



Grand Rapids Timberline

NEWS FOR AND ABOUT
AAUW GRAND RAPIDS
BRANCH MEMBERS

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February 2025

MISSION: AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research education and advocacy.



February 17, 2025

Location: United Methodist Church

Social/Registration: 11:30 – 11:45 AM Lunch: 11:45 AM – 12:30 PM

Menu: Chicken Croissant, Raw Veggie Cup, Cheesecake

Cost \$13

****RSVP to AAUWRSVPGrandRapids@gmail.com
by Monday, February 10, 2025**

Food Chair: Karen Karls

Food Committee: Norma Eppinga, Jean Gardner, Dianne Anderson

Business Meeting and Program: 12:30 PM

Program Topic: Coordinating Compassion Through Project Care Free Clinic

Presenter: Tiffany Schleppegrell, Executive Director of Project Care Free Clinic

Tiffany Schleppegrell has been the Executive Director of Project Care since 2019. Her first association with the program was as a member of the board. She has a Bachelor's Degree from St. Scholastica in Organizational Behavior completing the program using online and evening courses. She worked in and then owned a medical billing company prior to Project Care. She is responsible for managing staff and volunteers at three clinics, interacting with the community, fundraising

and grant-writing and promoting the clinics's services. Project Care provides basic medical care to uninsured and underinsured patients.

Pam Dowell, Site Coordinator for the Grand Rapids Project Care Clinic will be a guest to add some local information. Pam has been with the clinic since 2016. She has a degree in NonProfit/Public Organizational Management from Concordia University in St. Paul.

President's Message

Hello Friends!

Our luncheon was held on January 20, 2025. Thank you for the hearty participants who attended on such a frigid day. Every month our members contribute to Travel Treasures. The money from this helps to support a scholarship each year. It is so much fun to see where everyone travels. Our group travels worldwide so we all get a taste of the diversity in the world.

Our membership continues to grow, thanks to the members who invite a friend to attend a meeting, listen to our programs, meet new people, then decide to join the Grand Rapids Branch or not. At the present time we have 80 members.

We are asking for people to volunteer to mentor with Julie Skallman to learn the operations of the treasury position. Please let me know if you are interested.

Susan LaVelle, President



*****Travel Treasures**

Thank you to all who participated. We added \$58 to our Scholarship Fund!

We again had many wonderful donations:

- Jean Gardner brought a beautiful scarf from her travels to Norway;
- Marva Jean Hutchens traveled 'from my recliner to my computer' and brought a puzzle featuring Kamala Harris and many other groundbreaking women.
- Lynette Eck was home and donated hand lotion and homemade knitted slippers;
- Helen Ahlbrecht traveled to Maryland and brought cherry cordials;
- Sally Hagman, who was also our presenter, donated pens from her adventures in Spain;
- Susan LaVelle was in Savannah and brought Key Lime cookies.

See you all next month!

Marlys Mestemacher
Jean Gardner

*If you made someone else happy,
you made yourself happy!*

****INTEREST GROUPS****

*****LITERATURE**

The Monday Morning Lit Group will meet on February 3rd at 9:30 AM in the private dining room at Majestic Pines. Eileen Grosland will lead our discussion of AN UNFINISHED LOVE STORY: A PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE 1960s by historian and Pulitzer Prize winning author Doris Kearns Goodwin. "Dick and Doris Goodwin were married for 42 years and married to American history even longer. In his twenties, Dick was one of the brilliant young men of President John F. Kennedy's New Frontier. In his thirties, he helped design President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and was a close advisor and speechwriter for Robert F. Kennedy. At 24, Doris was a graduate student and was selected as a White House Fellow. She later worked directly with Lyndon Johnson and assisted on his memoirs (Simon and Schuster)." The book comes from the author and her husband's experiences and the over 300 boxes of diaries, letters, documents, and memorabilia that Dick saved for more than 50 years. It is a fascinating and thought-provoking read. Coffee will be provided. For more information, contact Nancy Salmi at 218-326-3147 or at nsalmi@earthlink.net.

