

NEWS FOR AND ABOUT  
**AAUW GRAND RAPIDS**  
BRANCH MEMBERS

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## AAUW Membership Dues for 2020-21

Please remember to pay your annual AAUW dues as soon as possible. Our new membership year starts July 1.

**Dues = \$85.00** (National: \$59--State: \$9--Local: \$17)

For those of you who have already paid your dues, THANK YOU! If you pay dues by **May 18, you will be entered into a drawing for a free membership.**

Please send your renewal check to our treasurer: Cheryl Vogel, 20401 Mishawaka Shores Dr., Grand Rapids, MN 55744. For questions, call Cheryl at 763-229-8098.

## President's Message

Hello Everyone!

We hope you are staying safe and social distancing with the new normal for now. Did you ever hear the term "social distancing" until a few months ago? I can't remember hearing that term.

In these uncertain times, it is wonderful that we can stay in touch through emails. I have heard from many of you how much AAUW friendships mean to you.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our spring program meetings. We will try to reschedule the speakers for 2020-21. The STEM camp is also cancelled this summer. They have donations from us, and we will continue donations and funding for Summer 2021 programs.

Our branch is the only one in Minnesota that holds summer meetings. **Julie Skallman** and **Marge Domish** have set up three excellent summer programs and they will be listed in the summer newsletter. Let's hope we can meet!

Our Scholarship Committee has been working on selecting recipients for 2020-21

and the winners will be announced in the June newsletter. Thanks to **Helen Ahlbrecht** and **Kathy Spencer** for chairing the committee and members are **Karen Karls, Elaine Thorstenson, Jan Bilden** and **Gayle Coyer**. They are doing the selection remotely via email and phone calls.

We hope to see you this summer!

Cyndy Agle, Co-President

## **SUMMER PROGRAMS**

*These are tentative plans, pending any change to the COVID-19 restrictions for public gatherings and restaurant dining.*

**JUNE 15:** Blandin Foundation visit and update. It has been a long time since our last visit to the Foundation. We are scheduled for a June meeting at the Foundation to catch up on what the Foundation is doing, how it operates, and news we should know. There is a plan to meet for lunch following the meeting at the Brewery should things have opened up by then.

**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. Stay tuned.

**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.

## **Sunshine & Caring Member Service**

By Juliet Jones

Sunshine and caring about our AAUW Family is what I do and something very dear to my heart. In this age of technology with email, texts, ZOOM, etc...cards are sent out by mail less and less, and for me this fills a need, which I think is so important.

The written word, with comments, whether it be a birthday, a retirement, a move, surgery, the passing of a loved one, congratulations for a job well done, is something one can hold in one's hand, display, know they are being thought of and cared about.

Please email me at [kcjones50@yahoo.com](mailto:kcjones50@yahoo.com) if you would like me to send an AAUW member a card, no matter what the occasion.

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***“In times of great stress or adversity, it’s always best to keep busy, to plow your anger and your energy into something positive.”***

— Lee Iacocca

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## **Grand Rapids AAUW Branch Officers 2020-21**

Join us in thanking these members for continuing or stepping up to leadership roles for our branch!

Co-Presidents: Cyndy Agle & Deanna Ensley

Vice President/Membership: Marj Lavalier

Vice President/Programs: Julie Skallman & Marge Domish

Treasurer: Cheryl Vogel

Secretary: Dianne Anderson

## **Women's Suffrage facts marking 19th Amendment 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

By Cyndy Agle

Anti-suffragists were mostly educated, married, wealthy and white women. They believed women needed to focus all of their attention on maintaining the home to provide a refuge from the stresses of the outside world.

The women's rights movement launched its own fashion craze. They wore bloomers! They were a knee-length skirt with full Turkish-style pantaloons gathered at the ankle. They wore this instead of the heavy, bulky hop skirts. This made it easier to get through doorways, onto carriages and trains and along rainy, muddy streets.

Note: Susan B. Anthony discarded the style after she realized they were getting more attention for their dress than their message.

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton:** Stanton and Susan B Anthony edited and published a woman's newspaper, *The Revolution*, from 1869-70

In 1869, they formed the National Woman Suffrage Association and they traveled all over the country and abroad, promoting woman's rights.

Stanton died in 1902 and never saw the 19th amendment passed.

## **\*\* INTEREST GROUPS \*\***

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

### **LITERATURE – Monday group**

Group meets on 1<sup>st</sup> Monday (except for holidays) at 10:00 AM at Grand Rapids State Bank Annex. Contacts are Nancy Salmi, 326-3147, and Jan Hill, 246-9791.

