

November 1, 2025

THE MONTHLY MONITOR

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



Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch Memo From The Board

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We had a wonderfully successful Fundraising event. Hope that if you weren't able to attend, you will go to our Branch website and check out the Photo Album <https://stcloud-mn.aauw.net/interests/>

As mentioned in the September Monthly Monitor newsletter, we are no longer able to hold a Tech Savvy event. All the donors have been contacted and advised that we can no longer do the event due to staffing changes. Instead, we will be taking the balance of the Tech Savvy funds and awarding scholarships to STEM students at SCSU and CSB. The funding committee consists of Chris Lepkowski and Sarah Pettito at SCSU, and Whitney Court and Annette Raigoza at CSB. Branch members who will also participate are Bobbie Bright and Debra Carlson. This committee is going to be meeting to flesh out the details of how these scholarships will work, and will advise your Board once the plan is finalized.

AAUW National has advised us that some entity has established GoFundMe accounts for many of our AAUW branches. Our branch was included, and has a fraudulent page on that website. We are in the process of getting that fraudulent account deleted. While it's a cumbersome process, we will be able to remove it as soon as we can.

Mary Lou Lenz has sent us a link to the obituary for Barbara Bloomer, who was an active AAUW member and member of the AAUW Book Club until she moved to Country Manor. Here's the link to her online obituary:
<https://www.sctimes.com/obituaries/pmns1304816>

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November Program Details

Trans in 2025: An Introduction to Transgender Identities and Rights



Charlie Curtis (They/Them)

Since the start of 2025, over 600 bills have been introduced seeking to limit the rights of trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming individuals. These bills target areas including healthcare, participation in sports, use of public restrooms, access to identity documents, and more. Trans people make up approximately 1% of the US population, but the impacts of the current wave of anti-trans legislation extend far beyond this small minority.

This presentation will cover basic terminology and concepts relevant for understanding trans identities and experiences. It will then review the influx of anti-trans legislation and the types of limitations that are being proposed and enacted on trans individuals. Finally, it will discuss the implications of anti-trans legislation for society at large and ways to be in solidarity with trans folks.

Deadline to register is Tuesday, May 4, 2025

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December Program Details

Date: Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Time: 5:30–7:30 p.m.

Location: Alumni Room, Atwood Memorial Center

Registration Deadline: December 2, 2025

Join the SCSU AAUW Student Organization for an engaging and impactful evening focused on equity, access, and student support.

The program will feature:

- **A short presentation** introducing the AAUW Student Organization and highlighting the issue of food insecurity on campus.
- **A student panel** of 2–5 AAUW Student Organization members who will share their experiences, goals, and ideas for how the AAUW St. Cloud Branch can continue to support students at SCSU.
- **Equity Requires Access Food Drive**, benefiting the Huskies Food Pantry, with donations of non-perishable food and toiletry items accepted at the event.

Did you know?

🍎 1 in 3 Huskies worry about having enough food.

📚 30% of Huskies say food insecurity has affected their academics.

❤️ The Huskies Food Pantry serves over 300 students each week.

Together, we can promote equity through access ensuring every SCSU student has the resources they need to thrive.



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October Fundraiser Results

Our Fundraiser was a success! Of course we don't have the final numbers as yet, but in terms of enjoyment - it was a terrific event. We thank our pianist, Bev Ranstrom, for the lovely music during the social hour. During the dinner hour, the St. Cloud Municipal Band Ensemble played for us. The dinner was delicious - maple dijon chicken, roasted asparagus, apple spice cake, pumpkin mousse...yum-yum!

After dinner, we enjoyed hearing from Dawn Loven, Development Director from the Paramount Center for the Arts. As you know, we sponsor the annual High School Juried Art Competition, and also provide two prizes to winning students.

Then we heard from the President of our SCSU Student Organization, Aditi Dhakal, who is also a Flash Funds recipient.

Our final speakers were the winners of our 2025-2026 Scholarships for Young Leaders:

Angie Mohamed, Abigail Reckinger, Twila Lefer from CSB, and Sarina Karki, Javelia Morrison-Galimore and Maria Shavers from SCSU.

