

NEWS FOR AND ABOUT
AAUW GRAND RAPIDS
BRANCH MEMBERS

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Summer 2020

AAUW Membership Dues for 2020-21

Membership renewals are due! **The AAUW dues are officially due by June 30.** If you have not renewed, please mail your renewal check for \$85.00 to Cheryl Vogel, 20401 Miskawaka Shores Drive, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.

The winner of a free membership from our drawing was **Joan Solberg**. Congratulations Joan!

President's Message

Happy Summer! We continue to find out a new normal and to see what is ahead and to comply with social distancing. There are still so many things that make us smile during these challenging times.

A couple of things for me are the daffodils and tulips in my garden and my orioles, which arrived on May 13, and I had the grape jelly ready! And one that made me laugh...I got up during the night when there was a full moon and looked out and there was a big raccoon sitting in the birdfeeder tray eating birdseed. I turned on the light and he didn't care...just kept eating!

A thank you to **Jan Miland**, who served as our secretary for the past 6 years. We read your minutes in the newsletters and it kept us up to date with board meetings and the business part of our meetings.

We want to thank you for all your dedication. We will miss you!

We have July and August meetings scheduled and hope that it will work to meet. We will see!

This will be our last issue until September. Enjoy our beautiful Minnesota summer!

Cyndy Agle, Co-President

SUMMER PROGRAMS

More details to come on the July and August programs closer to the date when we know whether they can proceed or not.

JUNE 15: CANCELLED: Blandin Foundation visit and update

JULY 20: Eben Spencer will present a **program on owls** that is very interesting and a treat for those of us interested in nature and birds in general, or owls in particular. Although not an ornithologist, Eben has a strong background in plant and animal science with his Bachelor of Science degree from the U of M in Agronomy and Animal Science, plus his experience with the DNR and the Audubon Sanctuary Board of Directors in NW Minnesota. The exact place of this program will be announced.

AUGUST 17: MDI of Cohasset will provide us with a morning tour of the facility and a look at the work done there with vulnerable people...if there is no threat of Covid-19 at that time. The plan is to lunch at Florio's after the program.

“Hard times should pull us together and not apart.”

— Donald T. Iannone, D. Div., M. Div., M.A.

Sunshine & Caring Member Service

By Juliet Jones

I am the Sunshine and Caring committee member who loves sending cards to let everyone know that whatever is going on in their lives, it is vital to be recognized and remembered.

When I left for college in the late 60's and the only person in my family to go away to college, students in Australia usually went to the closest university to their home as there were no forms and tuition was free! My father insisted I write at least once week, as of course, no cell phones, texts, emails, etc., so I wrote and am so accustomed to the written word.

I feel a card conveys so much more care, so if you have an occasion, a birthday, a wedding, a retirement, a move, a hospital stay, a family issue, a celebration, surgery, or the loss of a loved one. REMEMBER, your AAUW family is your family to lean on.

Please email me at: kcjones50@yahoo.com or call 218-327-2696. Be well, safe, healthy and hopeful for a better year.

**** INTEREST GROUPS ****

***Groups not meeting due to social distancing requirements:
Bridge, Lit groups, Exploring our Community and Public Policy***

Book recommendations from Jan Hill

I highly recommend ***Pachinko*** by Min Jin Lee. This is a best seller based on four generations of a proud Korean family in the early 1900's, wars that ensue, relocating in Japan. Beautifully told especially about the "class system" between Koreans and Japanese. I highly recommend it.

Recommended before but needs to be highlighted—***The Honey Bus*** by Meredith May. Her memo of a disjointed family and her relationship with a beloved grandfather, a bee keeper. The bees become a guiding force in a lonely child's life, but you as a reader, learn the amazing colony of bees, their extraordinary intelligence and how desperately we need them for pollination. A sad story of her life but you will learn!

LITERATURE – Wednesday group

From Barbara Zimmer: The Wednesday Morning Book Group does not meet in the summer but hopes to resume in September on the 2nd Wednesday at the Grand Rapids Library River Room, 10:30 a.m. The title for discussion is ***A Woman of No Importance*** by Sonia Purnell.

NEW NONFICTION GROUP

From Marilyn Rossman: We are getting used to no large crowds, no getting close to each other at meetings. I am thinking that a small group who want to read and discuss nonfiction books would work. We should consider how we can make such a group work, especially in the summer when we could meet outside. Holding the meetings via computer is a possibility, but I would rather try a get to gather in a small group.

If you are interested, please call me at 326-6775 or email mbro@paulbunyan.net or contact Emilie Zasada, 326 4909 or emiliezasada@mac.com Thus far, I have a list suggested from all sorts of suggestions, including short, interesting new looks at current issues.

I hope you all are enjoying the summertime. I would like to see and talk about new views even though we do not have to agree or like what the authors have to say. We could at least meet and start a list and discuss how we want the discussions to be organized. I would like to hear from you by June 14. Emilie and I will have some sort of short starter and some kind of refreshment.