**From Jan Hill:** Monday morning Lit Club usually meets on the 1st Monday morning at 10:00a.m. at the Grand Rapids State Bank Annex. Not meeting right now because of COVID19 should not deter our love for reading. I miss our conversations on each book; we learn so much from each other and book clubs are wonderful for hearing all sides of a particular book. Sometimes you don't like a good book when you come, and leave thinking..."Well, I never considered that side of the story...hmm". That we all miss. So, here are suggestions from several book clubs that a lot of us belong to. It's easy to order books, so enjoy the pleasure of book reading and our isolated days will be much fuller.

***Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation*** by Cokie Roberts

***The German Girl*** by Armando Lucas Correa

***Where The Crawdads Sing*** (A definite favorite!) by Delia Owens

***Have You Seen Luis Velez*** by Catherine Ryan Hyde

***The Accidental President*** (excellent account of early years of Harry Truman, great read to you historians!) by A.J. Baime

***Varina*** (another excellent description of a very strong woman of the Civil War- the wife of Jefferson Davis) by Charles Frazier

***Pachinko*** by Min Jin Lee

These should keep you busy for a few weeks. In the meantime, get out in your gardens and get your hands dirty!

### **LITERATURE – Wednesday group**

**From Barbara Zimmer:** The Wednesday book group, which meets on the second Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Grand Rapids Library September through May, will not meet again until fall...hopefully September.

### **WALKING & TALKING group**

The Walking and Talking Group is on its winter schedule of walking at 1 PM on Tuesdays, following social distancing rules. The location of the walks changes from week to week and is chosen by the group. Locations are emailed to the group. We generally walk for about an hour and then have coffee. We walk outdoors rather than in a mall or gym. 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 one. We welcome new members. If you want to be added to the group, send your email address to [k.karls@yahoo.com](mailto:k.karls@yahoo.com)



## Meet a MEMBER

### Marlys Mestemacher

2-year member of AAUW

**Family/Education:** I was born in South Minneapolis and graduated from Bloomington Kennedy. I attended Bemidji State University and earned a BS in Social Work. While in Bemidji, I worked several years with Head Start, and several summers in Milwaukee.

**Career:** I was the licensed social worker at the Sandstone Area Hospital and Nursing Home for 7 years, and spent 29 years with Pine County Health and Human Services, retiring in 2017. I worked primarily with Adult Services and Developmental Disabilities. I licensed Adult Foster Care Homes and completed Pre-Admission/MNChoices.

While in Sandstone I married Tom, lived on a farm and we raised our two children, Mike and Laura.

**Personal Interests:** We retired in Hill City and have a great home on Hill Lake. We are located right between our children and 5 grandchildren, who live in Bemidji and Mora. I really enjoy going to the Y, Bone Builder's and have even taken up quilting—currently making masks! I'm a member of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church.

Can't wait for summer to swim and use the pontoon. This is a great area for retirement, and many opportunities are available.

**AAUW Interests:** I was very happy to join AAUW and meet so many interesting and like-minded women. I have enjoyed learning more about the area and services that are available. I also like being part of funding scholarships for area women. Thanks to all of you for being so welcoming.

## MEMBERS SHARE SHELTER-IN-PLACE ACTIVITIES

**From Jean Hoshal:** I begin my days with Mass online from pastor's living room a few blocks from me. Many days I walk with neighbors, especially Karen Karls, in our neighborhood. Tuesdays, I walk with the AAUW walking group, keeping our 6 feet distance. I also nip into Brewed Awakenings a few times a week for takeout coffee and muffin. I've done a few jigsaw puzzles and read too.

**From Deanna Ensley:** I have been working for one of the companies that this past week was identified to have an employee with Covid19. I was not exposed! I have not been to the location where the Covid19 was discovered. The "red flag" warning came to us Sunday and my initial reaction was it was from the Twin Cities, this company does business there, also. Yes, the "carrier" was from the cities it turns out and I was so glad to find out it was of no really concern to me. We have much more strict practices now at work, since that one employee was so careless to have a visitor from the cities bring the virus to town. Be careful, be safe and hope to see you all before too long!

**From Jan Miland:** As I'm getting my house ready to put on the market, I'm going through boxes of letters and pictures I've saved from many years ago. Reading letters from my mother, who had a good sense of humor, have been uplifting and thought provoking.

**From Cyndy Agle:** There are several people that I know that are older or unable to get out so I have been sending care packages which include books and word games.

Reading: Have been reading several books a week and my favorite was: "The Winemaker's Wife" by Kristin Harmel. It is set during World War II in the Champagne region of France near the city of Reims. It is a story of betrayal and love, forgiveness and redemption with many twists and turns.

I have my list of local businesses where I will be shopping and buying once everything opens up in town. The list keeps getting longer!

**From Cheryl Vogel:** We have a group of neighborhood women who walk every day, trying to maintain proper social distancing. It is rejuvenating to be in nature and to visit with kind and intelligent people.

