

ANNUAL Branch Meeting
May 4, 7 pm
Shrewsbury Historical Society
419 Shrewsbury Avenue

As the country celebrates the 250th anniversary of our Independence, we in Monmouth County applaud the bravery of Elizabeth Covenhoven of Monmouth Court House (Freehold).

In June of 1778, British General Sir Henry Clinton seized her home and property as his headquarters before the Battle of Monmouth.



<https://alchetron.com/Hankinson-Moreau-Covenhoven-House> accessed 26 April 2026

Although she knew the risks she stayed at home. A video from Monmouth County Historical Association tells her story.

Please join us for this Annual Branch Meeting. **This meeting includes branch elections. Members may be nominated from the floor, but they must be present to accept and be voted upon.**

NOMINATIONS SLATE

The Nominations Committee met a number of times over the last two months to choose a slate for new directors. Some current directors have agreed to remain in place.

They are as follows:

Membership Committee:

Mary Lea Burden, Judy Kramer

Development Committee:

Joan Hebert

Education Outreach:

Annette Benanti, Connie Goddard

Study Group:

Lynda Griffith

Nancy Butler will continue with Public Policy

Karen Topham will continue Communications

I would like to thank our committee:

Patty Whyte, Joan Herbert, Connie Goddard, Ellen Jackson, Linda Ensor and Lorraine Stone

Submitted by: Lauren Nicosia, Chair

Presidents' Message

Dear Friends,

If we were to tell you that in 1967, a 26-year-old woman with no chemistry background invented the home pregnancy test, you would say, "That can't be true!" But it is!

Another instance to add to the little-known women's science history.

Margaret M. Crane (Meg Crane) was a graphic designer who, in 1967, was hired at Organon Pharmaceuticals in West Orange, NJ, to work on a new cosmetic line of lipsticks and ointments for the company. One day when she was touring the company lab she observed a great deal of test tubes. Curious, Crane inquired what they were; she was told each tube was a pregnancy test. Each test tube contained reagents that, when mixed with a pregnant woman's urine, would form a red ring at the bottom of the test tube. She was intrigued by this and felt there was a possibility for women to do this test in the privacy of their homes for quicker and more private results. As it was, tests required a doctor's visit and weeks of waiting for the results. Crane was worried by the length of time for results in case a woman was too ill to carry a child or was not prepared to be a parent.

Margaret started working on her prototype made from a clear paper clip container, a test tube, a mirror, and a dropper.



Her prototype was rejected due to concerns that the lab would lose sales of tests to doctors if women could purchase tests in a pharmacy and start to perform the tests at home. Pharmaceutical companies have safety

and accuracy concerns.

In convincing pharmaceutical companies to adopt her prototype, Margaret faced the same issues we continue to fight today for reproductive rights. Unfortunately, there is still an uphill battle when it comes to the health of women.

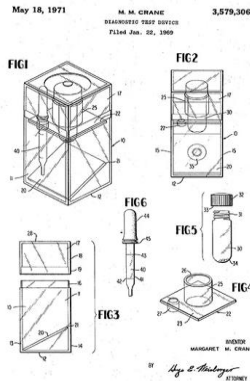
In 1972, Organon finally decided to do a market test of the product and Crane's design was chosen! Organon hired a New York advertising agency to do the marketing, and Ira Sturtevant was to head the account. He was impressed by how elegantly the home kit was put together. Margaret and Ira went on to become business partners for more than 40 years, founding the company Ponzi & Weill, until Ira's death in 2008.



Margaret Crane is listed as the inventor on US Patents 3,579,306 and 215,7774, but she did not receive any recognition or remuneration for her invention. In 2012, the *New York Times* published a short "Who Made It" story about the home pregnancy test. However, the column still didn't include her name. When she saw the column about the test and that her name wasn't included, she emailed the author of the article and finally received recognition for her invention. Crane's design simplified and made pregnancy tests

more accessible for many women.

You can see the original prototype device and a packaged version of the 1970 Predictor product at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History!



Heather (l) and Peggy (r) at the 10th Annual Scholarship Luncheon.

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND AAUW-NMCB: AN HISTORICAL CONNECTION

A play about Margaret Crane and her invention, written by Jennifer Blackmer, debuted in NYC in December 2025!

A side note, Margaret was also a juror in the 2004 trial of Martha Stewart for lying to federal investigators during an insider trading investigation.

