



Grand Rapids Timberline

NEWS FOR AND ABOUT
AAUW GRAND RAPIDS
BRANCH MEMBERS

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March 2025

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



March 17, 2025

Location: United Methodist Church

Social/Registration: 5:00-5:45 PM Dinner: 5:45 – 6:30 PM

Menu: Pork Chops in Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Corn, Éclair Cake
Cost \$15

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

If you have a concern on your reservation, you can either use the reservation link or contact Linda Johnson directly at: lindajohnsonj@q.com or 218-259-2305. Linda is our reservation expert, and she checks the reservation emails daily.

Food Chair: Marlys Mestemacher

Food Committee: Sue Koprowski, Marge Domish, Sue Mattson

Business Meeting and Program: 6:30 PM

Program Topic: Itasca Life Options: The Gift of Inclusion – Why Every Moment Matters

The mission is to empower and provide opportunities to people of all abilities. The goal is to provide services that help to develop and maintain vocational and life

skills, increase participation in community life and engage individuals in proactive and satisfying activities of their own choosing.

Presenters: Lisa Lawson & Sonia Lindgaard, Director & Assistant Director ILO

Lisa Lassen has served as Executive Director for over nine years. She graduated from Bemidji State University with a degree in Applied Psychology. With nearly 30 years' experience in Residential and Day Support Services, Lisa brings her knowledge and passion to creating meaningful programming and opportunities for participants in ILO.

Sonia Lindgaard graduated from Bethel University with a BA in Communication and Leadership Studies. She has worked in the nonprofit world since 2009 and joined ILO in 2022 as the Executive Assistant.

President's Message

Hello Friends!

Even though it has been really cold, there was a nice turnout of members for our luncheon meeting on February 17th, 2025.

The nominating committee, consisting of Kathleen Spencer and Louise Koglin Fidely, was announced. There are two positions open on the Board. The Program Committee is looking for a chairperson. Also, this committee is always looking for new members. The Treasurer position is looking for someone who would work with Julie Skallman to learn the bookkeeping, then when Julie's position ends, this person would step in.

As President, I shared the Five Star Achievement that our Branch was awarded. The Five Star Program is designed to honor branches that align their work with AAUW's strategic priorities in areas such as: Advancement, Public Policies, Advocacy, Programming, Communications and External Relations. In 2024, our Branch received a star for membership. For 2025, we achieved a star for Communications and External Relations.

The flyers are out for the **AAUW Book Sale that is held in Hibbing** each year.

You can **drop off used books at the Hibbing Armory**
from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM on:
March 10th – 14th, 17th - 21st & 24th - 28th
Please bring your books inside.
They do not take old textbooks, cassettes, VHS tapes,
encyclopedias or magazines (except crafts).
They do take puzzles, DVDs and CDs.

The **Hibbing AAUW Book Sale** is:
Friday, April 4th 9:30 AM - 8:00 PM
Saturday, April 5th 9:30 AM - 5:30 PM
Sunday, April 6th 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Please be aware that the **State Convention will be held in Austin, MN on April 25th & 26th**. You are encouraged to join the carpooling to get there. You can contact Susan LaVelle at 763-691-3335 for information.

Another reminder, **Grand Rapids will be hosting the Regional Northland Gathering on October 4, 2025, at the United Methodist Church**. The theme is going to be **'Cultivating Hope through History'**. We need to come up with a name for the gathering and will need volunteers that day.

Susan LaVelle, President



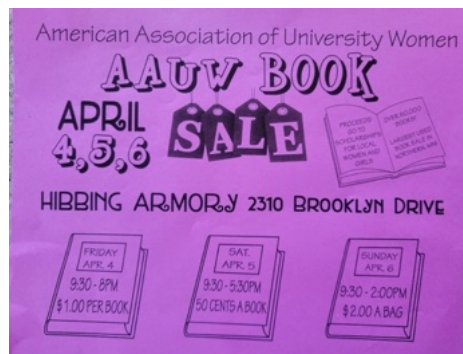
*****Travel Treasures**

It may have been cold outside, but all of you gave very warmly and we added \$69 to our Scholarship Fund. Thank you!

- Ellen Edverson shared beautiful items from her cousin's trip to the British Isles:
 - Tea towels from Bath, England, and from Fowey, England &
 - An art card from the Cotswold in England.
- Susan LaVelle brought Georgia Peach Cookies from her trip to Savannah, Georgia.
- Marlys Mestemacher traveled to Mora, Minnesota, for coffee from her granddaughter's fund raiser.

The Hibbing AAUW is sponsoring their annual book sale, over 80,000 books! See attached flyer for more information.

Stay warm!
Marlys Mestemacher
Jean Gardner



*'Never iron a 4-leaf clover...
you don't want to press your luck!'*



Happy St. Patrick's Day!

****INTEREST GROUPS****

*****LITERATURE**

The Monday Morning Lit Group will meet on March 3rd at 9:30 AM in the private dining room at Majestic Pines. Sue LaVelle will lead our discussion of Margaret Atwood's THE HANDMAID'S TALE, which has been banned in some local communities within the United States and in other parts of the world. A futuristic, dystopian novel published in 1985, the book is set in a near-future New England in a totalitarian and patriarchal society based upon a Christian belief that divine law should govern society - especially Old Testament judicial laws. This Republic of Gilead was created after the overthrow of the Government of the United States and the story is told by one of the Handmaids, young women who were forcibly assigned to produce children for the Commanders, the ruling class in Gilead. Coffee will be provided. For more information, contact Nancy Salmi at 218-326-3147 or 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.

