



Northwoods News - December 2024

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS ANDREA AND LINDA

Greetings, Branch Members!

The Thanksgiving holiday is over and we hope everyone was able to celebrate in the way that brings the greatest joy – with lots of friends and family, or more quietly. In any case, the celebrations ended in a cold and snowy fashion here in Ely! It's time for us to get out the skis, skates and yak tracks, as well as the movies, books and long johns.

Speaking of giving thanks, we are so thankful for each and every one of you for your contributions to the branch – your monetary donations, of course, but especially, your participation in our meetings and events. You are so appreciated. The women of our Ely branch are truly the best!

In line with the AAUW mission of supporting women and girls, our branch accomplished a great deal in the past year. We held a truly memorable Northland Get Together for the Northern Minnesota branches; held another

amazing Garden Party in July; hosted two candidate forums; registered students at Minnesota North College – VCC campus to vote; picked up trash on Highway 169; put human trafficking awareness posters in local establishments; had a successful spring fundraiser; sponsored a poetry reading for a woman who had experienced sex trafficking; provided nearly \$9,000 in scholarships; continued our support for the Equal Rights Amendment; served lunch to Indigenous students during the Ely Film Festival and held fun pop-up fundraisers. Whew, pretty impressive if you ask us. And everyone was involved in one way or another!

Now we're looking forward to our upcoming branch holiday celebration on **Tuesday, December 10, at 5:30 at the GEL**, when we'll hold our silent auction and bucket raffle fundraiser with some great items that will include a number of homemade goodies and adult beverages that could help with your upcoming entertaining needs. So, we hope to see everyone there to celebrate the end of a successful year for our branch and the wonderful women who made it happen. Please feel free to bring friends with you and be sure to make a new friend at every meeting!

Linda and Andrea

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

December 10, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting

Holiday celebration with auction and raffle.

Monday, January 13, 11:30 am - Soup 'n' Pig Popup Fundraiser

Jackie Ender's house, 13444 Bear Paw Trail

January 14, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting

Abby Dare, business owner, creator, and manager of The Meadows Gallery &

Studios, will discuss her small business ownership journey and the process of making The Meadows what it is today. She may also share a bit about the path of moving to the Ely area to work at one of the area camps, and the transitional process to finding her place in town for the long term.

February 11, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting

Jan Guerin, AAUW member, has taught English Literature, Film Studies, and Communications both at the high school and college level. She will facilitate our large group discussion on the novel *My Antonia* by Willa Cather. All are welcome to the book discussion, whether or not you've read the book.

March 11, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting

Nichole Boitz, owner of Studio North Dance and Fitness, will speak about the development of her business, which was started several years ago, and the programs and facilities available there.

April 8, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting

Annual Meeting.

May 13, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting

End of year banquet and silent auction.

If you need a ride to a meeting or event, please be sure to contact Linda Sutton!

TIME TO CURL UP WITH A BOOK!

Whose birthday is coming up on December 7th?

Willa Cather's!

Willa Cather was born December 7, 1873 and authored the book *My Antonia*, which we will discuss as a group, facilitated by Jan Guerin, at our February 2025 meeting.

Literary Classics of the United States Inc. says:

"...a masterpiece at once austere and exuberant, historical and mythical, *My Antonia* portrays a family of Bohemian emigrants on the Nebraska frontier."

There are several copies available through the Ely library, and it's also available as a paperback that can be ordered through the Piragis bookstore in Ely.

We hope you enjoy this classic read!

Program Committee



FUNDRAISING

By Kay Vandervort

Happy holidays!

The December meeting will feature our holiday banquet with bucket raffle, silent auction, and door prizes. Please invite friends to attend. Bidding will start at 4:45. We have lots of consumable items for sale, as well as some lovely options for gift giving.

Thank you to everyone who donated to or who is helping with set up etc. As a quick reminder, if you have food items for the auction, they need to be there before 4:45. And make sure you come with some cash so you can purchase bucket raffle tickets. For purchase of auction items, though, credit, cash or checks will all work.

Soup 'n' Pig

Let's kick off 2025 with a Soup and Pig Pop Up Party! We'll meet at Jackie Ender's house at 13444 Bear Paw Trail at 11:30 a.m., Monday, January 13 (plan a little time to get there).

