

NOTE DATE CHANGE: SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 11 AM TO 1 PM

ENCOUNTERS WITH GREATNESS: MEMORIES OF JOHN LEWIS

This month we're celebrating the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday with a look at one of the other giants of the Civil Rights movement, John Lewis. One of our members with a personal connection to Mr. Lewis will review the new biography, *John Lewis: A Life*, by David Greenberg. And two others will talk about their encounters with the Congressman.

Dr. Yvonne Asamaoh, our reviewer, retired as Professor of Social Work from Hunter College in New York City. Dr. Asamaoh taught Social Work in Ghana, West Africa, in an earlier part of her career. She recently joined the Branch after a move from New Jersey to the Rochester area. But many years ago--before Hunter College, before Ghana--Yvonne was a student at Fisk University in Nashville. And one of her classmates was the young John Lewis.

Greenberg's book follows Lewis's story from the Selma Voting Rights March of 1964 to registering voters with Andrew Young, through his career in the House of Representatives as a "moral force" for Civil Rights. Yvonne will review the biography as a historical document, of course, but she'll also offer her own insights into the John Lewis she knew.

We'll also get other perspectives. Long-time member Barbara Stevens spent an afternoon with Mr. Lewis in Atlanta, and Miss Betty Smith, a TPMI member, cooked for him and Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, another GRAB member, when they were both in town. We'll hear their impressions as well.

This meeting should be informative, inspiring, and a lot of fun.

The Zoom link for the program will be sent out the morning of the meeting, or copy and paste it: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86288750851?pwd=gVrK7H1yziITr6Koym7bzD0aYrLI1b.1>

Schedule:

11 AM Program
12 PM Lunch

Menu:

Assorted wraps, salad, cookies, beverages. **\$15**

Reservations:

Call, text, or email Julie Cotraccia by **January 10** with your reservation. Guests welcome.

CALL

[585-370-2235](tel:585-370-2235)

EMAIL

perkinsmansiondirector@gmail.com

AAUW is a powerful advocate and viable leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

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.

JANUARY 2024

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S KITCHEN TABLE

Best wishes for the new year to you and your families.

Request for help:

I'd like to know what you would like the branch to look like, and what we can do together to shape it to fit your needs. Let's start with a member survey. Can you help decide what questions to ask? Would you be part of the team that contacts members by phone or email or postal mail? How about assembling, interpreting, and reporting the results? Please step up if you have experience in this type of project. If you don't have expertise, join me in learning how. Help me to discover who we are. Call or write: [585-319-9314](tel:585-319-9314) or judy.a.trabert12@gmail.com.

Looking ahead:

The Annual Meeting of the branch will be held in May. We will elect officers for the program year that starts July 1. In odd years, the Branch elects a President, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer for Membership, and Recording Secretary, each for a two-year term. A member can serve two consecutive terms in the same position. My second term as President will end in June, so the Branch will elect a new president. In March, the board will form a Nominating Committee comprising two board members and three members who are not on the board. Think about being part of the nominating committee or running for an office. Ask for information about what's involved in each job, and/or come to a board meeting in person or on Zoom. Board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month from noon to 1:30.

Other opportunities:

Want to get involved in the branch, get to know fellow members, make a contribution? Try one of these ideas: Read with students at Innova Girls Academy (starting this month!), prep Girl Scout materials for Innova, join the branch program committee, write for the newsletter, help start up our new reading group. Make up your own activity and suggest it. We're ready to listen.



Judy Trabert

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP

HOLIDAY PARTY, DECEMBER 10

Members, friends, and guests met at the Mansion for good food, conversation, and even a special holiday drink from Caterer Lisa Wagner. We had special entertainment as well. A quartet of saxophone students from the Eastman School of Music played music that included classical offerings, holiday music, jazz, and baroque. Later, the students talked with interested guests about their instruments. They left the party with many new fans.

Thanks to Tom Myers, who roamed with his camera to memorialize the party. His photos are below.





WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER YVONNE ASAMOAH

At the December meeting of the GRAB board, we welcomed Yvonne Asamoah to the Branch and to the Board. Yvonne has assumed the position of Recording Secretary. Mary-Kay Belant, who has served in that position for 1 ½ years, resigned because of a move to Michigan and subsequent family complications. Yvonne's term will end June 30th. She will be eligible to run for a full two-year term at the Annual Meeting of the Branch in May.

