

April 1, 2024

THE MONTHLY MONITOR

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF AAUW ST. CLOUD (MN) AREA BRANCH



Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch

Memo From The Board

BY AAUW BOARD

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Memo From The Board

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We have several programs in the works and the Board received a status report on them. As you know, our branch is sponsoring the High School Arts Competition at the Paramount, and we have our judges in place to determine the awards we're giving.

The entries will be available at the Paramount Gallery for viewing starting April 2, and also online.

Our Scholarships for Young Leaders program is being advertised at SCSU and CSB. The applications deadline is April 19th, and we're looking forward to awarding four scholarships this year.

It's time for online voting regarding the national bylaws change, to remove the requirement for members to have a university/college degree. This change was voted on in 2021; however, less than 25% of our members nationwide voted on it. And even so, more than 60% of the voters approved the change. Our branch supports this change and encourages you to vote online during the voting period of 4/3 - 5/15/24.

The Board's Executive Nominating Committee is actively recruiting for Board membership. If you want to step up and help out, we are looking for the following positions (listed with the current Board member so you can contact them for questions). We'll be voting on the nominations at our May program meeting, so we need your help.

VP Finance, Barb Wismer: 616-206-8677

VP Membership, Pat Obstarczyk: 320-333-2552

Program Coordinator, Joanna Pucel: 320-250-6313

Fundraising Director, Jamie Swenson: 320-295-6951

Social Media, OPEN

Meet-a-Member, OPEN

Ads & Fliers, OPEN

April 1, 2024

Membership Renewals and Update

Membership Renewals for 2024-2025

Our members are vital in making AAUW the only organization to advance gender equity for more than a century. Our support helps AAUW to work with lawmakers to reshape unfair systems and to invest in women who will go on to change the world.

As we approach the start of fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024), many members will begin receiving email from AAUW National reminding them to renew your membership. Fortunately, our dues will not change for FY 2025 - National (\$72), State (\$9) and Branch (\$27) all remain the same as the previous year! Also, once again, you will have an opportunity to renew your membership online or by personal check. Our Membership VP, Pat Obstarczyk will share further information about payment methods and processing at the April, 2024 meeting and via future emails.

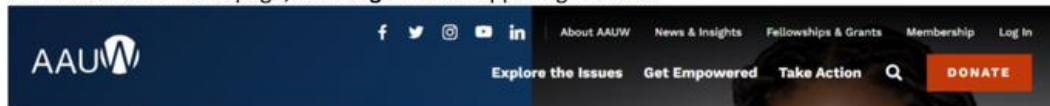
Whichever way you decide to renew your membership in 2025, I hope you will take pride in knowing that our work together is making a real difference in the lives of women and girls!

AAUW Community Hub: How to Self-Renew for Existing Members

The Community Hub allows existing members to log in and renew their membership and donate.

Login to your **Personal Snapshot** one of two ways.

- From the AAUW homepage, click **Log In** in the upper right corner



- or go to my.aauw.org.

A screenshot of the AAUW login form. It has a title "Log In". Below the title is an "Email" field with an envelope icon. Below that is a "Password" field with a key icon. At the bottom of the form is a blue button labeled "LOG IN".

April 1, 2024

Upcoming 2024 Events Schedule

April Program

Tuesday, April 9, 5:30p.m.
Alumni Room, SCSU Atwood



Hellen Lotara pictured left is our April speaker and is a recent 2023 SCSU graduate earning an MA degree in educational administration and leadership. She is the founder of a school in Abara, South Sudan, Africa. Her experiences drive her to better the lives of children through a high quality education. She believes her advanced education will help her implement best practices at Mama Hellen School to ensure quality, education, transparency, accountability and student success. She has received help from several connections and built a network of volunteers in MN. This network became "Mama Hellen's Team."

*The deadline for reservation is April 2nd.
Cost is \$20 for national members and \$10
for student members.*

HOW TO MAKE A RESERVATION...

Email: aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com

Subject Line: Reservations

Email Body/Message: Please reserve [#] places for [Name] for the program on [Date]. I am a [Member, Student or Guest] and I require a [Special Dietary Needs] meal. Thanks!

April 1, 2024

Upcoming 2024 Events Schedule

COME ONE, COME ALL,
THE MORE, THE MERRIER....

May Program

Tuesday, May 14, 5:30p.m.
Alumni Room, SCSU Atwood



Choosing AAUW Program Topics for FY 2025

The May program will have an exciting opportunity for members to choose the program topics for the coming season. During the May meeting, we will complete a guided activity to decide the most popular ideas. There will be large pages on the wall with various categories, such as empowering women and girls through arts/music, education, or natural resources. All people present will write one or more ideas on the large pages. Then, everyone will have 4 votes for their favorite ideas. The top 8 topics with the highest votes will become our program topics and will be provided to the Board.

