



# Atlanta Branch News

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## **President’s Message**

*By Velma Tilley*

As I have contemplated what to say in this winter-time newsletter, I have considered several topics. Since we have just come out of a time of frigid cold weather all over the country, including snow for the first time in two years here in Philadelphia where I am visiting, I thought about penning a few lines about the devastation of climate change that is only getting worse. Or I could talk about the catastrophe of war and how the impact falls so heavily on civilian populations, specifically women and children.

But I am confronted with local mortality, specific mortality, that confronts each and every one of us. At least five of our members have had recent incidents that have left them with injuries, near broken bones and recently, serious broken bones. Thankfully, all are recovering, but we don’t mend up quickly like we used to. These are vital and active members of our Atlanta AAUW branch, who do much of the labor in the bookroom, on our board, and elsewhere. They come to our meetings and support our mission with their whole selves, often while taking care of other people at home as well. We can’t do without any one of them. We lift them up in prayer for complete healing.

What to do about mortality? Frankly, there is nothing we can do in the long run. But in the meantime, each of us can strive to live our most healthy and best way. We can be aware. I have bruises all over me because I don’t pay attention to where I am reaching or stepping because I am thinking of something else or doing two things at once. I need to be aware of where I am placing my body. I need to keep up my exercise routine to remain flexible, strong, and balanced. I probably need to stop eating a half a donut for breakfast but I’m not going to do that. I will balance that out with fruits and vegetables every day.

These are the things that I plan to do. What will you do to keep yourself vital and healthy moving forward into 2024?

*Leadership continued*

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**Reminder of Board Meeting**

There will be a meeting of the Atlanta Branch Board on Friday, February 9 at 1:30 pm at the Buckhead Library.

**UPCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS**

*By Nancy Jordan, Program Chair*

March 16, 11:00am - Avis Williams Toco Hills Library

Speaker from Our House a family shelter in Decatur and Atlanta

May 4th, 11:00am - Cross Creek Cafe

Speaker from CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates for foster children

We have supported both of these charities. Come and learn more about where our hard-earned philanthropy dollars are being spent.

Watch your email for invitations to these events.

**AAUW OF GEORGIA NEWS**

*By Mary Lynn Merkle*

Save this date!

Our 2024 State convention will be held on Saturday, April 6, at the Byron Welcome Center. We met there in 2022, and Atlanta branch members who attended will recall that it's just along I-75, and about 1 ½ hours away. There will be more information about the program when it is finalized. Atlanta Branch has had great representation for the last two years. Let's continue that momentum.

Wanted! State officers and leaders!

The State nominating committee is looking for people who would be willing to serve as president or communications vice-president. Atlanta branch member Betty Slater is a member of the committee, and she can offer more information to any who may be interested.

A Regional Convention

There are plans underway to have a regional convention (as in years past). It will encompass members of 14 eastern states and will likely take place in Fredericksburg, Virginia in September.

Another date to save as soon as plans are finalized!

## BOOKFAIR SPRING SIDEWALK SALE

Bookfair's Westside Team is gearing up for a sidewalk sale at the Westside Market Toco Hill on Saturday, March 23 and Sunday, March 24, 2024. Historically, our sidewalk sales at Westside have generated a big boost to sales ... and most importantly, contribution to our philanthropic fund, every time we have held one!



Wendy Venet leads a group of dedicated Bookfair volunteers who spend weeks preparing for each special sale we hold at Westside. We promote these on our Bookfair website and send promotional emails to an email list that has grown to almost 2,000 subscribers (maintained and managed by Terry Eshenour).

More help is ALWAYS welcome (for set-up, merchandising/assisting customers, tear-down) so ... keep an eye out for the sign-genius that will be sent out a few weeks in advance of the March 23-24, 2024, sale dates.

## HOLD FAST OR COMPROMISE: WHAT SHOULD I DO?

*By Mary Lynn Merkle, Diversity Chair*

I believe that if my ideals are followed, we will have a better country. More people will live more comfortably and enjoy the freedoms and liberties that our Constitution promises.

Let me rephrase that. I think that if the party I support is in charge, we will all be in a better place.

Let me try one more time. If we can elect enough legislators that share my goals and ideals, we will definitely be headed for a more "perfect" Union.

Which of us would deny the truthfulness of any one of the above statements? The difficulty lies in our definitions of such words as "better place," or "live comfortably," or "perfect union." And that's where the current lack of respect for diverse ideas and pathways begins to fray and unravel any forward movement amongst all the rhetoric. Never in my memory has our United States been more split in determining which directions to go to achieve the positive outcomes stated above.

There are those that contend that we are a nation of immigrants. We are the land of opportunity. Let "them" in! Oh, but wait! Those swarms of people coming across our borders aren't paying taxes. And their use of health services, welfare supplements, and even their criminal intentions are costly to our economy.

Is it possible that there are millions of people who don't really care if one of the presidential contenders is convicted of a crime or even serving a prison sentence? They believe in his ability to move us toward that perfect union. But wait! Some of our most valued heroes in recent history have served prison sentences. Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King, Jr. both changed the minds of people and the directions of nations in terms of

racism. Mahatma Gandhi served many prison terms for standing his ground as he worked for the independence of India from British rule.

We (and our legislators) are in a quandary. Nothing is easy. There are some things that may be just too important to give in on. Surely, there must be other issues on which compromise could take place.

We are a diverse people. Our principles and values are important to all of us. However, if we are to move forward, we must find places where those principles and values are shared. We must be listeners and respect different viewpoints.

Hold fast and compromise: that's what we must do!

## Bookroom News

*By Cele Covatta Chair, Outgoing Donations*



Meet Deva Hirsch of the Rich's Foundation. She came to the Bookroom in mid-January to take possession of the legacy gifted anonymously to AAUW some years ago. Over the last few years, we have curated the posters, news articles and original artwork which we believe to be the work of Jim Barnett and his team. Mr. Barnett worked for many years in the advertising sector at Rich's. We have been able to sell a number of the items at our Westside Market stall, and are deeply grateful for the legacy. Deva is pictured with the Atlanta Neighborhoods poster, which has been our best seller. Framed copies are available for sale. As an interesting side note, during the years Deva lived in Japan, she was a member of College Women's Association of Japan, an organization that mirrors the mission of AAUW!

## Contemporary Literature

We will meet February 5 at 10:30 am, to discuss "Demon Copperhead." In March, we'll meet on the 4th to discuss "Her Hidden Genius." Refer to the Handbook for the year's list.

For more information contact Kay Collins, [contemporaryliterature@aauwatlanta.org](mailto:contemporaryliterature@aauwatlanta.org)

## Travel Group's CDC Visit

Travel Group Visits CDC, November 14, 2023.

Left to right, Phyllis Miller, Jean Zweifel, Kay Collins, Betty Arden, Frances Padgett

