Read Foundation*. Challenges to material and procedures are happening around our country at an alarming rate, according to the ALA's data. She shared how this trend impacts different populations when some members of society try to define what is acceptable for all. You may find their Intellectual Freedom blog to be interesting reading: <https://www.oif.ala.org/oif/>

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:** A panel of four women engaged in working to achieve progress in diversity, equity and inclusion shared their programs, lessons learned, and results. Watch for a series of programs in the fall by the Jane Addams branch featuring these speakers from DePaul University, City of Naperville, and North Central College.

The current news keeps reminding us that gains in women's rights are not guaranteed. The leak of the possible US Supreme Court decision to reverse pro-choice healthcare rights has many possible implications for women. The decision's impact is more than on general healthcare rights of women: their right to choose a career, to advance to leadership roles, to achieve current and future economic security and independence. A detailed summary follows on this possible decision and actions we can take.

Be informed, talk to your friends and take action (**like voting!**) to protect rights of women and girls.

Elaine

**ALERT:** The following article was written by our president on June 20, just before the Supreme Court's action. It is still vitally important for you to be aware of the facts.

### **June US Supreme Court Decision re: Right to Abortion/Privacy**

In May of 2021, the US Supreme Court agreed to hear *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. In this case, the Center for Reproductive Rights filed a lawsuit challenging a fifteen-week abortion ban passed by the Mississippi state legislature. As the Supreme Court reconsiders the constitutionality of a pre-viability abortion ban, the State of Mississippi has asked the Court to overturn the decades long precedent of *Roe* and *Casey*.

On May 2, 2022, a Supreme Court draft majority opinion on *Dobbs* was leaked, revealing that the Court is prepared to overturn *Roe* and *Casey*. Chief Justice Roberts stressed that the draft opinion "does not represent a decision by the Court or the final position of any member on the issues in the case." A final ruling is expected in late June.

If *Roe* is overturned, there are at least 26 states poised to ban abortion, stripping more than 36 million women of reproductive age, and others who can become pregnant, of their right to reproductive choice. Thirteen of these states have "trigger" laws, which are bans that will take effect automatically or by quick action if *Roe* no longer stands. This also will have a negative impact on women to be able to plan their careers, to achieve higher level positions and to be financially secure for their lifetime.

Abortion bans disproportionately affect underserved communities, compounding existing racial and economic inequities. Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, individuals with low incomes, people living in rural areas, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and immigrants already face greater barriers to quality and accessible health care. An increase in abortion restrictions is predicted to drive an influx of patients to seek care in the states that continue to allow abortion such as Illinois. For people without the time and resources to travel, restrictions may force individuals to seek potentially dangerous abortion care or to give birth. A recent study estimates that banning abortion would lead to a 21% increase in pregnancy-related deaths overall, and a 33% increase among Black women.

**In addition to having grave health consequences, overturning *Roe* endangers other individual liberties.** In the *Roe* ruling, abortion is protected as a right to privacy in the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution, the same legal reasoning that the Supreme Court used to uphold the rights to contraception, interracial marriage, and same-sex marriage. This new precedent of overturning the constitutional protection of the right to privacy threatens these and other civil liberties.

"If the court does overturn *Roe*, it will fall on our nation's elected officials at all levels of government to protect a woman's right to choose," President Joe Biden said in a statement. "We will need more pro-choice Senators and a pro-choice majority in the House to adopt legislation that codifies *Roe*, which I will work to pass and sign into law," he said.

After the Supreme Court draft leak, congressional leadership reintroduced a modified version of the AAUW supported *Women's Health Protection Act* bill (S 4132) before the Senate. Requiring a 60-vote majority, or cloture, it was again blocked (49-51) from reaching a final vote. Without the federal codification of reproductive choice, state legislatures will have more authority to legislate abortion restrictions. This means we must strongly advocate to restore reproductive choice if *Roe* is overturned. Overturning this right to choose that is based on the right to privacy, could open a Pandora's box of other rights that can be overturned.

