

## President's Letters

*Sarah Henderson and Nancy Buban,  
Co- Presidents*

As I sit down to write my note for the Initiative, I cannot help but think of the challenging times in which we find ourselves. Today, we are in a situation where women's rights are being attacked and denied at an alarming rate. Years of hard-fought progress and freedoms are disappearing in the blink of an eye. It is imperative that we work to have our voices heard and organizations such as AAUW are more important than ever. Our branch has struggled the past couple of years due to COVID. Participation has been limited and it has been difficult to fill positions. We need you! We need all of you to continue to thrive. Next year will be a rebuilding year for us in many ways, thanks to COVID and changes in membership. As a new president, I rely on all our members for their wisdom and experience. It is because of you that we are successful! Here's to a return to face-to-face meetings in the fall with renewed energy. With all of us working together, we can become a stronger organization.

Thank you,

Sarah



In the past two years Covid-19 kept us apart. The hybrid meetings were often met with hearing or viewing issues. Both face to face and zoom meetings were met with poor attendance. At the last meeting there were five members in the audience and two zooming. Sarah has kept members informed about facts from State meetings and upcoming events and Michelle worked hard to arrange hybrid meetings and inform the Branch of time and place. When asked for responses about meetings or officers few members contacted us. We were unable to get anyone to take Program Chair.

We may be at a crossroads with our branch. There are several issues to consider.

1. Is it fair for the speakers to prepare programs to present to so few people?
2. Would it be wise to have fewer meetings that would generate more attendance?
3. The Big question: Should the Monmouth Branch disband?

Sarah and I will take the brunt of criticism if the branch is dissolved but, you, as members also share responsibility. I write this with a bit of frustration yet also with sadness as this Branch of AAUW has meant a great deal to me over the years. All members can continue to hold membership in AAUW if there is no Monmouth Branch.

Sarah and I would like feedback on how to proceed.

Thank you,

Nancy



## May Program

*Sharon Gilbert*

The final gathering of AAUW for the 2021-2022 program year will be a face-to-face meeting on Monday, May 16, at 7:00 PM in Monmouth College Room 273. We will not be serving food and therefore will be meeting at 7 p.m. instead of 6 p.m.

I will present a program about an interesting historical woman.

Martha Hughes Cannon was a pioneering woman full of contradictions. She was fiercely independent and managed to become a physician. At the same time, she was devoted to her husband, a polygamist with seven wives. She ran against him for a state senate seat and spent years away from her home to help him avoid arrest for bigamy.

After this performance, we will take some time to chat about current issues and the future of our chapter.



## Public Policy

*Jan DeYoung*

Hi, everybody! I have been thinking about the Fall election. There is no doubt that this will be a very important election, and I wonder if there is something we can do to help get out the vote.

I know Fall is far away, and we have no idea what the Covid 19 virus is going to do. Will it subside, so that we can participate in a voter registration drive on campus, as we have done for many years? My crystal ball does not give me a definitive answer to that question. It will be a few months before we can make that decision, I am afraid. Can we figure out a way to cooperate with a campus group to promote online registration? Maybe? I am rather out of touch, but here are some ideas.

Michelle and Sarah can give us the names of campus leaders to contact this Spring to "plant some seeds,"

with a general plan of what we MIGHT be able to do. I know we have cooperated with a group before, but I cannot remember its name. It was the student activities group. I imagine they have already elected their officers to serve next year. I imagine they will be thinking about voter registration as one of their priorities for the Fall. If one of us steps up to be the contact person, a few emails over the summer break could build a plan. And we might be able to schedule a table at the Activities Fair on Dunlap Plaza, as we have done before, and feel safe enough for an in-person outdoor event. Michelle can give us the names of contact people to participate in that, too.

The election will take place on November 8, which means that in-person registration needs to be completed by 28 days ahead of that date, or October 11, by my calculation. Of course, people can register at the Courthouse up to and including Election Day.

Or do we just want to participate in a campaign to get students to register online? It is a very easy process. Maybe this would merely involve working with the student leaders and get our AAUW name on the promotional materials via the student email list.

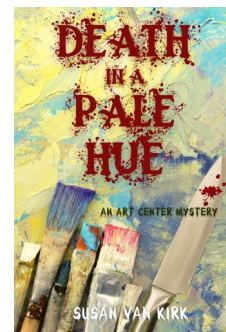
I am willing to do whatever I can to help from my new location. Just let me know!

Thanks for all you do for AAUW!



## New Book by Susan!

*Susan Van Kirk*



*Death in a Pale Hue* is the first of a new mystery series by member Susan Van Kirk. It might even remind you of the Buchanan Center for the Arts in Monmouth. From the back cover: Who knew going home could be deadly? *I will show them success.* Artist Jill Madison repeats this mantra when she returns to her small hometown to restart her life. Hired to manage a new community art center, she vows to make it successful so the people of her town will have what she did not have—an education in the arts. She no sooner accepts the job than a burglar makes off with an expensive sculpture and an uninvited corpse is discovered in the basement. Investigating what happened places Jill right in the path of a murderer. How will she keep her job, run her first big event, and escape a killer who plans to paint her out of the picture permanently?

*Death in a Pale Hue* can be preordered in eBook at Amazon now (\$5.99) and in print (\$16.95) and eBook upon its release June 7. Susan’s book will be available locally at the BCA, the Warren County Public Library, and the OSF Gift Shop. She will do a book talk and signing at OFTA at the Buchanan Center on June 8 at 10 a.m., and a signing at Wordsmith Bookshoppe in Galesburg on June 25 (time to be announced.)

## AAUW Membership Renewal

*Renew today and move forward with us.  
There is a whole world of women and girls relying  
on your support!*



**Mission Statement:** AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.  
**Vision Statement:** AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.  
**Value Promise:** By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

**Association Web site:** [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)  
**AAUW-Illinois Web site:**  
<http://aauw-il.aauw.net/>  
**Monmouth Branch Web site:**  
<http://monmoutharea-il.aauw.net/>