

Hagerstown Branch

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**American
Association of
University
Women**

Branch Meeting

Thursday, September 11, 2025

5:30 p.m.

Pavilion #4, Funkstown Park



Join us for our annual pot-luck picnic at Funkstown Park.

Chicken, drinks, plates, napkins and utensils will be provided.

Please bring a side or dessert to share. No RSVP required.

We will briefly review this year's programming as we catch up with friends.

AAUW MISSION STATEMENT

"Advancing equity for women and girls, through advocacy, education and research".

Visit our website: <http://hagerstown-md.aauw.net>

Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AauwHagerstownMd>

AAUW Newsletter

The President's Message

So here we are again, the beginning of another year of school. Oh wait ... I retired ... twice! Well, it is fall like weather out there (amazing) and it is time for our opening picnic. As I write this the picnic is less than two weeks away and it is anybody's guess whether we will need sweaters that evening. Whatever the weather that day, I know we will have good food and conversation. I hope you will all be able to attend.

The summer has been a busy one for me. There was a lot of gardening to do at the beginning, but the hot dry days of late July and early August meant a little less work. Still, the weeds seem to grow no matter what. In addition to the usual, I seem to have acquired a few plants of American Burnweed. I looked it up and, of course, there are positive and negatives, but most sites indicated that it is a pollinator friendly plant. Not a particularly attractive annual, but anything for the pollinators.

Also, in the garden of late, I have had an afternoon visitor. For some reason, despite the presence of the woods right behind my lot, a young deer has found the shade of my crepe myrtle and butterfly bush preferable for taking a nap. I guess I haven't been out and about enough. The butterfly bush is less than 10 yards from the back of the house so "Bambi" is growing accustomed to human structures. This might not be the best thing.

You know I love a metaphor. Weather and other activities have meant less time in the garden. Wild plants and animals are taking advantage. I think about the other things in my life that I probably should have paid more attention to and what "wild" things have taken advantage while I was distracted. Some of the podcasters I listen to and some of the columns I read suggest that keeping us distracted is a ploy so that we don't focus on the important things happening around us. Sales people and magicians use this trick. It is a clever understanding of our "animal" brains which, in the past, needed to pay attention to the new and different to survive. Focus on one thing could have been deadly during our hunter-gatherer phase. Now it seems, the opposite may be true. What do you think?

Looking forward to another great year of activities and conversation with you all. Come to the picnic and see what we have planned. Bring a suggestion or two of something you'd like to do.

See you soon,

Charlotte



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Public Policy Update

Denise Fry, Public Policy VP

You may have seen the following press release, entitled “A Big Broken Promise to America’s Students and Women, from July 2, 2025 in your email but it bears some attention now as Congress reconvenes tomorrow:

Congress passed a bill that will go down in history not as a beautiful promise fulfilled – but as a big broken promise to America’s students, working families, and especially to women.

From early learning through graduate school, this bill deals a devastating blow to educational opportunities in America. It slashes financial aid, eliminates vital student loan programs, and channels public dollars into private voucher schemes – all while doing nothing to ensure that participating schools uphold civil rights protections. Instead of expanding access, it erects new barriers that will shut out millions of students, especially women, low-income families, and communities of color. This bill makes drastic cuts to Medicaid, it threatens reproductive freedom and the health and economic security of the very people who rely on education as a path to a better future.

For AAUW, this is personal. We are the nation’s largest non-institutional funder of women’s graduate education. For more than 140 years, we’ve fought to open the doors of higher education for all women – not just those who can afford it. And we know the truth: when women lose access to education, they lose access to opportunity, economic security, and equity.

This bill:

- **Undermines educational equity** by using tax breaks to fund private school voucher programs without requiring participating schools to follow Title IX, Title VI, or disability laws – creating a loophole that permits legal discrimination against students.
- **Shuts women out of higher education** by eliminating Graduate PLUS loans and creating borrowing caps that disproportionately harm women of color, single mothers, and first-generation students.
- **Attacks reproductive health and health care access** by essentially defunding Planned Parenthood and making sweeping changes to Medicaid that will strip coverage from millions of women – leaving them without access to birth control, cancer screenings, and maternal care.

This bill doesn’t not reflect the values of fairness, inclusion, or opportunity. It is a deliberate rollback of hard-won rights, passed at the expense of women’s futures and our nation’s progress.

As the bill heads to the president’s desk*, AAUW calls on the administration to reckon with what this legislation truly means – and to recognize the irreversible harm it will cause to students, families, and our economy now and in years to come.

AAUW and our nationwide network of members and advocates will not stop fighting until every student – regardless of gender, race, income, or zip code – has full and equal access to education, civil rights, and opportunity.

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*Of course, we know that the president signed the bill, but it is incumbent upon all AAUW to monitor the activities in Congress relating to elements of this bill. AAUW will continue sending us notices, watch for emails from Meghan Kissell such as the one on August 26, Women’s Equality Day, asking for our input on various legislative proposals. We might be retired, for the most part, but our voices do not need to be silenced.

Afternoon Literature Schedule 2025-2026

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Afternoon Lit meets the third Monday at 1:30 at members' homes. This year the hostess is also the presenter, reviewing a book of her choice. Light refreshments are served. Call Judy Thompson if you have questions. All members are welcome!