(Continued on next page)

## Possible actions for us:

- Know where your US representative and senators stand on this issue, and **VOTE!** Primary June 28 and General election Nov. 8. Pro-choice endorsements: <https://www.personalpac.org/endorsements/>
- Share the AAUW Quick Facts on Reproductive Rights: [www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2021/11/Repro-Rights\\_QuickFacts\\_10.21-update.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2021/11/Repro-Rights_QuickFacts_10.21-update.pdf)
- Talk to other women (and men) about this decision, its impact on our rights, and encourage them to vote. (2022 Women March to the Polls?)
- Support the legislation, *Women's Health Protection Act* by becoming a two-minute activist with AAUW. [www.aauw.org/resources/policy/rallying-for-repro-rights/](http://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/rallying-for-repro-rights/)
- Be aware that we are in the majority and the conservative, religious Supreme Court is threatening our rights. AAUW is a partner in a civil rights coalition of 60 organizations with the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights that supports reproductive rights. A joint letter was sent to the US House of Representatives (link below). Without family planning and economical healthcare services, women lose the ability to have a career, and have economic independence and security. <https://civilrights.org/resource/support-the-womens-health-protection-act-of-2021-2/#>

## **WE'VE BEEN ACTIVISTS FOR 75 YEARS – WE WON'T STOP NOW!**

### **FROM *The Chicago Tribune*, JUNE 26, 2022, VOICE OF THE PEOPLE:**

#### **Let's talk 'original intent'**

Conservatives say we should interpret the Constitution according to the "original intent" of our Founding Fathers when the document was written.

Our Founders could've outlawed abortion in the Constitution or in the early days of Congress. They didn't, so their "original intent" must've been to let women have the right to choose.

In the 1700's, abortion was legal and socially acceptable until the point of fetal movement, otherwise known as "the quickening."

At least two of our Founders showed support for abortion. In 1748, Benjamin Franklin published "The American Instructor," which included recipes for inducing an abortion.

In a 1790 lecture, James Wilson, who wrote the Preamble to our Constitution, declared that abortion could not be regulated before the point of quickening because "in the contemplation of law, life begins when the infant is first able to stir in the womb."

Conservatives use the Second Amendment as an excuse to block virtually all gun laws, but they ignore the fact that it refers to a "well-regulated militia" or that guns in the 1700's were flintlock muzzle loaders.

If conservatives really believed in "original intent," they'd be regulating guns instead of women's bodies.

-Mike Mosser, Chicago

## **ANNUAL MEETING RECAP**

Following are the financial report for the branch, as of the date of the annual meeting, and the minutes of the annual meeting:

### **Financial Report:**

AAUW Northwest Suburban Branch (IL4051)

May 21, 2022

#### **Account Balances, May 21, 2022**

• Checking Account, Huntington National Bank	\$ 923.05
• Savings Account, Huntington National Bank	<u>1,580.58</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$2,503.63</b>

#### **Fiscal Year 2022 Revenue and Expenditures (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022)**

• Revenue	
Local Dues (18 members x \$12)	\$ 216.00
Investment Income (Interest on Savings Account through 5-15-2022)	<u>.19</u>
<b>TOTAL Revenue:</b>	<b>\$ 216.19</b>
• Expenditures	
Liability Insurance (AHT Insurance)	\$ 200.00
Contributions, gifts, grants	
Contribution to AAUW Leadership Fund (in memory of Irene Sylvester and Barbara Pfaff)	<u>100.00</u>
<b>TOTAL Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$ 300.00</b>

#### **Proposed Budget, Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)**

• Revenue	
Local Dues (18 members x \$12)	\$ 216.00
Investment Income (Interest on Savings Account)	<u>1.00</u>
<b>TOTAL Proposed Revenue:</b>	<b>\$ 217.00</b>
• Expenditures	
Liability Insurance	\$ 200.00
Contributions, gifts, grants	
Oakton Scholarship Fund	250.00
Miscellaneous	<u>50.00</u>
<b>TOTAL Proposed Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$ 500.00</b>

Prepared by Karen S. Heckmann  
Branch Financial Officer

**AAUW (IL4051) Northwest Suburban Branch**  
**Annual Meeting, May 21, 2022**  
**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 1:27 pm by President Elaine Fisher.