Margaret is currently in her mid-eighties and is living in New York.

More information can be found here: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/unknown-designer-first-home-pregnancy-test-getting-her-due-180956684/>

Happy Mothers' Day! We hope you have a lovely celebration with your families - biological and found!

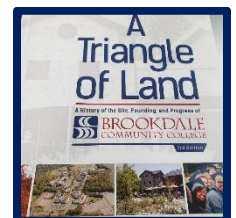
Heather and Peggy, Co-Presidents



Heather Balczarek
Peggy James

As many of you know, our branch was instrumental in helping to found Brookdale Community College. After the college was established, leaders of the branch thought to preserve the founding with a book, *The Triangle of Land*. Members of the branch interviewed many of the people involved in that effort. The interviews were recorded on reel-to-reel tapes and transcripts were made of the recordings. A couple years ago, our branch helped fund the transfer and restoration of those tapes. Unfortunately, many of the tapes were not well-preserved so the recordings are not the best quality. But the transcripts were rediscovered and Professor Shay Delcurla of the Bankier Library at Brookdale Community College has created PDF copies of the originals. These and the available recordings are accessible from the library at:

<https://libguides.brookdalecc.edu/c.php?g=1504620&p=11244963>.



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership Is Everyone's Responsibility

We again participated in the Shape the Future membership campaign at the Scholarship luncheon on April 29. New members were able to join AAUW for \$64.00 instead of the new membership rate of \$102.00. This membership will extend to **June 30, 2027**.

New Member:

Jeanne M. Vloyanetes

Douglas, Rutgers, Monmouth

Interests: History, theater, travel

We gifted memberships to our three Women of Achievement, Abigail Daly, Quadhera Simmons, and Lynn Hawkins, and to our speaker, Diane Lang.

Dues notices for 2026-2027 year will be sent out this May. **Please do not pay your dues on the National website.** Send a check or pay on our branch website.

In Memoriam:

Harriet Rogers Moore, 90, passed away on January 7, 2026. Harriet was born in Brooklyn, New York, and was a longtime member of St. James Parish in Red Bank, New Jersey. She was a proud graduate of Marymount Manhattan College and Fontbonne Academy. Harriet lived in Little Silver, New Jersey for over 50 years. More recently, she resided in Georgia and Florida.



Francis X. Moore asked Harriet to a dance while both were high school students pursuing big dreams—they ultimately enjoyed a marriage of 46 years. Together, they stayed the course and went into their chosen professions—education and law. 1960's rules for attorneys required long clerkships and Harriet supported their young family for several years as a fourth-grade teacher at Forestdale School in Rumson until life had other plans.

Life in Little Silver was exuberant. Harriet always maintained order within the chaos of multigenerational life, kids with diverse interests, and many pets. Nightly dinners were delicious, plentiful, and hilarious.

Harriet returned to teaching in 1986 at Saint Mary School in New Monmouth, New Jersey and cherished her many students through the years. Even after retiring and the loss of her husband Frank, in 2004, Harriet couldn't shake the teaching bug and worked into her eighties tutoring at the Huntington Learning Center. Concurrently, she rescued her beloved dog, Charlie, whom she rehabilitated and trained to be an avid Yankee fan like herself.

Harriet was in the NMCB Art History Study Group and often helped with branch hospitality.

Barbara Borys, 93, long-time resident of Monmouth Beach, passed away on Friday, March 27, 2026, after 13 years at Seabrook Village in Tinton Falls, New Jersey.



Born on November 22, 1932, in Mt. Vernon, New York, she pursued her education at the University of Madrid and the University of Mexico, experiences that helped shape her lifelong love of language and travel. She

shared that passion with others teaching Spanish at Monmouth University and working as a travel agent with Blue Moon Cruises and Tours in West Long Branch, a role that suited her genuine delight in helping others discover the world.

Travel was one of Barbara's greatest joys. She loved exploring destinations across the globe and treasured each place she visited, though Spain always held a special place in her heart. Her appreciation for the world was matched by her active and vibrant lifestyle. She was an avid reader, and someone who truly enjoyed the beach and swimming throughout her life.

Barbara was also deeply involved in her community and faith life. She was a member of our branch for over 30 years. She was also a member of Tower Hill Presbyterian Church in Red Bank, the Vasa Dalahast Lodge, Presbyterian Women, the Sandpipers of Monmouth Beach, and the Little Silver Seniors. Through these affiliations, she formed lasting friendships.