Yvonne Asamoah ("Ah-SAHM-wah") is a Syracuse native. She earned an undergraduate degree in Sociology at the University of Michigan, a Master's in Social Work from Columbia University, and a Doctorate in Psychology from Syracuse University.

Yvonne's career has included teaching at Hunter College and the University of Ghana, work as an administrator of social work programs, and research on aging and homelessness. She has written on a wide variety of topics: children's rights, sustainable development, multi-cultural social work, and traditional medicine, among others.

In her "spare time," Yvonne has served on American Red Cross disaster teams, volunteered at homeless shelters, and worked on blood drives in Syracuse. She has three adult children.

Welcome, Yvonne, to the Branch and to the board.

DECKING THE HALLS

Saturday, December 7, we gathered to decorate the Perkins Mansion for the holiday season. Every year the decorations are a mix of old favorites and new discoveries. This year we added some new trees in different color schemes. It was a good combination of hard work and fun. Thanks to all who participated.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ANNE MILLER AND THE BEGINNING OF WOMEN HELPING GIRLS

In the early 1990's, four GRAB members who taught in the Rochester City School District had an idea. They wanted to work with late elementary and middle school girls in the City to show them possibilities for careers and ways of life that they might not be exposed to otherwise. One of those members was Anne Miller.

Anne says that they asked teachers for recommendations of girls with potential, not the academic stars or those who were really struggling, but those who could blossom with some extra attention from an adult. This was the beginning of the Women Helping Girls program. (In a coming issue, we'll profile Dorothy Pecoraro, another of the four founders. The other two, Beverly Vaughan and Bettie Lindley, are deceased.)



The founders started with 12 girls from four elementary schools, and a panel discussion where women from the community talked about their careers. They wanted to show the girls that fulfilling careers were possible without a college degree. After the panel discussion, there were workshops on what we would now call social-emotional learning, and periodic events at the AAUW House. The girls were paired with adult female mentors, who met with them regularly without an agenda, just to listen. A few of the mentor/mentee relationships lasted for years.

And what about Anne? She's from the Rochester area and attended RCSD schools, graduating from Charlotte High School. She studied Special Education at SUNY Geneseo and then taught at the high school level. Later she studied at Nazareth College for administrative credentials and served in that capacity in the Brockport School district. Anne says that her favorite time with the district was running the vocational education program at Edison Tech. The students were all handicapped. They were introduced to the world of work and learned how to be successful at it.

When Anne wasn't teaching or starting a new program at AAUW, she raised four children and was part owner of a photofinishing business. For many years after her retirement in the late '90s, she was the House Manager for GRAB. That meant not only making sure that the Perkins Mansion was in good shape and running well, but also overseeing the event rental business that kept the heat and lights on. Now that is a paid position, but Anne did it as a volunteer. For many years Anne moved between Rochester and Florida, but she's here full time now, so she's eagerly awaiting warmer weather.

Thank you, Anne, for all you've contributed to GRAB AAUW, and all you keep on giving.



Fine Art and Jewelry Sale

Join us for our 'Raise The Roof' Fine Art and Jewelry fundraiser, where each purchase directly contributes to preserving the historic roof of our beloved mansion.



Saturday, February 8 and Sunday, February 9, 2025

1-4 PM

Explore our unique collection of one-of-a-kind paintings, canvas prints, and watercolors by a variety of talented artists, and our stunning mix of vintage and modern jewelry pieces for both daytime and evening wear.

Help us preserve this historic landmark and support the essential work of the nonprofits housed here while adding something truly special to your jewelry and fine art collection.

LOCATION

494 East Ave. Rochester, NY 14607

TICKETS

theperkinsmansionevents.eventbrite.com

eventsatperkinsmansion@gmail.com | (585) 370-2235 | theperkinsmansion.org

NEWS FROM THE PERKINS MANSION

JANUARY 2025

Dear Friends,

As this year draws to a close, I would like to reflect on the accomplishments we have made and also to express my gratitude to those who have put their trust in me as Mansion President. Thank you to the many donors who have contributed money, time and talent to the Perkins Mansion.

