



AAUW
Oak Ridge Tennessee Branch

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

National AAUW Web Site
<http://www.aauw.org>

Tennessee AAUW Web Site
<http://aauw-tn.aauw.net>

Oak Ridge AAUW Web Site
<http://oakridge-tn.aauw.net>

November—December 2021



AAUW Holiday Gathering on Zoom
Monday, December 13, 10:00—11:00 am

To enter **Zoom** meeting, click on the link below.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84026923055?pwd=blkremFFdTZMaUJqNmozb29jSEdkZz09>

If you log into Zoom first, you should enter the meeting ID, 840 2692 3055, and passcode, 387520.

President's Message

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! You may remember that AAUW had a lovely December Holiday Tea for many years. We received donations for our scholarships at that delightful event, which is no longer possible during this pandemic. In lieu of a get-together your Board will be available on Zoom (see Zoom instructions above) on Monday, December 13th from 10-11 a.m., to wish you virtually Happy Holidays. Please join us.

In lieu of the Holiday Tea, I encourage you to send an AAUW donation marked for 1) National Education Fund, 2) Local Education Fund, and/or

(continued on page 2)



Mayme Crowell

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

3) Branch Operations to our Treasurer, Missy Bowen, 386 East Drive, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. You might consider the amount you would have spent for the event's food, decorations, and/or entertainment as an appropriate donation amount.

As we come to the end of 2021, you should know that our Branch is quite busy in 1) offering a RSCC Scholarship to a deserving nursing student, 2) nominating a Tennessee State junior to the National College Conference for Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), 3) engaging in the public policy of Tennessee Redistricting Projects, and 4) selling Christmas ornaments by personal order and at the Ferrell Shop in Jackson Square.

Special thanks go to member Kowetha Mack, who read in our last Newsletter that our National Education Fund was not fully funded this year and then she subsequently contributed the difference. Thanks go to Virginia Jones, who has developed a Public Policy Committee to work on various public policy tasks and to Maggie Slankas, who coordinated the local RSCC scholarship. In addition, our appreciation goes to Stella Schramm, who has hosted our AAUW General Meetings for which we thank Kay Moss, who has procured excellent presenters on important, current topics. We thank Ruth Smiley, who has produced our lovely, informative Newsletters and Kowetha Mack for updating our Yearbook.

Not to be overlooked is that this year is the 70th anniversary of our Branch and the 140th anniversary of AAUW. We've been unable to celebrate adequately these achievements, but at the very least we can acknowledge them with gratitude. AAUW members comprise many quality individuals and life-long friends. How fortunate we are to be members!

—Mayme

NCCWSL

The National Conference of College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) is sponsored by AAUW each summer. Local Branches nominate college undergraduate women. Generally, State AAUWs chose attendees and pay for their tuition and lodging while the local Branches and participants handle transportation costs. The event occurs in early June in Washington, DC, or at the University of Maryland Baltimore campus. Last year it was via Zoom. Topics include history, current events, political science, finances, leadership qualities, etc. This Conference had been operating since 2005 with hundreds of women attending annually. You can find out more about the June 2022 Conference at the AAUW website, aauw.org. Tennessee has been sending one to three students each year, depending on the funds available. Attendee(s) this year will be chosen on December 12, 2021.

AAUW-OAK RIDGE NCCWSL NOMINATION

Maya Weaver, a junior from Knoxville at Tennessee State University, is nominated by AAUW-Oak Ridge to AAUW-TN for the 2022 NCCWSL. Maya is a junior political science major who plans on applying to law school after her graduation in Spring 2023. She has excellent grades and has worked on the League of Women Voters TN Redistricting Project. We thank member Mary Ann Reeves for nominating Maya. We shall learn on December 12 if Maya is selected by AAUW-TN. Should she be selected, we plan to negotiate with her to pay for her transportation. We believe that she should pay a small portion of the cost while we pay the remainder. In that manner, Maya has a vested interest in the event. AAUW-Knoxville has nominated two college women for this event. AAUW-Maryville may have made nomination(s) but we do not know. If possible, we plan to coordinate transportation with other recipients chosen. Stay tuned for more information...