Co-Membership Directors:
Mary Lea Burden
Judy Kramer

UPDATE ON TECHTREK

Submitted by Annette Benanti

This year's camp will host 42 rising 8th-grade girls, including three from Monmouth County. All three girls nominated were accepted! Great news!

This is the first year we partnered with Brookdale Community College to mentor two WILL members to evaluate and interview the applicants. **Riley Kessler** and **Kaitlin Gilmore** have been enthusiastic, reliable, and enjoyable partners. They both will be available to continue their roles in 2027. They do earn community participation credits at BCC. It's a partnership agreed to and supported by **Roseanne Alvarez** and further enhances our long relationship with BCC.

The only remaining business is to print the

journals we traditionally have provided the 42 campers. Of course, volunteers and visitors to camp at beautiful Stockton University are welcomed July 18-25! Congratulations to Claudine Keenan, Dean of the School of Education for continuing her work to seek funding, staff and volunteers for a successful STEAM camp experience.

PUBLIC POLICY NEWS AND RESOURCES

Planning Ahead: Social Security for Women at Every Age

Webinar on Thursday, May 7, 2-3:15 pm ET

Trisha Mentzer, a Social Insurance Specialist in Communications at the Social Security Administration Headquarters (SSA), will break down the fundamentals of Social Security and the benefits available to you. Whether you are approaching retirement or just beginning your career, this session will provide valuable information to help you make confident decisions about your Social Security benefits.

[Learn more and register here.](#)

AAUW Speaking Out for Student Safety and Civil Rights

During April, Sexual Assault Awareness Month, AAUW continued to advocate for safe, harassment-free schools and equal opportunity in education. We [co-led a letter](#) urging the Department of Education to fully enforce Title IX and protect students, and we condemned efforts that weaken these protections. AAUW members also took to Capitol Hill to call for accountability, while CEO Gloria L. Blackwell [joined leaders urging action](#) on workplace harassment and violence. We are monitoring key policy developments affecting higher education and voting rights. Across the country, AAUW members continue to speak out and advance this work. [Join AAUW's advocacy.](#)

New: Voter Issue Guide 2026

AAUW and the AAUW Action Fund published a nonpartisan [Voter Issue Guide](#) to highlight what's at stake in the 2026 elections — from public education and higher education access

to equal pay, reproductive freedom, and voting rights. Use it to learn more, start conversations in your community, and ask candidates the questions that matter. You can also watch the recorded April 14 webinar, [**From Issues That Matter to Actions That Count**](#), to learn how to use the guide for voter education and community engagement.



ICYMI: Other recently recorded webinars on <https://www.youtube.com/@AAUW>

- **The Fight for Pay Equity: Turning the Not So Simple Truth into Real Action**
Featuring the updated AAUW report on the Gender Pay Gap -- aired on March 16.
- **From Scholarship to Solidarity: AAUW Fellows Building an Intersectional Future**
AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell moderated an excellent discussion with three AAUW Fellows in a parallel event at the UN's NGO CSW 70 Forum on March 16.
- **AAUW: Standing Strong Against Attacks on Equity in Education**
Gloria Blackwell speaks about how AAUW is fighting and standing strong against current attacks on equity in education – aired on March 27.

Nancy Butler, NMCB Public Policy Director

Study Group News

Dear Friends,

Thanks to all Study Groups who contributed items for the Scholarship Luncheon raffle baskets!

Interested in joining an established Study

Group? Check with the Chairs in the groups listed below. Those attending are required to be members in good standing. Guests may attend three meetings before being required to join AAUW. Here are your current possibilities.

Susan Gelber, Study Group Director

Art History

Our April outing:

The group participated in an “Art Walk in Red Bank” to support the third annual Garden State Art Weekend. We met for lunch at the *Inbetween Cafe*, followed by a tour of The Art Pod, participating in an interactive “Kiss” performance art, created by artists Mona Pollard and Colin Goodall. Other Red Bank venues: *Art Alliance of Monmouth County*, *The Art Space of Monmouth Arts*, and the gallery at the *Oyster Point Hotel*.



Friday, May 14

Meet at 10:00 am for a guided tour of the gardens at Georgian Court University. Contact co-chairs for travel directions and carpooling.

June

Join us for an architectural tour of Asbury Park, led by member Susan Rosenberg. Date and time to be determined.