I would like to thank **Tom Myers**, (husband of member Mary Myers) who has unscrambled our internet problems many times over the years. The walls of the mansion are 16 inches of cinder block, plaster, and wire mesh, which is difficult for internet signals to penetrate. Tom has worked inside and outside the mansion to help us figure out how to get strong coverage in each room. We now have it! Furthermore, this year, when we were locked out of our website, Tom helped us regain access and also introduced us to **Brittany Pietrzykowski**, the webmaster for the Mansion and for GRAB. Thank you, Tom for your persistence, knowledge and skills given freely to us over the years.

Another special Friend of the mansion is **Nora Wilcox, MD**, who has contributed annually to the Francine Wilcox card party, named after her Mom. This year, knowing we were trying to raise money for a new roof, Nora challenged us to a \$10,000 match. Our members and friends took on that challenge and raised even more! Thank you to Friend **Adriene Emmo** who helped us with a Bunko fund raiser and **Bess Watts** for her Blackjack skills at game night.

I want to personally thank **Ginger Goyer**, CPA, who has trained and supported all of us in GRAB and the Perkins Mansion with book keeping and proper ways to report and account for all monies donated and spent. This was no easy task for her or us! Thank you, Ginger.

Another behind the scenes volunteer whose skills we could not have managed without is **Ellen Lewis**. Ellen continues to volunteer her legal skills to TPMI as board assistant and hospitality advisor to the Perkins Mansion.

These are a few of the behind the scenes people. I thank you all and wish all of us the very best in the coming year.

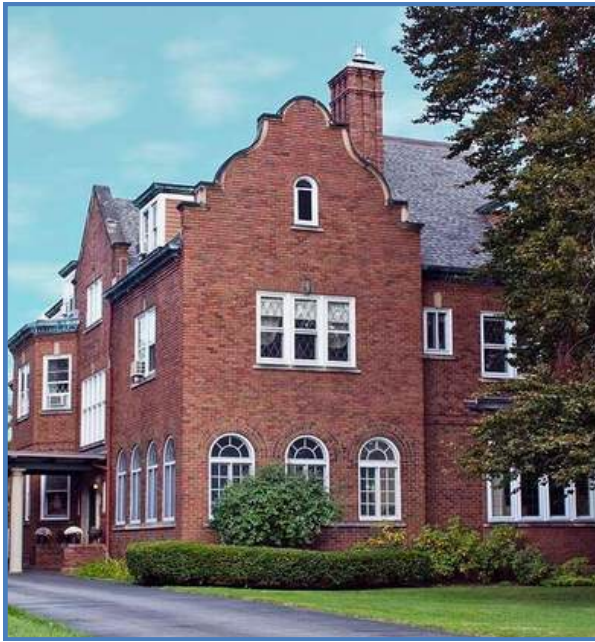
Onward and Upward,



Marilyn

marilyntee991@gmail.com

[585-414-4979](tel:585-414-4979)



MEMBERSHIP OFFER ENDS JANUARY 31ST

Have you been thinking about taking advantage of our free trial membership offer, but haven't quite gotten around to it yet? We want to remind you that the offer expires on **January 31st**, so it's time to act.

You can download an application from our website (Rochester-ny.aauw.net) or [fill it out online](#). Quick and easy.

Here's the offer again: Join GRAB AAUW by January 31st and the Branch will pay local, State, and National dues for you **until June 30**, the end of the program year.

We welcome the new members who have joined since the program started in October: Karen Cox, Lucia VerSteeg, Chiamaka Ikpeze, Teresa Froncek, Brittany Zeager, Rebecca Fuss, Susan Hollis, Susan Motten, Yvonne Asamoah. We also welcome two new student affiliates, Abigail Teal and Marie Beghini.



GREATER ROCHESTER AREA BRANCH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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Newsletter Staff:
Editor, J. Trabert
Design, B. Pietrzykowski

We welcome suggestions or contributions to include in future newsletters.

Deadline for February: January 20, 2025

Please email items to judy.a.trabert12@gmail.com

**Articles submitted are printed at the discretion
of GRAB**

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 8

GRAB board meeting

JANUARY 18

Branch meeting

FEBRUARY 12

GRAB board meeting

FEBRUARY 15

Branch meeting

MARCH 8

International Women's Day Celebration

MARCH 12

GRAB board meeting

APRIL 22

Branch meeting