The Public Committee met twice in November. The first paper by Anne Garcia and the second one by Kay Mos follow below. A letter from the committee to *The Oak Ridger* about the failure of the state legislature to truly protect Tennessee citizens can be found at <https://www.newsbreak.com/news/2439712800476/tennessee-s-age-of-unreason>.

The Committee also sent a letter to members asking them to call or write our two Senators to ask them to vote for the Build Back Better bill for the beneficial effect it will have for citizens and the state's economy.

The Public Policy Committee is pleased to have Mary Ann Reeves as its newest member.

Oak Ridge Branch's Public Policy Committee's Values and Procedures

AAUW's public policy committee is focused on addressing current public issues affecting all citizens, but especially women and girls. We do so by collaboratively evaluating each situation and what can be done to affect it. We then endeavor to persuade legislatures, other governmental bodies, corporate entities, or individuals through direct contact by phone, email, letters to editors, regular mail, or in person. We also undertake educating members and the general public about current issues and potential methods of addressing them.

We are also committed to honesty, facts, and non-partisanship. As an organization we are devoted to the betterment of opportunities for women and girls and the reduction of barriers to these opportunities.

—Anne Garcia

Lee's Funding Overhaul is a Smokescreen

The Basic Education Program (BEP) in TN has never been fully funded in the 30 years of its existence. It is a formula that distributes state dollars based on the student population of a local school district. Although the 46 component formula along with local economic data determine the amount of state dollars sent to local districts, there has never been enough money allocated for the BEP to move TN out of the bottom five states in the nation for public schools.

Revising the BEP to improve funding can be done, and the BEP has made recommendations for years to do just that. But most of the committee's recommendations have never been implemented because legislature after legislature balked at the price tags of millions of dollars. So the committee quit attaching costs. School systems have filed a lawsuit alleging that TN is not meeting its obligations to adequately fund public schools. That lawsuit includes the BEP Committee's recommendations and is set to go to trial in February 2022.

Governor Lee's and Commissioner of Education Penny Schwinn's efforts to build a new BEP from scratch while involving the public buy-in is an exercise to redistribute the BEP monies. Distribution is not the problem. TN legislators have not yet found the will to do what is ethical for their public Schools, although it has stockpiled record surpluses, a cash reserve of 9 billion dollars.

—Kay Moss

Source: TEACH, Nov. 2021, vol. 53, issue 2
Tennessee Education Association

We Care About Our Members

If you know of illness or death in the family of a member, please contact
Carol Hoffner
carolhoffner35@comcast.net

AAUW-OAK RIDGE YEARBOOK

Do you want your 2021-2022 Yearbook? It is available on our website, <http://oakridge-tn.aauw.net> in PDF for downloading or simply reviewing. Hard copies are available upon request to any Board member. Please remember that this is an abbreviated Yearbook, somewhat similar to the one produced last year. Unfortunately, the pandemic has severely limited this publication.



*Display at Ferrell Shop
Photo by Kay Moss*

Mark Your Calendar—2022**

January 10, AAUW Board Meeting

January 24, AAUW General Meeting
with speaker Michelle Campanis from
the UT Arboretum

Holiday Gift Shop

The White House 2021 Holiday Tree Ornament is on display at The Ferrell Shop in Jackson Square and may be ordered by filling out an order form by December 10 and writing a check made out to AAUW for \$40. Purchasers of the ornaments will be notified when they arrive at The Ferrell Shop.

Two other ornaments may be ordered also. 'The Tree of Life' for \$35 and the 100th anniversary medallion for women's suffrage for \$18 (please see pictures sent in an earlier email, along with an order form).

The 2020 White House Ornament featuring the White House portrait of President John Kennedy is available at the price of \$25.

Copies of the book, *Tennessee Women of Vision and Courage*, compiled and edited by Charlotte Crawford and Ruth Johnson Smiley, are available at \$15, without the need to be ordered.

All proceeds from the sale of the book and ornaments will go to the Local Educational Projects fund of the Oak Ridge Branch of AAUW for scholarships for non-traditional women students at Roane State, books donated to the Oak Ridge High School Library, magazine subscriptions for Girl's Inc., and a stipend for leadership training for a young woman of college age.

—*Virginia M. Jones, AAUW Gift Shop Chair*
103 Burgess Lane, Oak Ridge, TN 37830
cavjones@bellsouth.net

Ruth Johnson Smiley
Newsletter Editor