



Northwoods News - January 2025

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS ANDREA AND LINDA

It's hard to believe that 2024 is gone and we are starting a new year! Our branch accomplished so many good things last year as noted in last month's Co-President's Report – and many more good things are planned for this year! More to come on those plans in upcoming newsletters.

A BIG thanks to all of the branch members who participated in our Holiday Celebration Silent Auction/ Bucket Raffle – whether you bid on packages, donated delicious baked goods or other wonderful items for the event, helped set up/clean up, or came to enjoy the event. And a huge thank you to Kay Vandervort, our Master Fundraiser, for the hours to prepare many of the auction packages and raffle goodies - along with detailed auction/raffle instructions for us to follow in her absence as she was recuperating after getting some “replacement parts.” With the help of all, we were able to make just over \$1,500 for branch programs and scholarships! Thank you!

You are invited to the branch “Soup ‘n Pig” Pop-Up Party at Jackie Ender’s house at 11:30 am on January 13 to have lunch then decorate a new piggy bank to bring to branch meetings stuffed with your spare change. What fun! More information can be found in the Fundraising section of this newsletter.

And don’t forget to read My Antonia by Willa Cather for the book discussion at our February branch meeting. Willa Cather was a Pulitzer-Prize winning novelist and one of the most widely read female authors of the twentieth century. Her novels generally contain strong women. My Antonia is considered one of her best works. Jan Guerin, AAUW member, will facilitate the discussion. Jan has taught English literature, film studies, and communications both at the high school and college level (and does a fabulous job facilitating discussion during our monthly Short Stories gatherings – contact Linda or Andrea if you’d like to come to Short Stories). Several hard copies and also the downloadable ebook of My Antonia are available within the Arrowhead Library System (the Ely library can assist with requests or downloading), or a copy can be ordered through the bookstore at Piragis.

Please join us for the next branch meeting on January 14 at the Grand Ely Lodge. Our speaker, Abby Dare, business owner of The Meadows Gallery and Studios, will discuss her small business ownership journey and the process of making The Meadows what it is today. She may also share a little about how she came to Ely and the process of finding her place in town for the long term. Come early at 5:00 for social time. The program starts at 5:30 followed by our branch meeting. Hope to see you there!

Andrea and Linda

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

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!

MAYOR OMERZA'S STATE OF THE CITY

Mayor Heidi Omerza will present the Ely State of the City address on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the Ely City Hall Council Chambers, located at 209 E Chapman St. The event, the first of its kind in recent history, will commence at 6:30 PM and is open to all residents and members of the media. The address is co-sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ely and the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Ely Branch.

In her address, entitled “How do so many Fs equal an A+?,” the Mayor will highlight Frozen, Films, Festivals and Funding to describe recent achievements in the Ely community. She will also discuss future initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life for Ely residents. Key topics will include economic development and community well-being.

Residents are encouraged to attend this important event to gain insight into the city's progress and plans for the future. For those unable to attend in person, the address will be streamed live on Midco Channel 11 and available for later viewing on that channel. It will also be available to be viewed afterward on YouTube (entitled 2025 Ely Mn State of the City Address).

PUBLIC POLICY

By Mary Setterholm

We sent an Action Alert in early December that made it very simple to Take Action sending an email to our Senators Klobuchar and Smith encouraging passage of the Social Security Fairness Act. The bill would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) provision, both of which reduce Social Security benefits for government workers when they retire. The House had passed the bill in November, and AAUW encouraged passage by the Senate before years end. On December 21, the Senate passed the bill. It now moves to the President for his signature.

Action Alerts and the Take Action process provided by AAUW make it so easy for each of us to engage with our representatives- nationally and statewide- as we advocate for those issues important to our AAUW mission. Your Public Policy Team will work to get these issues front and center and remind you to

Take Action. If you haven't yet, you can sign up to get the alerts directly to your inbox at [Take Action](#).

2025 will be a year of learning and study for the Public Policy Team, with a focus on women's economic justice in our community. We will be learning what is available, where can we be supportive of current offerings and advocate for additional needs for young and not so young in our broader community. With that in mind, we are working to schedule local and regional leaders of support services to our meetings. We meet the 3rd Tuesday of every month at Grace Lutheran Church (3:00 PM). During this learning year, meetings will have a ZOOM option. Any AAUW members interested in attending in person or via ZOOM are welcome- even if not a permanent member of the Public Policy workgroup. The first quarter schedule is below:

January 21st - Abby Dare - <https://www.abby-dare.com> Communication and community building

February 18 - Ellen Anderson - Justice North Legal Aide

March 18 - Colleen Chapin- Advocates for Family Peace- <https://www.affp.org>



FUNDRAISING

By Kay Vandervort

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, 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 do-dads, 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 email before you come just to make sure. Also, watch for messages about carpooling to get there.

Thank You

Thanks to everyone. You made our Christmas banquet a success. We raised right around \$1,500.

For the coming year:

Join us for our Pig party on January 13. Keep filling the pigs you do have. They can be turned in at any meeting, but for sure, plan to bring them to the annual meeting.

If you have a great pop-up idea you'd like to organize, just let Kay know. We're always looking for your input. It could be a craft party, a cooking demo, a potluck, a movie and dinner or trip to a ball game. Maybe it should be a hike

in the woods. How about cheese and cocktails? Remember how much fun we had with our pie for breakfast? What's your thought? We'd love to hear it.

NEW MEMBER!

We're excited to welcome a new member since the last Northwoods News!

Please welcome:

Kristen Anthony Kristen.e.anthony@gmail.com

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.