To close it out, the students helped with our raffle prize drawings. Congratulations to our winners: Jan Bensen, Fay Bolin, Debra Carlson, Laura Hood, Joyce Hummel, Rene Kaluza, Kathy Kampa, Cindy Leigh, Peggy Lodewyck, Linda Nistler-Schnabel, Donna Nordang, Suzanne Rodell, Maggie Stotterau, and Bonnie Wenker.

A big thank-you to all our donors, and to the Fundraiser Committee: Fay Bolin, Kathryn Gainey, Joyce Hummel, and Peggy Lodewyck.

As you can see from the pictures, a good time was had by all!



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October Fundraiser Results



2025-26 Scholarship Recipients



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2025-2026 Programs



11/11/2025 Kathryn Gainey. Charlie Curtis, Director, SCSU LGBT Resource Center.

Transgender, the new Other. SCSU Alumni Room. 5:00 pm

Over 900 laws have been introduced across the nation targeting the rights of transgender people. Why are these laws being introduced? Approximately 1% of the population identify as transgender. Are transgenders a threat to the other 99%? When the rights of some are taken away, the rights of all are in danger.

FOOD Buffet Meal: Hors d'oeuvres, cookies, cheese

12/09/2025 Debra Carlson. SCSU Student Organization Panel. SCSU Alumni Room. 5:00 pm

Join us for a meaningful evening hosted by the SCSU AAUW Student Organization, focused on equity, access, and supporting college students in need.

The program will include:

- A brief presentation introducing the AAUW Student Organization history, goals, current needs and how the AAUW Saint Cloud Branch can best support their efforts.
- The presentation will also highlight the issue of food insecurity on campus. As part of the program, a food drive will be held to support the Huskies Food Pantry initiative. Attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable food and toiletry items to benefit the SCSU Huskies Food Pantry
- The presentation will be followed by a student panel made up of 2-4 SCSU AAUW student organization members who will answer questions about the student members personal campus experiences, and the challenges they face.

Together, we can ensure that every SCSU student has access to the resources they need to thrive.

FOOD Buffet Meal: Hors d'oeuvres, cookies, cheese

01/22/2026 (Thursday 5:00 pm) Laura Hood. *Great River Children's Museum Part 2*

110 8th Ave. South, St. Cloud

Join us for a fun and exciting tour of the Great River Children's Museum! Note the special day and time. Although we generally do a Saturday morning in January, that's the busiest day of the week for the Children's Museum.

AAUW members will be provided an exclusive tour of the newly opened Great River Children's Museum located in downtown St. Cloud. Executive Director Cassie Miles and leadership team will present on the recent launch of this successful and important museum for children and the young at heart.

Then....

We are within walking distance of Kohinoor Bar and Grill (Indian food)

17 7th Ave. S

Or

The Olde Brick House 102 6th Ave. S.

Or

Arroy Thai & Filipino Restaurant 800 W St. Germain St.

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2025-2026 Programs

02/14/2026 (Saturday 10:00 am). Christine Lepkowski. Artificial Intelligence. SCSU Alumni room.

Artificial Intelligence: What You Need to Know

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is already shaping the way we live, work, and study every day, often in ways we don't even realize. The St. Cloud State student chapter of Women in CyberSecurity (WICyS) will be presenting an exploration of how AI is embedded in the tools we use, the opportunities it brings, and the ethical and practical issues we all need to understand and consider. Join us for an engaging and accessible conversation about how AI is transforming our world.

FOOD: Continental Breakfast

03/10/2026, CSB. Whitney Court. Judicial speaker 204 Gorecki Center

We will have the honor of having a Judiciary Leadership Guest Speaker join us for the evening to discuss leadership during times of change and uncertainty, experiences overcoming personal and professional obstacles, and to provide encouragement and advice for emerging young female leaders.

04/14/2026, Caroline Williams. Planetarium Presentation. SCSU Planetarium. 6:00 pm (Park after 6; it's cheaper) check-in & appetizers 6:00-6:45; program 6:45-8:00 pm. Map for parking & Planetarium to follow.

Dave Williams has taught astronomy for over 50 years. He was the Planetarium Director at SCSU overseeing the planetarium renovation with the GOTO Chronos projector. This projector shows over 8,500 stars giving a brilliant star field showing the Milky Way, planets, star clusters, and galaxies.

Dave retired just 2 years ago and is the husband of Caroline Williams. The current planetarium director allows him to give planetarium shows to special guests.

