



AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY  
WOMEN

# THE FORUM

Volume 108 , No. 7  
Atlantic County Branch, New Jersey

March 2009

*~Visit us on the web at [www.aauwacnj.org](http://www.aauwacnj.org)*

## *President's Notes* *Sonya Bertini*

Who says St. Patrick's Day is over on the 17th? This year AAUW is celebrating the wearing of the green right up to the 21st of March with the beautiful music of the Celtic harp played by Frances Hill Tournese. Please join us for our annual fundraiser to be held at the Crabtrap Restaurant in Somers Point where we will be entertained by Ms. Tournese as she takes us back to the 17th century harp music of Ireland and that of Turlough O'Carolan, the blind Irish harper. Frances will also select tunes to demonstrate the variety of harp music in the subsequent centuries right up to the present. She intersperses her tunes with interesting historical commentary making for a delightful and fascinating program. Guests can arrive at 12:00 for cocktails and chit chat (cash bar). Lunch will be served at 12:30 followed by the program. Gifts will be raffled off and a wonderful time will be had by all. Irish and non-Irish alike! Proceeds from this event will go toward the scholarships our local AAUW branch awards every year to college bound women in our area.



Date, Time and Place: Saturday, March 21, 2009 from 12:00 to 3:00 at the Crabtrap in Somers Point.

Price: \$35.00 includes lunch consisting of appetizer, with choice of crabcake, grilled filet mignon, or herb grilled chicken, bread, vegetable, potato, dessert, coffee or tea.

Please mail payment including lunch choice to Mildred Thomas by March 16th. Make checks payable to AAUW Atlantic County Branch.

If you have any questions, contact Mildred, Christine Ecker or Helen Riso.

***Report of the Nominating Committee***  
***Audrey Moloney, Audrey Owen,***  
***Helen Riso and Priscilla Wilkinson***

The Nominating Committee presents the following nominations for officers for the

2009-2011 terms: President: Emely Aiken

Program Vice President: Helen Riso

Corresponding Secretary: Jackie Sarner

"The Forum": Sandra Swain

Hospitality Chairs: Loretta Scheetz and Hilde

Dimond

Historian: Priscilla Wilkinson

The nominations for these offices will be voted on at the April meeting. Officers will be installed at the May dinner meeting.

***Travel Group***  
***Carolyn Bassett***

The February meeting of the travel group featured an informative presentation by Betsy Reed which was well-attended.

On April 15 the group will meet again at the home of Stella Hordes when the presenter will be Helen Walsh. She and her husband have rented apartments for one or two weeks in major cities in Europe, and Helen will describe their experiences in immersing themselves in the cultures. (Some of the cities were Paris, Rome, Vienna, and Florence). The meeting will be at 7:30 - please let Stella know if you plan to come.

***AAUW Washington Update***  
***Linda D. Hallman, Executive Director***  
***On Lincoln, AAUA, and Economic Recovery***

Dear AAUW Friends:

Today I was honored to attend the national ceremony celebrating President Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday. As you can imagine, it was a wonderful event - held in the grandeur of the U.S. Capitol Rotunda but tempered by the real challenges before us. The crisis facing America today is very different from the one that faced President Lincoln, but as President Obama stated this morning, "We are once again debating the critical issues of our time. Let us remember that we are doing so as servants to the same flag, as representatives of the same people, and as stakeholders in a common future." Those words get to the heart of AAUW's mission, and specifically what AAUW has been doing to get our nation back to work and our economy moving again. As the recession has deepened, we at AAUW have been stepping up our efforts to fight for working women and their families. I wanted to take this moment to fill you in on our latest work, update you on our progress, and keep you informed on where we stand on these critical issues. We believe wholeheartedly that the most pressing national economic question is simply this: "Are we - our government, policy makers, and communities - doing everything we can to get the American people back to work?" That has led AAUW to ask a similar question: "Is AAUW doing everything we can to help get the American people back to work and to ensure that the unique concerns of women and girls are factored into policy solutions?" For the last several months, AAUW has been lobbying members of Congress on our top priorities for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - the recovery bill -which include investments in higher education, school construction and modernization, affordable healthcare, targeted tax credits, and direct appropriations to states and localities to support critical services. The recovery package, a version of which has been passed by both chambers, has now been reconciled and is set for a final vote. This week, AAUW sent a letter to conferees urging them to include our most important priorities in the final bill. We are pleased to report that AAUW was successful in maintaining most of our key priorities in the compromise measure, including:

**AAUW WASHINGTON UPDATE**  
**LINDA D. HALLMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**ON LINCOLN, AAUW, AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY -CONTINUED**

- A valuable tax credit to "Make Work Pay" for American families and an expansion of the Child Tax Credit to target more families in need - especially those in poverty.
- The inclusion of an extension and increase of current unemployment benefits, which will help many hurting workers facing an even tougher job market and also represents funds that will quickly go back into the economy.

Almost \$20 billion in appropriations for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) because, in addition to feeding the hungry, food stamps are dollar for dollar by far the most stimulative provision in the recovery and reinvestment bill.