**From Julie Skallman:** Marlys Mestemacher and I met at the Walking group to exchange jigsaw puzzles as another way to keep busy while at home. I am looking forward to planting a few vegetable seeds soon; the garden is ready and waiting for the weather to warm up a bit more.

**From Juliet Jones:** Hi Ladies! Those of you who are golfers can now play at the Pokegama Golf Course. The bar is open but not the restaurant yet. However, UnWined and Brewed Awakenings do have pickup, so Elaine, Cyndy and I did a picnic facing the lake. I brought my lunch from UnWineda and a bottle of wine, and since the area below the grill is county parkland, they were fine with that and gave us wine glasses to use. Elaine sat at one picnic table, Cyndy at the other and I was on my blanket so we did the social distancing and had three perfect hours in the sunshine catching up. It was perfect.

Although it's a month overdue I think spring has finally sprung! No green leaves or buds yet here, but the weather has been perfect the last few days...all the raking is done, the garages are swept clean, the windows have been scrubbed inside and out

and can't wait to be planting! We have two college-age kids, one a Junior and one a Senior, best friends, who have worked summers for us since they were 15, helping Kevin with do many outdoor projects. Then in the next few weeks they will plant and build a raised garden for veggies, redo our dock with stairs so I can access my kayak more comfortably, and do some repairs on our huge 🐾 pen, where the gate is falling in.

**From Arlene Wheaton:** I enjoyed taking a virtual tour of the MacRostie Art Center's new exhibit called "Together Apart". Simply go to [www.macrostieartcenter.org](http://www.macrostieartcenter.org) and click on EXHIBITIONS.

**\*\*\*\*\*AAUW Minnesota News\*\*\*\*\***

**AAUW Minnesota State Board Meeting, April 25, 2020**

Present: Lisa West, Mariah Ring, Mary Ann Lucas-Houx, Deanna Ensley, Barb Wonson Liukkonen, Jan Carey, Peg Lonquist, David Kirkwood, Beth Nienow, Cyndy Harrison, Gail Glashan, Sheila Lind, Anne Johnson, and Trudy Severson. Guest: Karen Kirkwood, past MN AAUW President and current member of AAUW National Board of Directors.

Call to Order: President Lisa West called the virtual meeting to order at 9:15 AM and introduced all participants. No changes to the agenda were needed. Anne Johnson moved to accept the agenda; Barb Wonson Liukkonen seconded; the agenda was approved.

REPORTS:

President's Report: Lisa reported sending multiple update emails to MN Branch Presidents. She also worked with regional state presidents on postponing the Regional Convention from June 2020 to June 2021. Finally she worked with board members to prepare for this annual virtual meeting and to provide voting ballots for all voting members.

Secretary's Report: Trudy Severson, Secretary, presented the February 28-29, 2020 minutes. Peg Lonquist moved to accept the report, and Cyndy Harrison seconded. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Beth Nienow, Treasurer, presented the annual Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement. David Kirkwood moved to accept the report, and Sheila Lind seconded. Treasurer's Report was accepted.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election results: After determining that a quorum of branches had voted, Cyndy reported that the following nominees were elected to the 2020-2021 MN State Board of Directors:

Vice President Membership – Pat Powers, Hastings  
Vice President Funds – Anne Johnson, Hastings

Secretary/Historian – Linda Blaisdell, Minneapolis

Nominating Committee composed of Gail Glashan, Hastings and Teresa Sagan, Ely

Lisa then thanked this year's nominating committee members: Carol Sheldon, Minneapolis; Gail Glashan, Hastings; Pat Powers, Hastings; Teresa Sagan, Ely; and Anne Johnson, Hastings.

2020-2021 Budget: David reminded that the 2020-2021 Budget was approved by the Board at the February 28-29, 2020 board meeting. Voting members approved the 2020-2021 budget as a part of the electronic ballot. Also, AAUW MN financial status is stable.

Funds Report: Vice President of Funds, Barb Wonson Liukkonen, reported that the funds' distribution was detailed in The Pine. She moved to accept the 2019 funds distribution which indicated a donation of over \$86,000 to National. She also mailed out the Top 10 total branches and the Top 10 per capita giving. Also, branches who gave \$750 could name an AAUW honoree. As Lisa West is currently both Hastings Branch President and State Board President, the Hastings branch made Lisa a named honoree this year. Finally, Barb shared that last year's convention silent auction raised over \$4,000 for National. Since there is no convention or silent auction this year, she discussed other ways for branches to contribute to National and suggested using The Pine to highlight fundraising ideas. Voting members approved the Funds Report as a part of the electronic ballot.