Please come with your ideas. This can be topics of interest to you or something you want to learn more about. We need your participation! Looking forward to seeing you at the May program.

The deadline for reservation is May 7th. Cost is \$20 for national members and \$10 for student members.

- COST OF COLLEGE?
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING?
- FINANCIAL STABILITY?
- WOMEN'S RIGHTS?
- DEI?
- SEXUAL HEALTH?
- EQUAL PAY?
- VOTING RIGHTS?
- MENTAL HEALTH?
- STEM?
- SOLAR ENERGY?
- IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON EDUCATION?
- SELF CARE?
- ANIMAL TESTING?
- LGBTQIA+
- HEALTH CARE AFTER RETIREMENT?
- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS?

April 1, 2024

It's Time To Vote



This spring AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the national bylaws recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee to open membership by to eliminating the degree requirement for membership in AAUW..

Key Dates for 2024 Vote

- **April 3 | Voting opens (online voting is encouraged)**
- May 15 | Online voting ends at 12:00 pm ET and results announced online

The board firmly believes that the proposed amendment is in the best interests of AAUW and its future relevance and sustainability as an inclusive and forward-thinking organization committed to advancing equity for women and girls. The board urges a vote in favor of the amendment.

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Upcoming 2024 Events Schedule

The HS Art Show info opens April 2nd at 10am. The show can also be seen virtually by going to the Paramount website. AAUW is a co-sponsor of the annual High School Art Exhibition at the Paramount. Two artworks (one 2D and one 3D) will be selected for a \$250 cash award. If you would like to help make the selection of the AAUW award, please contact Kathryn

Gainey.



Submitted by: Kathryn Gainey



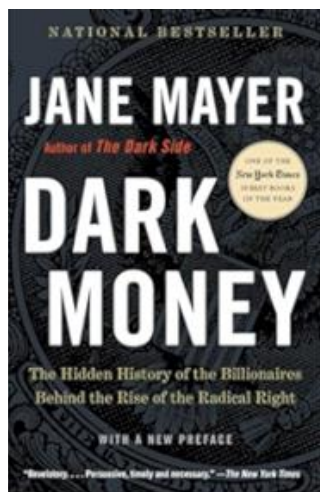
WE NEED A COUPLE AAUW MEMBERS TO HELP SELECT OUR AWARD WINNERS THE LAST WEEK OF MARCH. Contact: kagainy@stcloudstate.edu

At the art reception on Friday, April 26TH. WE WILL NEED VOLUNTEERS TO SIT AT OUR AAUW TABLE AND GIVE OUT INFORMATION, DIRECT GUESTS TO THE GALLERIES, AND MAKE AAUW VISIBLE.

Contact: kagainy@stcloudstate.edu

April 1, 2024

NEWS FROM AAUW BOOK CLUBS



The Thursday AAUW Book Club meets next on Thursday, April 25 @ 6:30 p.m., to discuss “Dark Money” by Jane Mayer Held at Barb Wismer’s home in Cold Spring.

AAUW members can contact Mary Harlander-Locke if they are interested in joining.

Submitted by Kathryn Gainey

If you’d like to join our book club, please contact Mary Harlander-Locke (mary.harlanderlocke@gmail.com). The schedule of books they are reading can be found on the AAUW Branch website.

“Love this group!! Such an amazing group of women!! ❤️❤️❤️” - Linda N S

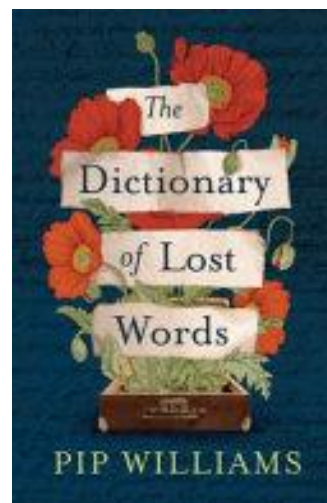
“I truly adore you all. It's so wonderful to dig deep and have such meaningful conversations - it really means a lot to me that we share”. - Barb

On Wednesday, April 3 at 1:00pm the AAUW Wednesday Afternoon Book Club will be discussing the Dictionary of Lost Words by Philippa Williams. Discussion Leader: Mary Lou Lenz. Hostess, Judith Hook, 276 Waite Ave. S, St Cloud, MN.

If you are new, call Molly Ewing for more information, 320-252-2166.

Hope to see you there!