Introductions were made by all present in person and online: Carol Ayres, Cynthia Andersen, Elaine Fisher, Diane Forsythe, Judy Fregetto, Karen Heckmann, Irene Jinks, and Pili Richardson.

President's Report by Elaine Fisher:

1. 2021 -2022 Branch Meetings were reviewed. They were almost entirely held by Zoom.
2. The Branch gained two new members and lost one member. Irene Sylvester died this past year.
3. A postcard, "Five Reasons to Join AAUW", and other hard copy promo materials were designed and provided by Elaine. Our goal is to send the postcard to invite possible new members to join AAUW.
4. Fundraising possibilities will be discussed at a later Board Meeting.

Treasurer's Report by Karen Heckmann, Branch Financial Officer:

1. Current Funds: Total Balance is \$2503.63.
2. Budget for 2022-2023 (see attached) includes Income from 18 members (anticipating 1 new member). Expenses include \$200 for Liability Insurance, \$250 for Oakton Scholarship donations, and \$50 for Miscellaneous donations.

Elections

1. Elaine Fisher was elected to another term as Branch President.
2. Diane Forsythe was elected as Board/branch Secretary.

Changes to Bylaws

Motion, seconded, and approved to change:

1. ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP AND DUES  
Section 4. Dues, by adding "State and Branch dues will be set by their respective boards."
2. ARTICLE XII. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION  
Section 3. Budget, by changing "for presentation to the branch" to "to publish to the branch".
3. ARTICLE XIII. Meetings  
Section 1. Annual Meeting, by deleting "establishing [branch] dues".

This year is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the branch. Elaine, Irene, Pili, and other members participated in reviewing some highlights of our Branch history. Possibilities for a celebration location were discussed. Irene volunteered to host; Carol and Pili offered to bake cupcakes or cake for the event. More discussion will be needed to finalize plans.

2022-2023 Annual National + State + Branch Dues were reconfirmed at \$89, to be paid either online or by check to Treasurer Karen.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.

Notes compiled by Elaine Fisher and Diane Forsythe.

## **A MATTER OF MEMBERSHIP**

We have a new national AAUW membership online system. That means we renew our membership this year in a different way. We hope everyone can renew in June or July.

Each member will need to have a user account in order to login. You use your email address as your ID (NOT your AAUW membership number) and create your own password – any password you wish.

To begin, click the “Log In” at the top right corner of the website or visit [my.aauw.org](http://my.aauw.org). **The first time you log in, you’ll need to reset your password by clicking the “Forgot Password” link. Once you reset your password, you don't need to do it again the next time you login.** You then should receive an email with your next instructions.

Once you create a password and log in, you can renew your membership by clicking “My Memberships” in the menu on the left side of the screen. The new system refers to us as national members. View the video tutorial below for a step-by-step guide. Here's the Link to the tutorial:

<https://www.aauw.org/membership/new-systems-update/#join>

This process is actually easier to do than it seems in reading these directions, but if you are hesitant, you can send a check for \$89 to our treasurer, Karen Heckmann, 905 Center St., #304, Des Plaines IL 60016. Checks should be payable to AAUW Northwest Suburban Branch. The breakdown is: \$67 for National (of which \$64 is tax-deductible, if you itemize); \$10 for State; \$12 for Branch. Honorary Life Members (50-year members) do not pay dues, but contributions to the Branch are very much appreciated.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS/PLANS**

June/July: Dues renewal time! See above.

### **Celebration! Northwest Suburban’s 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!**

We’re hoping to have an in-person event in August or September – an anniversary party with refreshments! What should you bring??? YOURSELF! (and maybe a lapsed member!)

Our book group meets regularly on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., and we have been meeting virtually. Our book for July is *Run, Rose, Run*, by Dolly Parton and James Patterson. Should be fun! If you would like to join us, contact Irene Jinks (847-698-3113) for the link.