*****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 25th and 26th in Austin, MN.****

AAUW Minnesota has 25 branches and 1700 members!!

We urge our members to participate in activities and special interest groups,
but it is not required.

Do you know someone who is interested in joining us?

**Invite them to a meeting or contact our membership chair,
Janis Johnson at janiskjohnson@yahoo.com**



Historian Committee Opening

Our Grand Rapids chapter maintains a scrapbook record of all our meetings. Included for each month are a copy of the Herald Review article announcing the meeting, photos of the speaker, anything else of interest and any handouts provided by the speaker. In the past, 2 or 3 members have participated in this endeavor. Right now, Karen Wennen, the committee chair, is the only member, and she would love to have some help. So, if you are someone who enjoys taking photos or scrapbooking and would like to help, give her a call or send an email.

AAUW WELCOMES PROJECT CARE

Published in the February 5th edition of the *Grand Rapids Herald Review*

AAUW welcomes Tiffany Schleppegrell, Executive Director of Project Care, as the featured speaker for their February 17th meeting. Coordinating compassion through Project Care Free Clinic is Schleppegrell's topic and the mission of the program. Project Care, a nonprofit organization, operates three clinics, Grand Rapids, Hibbing and Virginia, that provide basic medical care to uninsured and underinsured patients. In addition to basic medical care, the clinics provide health education and networking. The services are provided by local volunteer doctors, nurses and community volunteers. Only the director and site coordinators are paid, part-time positions. The Grand Rapids Clinic is open, by appointment, on Tuesday evenings.

Schleppegrell, a graduate of St. Scholastica with a bachelor's degree in Organizational Management, had been working for a medical billing company in Hibbing, when she became involved with the board of Project Care. When the executive director stepped down in 2019, inspired by the mission, Schleppegrell applied for the position and joined the organization in June. Her responsibilities include everything from managing staff and volunteers, interacting in the community and promoting the clinic by grant writing, public speaking and fundraising.

Schleppegrell says, "I'm not trained in providing direct care, but I'm really good at writing and talking about it, fundraising and making the volunteers feel appreciated."

Joining the program to add some local insight is Pam Dowell, Site Coordinator for the Grand Rapids Clinic. She has been with the clinic since 2016. She has a degree in NonProfit/Public Organizational Management from Concordia University in St. Paul.

The meeting is on Monday, February 17th, at United Methodist Church, in Grand Rapids and begins with registration at 11:30 AM, with lunch from 11:45-12:30.

There will be a short business meeting followed by the program at 12:30 PM. The community is invited to attend the program.

Applications remain open for AAUW scholarships for non-traditional women students through the **Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation**. Applications are available from GRACF until March 1. A special \$4000 **Karen Lonson Memorial AAUW/GRGM Scholarship** is available for a student in a business-related field. Karen Lonson is a long-time AAUW member and active in the business community. AAUW also sponsors a **Scholarship through Minnesota North**. These scholarships support the mission of AAUW to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.

Membership information is available from Janis Johnson at janisjohnson@yahoo.com or 218-259-6003.



AAUW Grand Rapids MN Branch General Meeting Minutes February 17th, 2025

The Grand Rapids Branch of AAUW met at the United Methodist Church on Monday, February 17th, for social time, lunch and program. There were 30 attendees.

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

Nancy Raymond announced that Juliet Jones is recovering in The Grand Village Lodge from hip surgery following a fall.

Susan LaVelle reminded us of the Hibbing AAUW's Book Sale. That Book Sale will be held April 4th – 6th at the Armory in Hibbing. They will accept books from us, but they need to be received between March 10th and March 28th.

Susan announced that we received a star for Communications and External Relations from AAUW National's 5 Star Program.

Kathleen Spencer and Louise Koglin Fidely are the nominating committee members for our upcoming election. Positions needing filling are VP of Programs and a Treasurer co-chair/mentee. More details on these positions will be found in last month's minutes which are in the February Timberline. Let a nominating committee member know if you are interested or have questions about these positions. The election will be held at the April meeting.

If members have ideas for good spots to visit in Grand Rapids for people coming for the Fall Gathering, let board members know. These will be listed in our 'Save the Date' information that goes out to the other AAUW chapters.

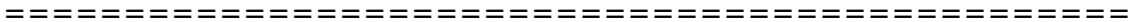
The State AAUW Meeting will be April 25th and 26th in Austin, MN. The theme for the meeting is 'Cultivating Hope through History'. Please let Susan LaVelle know if you would like to attend. Carpools are being arranged.

A request was made to have the Grand Rapids Herald Review article announcing our meeting be included in the Timberline. It sounds like this is doable.

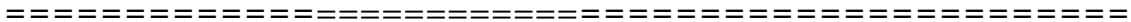
Travel Treasures raised \$69 for our scholarship funds.

Janis Johnson introduced our speaker, Tiffany Schleppegrell, the Executive Director of Project Care Free Clinic. Pamela Dowell, Site Coordinator for Grand Rapids, was also present to add local color.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Vicki Holmstrom, Secretary



- Jan Mary Hill - March 4**
- Kathy Pliska - March 8**
- Carolyn Gaarder - March 8**
- Susan LaVelle - March 14**
- Vicki Holstrom - March 21**
- Alexandra Mack - March 21**
- Barbara Duffy - March 25**
- Norma Eppinga - March 27**



Websites for local, state and national AAUW information:

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

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