Submitted by Mary Lou Lenz



April 1, 2024

Review of March 2024 Program



Our March program was wonderful. Tracy Hodel, Public Services Director for the City of St. Cloud, was our speaker. She provided so much information about what her team and the city is doing in regards to climate change, extracting energy from wastewater and recirculating it into our grid! The Dept. of Public Works is doing trend-setting, groundbreaking projects that help reduce the effects of climate change. Did you know we are #1 in the nation for the extraction and re-use of hydrogen for heating? (I didn't!). St. Cloud and the surrounding 6 cities (soon to be 7) extract our drinking water from the Mississippi River; however, the innovative processes at our wastewater treatment facilities means that we return MORE water to the river than we use. St. Cloud now has solar arrays on many public buildings, and the Dept. of Public Works sells excess energy back to the grid. St. Cloud is really lucky to have such a progressive Public Services team, and we were lucky to hear the Director speak.



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News from AAUW State and National

SAVE THE DATE

April 26-27, 2024

AAUW MN ANNUAL MEETING

"Confluence = Inclusion, Collaboration, Empowerment"

The Confluence Hotel & Conference Center

Hastings, MN

Keynote speakers presenting the issues of the day alongside
AAUW Mission-based Advocacy.

Register for MN AAUW Annual Meeting using [AAUW-MN-2024-Annual-Meeting-Registration-.pdf](#)

Program Information: [Program-2024-AAUW-Minnesota-Annual-Meeting-1.pdf](#)

Book Your Hotel: Confluence Hotel (651-432-0202): There is no room block. Rooms will be discounted 15%, but you must mention the AAUW State Meeting when booking. Book before March 27 for AAUW discount.

Other Hotels: Nichols Inn (877-324-0295): 2400 Vermillion Street (Hwy 61), Hastings, Minnesota

Country Inn and Suites (855-516-1090): 300 33rd Street W, Hastings, MN

April 1, 2024

News from AAUW State and National

MINNESOTANS FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

Monica Meyer and I are writing to invite you to a briefing about the status of the Minnesota Equal Rights Amendment, which is currently moving through the state legislature, and the campaign to secure a majority of affirmative votes from Minnesotans on a future ballot (either 2024 or 2026, but most likely 2026).

The Minnesota Equal Rights Amendment would guarantee every Minnesotan the same exact rights under the law. It would give Minnesotans the strongest possible protections against discrimination by the government based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, or sex – including pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation – no matter who's sitting in the Governor's office, the state legislature, or the courts. With mounting attacks on our rights, we need to ensure protections for all, including transgender Minnesotans and people seeking abortion care.

We are reaching out because we are hoping you and your organization will be a part of building this campaign in some way. 501c3 organizations can be involved with ballot campaigns. We are excited to recreate the energy, excitement, and connection we saw in 2012 when Minnesotans came together to defeat a constitutional amendment banning marriage equality through Minnesotans United for All Families. We know the ERA will require a robust, statewide campaign that will engage Minnesotans to mobilize, connect, and get out the vote for a Minnesota that respects and values all people. Looking at recent ballot campaigns in other states, we also know it will be expensive.

We are offering the Zoom briefing twice next week (they will be the same):

Monday, April 1st

11:30a-1:00p

[Register](#)

Friday, April 5th

11:00a-12:30p

[Register](#)

Agenda for the Briefing:

Introductions

Session update and timeline

Review of the new ERA language, why does MN need this specific language?