Outgoing Board: The following outgoing board members were thanked for their service:

Lisa West – President

Mariah Ring – Administrative Assistant

Peg Lonquist – Vice President Membership

Barb Wonson Liukkonen – Vice President Funds

Anne Johnson – C/U Representative and Nominating Committee

David Kirkwood – Finance Chair

Sheila Lind – ByLaws Chair

Carol Sheldon and Pat Powers – Nominating Committee.

Recognition of 2020-2021 MN Board of Directors:

President – Mary Ann Lucas-Hoax, Duluth

Vice President Membership – Pat Powers, Hastings

Vice President Funds – Anne Johnson, Hastings

Treasurer – Beth Nienow, Rochester

Secretary/Historian – Linda Blaisdell, Minneapolis

Vice President Program – Deanna Ensley, Grand Rapids

Vice President Public Policy – Jan Carey, Hibbing

Communication Coordinator – Cyndy Harrison, Faribault

Finance Chair – Janice Quist, St. Paul

Nominating Committee – Gail Glashan, Hastings and Teresa Sagan, Ely

Still needed: Administrative Assistant, Bylaws Chair and third Nominating Committee member

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Regional Convention: Lisa reported that the fourteen-state regional convention to be held in East Moline, IL, will be postponed to June 18-20, 2021. Plans will be further detailed at a conference call in June. Lisa West and Deanna Ensley will continue with the planning.

Macpherson Scholarship: Peg reported on the scholarship's background and the relationship between the Macpherson family and Minnesota AAUW. The scholarship was founded by Carol Macpherson and is now carried on through her children. Currently worth over one million dollars, the scholarship awards \$50,000 annually in amounts of \$2,000. These monies are given to women who dropped out of college and wish to return after at least a five year gap in schooling. A drafted document clarifies that AAUW provides Board members Lisa West and Peg Lonquist, an Application Review Committee, currently composed of Mary Ann, Lisa, Peg, Anne and Gail, as well as administrative support and the AAUW name. No longer tied solely to the University of Minnesota, the scholarship is now open to colleges throughout Minnesota. The selection process should be completed by the end of June. The application review committee must be composed of AAUW members, but not necessarily State board officials.

Strategic Plan: Even though no longer on the board, Lisa will continue working on a draft of a strategic plan which focuses on educational and training components.

Final Items: Sheila reminded the board of the need to fill the Bylaws Chair. Items such as annual meetings in lieu of conventions need to be addressed in Bylaws or standing rules.

Barb suggested the secretary resend out 2019 condensed convention minutes along with these annual April 2020 minutes.

Gail pointed out that prior to cancellation, branches had planned to send 15 girls to NCCWSL training.

Lisa will send out information about, and pictures of, two AAUW banners she AAUW MN recently purchased. They are available for use/checkout by all branches. She suggested keeping one in the northern part of the state and one in the south, so one will reside with Deanna in Duluth and the other with Cyndy in Faribault.

Jan reported that she will send links to national public policy webinars.

Next Meeting: Incoming president Mary Ann Lucas-Hoax stated that she will wait until June to decide on the next meeting date either in July or August. She also wants to consider dividing the state into three sections and having regional meetings, one with the northern branches, one with branches in the middle of the state and one filled with southern branches.

Adjournment: Peg moved to adjourn; Sheila seconded. President Lisa West adjourned the meeting at 10:31 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Trudy Severson, Secretary

## **Minnesota AAUW 2020 Annual Meeting**

The Minnesota AAUW State Board held their annual meeting on-line this past weekend in lieu of a board meeting

that is traditionally held just prior to the state convention, which had not planned for this year as no AAUW branch stepped up to volunteer to host the convention (which would have been cancelled due to the coronavirus). The agenda of the meeting was very light due to circumstances. The meeting highlights are included below. The meetings minutes will follow at the end of this newsletter.

### **Recognition of 2020-2021 MN Board of Directors:**

President – Mary Ann Lucas-Hoax, Duluth  
Vice President Membership – Pat Powers, Hastings  
Vice President Funds – Anne Johnson, Hastings  
Treasurer – Beth Nienow, Rochester  
Secretary/Historian – Linda Blaisdell, Minneapolis  
Vice President Program – Deanna Ensley, Grand Rapids  
Vice President Public Policy – Jan Carey, Hibbing  
Communication Coordinator – Cyndy Harrison, Faribault  
Finance Chair – Janice Quist, St. Paul  
Nominating Committee – Gail Glashan, Hastings, and Teresa Sagen, Ely

**Regional Convention:** Lisa reported that the 14-state regional convention to be held in East Moline, IL, will be postponed to June 18-20, 2021. Plans will be further detailed at a conference call in June. Lisa West and Deanna Ensley will continue with the planning.

### **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](http://www.aauw.org)

**ADVANCING EQUITY FOR WOMEN & GIRLS** – FOR MORE INFORMATION  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)  
AAUW MINNESOTA [www.aauwmn.net](http://www.aauwmn.net)