



# Elmhurst Area Branch News

Volume 82, No. 7 • February 2021

## AAUW Monthly Meeting

Wednesday - February 10 - 7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

## Our Everyday Environment

This energetic and informative presentation will recommend easy and healthy practices that can be incorporated into our daily lives to help care for the planet and each other as well as con-serve precious natural resources, taking into consideration current events.

SCARCE (<https://www.scarce.org/>), located in Addison, is an award-winning environmental education non-profit dedicated to creating sustainable communities. They accomplish this through innovative and hands-on education programs for schools and organizations, demonstrating care for people and natural resources through their Reuse Center, and engaging the broader public through community-wide events and programs.

Learn how this organization truly makes a difference by helping individuals connect with all aspects of our environment, both locally and globally, through special programs and offerings. Remember, everyone can be a part of building a positive and healthy future for us and the coming generations, so be sure to join in the effort!

Register with SCARCE in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84451200000>

Once you register, the Zoom link will be sent to you. It is easy to do. As usual, you will then click on the Zoom link you receive from SCARCE to attend our March meeting.

## Facebook Reminder

Are you on Facebook? Please “like” our Branch’s page, “AAUW Elmhurst Branch, IL” (<https://www.facebook.com/AAUWElmhurstIL>) to boost our visibility and keep you posted on our events and news of interest.

Better yet, add comments and get a conversation going. There are non-members and other branches that are following our page, and it can help us get support. For instance, our recent project to collect bras for Free the Girls was posted on our Facebook page and resulted in a large donation of bras from another Branch. Let Sarah Caltvedt know if you would be interested in adding posts yourself.



## **Board of Directors**

February 3 • 7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

## **Branch Meeting**

February 10 • 7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

“Our Everyday Environment”  
SCARCE

## **Half the Sky**

February 23 • 7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Discussion about Groups supporting Immigrants from the southern border up to the Chicago area.

## **Book Group**

February 25 • 1:00 pm

*Hummingbird's Daughter*  
by Luis Alberto Urea  
Zoom Meeting  
Discussion Leader:  
Jeanne Regan

*Links for Zoom meetings will be sent in advance by email*



**AAUW Hotline 1-800-326-2289**  
**Email: info@aauwelmhurst.org**

**Mission**

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

**Values**

Nonpartisan. Fact-based Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

**Vision**

Equity for all.

**Membership**

The American Association of University Women is open to any graduate holding an associate or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution.

**AAUW FUNDS**

The AAUW Funds support educational fellowships and grants, legal advocacy, public policy, leadership programs and research reports.

**ELMHURST AREA BRANCH NEWS** is published ten times a year (August/September through May) by the American Association of University Women - Elmhurst Area Branch.

# FOR THE PEOPLE ACT: HR1 Election and Ethics Reform

An impressive democracy reform bill, the For the People Act, has been reintroduced in the US House of Representatives (HR1, January 4, 2021) and the US Senate (S1, week of January 17, 2021). The US Senate has committed to making this the first bill in their new 117th legislative session (after impeachment, covid relief, and approving Biden’s cabinet/ key leader candidates). The bill is a sweeping attempt toward fixing our broken election system on all fronts.

In sum, the For the People Act addresses voting access and voter suppression, the campaign finance funding system, partisan gerrymandering, our aging voting infrastructure, and curbing corruption. WOW!! No wonder it is 791 pages long (easy to find online if you are interested). Here’s an overview of some of the key components:

Voting and election laws: Easier registration online or automatically from driver’s licenses or other government source. For federal elections: a holiday, paper ballots to prevent hacking, same day registration, and at least 15 days of early voting. Crack down on efforts to take voters off the rolls or to prevent them from voting. Revive the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Campaign finance: Expand the prohibition of foreign political money; mandate disclosure of big donors. Digital companies (e.g., Facebook, Google) would have to set up databases of big donors and block ads by foreign nationals. Inaugural committees would have to disclose expenditures. Mandate new matching fund programs for candidates who agree to take only small-dollar contributions. Prohibit “sidecar” super PACs that support individual candidates.

Ethics: Presidents and VPs would have to release tax returns and act as if covered by the conflict-of-interest law. President-elects would need transition ethics plans and filing financial disclosures within 30 days of taking office. House members would be barred from serving on Boards. Use of taxpayer money to pay penalties for member’s employment discrimination would be forbidden. (Congress already passed a bipartisan measure in December requiring members to pay their expenses for settlement and judgments in sexual misconduct cases.) Supreme Court would need a code of ethics (something it has never had). Law regulating foreign and domestic lobbying would be expanded.

Watch for lots of consideration and, hopefully, action centering on the For the People Act as soon as Congress can once again focus on pending bills. Be prepared to contact your US Senators and Representatives about components of For the People Act that you feel are important - most are aligned with the AAUW priority to “vigorous enforcement of and full access to civil and constitutional rights, including...expanding voting rights.”