After a soup luncheon, we'll decorate pig banks. Maybe you're tired of yours, maybe you want to decorate one for an incoming member, maybe you want to decorate a pig as a centerpiece at our Branch meetings, or maybe you are new among our ranks and have no idea what we're talking about and just want to come find out.

We'll have the pigs, lots of doodads, glue and paint. You come prepared for fun with AAUW friends. We might even see how you do with pig trivia. If you have odds and ends of wrapping paper, ribbons, feathers, or old jewelry to donate to the project, bring them along.

Because it's a pop-up fundraiser in addition to being a fun event, we will pass an envelope for donations. But, for us, we'd rather see your smiling face than your money so come whether you want to donate or not. (An RSVP to Linda Sutton, ldsutton2001@aol.com or Kay Vandervort, khv771@gmail.com, would be helpful so we know how much soup to prepare.)

If we get bad weather that day, we'll reschedule so check your e-mail before you come just to make sure. Also, watch for messages about car pooling to get there.

MEET OUR MEMBERS!

Say hi to Susan Polege!

Hello new friends! I am back in Ely but new to this AAUW club. One of my favorite inspirational quotes - "Life is a daring ADVENTURE, or nothing at all."
—Helen Keller

I'm a dairy farm girl from Wisconsin transplanted to the northwoods, first coming to Ely in 2005 as a Voyageur Outward Bound School intern. After one summer here, I left for service in Peace Corps Zambia as an environmental/forestry volunteer in Southern province (near Victoria Falls). These two years were unique, challenging, and unforgettable. After returning from Zambia, I felt a bit lost back in the U.S., and found my footing again with Outward Bound in Florida and Alabama for another unique, challenging and unforgettable 2 years working with at-risk and adjudicated students. I met my sweetheart Greg Heide first at the Key Largo Outward Bound base and then found him again the following summer at the VOBS base here in Ely in 2011.

We moved together to Washington DC so he could fulfill an Army contract, and I trained in a massage school nearby. I loved biking in the Virginia - DC - Maryland area past all the famous monuments to school and work for those two years. We returned to Ely in 2014 and got married that fall. I spent this two years working at the Pebble Spa, Wintergreen Northern Wear, and helping to start the Ely Folk School.

The next three years we relocated to Colville WA for Greg's US Forest Service archaeology work, and I found a position as a bookkeeper in a furniture store, and joined the local Rotary club. Washington was a great place to live, and it was a tough decision to come back to Minnesota. We first landed in Duluth so Greg could continue to work for the Superior National Forest, and I started as business manager at Yoga North, where I've worked the past five years. The

Forest reorganized Greg's Heritage department so he could work again from the Kawishiwi District here in Ely, so we've been back again since 2023. Starting in December, I'll be learning a new job at Frandsen Bank here in Ely!

I love traveling - some favorite destinations have been Tanzania, India, Hong Kong, Ireland, and Greece. Running, biking, and canoeing are some of my favorite ways to enjoy the outdoors. I continued a habit from my high school cross country and track days of running races, and the Ely Marathon canoe portage relay last year with the "LumberJills" team was the most fun event I've ever been part of! My indoor hobbies include experimenting with recipes, and taking folk school classes to dabble in craft projects like wood carving, sewing, and fiber art. My husband and I have a tradition of choosing a Christmas holiday menu and tradition to adopt from another country every year, so this year we'll be learning about how to celebrate in France: **Joyeux Noël** to all of you! - Susan Polege



MEMBERSHIP

If you know someone who might like to join us, bring them to any meeting to check us out with no pressure. Or, schedule a coffee get together for the person and invite another member or two to talk about AAUW.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ely Branch of AAUW respectfully acknowledges that we are on the homelands of the Lake Superior Bands of Ojibwe people and within the ceded lands of the Treaty of 1854, where they retained rights to hunt, fish, and gather.

We also recognize other Indigenous peoples who lived here before the Ojibwe people. These include Dakota, Cree, and other tribes that have occupied and utilized this land.

We recognize the perseverance and survival of our Indigenous neighbors who continue to live throughout this region. We're deeply grateful for the multitude of ways that the Anishinaabeg have and continue to contribute to collective well-being through sharing of knowledge and time.