If you have any questions, contact the co-chairs:
Joan Fructer

Barbara Withers

French Conversation

Our group enables women with a good knowledge of the French language to maintain their fluency through some language structure reviews and conversations with other members on different topics. Upon the recommendation of our members, we have now added a literary component to some of our meetings.

To keep up with the needs of our members, we will be meeting once a month (the second Thursday at 7:30 p.m.) through Zoom.

Members are encouraged to participate (orally or written) at the monthly meetings.

If anyone is interested in joining the group, please contact the chair for further information. Newcomers are always welcome.

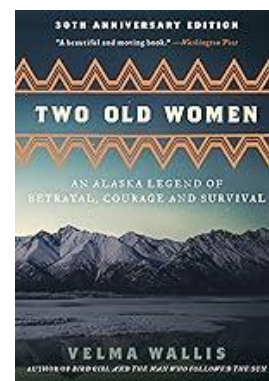
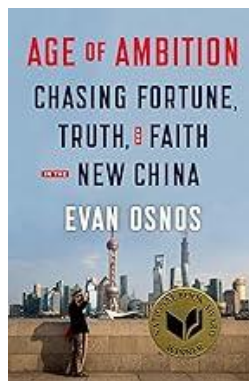
Chair: Jeannine Maloney

Insights Into Our Times

Insights, our non-fiction book group meets for discussion on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June.

On May 12, we will meet via Zoom at 11 a.m. (courtesy of Sue Smith) to discuss *Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth and Faith in the New China* by Evan Osnos. This was the National Book Award winner in 2014, and a Pulitzer prize finalist in for General Nonfiction.

Our June 9 potluck meeting at noon, at the home of Judy Kramer, will include a discussion on *Two Old Women: An Alaska Legend of Betrayal, Courage and Survival* by Velma Wallace. We will also consider titles for fall discussions. RSVP to Judy and let her know what you plan to contribute to the lunch.



New Members are always welcome. Contact chair, Kathy Olsen for more information.

Russian Short Stories

We have scheduled future Zoom meetings for the third Thursdays of the month at 1 p.m.

Contact Study Group Chair:
Stephanie Rose

Book Sale Book Sale Book Sale

Old First Church
69 Kings Highway, Middletown
Lower Level, outside stairs
732-275-2237

Open: **Saturdays:** 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Thursdays: 10 a.m. - Noon
(except for holiday weekends)

Donate: Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Thursdays: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Thursdays

The Used Book Sale is doing well. Many, many thanks for our wonderful volunteers. If you haven't volunteered at the Book Sale yet, consider joining the fun.

Continue, please, to spread the word about our book sale. We love meeting our new and returning customers.

Check our website for donation policies. Donations are accepted when we are open on Thursdays and Saturdays. All profits from the Book Sale help provide scholarships for local women and girls.

BOOK SALE SPECIAL EVENT

May 9 ~ 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

New Jersey author Olivia Martel will be present for a book signing of her novel, *How to Fly*.



How to Fly is a love letter to late-bloomers and anyone who feels like they are somehow bad at life-ing. It's proof that it's never too late to come of age and be more than just good.

NetWorks is published by the Northern Monmouth County Branch of AAUW. Upcoming due date for copy: Wednesday, May 27 for June issue. Please submit copy to Karen Topham, Editor.

Send address changes, names of prospective members, membership applications and checks, and questions about non-receipt of the newsletter to:

Judy Kramer and Mary Lea Burden, Membership, Co-directors
P.O. Box 398, Red Bank, NJ 07701 aauw.nmcb@gmail.com

Our electronic mailing list enables us to inform you about opportunities for AAUW members that arise too late for publication in *NetWorks*. You can be sure that we carefully evaluate each notice before we send it out.

Please note that the use of the branch email list is for branch activities only. Members wishing to share other information with branch members are invited to submit a notice to the "Networking" column in *NetWorks*.

Something to share? Please send the information to Karen Topham for the next *NetWorks*.



Pinwheels are the national symbol for childhood neglect and represent the whimsy and carefree nature of children. April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Mother's Day

Special Screening of the Film...
The Quilt Makers of GEES BEND

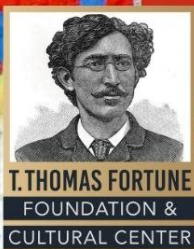
Saturday May 9th
3-5pm

We're honoring the ancestors and illuminating Black cultural heritage. This film will make you realize we're all artists. Fine artists, like the women quilters of Gees Bend, Alabama.