*****WALKING & TALKING**

The group is on its fall/winter schedule of walking on Tuesday afternoons at 1 PM. The locations change from week to week but are generally in the Grand Rapids area. We walk for about one hour and then may gather for coffee. We are hardy women and always walk outside but we are not speed walkers so you can set your own pace. Group members receive a notification of the location of the walk. Members walk when they want to. No need for RSVPs. If the walk is cancelled for any reason (potential weather threat) you will be notified. The group welcomes new members interested in walking. Send your name, email address, and cell phone number to Karen at k.karls@yahoo.com.



Our walkers were discussing their plans over lunch at Boulder Tap.

*****SUNSHINE & CARING**

If any member of AAUW needs a bit of sunshine because of illness or a sympathy card, please let Nancy Raymond know, she is our SUNSHINE & CARING contact. She will send a card from AAUW. You can email her at: nmraymond14@gmail.com.

****The state meeting will be held on April 25 and 26 in Austin, MN.****



The 2025 AAUW Annual Art Contest is STILL OPEN!

This is your opportunity to showcase your artistic talents and have your work featured in our annual notecard collection, distributed to members nationwide.

Women artists remain underrepresented in galleries and often face pay inequity. Our annual contest spotlights the creativity and contributions of women artists within our community, advancing gender equity through art.

How the Art Contest Works:

AAUW members can submit up to two entries featuring their photography or a digital photo of their painting, drawing, sculpture, collage or other form of art through our [AAUW Art Contest page](#). Sign-up is easy and only requires your email address or AAUW member ID!

Entries are open now through January 31, 2025.

You will be able to vote for your favorites and the winners will have their cards made up and sent to all AAUW members in late summer.

NOTE: There was a winner from the Hibbing branch in 2024 and her notecard went to all AAUW members.



Congratulations to our own Tammy Pluym!



“First, she was lucky enough to bag a once in a lifetime permit to hunt for Oryx on the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. Then she got an Oryx with horns measuring nearly 36”!!!
Way to go Tammy!” (from Cathy Davies)

Tammy shared, “I’ve been very fortunate to harvest two elk and now this oryx in the last four years, here in NM (rifle hunts). I just bought a crossbow and I plan to try getting a deer in MN this year. I was born and raised in Minnesota and I spend five months there near Deer River and seven months per year here in the mountains of New Mexico, with my partner (Gregg Gardner).

Cathy Davies recruited me into AAUW and I very much enjoy everyone in the group.”

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**Grand Rapids AAUW Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 20, 2025 - United Methodist Church**

Susan LaVelle, President, called the meeting to order. Additional attendees were Janis Johnson, Karen Karls, Helen Ahlbrecht, Julie Skallman, Kathleen Spencer, Marlys Mestemacher and Vicki Holmstrom.

Secretary’s report: Karen Karls moved the minutes from the previous board meeting be approved as read. Kathleen Spencer seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer’s report: Currently we have 80 paid members. The bank account currently has a balance of \$6281. \$1992 of that is dedicated to scholarships. This leaves \$4289 available to spend. Treasurer Julie Skallman requested permission to move some funds received into the GRACF spendable account. Permission was granted.

Programs: It was decided that the May music program by Patchwork Ensemble should be presented after the meal, not during the meal.

Communications: Information on the Karen Lonson AAUW-GRGM Memorial Scholarship is being added to the articles announcing our meetings in the Herald Review. Hopefully this will help us find interested applicants

Scholarships: The scholarship committee members are Kathleen Spencer, Helen Ahlbrecht, Nancy Raymond, Karen Karls, Marva Jean Hutchens, Lexi Mack and Linda Lonson.

Old Business:

Northland Gathering

- The date will be October 4, 2025
- There will not be a regular AAUW meeting in October.
- The Methodist Church space has been reserved, along with technical support and custodian.
- Our caterers are ready and eager to do the food.

New Business:

- A nominating committee needs to be appointed to find candidates for the upcoming election. The nominating committee consists of one member from the board and two from general membership. Kathleen Spencer will be the board appointee. Susan will announce the need to members at today's general meeting, and information will also be put in the February Timberline. Those who are interested should contact either Susan LaVelle or Kathleen Spencer.
- Two positions will need filling in the upcoming election: Treasurer and Vice President of Programs. Julie Skallman is willing to serve a third term as treasurer. However, we need to find someone who is willing to serve as a mentee/co-chair to learn all the ropes to be able to serve in the position for the following term. Kathleen Spencer is the current Vice President of Programs. She will not be running for VP again but is willing to still serve on the committee.
- The To Do list for the Northland Gathering includes 'Save the Dates' notices, a flyer once speakers and local activities have been decided, and the big one – the Program. Kathleen and Karen have some great ideas.
- The State Meeting is April 25 and 26 in Austin.
- National AAUW sent an email to all members about dues changes and governance proposals on January 8. The proposal for dues is to raise them by \$5 annually for the next 5 years. Comments can be submitted through January 29 and 5 PM Eastern time.