September 15	Suzanne Beckwith
October 20	Andrea Kautz
November 17	Judy Chaney & Carole Myers
There will not be a December meeting.	
January 19	Meet for lunch and share a book, TBD
February 16	Georgi Kauffman
March 16	Susie Latimer
April 20	Judy Thompson
May 18	Vivian Michael

Evening Literature Schedule 2025-2026

Evening Lit meets on the fourth Tuesday at 7:30 at members' homes.

Date	Host	Book	Author	Reviewer
Sept 23	Robbie Matonek	Dictionary of Lost Words (fiction)	Pip Williams	Judy Chaney
Oct. 28	Suzanne Beckwith	The Wager (non-fiction)	David Gann	Suzanne Beckwith
Dec. 2	TBD	All read a book by Martha Grimes	Author is a mystery writing living in Annapolis.	
Future meetings to be determined later.				

Second Friday Lunch

The next lunch will be on **Friday, September 12, Baile Cask & Kettle**, 53 W. Washington St., Hagerstown at 12:30 p.m. Please let Sharon Chirgott know if you are interested in attending by the end of Wednesday, September 10 so a reservation can be made.



Mark your calendars for future lunch dates:

October 10, Akrikico Best Taste of Africa, 222 E. Oak Ridge Dr. #900, Hagerstown

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Recipe of the Month

Orecchiette with Italian Sausage and Asparagus

Approved by the Chirgott family

½ t kosher salt, plus more for the pasta water	1 C chicken broth
1 lb. orecchiette (small shells work)	1 C heavy cream
1 lb. medium asparagus, woody stems trimmed, cut into 1 ½ inch pieces	
2 T salted butter	1 C grated parmesan cheese, plus more for topping
1 lb. sweet or hot Italian sausage, casings removed	grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped	¼ C fresh basil, chopped
½ t black pepper	
¼ t red pepper flakes	

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to the package directions, adding the asparagus during the last 2 minutes. Drain the pasta and asparagus.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the sausage and cook, breaking it up with a wooden spoon until browned, about 5 minutes.

Add the garlic, salt, and peppers to the sausage and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the chicken broth and cook 1 minute, scraping up the bottom of the pot. Reduce the heat to medium-low and stir in the heavy cream. Simmer until thickened, 3 to 4 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the parmesan, lemon zest, and lemon juice.

Add the pasta, asparagus, and basil to the pot and stir to coat. Serve with parmesan for topping.

Yield: 4-6 servings

Source: The Pioneer Woman Magazine Summer 2025

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Maryland Defenders Day September 12

Commemorating the successful defense of Baltimore on Sept. 12-13-14, 1814 during which time Francis Scott Key penned the words of what became known as the Star-Spangled Banner. Sept. 12 is a legal holiday in Baltimore City.

Why Can't You Wear White After Labor Day?

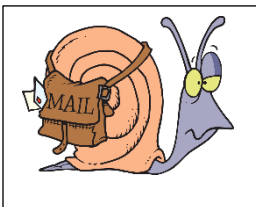
Why is there an old-time rule about not wearing white after Labor Day? And does it still apply?

One theory about wearing white is simply that it's cooler in an age before air conditioning; while reflects the Sun instead of absorbing it. Another theory is that the end of summer meant a return to the city and work life, as many people used to take the month of August to visit the seashore. Returning to the city life (often dirty) meant that dark clothes returned and the whites weren't practical.

Of course, this idea of "summering" was more for the wealthy who could leave the city in the days of no air conditioning to escape to the seashore or mountains. So, wearing white was for those who could afford to stay clean and travel.

Today, there really aren't such rules about whites. We have air conditioning, we have lighter fabrics, and clothing has generally become more casual and comfortable versus the more formal suits and work clothes of the past decades.

From The Old Farmer's Almanac in the Boys Town 2025 Almanac



Member Helping Member

The newsletter does not always arrive in a timely manner to those receiving print copies. If you receive the electronic delivery, please share the information with your friends who you know get the newsletter via the mail, so they don't miss events.



October branch meeting will be held at the Historical Society on October 11, 6:00 p.m. taking advantage of the Culture & Cocktails program: The Two Emilie Lawrence Reeds of Blue Ridge Summit. There is a small fee to attend, and the seats fill quickly.

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Proposed Calendar of Activities

Date	Event	Location / Hostess	Time
Thurs. Sept. 11	Picnic/Branch Mtg.	Funkstown Park	5:30 p.m.
Fri. Sept. 12	2 nd Friday Lunch	Baile Cask & Kettle	12:30 p.m.
Mon. Sept. 13	Afternoon Lit.	Suzanne Beckwith	1:30 p.m.
Tues. Sept. 23	Evening Lit.	Robbie Matonek	7:30 p.m.
Mon. Oct. 6	Board Meeting	Zoom	7:00 p.m.
Fri. Oct. 10	2 nd Friday Lunch	Afrikico Best Taste	12:30 p.m.
Fri. Oct. 10	Branch Meeting	WC Historical Society	6:00 p.m.