The tradition of quilting was handed down to them from those enslaved. The women you meet in this film their work has been exhibited in the finest museums in the nation.

You will shed tears of JOY!



To register contact: jazmin@tthomasfortunefoundation.org
94 Drs James Parker Blvd. Red Bank, NJ 07701

*From the 10th Annual Scholarship Luncheon
Held at Beacon Hill Country Club
Atlantic Highlands, NJ
April 29, 2026*



Checking in and buying basket raffle tickets



So many baskets! How to choose?



*Irene Gibson, wearing her favorite
Every-Year-Going-to-the-Scholarship-Luncheon sweater.*



Quadhera Simmons (r), one of the founders of Pinwheel Place, presented with her award as a 2026 Woman of Achievement by **Marian Wattenbarger**.

For more info: [Pinwheel Place](#)



Abby Daly, founder of Bridge of Books. More than 600,000 children throughout New Jersey have received books to call their own through the efforts of this non-profit.

For more info: [Bridge Of Books Foundation](#)



Diane Lang, author and positive psychology coach, was our featured speaker, who shared tools to help us live with more awareness, intention, and joy.

For more info: <https://dianelang.org/>

A Special Thank You

Please thank the local business donors listed below for supporting AAUW's mission when you shop or dine with them.

- Angelica's, Sea Bright*
- Bagel Masters, Shrewsbury*
- Bagel Station, Red Bank*
- Bahr's Landing Restaurant, Highlands*
- Balance, Massage, and Energy, Hazlet*
- Blonde Shallot, Little Silver, Sea Girt*
- Brennan's Deli, Middletown, Rumson, Oakhurst*
- Bridge of Books*
- Count Basie Theater, Red Bank*
- Delicious Orchards, Colts Neck*
- Design 329 Salon, Holmdel*
- Dr. Chay Triamarit, DDS*
- Greek Spot, Red Bank*
- Lusty Lobster, Highlands*
- Patricia's, Holmdel*
- Playa Bowls, Holmdel*
- River Road Books, Fair Haven*
- Rooney's, Long Branch*
- Seabrook Senior Living, Tinton Falls*
- Shrewsbury Car Wash, Shrewsbury*
- Trader Joe's, Shrewsbury*
- The Turning Point, Locations throughout NJ*
- Wild Birds Unlimited, Middletown*

Thank you to the following NMCB-AAUW study groups, committee members and friends who donated baskets, basket items, cash, and gift cards:

- The Art History Study Group*
- The French Conversation Study Group*
- The Insights Into Our Times Study Group*
- Marilyn Baldi for her photographs*
- Blake Patterson for his wooden bowls*
- Nancy Griffith for her Just Ducky handmade quilt basket*
- Heather Balczarek, Annette Benanti, MaryLea Burden, Arlene Caruso, Susan DePalma, Amy DeSanctis, Sonia Dorn, Susan Gelber, Irene Gibson, Margaret Graf, Ruth Hodum, Midori Iwama, Barbara Iwanski, Ellen Jackson, Peggy James, Alice MacPhee Jesmajian, Katherine McCleary, Judy Kramer, Michele Meany, Lauren Nicosia, Kathy Olsen, Maureen Paoni, Janet Richter, Muriel Smith, Carol Toolan, Karen Topham, Marian Wattenbarger, Barbara Withers*



American Association of University Women
Northern Monmouth County Branch
P.O. Box 398
Red Bank, NJ 07701

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. In principle and in 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, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class. Membership is open to any graduate holding an associate degree or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university. AAUW-NMCB is designated as a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations to the branch, as well as to the national organization, are fully tax-deductible. AAUW is a highly rated charity.

AAUW Used Book Sale



The store is located at:
Old First Church
69 Kings Highway
Middletown

Open: Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through June.
Thursdays from 10 a.m. to Noon through June.

Donations: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

(The sale is closed on holiday weekends.)

Have you been missing AAUW's *Outlook* magazine that used to arrive in the mail?

Go to www.aauw.org. At the bottom of the home page, sign up for news and updates with your email address and zip code.

Stay Connected!

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AAUW-NJ <https://aauwnj.org>

AAUW-NMCB www.aauw-nj-nmcb.org

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AAUW Action Network www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/



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