



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

EDITOR: Myrna Peterson  
[myrnakay67@gmail.com](mailto:myrnakay67@gmail.com)  
(218) 301-6028

# ***Grand Rapids Timberline***



Volume 49, Issue 10      June, July, August, 2025

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

## **President's Message**

Hi Friends!

The May meeting was the last meeting of the calendar year. What a successful turnout at the Forest Lake Lodge. Before the gathering Julie Skallman was collecting dues for the 2025-2026 calendar year. I am so glad to know that we will be seeing most of you in the coming year.

The entertainment was delightful. The Patchwork Ensemble: Uniquely American will also be performing on July 1, 2025 at the Community Presbyterian Church. I hope to see many of you there. This multi genre group works very well together playing American music.

Please read the article about the scholarship recipients. The result shows how all of our fundraising throughout the year helps several people pursue their dreams. It is good to know who they are, and how they will use their funds. Thank You to the Committee for your time in choosing these deserving women.

Please remember to put October 4th on your calendar. This will be the Regional Gathering at the Methodist Church. There is the possibility of signing up and paying in August so we will know how much food to buy. We always can use more people to volunteer on October 3rd and 4th. The cost will be \$35.00.

Enjoy your summer as it is short and sweet.

Respectfully yours,  
Susan LaVelle, President

### \*\*\*Travel Treasures

Our May meeting was such fun, and the music so beautiful! We also added \$91 to our Scholarship Fund

- Cyndy Agle donated Praline Pecan Honey Butter from Fairhope, AL.
- Anita Firman donated a satin eye mask.
- Sue Koprowski toured Southern Tuscany and brought back olive wood spoons and truffle items.
- Janis Johson brought a Red Wing pottery vase from Red Wing.
- Julie Skallman re-donated our "traveling" travel treasure In Their Footsteps puzzle.
- Cathy Davies has been traveling much of the world and donated: pouch from Egypt; coin purse from Thailand; tea towel from Portugal and a purse from Mongolia.
- Marlys Mestemacher attended the AAUW Statewide conference in Austin, MN, and donated from the Spam Museum a wine glass, tote bag, air freshener and Spam.

Thank you to all who donated items and purchased a chance to win!

Marlys Mestemacher  
Jean Gardner

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### *Welcome!*

Welcome to the members serving on the 2025-2026 board:

President: Susan LaVelle  
Vice President/Membership: Janis Johnson  
Vice President/Programs: Pam Friesen  
Secretary: Vicki Holmstrom  
Treasurer: Julie Skallman and Carolyn Chase

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### \*\*\*Membership

Congratulations to the winner of our Membership drawing! All members that had paid the \$100 dues by the May meeting were entered in the drawing.

Our winner was: Sally Hagman. Congratulations, Sally!

### \*\*\*WALKING & TALKING

Starting in May the group switches to the summer schedule of walking on Wednesday mornings at 9 AM. The locations change from week to week but are generally in the Grand Rapids area. We walk for about an hour and then may gather for coffee. We are hearty 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 canceled 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 Karls @ [k.karls@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:nmraymond14@gmail.com).

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*Thank You!*

Dear Grand Rapids AAUW Scholarship Committee,

I want to sincerely thank you for selecting me as a recipient of the Grand Rapids AAUW Anniversary Scholarship. I'm honored to receive support from an organization that recognizes the inequities women face in academics and the workforce and actively works to change that.

I'm currently pursuing a dual Family Nurse Practitioner and Emergency Nurse Practitioner Master's degree at the University of South Alabama, with plans to graduate in 2027. I chose South Alabama because it offers specialized training in both emergency and family medicine, which will equip me with the skills and knowledge I need to succeed in rural emergency settings. I live in the Grand Rapids area with my family. I also work as a flight nurse, providing critical care to patients in need of air medical transport. Balancing work, graduate school, and a family is no small task, and receiving this scholarship makes a meaningful difference as I continue forward.

I recently spent some time learning more about AAUW and was really struck by how much your mission aligns with my own values. I care deeply about access, equity, and supporting women in leadership, education, and healthcare. I'm grateful for the opportunity to attend the upcoming banquet and meet the members within our community. Your inclusion means a lot.

Thank you again for investing in students like me. Your support goes beyond financial relief — it's an affirmation of the goals I'm working toward and the work I'm excited to do.

Sincerely,  
Brandi Maki, BSN, RN, CEN, CPEN, TCRN, CFRN

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## Thank You!

Thank you so much for the Grand Rapids AAUW Anniversary Scholarship. It is appreciated so much more than you know. It will ensure that I can finish my education to be an elementary educator. With the rising costs of everything it will help me so much! Thank you once again!

Jessica Hanson

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## Treasurer's Report from Julie Skallman

I have only good news to report!

Membership renewals have been coming in fast. Only 11 members remain who have not renewed or informed me that they are moving away or will not be rejoining. This is ahead of last year at this time. Sally Hagman was the winner of the free membership at the May meeting. She had just given me her check and I handed it back to her an hour later.

Our scholarship fundraising was very successful. We added one additional scholarship at GRACF in May because we could see that your generosity would allow it. Along with the \$2070 raised with direct checks to the fund, Travel Treasures, Book Sales, Anita's scarf sale, and Honorariums helped us reach a total of \$3398. This is enough to support 2 of the \$1500 scholarships without having to count on growth from our endowment at the Grand Rapids Area Community Foundation. With the uncertainty of the stock market at this time I hope we can count on you again next year.

Marva Jean Hutchens paid for the scholarship recipients at the May dinner. She has done this for the past several years and it is greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU all for your support of AAUW and particularly of education for non-traditional women students in our community.



**AAUW NORTHLAND GATHERING 2025**  
**Saturday, October 4, 2025**

**Grand Rapids Methodist Church**

1701 SE 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744



*Advancing Gender Equity for  
Women and Girls through  
Research, Education and Advocacy*

*‘Watch for More Details to Come!’*

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**At AAUW, we believe in women and girls, and we believe in the future.**

**We believe that higher education is a key driver  
to achieving economic prosperity.**

**We believe economies thrive when all women  
are empowered and educated.**

**We believe in equitable access to higher education  
that is diverse and inclusive and free  
of harassment and discrimination.**

**We believe women deserve the opportunity to pursue  
and thrive in any career they choose.**

**We believe in equality and opportunity for all women, everywhere!**

**(From AAUW-National)**

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***Best Wishes to June, July & August Birthdays!!***

**Judith 'Judy' MacAlpine - June 1**

**Joan Solberg - June 4**

**Marjorie 'Marj' Lavalier - June 5**

**Harriet Lucia - June 6**

Juliet Jones - June 9  
Sharon Burt - June 12  
Helen Albrecht - June 15  
Sharon Quern - June 20  
Cheryl Vogel - June 24  
Marcia Anderson - June 25  
Vicky Harding - June 25  
Lynette Eck - June 27  
Janis Johnson - June 28  
Nancy Raymond - July 1  
Margaret 'Marge' Domish - July 30  
Laurie Claasen - August 3  
Julie Karels - August 3  
Judith Gorham - August 14  
Anita Firman - August 16  
Johnnie Fulton - August 18  
Kathleen Spencer - August 21  
Karen Karls - 30

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**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](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)