*Jane Jegerski - Public Policy*

*Source of much of this information was the website of the Brennan Center for Justice; it was confirmed on other reputable websites.*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

**December 31, 2020**

*Moira Murray*

*Director of Finance*

Fund Raiser Fund	\$ 10,909.35
Conferences Fund	2,634.01
General Fund:	<u>7,476.15</u>
Total	\$21,019.51



## President's Message - February 2021

With 2020 in the rear-view mirror and the Biden-Harris administration in place, we all look forward to what 2021 will bring!

As shared in Mission & Action, AAUW's newsletter, we can celebrate the improvement in diversity among the new administration. We now have a total of 144 or 26.9% women in the United States House of Representatives and Senate combined serving in Congress. This includes 106 Democrats and 38 Republicans.

In addition, fifty-two women of color now serve in the 117th Congress. Forty-seven are Democrats and 5 are Republicans. However, there is a way to go on all fronts: women comprise more than half of the United States, women of color about 36% of the female population and 18% of the entire population (statistics cited are credited to Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) of Rutgers University).

These small steps toward improvement together with the results of the early January run-off elections for two Senate seats in Georgia are reasons enough for us to celebrate!

While we did not get to see the planned January Branch program "Mindfulness, Meditation, and COVID-19" by Jacqueline McCarty, we had a great turn out of 25 ladies and enjoyed the hour discussing current issues and interests.

We are looking forward to the February presentation, "Our Everyday Environment". Learn how SCARCE, through special programs and offerings, helps individuals connect with all aspects of our environment, both locally and globally. Learn of easy practices we can utilize to help care for the planet and each other. I hope you will join us. I have seen the presentation and it is both excellent and timely.

As we continue the battle to contain COVID-19, we are enlightened by the decrease in both cases and deaths caused by the virus, the loosening of restrictions in our daily lives and the potential for additional new vaccines. Besides gaining control of the pandemic, the new Biden-Harris administration faces many other challenges: racial injustice, gender inequality and education reform. We are optimistic there will be great strides in these areas. In the upcoming months 2021 promises to be a very good year!

Suzanne J. Stock  
Co-President

## AAUW Funds Committee Report

The AAUW Funds Committee met virtually on Thursday, January 7, 2021, at 7:00 pm.

Last year, the Scholarships for Returning Scholars were publicized but not awarded to anyone, because with the outbreak of Covid-19 in March, many public organizations such as schools and libraries closed, and it became very difficult for the applicants to complete their applications.

While the pandemic has not left us yet, the committee felt we should be able to offer the same scholarships again this year with some adjustments to the procedure.

1. The application deadline will be moved from April 1 to May 1, 2021.

2. The list of locations where the flyers will be placed will be cut back significantly.

3. The scholarship flyers will be distributed in early March.

4. We will contact electronically all the organizations listed on the 2020 publicity plan.

The branch website has all the necessary information for anyone interested. All branch members are encouraged to publicize the scholarship availability to anyone who may qualify.

*Tsue Ostermann - Funds Committee*

### **Jean Kane**

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of our member, Jean Kane, 95.

Jean was an Elmhurst AAUW branch member since 1988. A memorial contribution in honor of Jean will be sent to the national organization.

## Bag It!

Looking for a project to help beat the winter blahs? Connect with HALF the SKY.

We are joining forces with Interfaith Community for Detained Immigrants to assist with easing people's bus journeys here in the USA.

We are creating "snack bags" to give folks for their bus trips as they move from detention to their next location.

You are invited to "choose your own adventure":

- Add a snack to a bag,
- Contribute funds for shopping,
- Serve as clearinghouse to gather resources and assemble the bags

Contact Betty Laliberte for more information. Leave a message at 630 832 9010 or send email to [bettylaliberte2007@gmail.com](mailto:bettylaliberte2007@gmail.com).

This is a winter project. All are welcome, Join us when you can!

*Betty Laliberte - Half the Sky*

## Branch Files for 501(c)(3) Status

As previously announced, we are in the process of applying for not-for-profit status for our branch.

The first step was to form a new corporation, AAUW Elmhurst Area Branch, NFP, which was granted by the State of Illinois on October 1, 2020. Next step was to obtain a federal tax ID number for the new organization which was received on December 17, followed by our application to IRS, which was submitted at the end of January.

Everything takes much longer due to the pandemic, but we hope to have the final ruling by this spring.

The primary benefit of being tax-exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) is the ability to accept contributions and donations that are tax-deductible to the donor. Additional benefits include:

- Exemption from federal and/or state corporate income taxes
- Ability to apply for grants and other public or private allocations available only to IRS-recognized, 501(c)(3) organizations
- The public legitimacy of IRS recognition.

*--Perry Doubt*