- \$53.6 billion in State Fiscal Stabilization Funds to help schools maintain their education budgets and initiate critical renovation and construction projects. This education funds will save jobs as well as create them.
- The "American Opportunity Tax Credit," a \$2,500 tax credit for college tuition and other expenses, providing a targeted investment that will encourage individuals to retrain and retool through higher education - which will in turn improve their earning potential and career competitiveness. People without college degrees are much more vulnerable to being laid off than those who have this important credential, providing further evidence that the AAUW priority of investing in education is money well spent, period.
- A vital increase in the maximum Pell grant award of \$500 for the 2009-2010 school year, as well as additional funds for work-study programs, helping millions of students go to college - and stay in college.

Providing meaningful COBRA subsidies, which will allow more American families to be able to maintain their health insurance and afford valuable preventative care after they've been laid off, which could help to avoid not only heartache but bankruptcies in the future.

While engaging in intense lobbying efforts on the recovery bill, AAUW has simultaneously taken the lead in promoting another form of economic stimulus: pay equity. I was so proud to have a front-row seat at the White House to watch our new president sign this AAUW priority into law - in fact, it was the first bill President Obama signed. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act fixes the Supreme Court's disastrous 2007 *Ledbetter* decision, but that's just a down payment on the truly meaningful change needed to end the pernicious wage gap. That's why, just this morning, AAUW hosted and led a key coalition meeting for the Paycheck Fairness Act. This critical legislative update to the 45-year old Equal Pay Act takes a number of steps to deter wage discrimination and to empower women to negotiate for and achieve equal pay in the workplace. You might ask how pay equity equates to economic stimulus. Women have lost about 495,000 jobs since the beginning of the current recession in December 2007. Women's unemployment rate is up 1.6 percentage points to 5.9 percent over that same time period.. More families than ever rely on women as a breadwinner of the family, yet women still only earn 78 cents for every dollar men do. As a result, many working families require meaningful support simply to make ends meet. Consequently, pay equity - quite literally - helps families make ends meet, especially during these difficult economic times. Toward that end, in fact, we're asking that you send a Keep the Change e-card to your friends and family, asking that they write their senators and urge passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act to help revive our economic engine. AAUW's mission-related work is ongoing and widespread. Just last week, at the invitation of the White House, I attended the first briefing on the new White House Task Force on Middle Class Working

*(Continued on page 4)*

## ON LINCOLN, AAUW, AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY -CONTINUED

Families. During that meeting, I addressed the need to ensure apprenticeships for women on the shovel-ready construction projects that will be funded in the short-term by the recovery package, as well as the importance of opening up the nontraditional STEM fields to women as a means of achieving long-term economic growth. In addition, AAUW has sent the White House a letter requesting that the Task Force devote a specific field hearing to the unique challenges facing women in the workplace, with an emphasis on work/life balance. I wanted to give you a complete update on our economic recovery efforts, and that can't be done in a short note. But since I know that our members expect and deserve an AAUW that fights the good fight on multiple fronts, never resting until the job is done, I thought I would use the auspicious occasion of Lincoln's birthday to illuminate our efforts. AAUW is steadfastly working towards a more perfect Union, and your support and participation is what makes this success possible. Thank you.

Sincerely,

### Book Groups Mary Lou Breidenstine

The book group will meet to discuss "Brideshead Revisited" by Evelyn Waugh on March 28 at the home of Sally Roik. Diana Intenzo will lead us in a spirited discussion of this classic. The Linwood Library now has the Masterpiece Theater version of this book. Although lengthy, it is worth watching after you have read this book. On May 6 Gail Vreeland will lead a discussion of "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society" by Mary Anne Schaffer. Our "American Literature group (Saturdays) is currently reading "Go Tell It on the Mountain" by James Baldwin. All are welcome. We hope to see you at one of our meetings.

### Treasurer's Report Betsy Reed

As of February 15 we have a total of \$3363.78 in the Operating account.

### Did You Know? AAUW Website Contains a Members Center



The AAUW website contains a Members Center. This section includes features, information, and resources available only to members. Currently the AAUW Dialog section includes an article about Ida B. Wells titled *Nothing Stopped Her from Exposing the Truth*. You will want to read about this extraordinary woman.



# March 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Reservation due for Branch Fundraising Luncheon at Crabtrap Restaurant. Harpist Celtic harp played by Frances Hill Tournese is featured.	17	18	19	20	21 Chapter Fundraiser at Crabtrap Restaurant Cocktails 12 noon. Lunch served at 12:30
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Book Group meeting at home of Sally Roik
29	30	31				

Forum Newsletter Deadline:

15th of every month

Send information to Sandy Swain

sandras412@verizon.net

The **American Association of University Women** promotes equity for all women and girls, life-long education, and a positive societal change. The **AAUW Educational Foundation** provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women and to foster equity and societal change. **The AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund** provides funding and a support for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination. In principal 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 or disability.

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