Adjournment: Vicki Holmstrom moved the meeting be adjourned. Helen Ahlbrecht seconded the motion. The next board meeting is scheduled for March 24 at 9:30 at the Methodist Church.

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Vicki Holmstrom, Secretary



**AAUW Grand Rapids MN Branch General Meeting
Minutes for January 20, 2025**

The Grand Rapids branch of AAUW met at the United Methodist Church on Monday, January 20, for social time, lunch and program. There were 27 attendees including 2 guests. It was a bitterly cold day. All who came are to be commended!

President Susan LaVelle opened the business meeting with the reading of the AAUW Mission Statement.

Nancy Raymond announced that former member Harriet Mattei has passed away.

Susan announced the need for 2 members to serve on the nominating committee for the upcoming election. The slate of officers is announced at the March meeting and the election takes place at the April meeting. The current officers serve through June. The positions open are VP of Programs and Treasurer. Kathleen Spencer will be leaving her position as VP of Programs but is still willing to serve on the Program Committee. Julie Skallman is willing to serve a 3rd 2-year term as treasurer, but we need someone to serve as a mentee/co-chair. That person would be learning the duties and then serve as treasurer for the term starting 2 years from now. If you are interested or have questions, contact Susan LaVelle, Kathleen Spencer (who is the board’s representative on the nominating committee) or Julie Skallman.

Susan updated members on the plans for the Fall Gathering. There will be many small things (e.g. registration, greeters) that we will need help with. Members can start thinking about ways in which they would like to be involved.

Travel Treasures raised \$58 for our Scholarship Funds.

Ann Clark introduced our speaker, AAUW member Sally Hagman. Sally is a seasoned traveler and gave a presentation of her experience on two multi-day hikes: The Portuguese Camino and West Highland Way. We all admired her beautiful photos and amazing stamina!

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Vicki Holmstrom, Secretary

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AAUW LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Grand Rapids AAUW nominating committee is looking for a volunteer(s) to serve as Vice President for Programs. This could be a shared position with 2

individuals serving as Co-Vice Presidents. It is a 2-year term. Position works with a Program Committee to discuss, identify and schedule programs for 9 of our monthly meetings. There has been a tremendous amount of excellent committee involvement for programs which makes the job easy and rewarding. Please contact Kathleen Spencer if you are interested in accepting this position or sharing it as a Co-Vice President.

218-779-5914

Kmspencer21@outlook.com

The committee also needs a volunteer to become a Co-Treasurer with Julie Skallman for the next 2 years. The maximum time a treasurer can serve is 6 years so after this term Julie must retire. She is willing to do the bulk of the work for the upcoming 2 years but will show the new treasurer the ropes so stepping in to take it over completely should be a smooth transition. There is some work each month that we have a meeting, but the busiest time is late spring to early summer when dues come in and people must be re-registered with National on the computer. Almost everything can be done remotely.

Please contact Julie if you have any questions.

651 308-5866

julie.skallman@gmail.com

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Legacy Circle (page 28 in our directory)

Become a member of the AAUW Legacy Circle by making a planned gift to AAUW and affirming your commitment to the future of women and girls. Planned gifts expand AAUW programs and public policy agenda by providing for future generations of women and girls.

The planned gifts can be made in these ways:

By naming AAUW as a beneficiary in your will, trust, life insurance policy or individual retirement account (IRA), or by Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA), charitable trust or property donation.

To enroll, visit the AAUW Planned Giving website:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/support-aauw/leave-a-legacy/>



Shirley Jacobson - February 2

Pat Anderson - February 12
Julie Skallman - February 12
Colleen Nardone - February 22
Ann Clark - February 26
Pam Friesen - February 27



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