WALKING & TALKING group

From Karen Karls: The Walking and Talking Group is on its summer schedule of walking on **Wednesday mornings at 9 AM**. We walk using appropriate physical distancing rules, generally for about an hour. Past practice was to have coffee at one of the local restaurants following the walk. Since this has not been an option, we have managed a time of distance-talking; those who like bring their own lawn chair and gather in a large circle. We will continue this as long as it's the best

health practice.

The location of the walks changes from week to week and is chosen by the group. Locations are emailed to the group. Members walk when they want to and at their own pace; no need to RSVP. It is a social group rather than a hard-core exercise group. We welcome new members. If you want to be added to the group, send your email address to k.karls@yahoo.com

These photos are physical distancing at its most friendly. In the first photo, note the cute little hair poofs on **Cathy Davies** for Best Quarantine Hairdo! The one with the table is a farewell send-off for Jean Walthour.



Meet a MEMBER

Kathleen Spencer

Almost 3-year member of AAUW

Family/Education: I was born in St. Paul and graduated from St. Joseph's Academy. I met my husband, Eben Spencer, when my family moved to the North Shore of Lake Superior near Duluth. After marriage, my husband and I moved to the Red River Valley where he worked as an agronomist. I received a Master of

Science (MS) from the University of North Dakota (UND) in Geography/Geology and a Master of Library Science (MLS) from Southern Connecticut University. I also attended Saint Paul College and received certification from the National Interpreter Training Consortium as a deaf interpreter.

Career: Initially, I was a stay-at-home mom until my three children – two boys, one girl - were all in school. My oldest son was born deaf, which took me by surprise and required a substantial commitment to understand his communication, educational, and psychological needs. He has since received two Master's degrees.

My professional career was as a librarian at the University of North Dakota Geology Library within the UND School of Engineering & Mines. There I managed a collection of geologic literature and a map collection of more than 150,000 maps. After 15 years in geology, I migrated to the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences, working as a librarian for a new online rural health information service providing and presenting information, technical assistance, and referrals for improving rural health throughout the U.S. I developed guides on topics of significant interest to help rural healthcare organizations, providers, and communities develop, maintain, and improve rural health. Travel was required and frequent, with 50+ trips across the U.S. – from Alaska to Florida, from Hawaii to Maine.

My work included participation in several fellowships including the National Library of Medicine, Medical Informatics Fellow, and the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) Rural Health Fellow. Elected to the NRHA Rural Health Congress for 8 years, I collaborated with colleagues writing policy papers to inform the U.S. Congress of critical issues affecting healthcare in rural communities. Most recently I was a contributing author to a textbook, *Handbook of Rural Aging*, to be published late 2020.

Personal Interests: After living in the Red River Valley for 30+ years and surviving several floods, Eben and I moved back to pine-and-lake country. A forced buyout due to a flood mitigation project speeded up the process, and we built our home in 2012. Since retirement we try to spend as much time as possible with our children - a teacher, an engineer, and a physician - all living in Minnesota. We have four grandchildren who my husband wishes we should have had first! Free time finds me hiking, kayaking, doing yoga, listening to music, dancing, reading, quilting, trying new recipes, and gardening. Eben and I enjoy traveling, particularly to more remote and scenic areas of the U.S., Latin America, and Canada.

AAUW Interests: I always wanted to join AAUW while working at UND but could not find the time. Now retired, I have joined and met many wonderful and like-minded women who have the most interesting lives. This is a great group - a perfect choice for someone new to the area interested and good connections with whom to socially interact. I am happy to be involved with the scholarship committee helping non-traditional women return to school, and in supporting a campership for high school girls interested in science, math, engineering, and technology (STEM). Thank you all for making this a great club!

2020 AAUW Scholarship recipients

By Kathleen Spencer

ICC Scholarship Recipient: **LaNaya Allen-Abdulai** is from Grand Rapids and is pursuing an Associate of Science in Accounting with future plans to earn a Bachelor of Science in Business Management offered through St. Scholastica on the ICC campus. She is 39 years old and has a 3.8 GPA.

GRACF Scholarship Recipient: **Desiree Rohling** graduated from Deer River High School in 2007 and is pursuing a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree as a Family Nurse Practitioner at Mankato State University. She is currently working at Grand Itasca Clinic & Hospital as a registered nurse clinical preceptor teaching other RNs.

Members share "pandemic" activities

Karen Lonson: I enjoyed making "May Day" baskets filled with pansies and dropping them on my neighbor's door steps.

Julie Skallman: I volunteered to help Madeline Cook, who owns North in Bloom, (she spoke at our May 2019 meeting) by delivering Mother's Day flowers. I drove all over the west side of the county for two days providing "no contact delivery". One mom had four little ones step out on the porch with her, and everyone was excited to see what I had placed there. The smiles and shouted thank you's as I walked back to my car warmed my heart. For about \$6 in gas for my Prius, I got back boundless joy.

Arlene Wheaton: I've been trying some new recipes...latest one was for Andes Mints Brownies...so delicious with vanilla ice cream! Found the recipe online and it's the one from Mel's Café, comes up as one of the top five recipes for these brownies. I'm finding more enjoyment in the simple things of life...walks in nature, sitting in the sun, flower gardening. While out for a walk today, two 8- and 10-year-old neighbor girls flagged me down and showed me their handmade "game arcade" made out of cardboard and other materials, showing quite a lot of creativity and boundless enthusiasm. You go, girls! It made me feel good to be supporting an organization with a mission of empowering girls and women.