Highlights from the January Project Lakes and Plains poll

Campaign Outlook

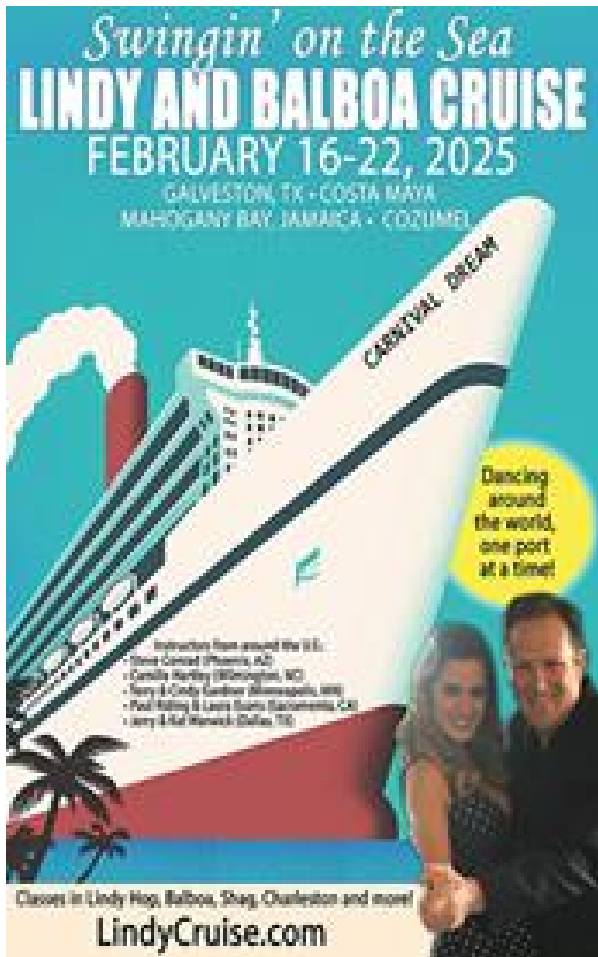
Discussion / Q & A

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Senior Dance Team Opportunity

Interested in joining A SENIOR DANCE TEAM?

I have been working with Whitney to get a team started. Through the SCSU Gerontology Department, we have a student volunteer who will be our coach. Lucy Nelson has lots of experience with dance teams and she is our guide! Starting on April 5th, we will meet once a week on Friday's at Whitney. For more information contact me: kagainy@stcloudstate.edu



Another Dance Opportunity

Do you like to dance? I would like to share a fun opportunity for AAUW members. (This trip is not sanctioned by AAUW. I am an AAUW member who just returned from a dance cruise and I want to share this with you.)

Learn to dance from top international instructors from around the U.S. with classes in Lindy Hop, East Coast Swing, Balboa, Shag, Charleston, vintage jazz steps & line dances, and so much more! Beginning to advanced level classes.

Lindy and Balboa Cruise, happening February 16-22, 2025. Join us for an amazing time in the

Western Caribbean. Here are our ports:

Galveston, TX ► Costa Maya, MEX ► Panama Mahogany Bay, Roatan, Honduras ► Cozumel, MEX

Classes are during days at sea, dances on beaches and dances at night on the ship to our DJs and the ship's live music! You do not need a partner to come on the dance cruise. Many dances do not require a partner, and if they do, we rotate. The majority of the dancers on the cruise were women and over 50. All dance cruisers had one thing in common – they loved to dance and they understood the benefits of dance!

If you have questions, contact me: Kathryn Gainey kagainy@stcloudstate.edu Or check out their website at LindyCruise.com. I am already booked for the February 2025 Dance Cruise!

April 1, 2024

Whats happening with the LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. CLOUD AREA???



LWVSCA Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 6, 2024 11:00AM

Bremer Room, St. Cloud Library

1300 W. St. Germain St, St. Cloud, MN 56301

Dialogue & Drink Thursday

Thursday, April 25, 2024 5-7PM

House of Pizza, 4040 Second St. S, St. Cloud, MN

Important Dates for 2024 Election Year:

State Primaries: August 13, 2024

- Early registration deadline: July 23, 2024
- Early/mail-in voting: June 28 - Aug. 12, 2024

General Election: November 5, 2024

- Early registration deadline: Oct. 15, 2024
- Early/mail-in voting: Sept. 20 - Nov. 4, 2024

Unit Meeting Schedule

April 10, The Supreme Court

May 8, Community Policing Update

April 1, 2024

Meet Your Board Members



VACANT
Branch President



Barb Wismer
VP Finance



Pat Obstarczyk
VP Membership



Jacqueline Ampe
Monthly Programs VP



Laura Hood
Monthly Programs VP



Linda Nistler-Schnabel
Monthly Programs VP



Jamie Swenson
VP Communications



Jan Benson
VP Public Policy



Joanna Pucel
Program Coordinator



Linda Saupe
Monthly Programs VP



Joyce Hummel
Social Chair



Mary Peterson
Social Chair



Caroline Williams
Social Chair



Molly Ewing
Recording Secretary



Mary Wagner
Finance Assistant



Kathryn Gainey
Newsletter Editor



Chris Lepkowski
Start Smart Program
Chair



Jan Benson
Tech Savvy Program
Chair



Whitney Court
CSB Representative



Chris Lepkowski
SCSU Representative



Rene Kaluza
Website Design



Whitney Court
NCCWSL Program
Chair

Want to join the board?

Contact us today!

Empowered
Women
Empower
Women



April 1, 2024

Do you have a special announcement or event you would like to share with all the AAUW St. Cloud Area (MN) Branch members?

Want it included in our next Monthly Newsletter???



SEND YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENT DETAILS WITH PHOTOS TO JAMIE SWENSON JAMIE_2992@YAHOO.COM BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.

Disclaimer: There is no guarantee that your information will be shared but we will do our best to get it shared in the following newsletter.

