

BRANCH MEETING, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

NOT JUST SANTA CLAUS

Program 5:30 PM, Dinner 6:30

The Branch celebration of the winter holidays will highlight three that don't get as much press as Christmas: Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Three Kings Day.

For each holiday, a guest speaker will tell us what's being celebrated and what ceremonies are associated with the holiday. They'll describe family rituals and any gift-giving traditions. They'll tell us about the foods associated with the holiday. Some of those foods will appear on our dinner buffet, so listen closely!



Rabbi Drorah Setel

Rabbi Drorah Setel of Temple Emanu-El will talk with us about Hanukkah.



Tabita Torres

Tabita Torres will describe the Puerto Rican traditions that go with Three Kings Day, or Epiphany.



Delores Jackson Radney

Delores Jackson Radney will share the celebration of Kwanzaa.

Join us to learn, to celebrate with friends, and to share a meal rich with tradition.

We hope to see you on Thursday, December 18.

Schedule on Thursday, December 18

5:00 PM Arrive & sign in

5:30 PM Branch Meeting

6:30 PM Dinner

Holiday menu:

Potato pancakes with sour cream and applesauce, picadillo stew with rice, macaroni and cheese, collard greens, corn bread with honey butter, special desserts.

Cost of dinner: \$25

No charge for the program only.

Guests:

Members may bring one guest for \$10. (Additional guests at \$25 each.)

Reservations:

Call, text, or email Julie Cotraccia by **December 12. This is a FIRM DEADLINE. No late reservations.**

☎ [585-370-2235](tel:585-370-2235)

✉ 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.

FROM THE (ACTING) PRESIDENT'S KITCHEN TABLE

December 2025

As usual, a potpourri of topics:

Honoring your reservation.

A few days before the branch meeting, we give the caterer a final number of attendees, and we are obligated to pay for that number whether you show up or not. We realize that things happen and plans change, but if you make a dinner/lunch reservation and can't come, please send a check or call Julie Cotraccia with a credit card number.

Honors for two members:



Honorable Joan Kohout

Honorable Joan Kohout (ret) will be recognized by the Monroe County Bar Association for 50 years of service at its December meeting. Joan had a stellar career as a Family Court Judge. She was previously honored by the Bar Association in 2023 with its Justin L. Vigdor Senior Award for Service.



Barbara Blaisdell

Barbara Blaisdell will be honored December 3 with a NYS Commendation Award for her many years of service portraying Susan B. Anthony at public gatherings, parades, and thousands of classrooms. The award will be presented by State Senator Jeremy Cooney at the 2025 Community Awards Ceremony.

Congratulations and thanks, Joan and Barbara

And a suggestion.

I wanted to suggest to newer members that they consider taking on a leadership position in the Branch by running for office at the May Annual Meeting. We will be electing a variety of positions for two-year and one-year terms. I am especially concerned that we elect a new president for a one-year term. For a member engaged in a career or newly retired, it's a great way to make connections in the community as well as in the branch and the State AAUW. As Immediate Past President, I would work closely with the new President as she "found her feet" and made the office her own.

Think about it, and talk with me or any other board member. We're a great group, if I say so myself. 😊



Judy Trabert

NOVEMBER MEETING RECAP: DR. EMILYE CROSBY

By Faith Walter

"We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes." Dr. Arlette Miller Smith encouraged members to sing along as she introduced guest speaker Dr. Emilye Crosby at the November 20th branch meeting. Dr. Emilye Crosby is an educator, activist, historian, writer, and editor. Her presentation was about the role of women in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and its historic involvement in the civil rights movement. The SNCC emerged out of sit ins during the civil rights movement, promoted voter registration, peaceful protest, community engagement, and elevating marginalized voices. SNCC members such as Jean Wheeler, Ella Baker, and Judy Richardson were central to the movement. Women in SNCC challenged traditional gender roles and modeled an egalitarian democracy, paving way for many other current forward-thinking grassroots social and political organizations.

Dr. Crosby shared her experience growing up in Port Gibson, Mississippi and attending an integrated school just two years after the Supreme Court Brown vs the Board of Education ruling. At school she learned about the civil rights movement from her grade schoolteachers and at home from her father who taught at an HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities). She was inspired by activists like Ella Baker. Crosby wrote a book, *A Little Taste of Freedom: The Black Freedom Struggle in Claiborne County, Mississippi*, a detailed exploration of the freedom struggle and impact of the civil rights movement on local communities after the 1982 Supreme Court victory in the case NAACP vs Claiborne Hardware company.

Dr. Crosby brought along three of her students; they helped pass out resources such as the Women & Gender Toolkit, a SNCC Digital Gateway packet, and other information on the SNCC legacy. Dr. Crosby left the audience better informed on SNCC, civil rights history, and inspired for future peaceful protest and grassroots movements.



Dr. Emilye Crosby



Dr. Crosby (center), Dr. Miller Smith (right of center), and SUNY Geneseo students



Faith Walter
Intern

Editor's Note: This is Faith's last Recap, since her internship ends early in December. Faith plans to finish her Senior year at Brockport, then go off to grad school. We will miss her!

We need another volunteer to attend the branch meetings, take notes on the program, and write up a shortish (one page typewritten) of what you heard. Since you'd get a byline, you could even add a personal reflection or two. No compensation but your picture in the newsletter and the thanks of a grateful Branch. Call or email the editor (see page 6) for more information or to volunteer.

PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

By Marilyn Tedeschi, Public Policy Director

New York State Public Policy has been very active in 2025 and will continue to be in 2026. One of our major goals is to help gather one million signatures by August 26, 2026 in support of the Equal Rights Amendment. This amendment was introduced by Alice Paul in 1923 in Seneca Falls, NY. Yet, after all these years of asking, a guarantee of equal rights for women is STILL not in the US Constitution. Please scan the code and follow the link to add your name. We can't let this opportunity to show our support for passing the 28th Amendment to our Constitution go by.



As Public Policy Director for our branch, I was asked to choose one of three areas of interest for our branch to work on in 2026. I chose sex trafficking. **Our first zoom meeting will be on Monday, December 15, 2026 at 7pm.** Please send me your email address to receive a link to join the public policy group that will research and work on this **modern day slavery issue**. marilyntee991@gmail.com or [585-414-4979](tel:585-414-4979).

Thank you for your interest in Public Policy.

Scan the QR code or visit sign4era.org for a link to the signature page for the ERA.

HOLIDAY HARPS

The next few weeks could be a little frantic for some of us. If you're feeling the need of a peaceful respite, keep this schedule of harp concerts handy. They will all be free, open to the public, and suitable for adults and children. Registration is not required.



DATE	TIME	LOCATION
THURSDAY, 12/11	1 PM	Winton Library, 611 N. Winton Rd, 14609
THURSDAY, 12/11	7 PM	Henrietta Library, 625 Calkins Rd, 14623
FRIDAY, 12/12	2 PM	Fairport Library, 1 Fairport Village Landing, 14450
MONDAY, 12/15	2 PM	Greece Library, 2 Vince Toffany Blvd., 14612
MONDAY, 12/15	6:30 PM	Scottsville Library, 2 Main St., Scottsville, 14546
SUNDAY, 12/21	4 PM	Penfield Library, 85 Baird Rd., 14526

Thanks to Cindy Boyer of the Landmark Society for passing this along.

NEWS FROM THE PERKINS MANSION

December 2025

Dear Beloved Members and Friends,

It is difficult for me to believe that the end of 2025 is at hand. The Mansion operates on the fiscal calendar year, so membership renewal and the annual giving campaign make December a whirl-wind month. Our accomplishments have been many this year and our strategic plan and budget for 2026 is coming together. I think the best part of this year was hosting three interns who seemed like a breath of fresh air as they helped with our Francie Wilcox Annual Card Party Weekend, our work with Innova Girls Academy, our Public Policy efforts and the creation of historic displays on the second floor. We will miss them and look forward to the next semester's cohort. Thank you to our future leaders.

Also, thank you to the donors and participants in our 2025 "Raise the Roof" Campaign. A special shout out to Kate Cerulli who chaired the jewelry sale and Lorie Seagren who continues to sell members donated artwork. Take a look next time you are at the Mansion, you just may see something you can't live without or may want to buy for someone special in your life. These pieces of art will decorate our walls all year.

You will receive our annual appeal letter in the mail within the next few days. Please be as generous as you can. All proceeds for our annual appeal will go towards our major kitchen upgrade project. Our goal is to begin a culinary school and use the kitchen for fund raising and community events. And, don't forget, volunteering of your time and talent is just as important as a money donation. Thank you for being a Friend, volunteer, and member of the Mansion.

Onward and Upward,



Marilyn Tedeschi

marilyntee991@gmail.com

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

NOTE DATE CHANGE**DECORATE THE MANSION ON
DECEMBER 7TH****Sunday, December 7 from 11AM to 3PM**

Join us for a decorating party on Saturday, December 7, 11AM to 3PM. It's a cheerful combination of work and fun, unearthing holiday decorations from the storage boxes and arranging them on mantels and windowsills. Of course we'll trim a tree, too. We usually get ourselves into the spirit with seasonal music. "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree", anyone?



Since decorating is hungry work, there will be a break for pizza sometime in the afternoon.

Friends and family are welcome to join us. We'll find a job for everyone.

Call, text, or email Julie Cotraccia to RSVP: ☎ [585-370-2235](tel:585-370-2235) ✉ perkinsmansiondirector@gmail.com

**PROGRAM SPEAKERS AND TOPICS
FOR WINTER AND SPRING**

In the winter, branch meetings move to Saturdays in the middle of the day. We return to Thursday evenings in April. More detail on each of the programs will follow.

January 17. Dr. Serenity Sutherland on "Bringing the Women of Science to Light". Sign-in 11AM, program at 11:30.

February 21. Dr. Marilyn Patterson Grant reviews Kamala Harris's *107 Days*. Same schedule as January.

March 21. Dr. Roja Suganthi-Singh on Education and Social Change Among Dalit Women in India. Same schedule as January.

April 16. Salute to Martha Hope. Sign-in at 5, program at 5:30.

May 21. Annual Meeting of the Branch. Same as April.

June 18. TBA. Wait for a surprise.

Thanks to the Program Committee for their hard work.

**Greater Rochester
Area Branch**

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Submissions

We welcome suggestions or contributions to include in future newsletters. Please email items to judy.a.trabert12@gmail.com

Deadline for January: December 22, 2025

Newsletter Staff

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Articles submitted are printed at the discretion of GRAB.