

DECEMBER NEWS



YOU ARE VERY SPECIAL AND WE WANT YOU TO COME TO OUR DECEMBER PROGRAM!! Bring a Friend too! It will be FUN,FUN,FUN!

Just a quick reminder that the deadline for reservations for our December program is December 5. The program dinner will be held at SCSU Atwood Memorial, on December 12 starting at 5:30 pm.

In case you haven't already submitted your email to our reservation system (email to aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com, with subject Reservations), here's an easy way to reserve: just reply YES

I plan to attend the December 12th program

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Maybe</u>
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THE DECEMBER PROGRAM

Our President, Mahogany Morrison, is still on medical leave. So, the board has planned a **special Holiday gathering** to have fun and get to know our membership!

1. **A fun activity** is being planned by members Ann Fleming and Karen Lanasjaen to help us get to know each other better and break the ice!!



By looking at this photo, you know this will be fun!!

2. There will be a short presentation on **the Husky Pantry**. Since SCSU is an institutional member of AAUW, it is only fitting that we do something to benefit our University. The pantry is located in the Hill-Case building. (The L lot where you park is next to Food Pantry).

Operating somewhat like Community food shelves, this pantry serves the needs of students. The day I visited the Panty there was a line of over 50 students waiting to get inside. To keep it orderly, students are admitted inside the pantry 5-6 at a time. There are 4 rooms with items. There is a room for refrigerated items, another for packaged goods and fruits and vegetables, and another room for canned goods. SEE PHOTOS BELOW

The HUSKY PANTRY



A photo of one of the rooms is missing – the self-care products room. There was very little in that room. **Therefore, our organization will help by donating items such as toothpaste, deodorant, haircare products, etc. Please bring an item or two to help us fill this need! Of course they also take monetary donations.**

AAUW Member Talent and Strength Survey

We want to learn more about YOU. Please help us by taking this 5-10 minute [SURVEY HERE](#). As a member of the AAUW Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch, you are an important part of the work that we do and your participation is essential to the success of this branch.

The information collected from this survey will serve as a means to ensure our future programs align with our current members' interests and strengths. We will also use this survey to collect your most up to date contact information so you don't miss a thing. Please complete this survey before December 31st, 2023. We will also be providing paper forms for this survey if you prefer a paper version at the program on December 12th, 2023.

What are your strengths? What are your talents? How can your talents and strengths be applied to AAUW? How can our membership help each other? Together we can move mountains! You may have filled out this survey online. **Jamie Swenson will use her technology skills to collate and organize strength and talent groups in our AAUW membership!**

Plus, to help you get to know each other, all members in attendance will receive a 'hot off the press' AAUW membership directory!

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News on the November Program

We had a wonderful, well-attended November meeting at SCSU, and we welcomed Jan Holz, who joined AAUW Saint Cloud at the meeting! We are missing our beloved Mahogany, our President who is out on medical leave.

The speaker at our program was introduced by John Pucel, husband of our own Joanna Pucel, who was unable to attend. Our speaker, Brian Hart, is a Rotary member, community volunteer and advocate, who is a co-founder of the Rotary program "Preschool 4 Success".

Brian explained that the idea for this program began at a discussion at a book club meeting (yay book clubs!) where they discovered that state-funded preschools had a long waiting list in our area. It seems that Minnesota funds kindergarten, elementary, middle and high schools on a per-student basis. However, preschools are allocated a flat fund out of the general budget, and this does not cover all the three and four-year-olds who need it. Rotary immediately began to develop a program to help cover the need, with the intention of removing the waiting list, and working with state legislators so that funding for all preschool children in the state are covered.

It was inspiring and educational to hear Brian speak about the process that Rotary went through, working with School District 742 to not only create the program, but also to ensure its success. The program uses the same curriculum as the preschool in the District, and has hired experienced teachers. In fact, Brian said that the District hires recently-graduated teachers for its program, so that experienced teachers are available to be hired by Preschool 4 Success. He says the initial difficulties - finding facilities, staff, and supplies, have been surmounted. The biggest continuing concern is simply transportation, to get the children to and from the schools.

Rotary has also successfully repeated the program via Rotary Clubs across the state, and continues to work with the State Legislature to secure proper funding for a full state-wide program.

You can sponsor a child for \$500, sent to The Rotary Preschool 4 Success Fund, P. O. Box 713, St. Cloud, MN 56302. Our November speaker stipend of \$100 was donated to this fund.

Thanks again, Brian and John! It was a very worthwhile program.



The BOOK CLUB BOOK REPORT

The AAUW Evening Book Club met for November at Joyce Hummel's home. Our book was **"Horse" by Geraldine Brooks**. All agreed it was a fascinating book, covering the history of a famous thoroughbred horse, racing history, a painting of the horse, and even the bones of the horse. Throughout the book becomes "a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism." (Goodreads). We really enjoyed our vigorous discussion about the characters in the novel and the historical implications of their actions. Barb Wismer shared that her cousin who lives in Louisville Kentucky was so intrigued by the book that she and her son visited the museum in Lexington, Kentucky which currently houses the displayed bones of the famous horse. She reported that it was well worth the trip, especially after having read this book. We also spent some time discussing book suggestions for the upcoming year of 2024, and those will be announced shortly. As always, please feel free to join us! Our book for December is "Botticelli's Secret" by Joseph Luzzi.



THE JANUARY PROGRAM – looking ahead!

The January program is scheduled for St. Benedict's and is a noon luncheon! It is scheduled for Tuesday, January 9th so the due date for reservations would be Tuesday, January 2nd.

The room is reserved in Gorecki Hall and the lunch menu will be a Taco Bar. Stay tuned for an update on the program.