Jan Bilden: I've gotten my idle spinning wheel out and am working on those skills, and am taking organ lessons so will have even more pleasant hours practicing.

Pat Anderson: Besides reading, I've been doing a bit of sewing, making masks, potholders, and potato bags for friends. With more togetherness than ever before in our 57 years of marriage, Phil and I have come up with two partnering activities that we never shared before: crossword puzzles and online exercise workouts.

Cathy Davies: Staying at Home since March 15th has given me a lot of "Bonus Time." At our winter home in GA, the workbenches in both our basement workshop and "Stable," (detached garage) are free of clutter for the 1st time in 20 years. The pile of "stuff" that accumulated in the middle of the basement floor has been sorted, stored and/or dispatched. A couple of ancient cockroach skeletons even made it to the trash! Ziploc bags of papers from my 3M years (retired since 2011) have FINALLY been recycled after walks down memory lane as to the dreams of sales I would have, could have, should have made. Since arriving in MN, my husband Larry's health has taken plenty of time. He's the only one I know who has

had 5 negative Covid19 tests after 4 hospital stays since April. Flower and vegetable gardens are in better shape than usual for late May. Although I don't wish for "Staying at Home" to continue, if I had another year, maybe, just maybe, my sewing room and sewing machine cabinet would get purged and organized. Make that 2 years ☺...

Cyndy Agle: I'm figuring out a new hairstyle that involves wearing a ball cap. Watched a live-stream video of one of my Florida girlfriends getting married today at an outdoor wedding ceremony. Called Goodwill every day for over a week to see if they were accepting donations and yesterday they finally were so I was there in 15 minutes to drop off.

Juliet Jones: As of June 1st, most restaurants in town that have outdoor seating will open! Many of us have been having outdoor picnics, purchasing lunches at local restaurants such as UnWined Up North...and then going to a spot...Ice Lake, Pokegama Golf Course, Grand Rapids Area Library grounds...Gunn Park, Scenic State Park. Masks are needed, but usually once we are at our spot with the 6' social distancing, we remove our masks, and enjoy "girlfriends day"...no more usually than four women. We all look forward to our Thursday picnics, and supporting local businesses.

Submitted by Cyndy Agle:

We're allowed back to work and into stores and restaurants, but remember to:

Avoid touching **MEN...** **M**outh
 Eyes
 Nose

Instead, follow **WOMEN...** **W**ash your hands
 Obey social distancing
 Mask up
 Exercise and eat well
 No unnecessary travel

The 19th Amendment: 100 years of women voting

By Cyndy Agle, Co-President

Early suffragists spent years, and in some cases entire lifespans advocating for the right to vote.

The first territorial legislature of the Wyoming Territory granted women suffrage in 1869. On Sept. 6, 1870, Louisa Ann Swain of Laramie, became the first woman to cast a vote in a general election.

Minnesota ratified the 19th amendment on Sept. 8, 1919.

The 19th Amendment does not directly mention women.

Mississippi was the last state to ratify the amendment on March 22, 1984.

AAUW support, new political group

By Deanna Ensley, Co-President

As we remain under pressure from coronavirus' regiment and other serious stresses at this unique time in history and in our lives, I want to share a couple "potential" items with you all.

First, although it is the time of year to pay our AAUW dues and without much enjoyment from our membership due to the pandemic, it is also time for the AAUW's national fundraising. I encourage you each to send some donation to the organization in exchange for the beautiful greeting cards the national office sent out to us several weeks ago. AAUW does important work for young women throughout our country. I met Kim Churches last year and am quite convinced she is doing the best she can for all us women!

Secondly, some of you that know me realize I am quite politically liberal, a member of Itasca County DFL and the Progressive Caucus. I have always had respect for Republicans until the Tea Party distorted matters. My mother and her family were all Midwestern Republicans. My Dad turned into a Republican with time. I am sure my brother and sister-in-law are Republicans but out of love we do not discuss politics much in our older age!

This week I became aware of an organization called "Defending Democracy Together". It is made up of Republicans who can no longer support President Trump's re-election and other significant issues. I found it very interesting and was so impressed with the platform I read about that I sent them a small donation in appreciation for their serious reconsideration in what I think in the name of "civility". Coincidentally, I heard from my favorite conservative pundit, David Brooks, just two nights ago, that 16% of the 2016 Trump supporters have become discouraged and are considering not voting from him this year.

Please consider looking at the [Defending Democracy Together](#) and see what you think.

Websites for local, state and national AAUW information:

Our Grand Rapids AAUW blog: <http://grandrapidsaauw.blogspot.com/>

MN AAUW website: <http://aauw-mn.aauw.net>

National AAUW website: www.aauw.org

ADVANCING EQUITY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS – FOR MORE INFORMATION

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION www.aauw.org

AAUW MINNESOTA www.aauwmn.net