His presentation will highlight some of the significant contributions of women in astronomy, paired with a survey of the night sky along with constellations and ancient stories.

FOOD Buffet Meal: Hors d'oeuvres, cookies, cheese

05/12/2026 (Lunch). Barb Wismer. Annual Business Meeting/Membership

Appreciation/Program Planning/Travel Talkin'. A special travel presentation. CSB Gorecki Hall 11:00 am

We're going to try and speed through the business portion of our meeting so that we can enjoy a spirited and fun presentation from a pair of inveterate world travelers.

Travel Talkin' (Intro from Laura Hood)

Local world travelers Jim Grubinski and Mike Smith will provide a presentation on one of their many foreign adventures. Beautiful pictures, delightful stories, fun facts, culture and history will be shared.

FOOD Sandwiches with chips and beverage

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SCSU AAUW Student Organization

2025-26 Programs

09/15/2025 Field trip to Stearns History Museum & St. Cloud Municipal Band Concert
10/07/2025 Annual Fundraiser
11/11/2025 Transgender, the new Other
12/09/2025 SCSU Student Organization Panel & Food Drive
01/22/2026 Field trip to the new Children's Museum
02/14/2026 Artificial Intelligence
03/10/2026 Judicial speaker
04/14/2026 Planetarium Presentation
05/12/2026 Annual Business Meeting/Membership Appreciation/Program Planning/Travel Talkin'



Mainstreet 2025



Campus Engagement



Questions? Call or Email us today...

763-286-2051
320-295-6992

aditi.dhakal@go.mnstate.edu
 maria.shavers@go.stcloudstate.edu

JOIN US



SCSU Student Organization &
Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch



2025-26 Scholarship Recipients

Why AAUW???

Student
Membership
is
FREE

Scholarship Opportunities



Flash Funds



Sense of Belonging



Leadership Experience



Friendships



Continued Education



and more....



Our Mission: AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through education, research, and advocacy.

JOIN US TODAY

For More Information
<https://stcloud-mn.aauw.net>



November 1, 2025

Obituary



Barbara Jane Bloomer entered her heavenly home on October 8, 2025, at the age of 91 years. A service in her memory will be held at 11:00 am on Friday, October 24, 2025, at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, St. Cloud. Visitation will be at the church one hour prior to the service. Private interment of her urn will be at Bethlehem Lutheran Church Columbarium. Arrangements are with Benson Funeral Home, St. Cloud, MN.

Barbara was born April 18, 1934, to Lloyd and Katherine (Luff) Bloomer in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She grew up on the Bloomer family farm outside of Morristown, Minnesota attending public school there through 8th grade, and graduating from Waseca Central High School in 1952. She attended the Morristown Methodist Church which was originally founded at her grandparent's log cabin on the Pleasant Ridge Farm. She played organ at church during her high school years and enjoyed music her entire life.

Barbara was an avid learner throughout her life and delighted in her education as well as educating others. She graduated from St. Olaf College with a Bachelor of Arts in English, a history minor and enough credits to be certified to teach German. Barbara was granted a Fulbright Scholarship and headed off to Mainz, Germany to be an English conversation assistant for a year. She was awarded a second Fulbright Scholarship and taught in Vienna, Austria. After returning to the U.S. and teaching for a couple of years in Wilmar, Barbara went to graduate school at the University of Illinois, Urbana to obtain her master's degree. That led to her vocation of 31 years as a professor of German at St. Cloud State University retiring in 1995.

Barbara Bloomer

While there, Barbara helped organize and direct the study abroad program in Ingolstadt, Germany and was instrumental in developing the St. Cloud/Spalt, Germany relationship which led to the two cities becoming "Sister Cities."

She was extremely active at Bethlehem Lutheran Church where she served on several church boards and participated in many committees. She was awarded the Bethlehem Lutheran Church "Bold Woman" award in 2015. Barbara also delivered meals on wheels, brought her famous pea salad to the Community Meal that her church served monthly, read newspapers for the blind on the radio, taught German at the Whitney Senior Center, and held German conversation groups at the St. Scholastica Convent and the Good Shepherd Community. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star whose core beliefs include charity, truth, and loving-kindness which Barbara exemplified. She traveled many times to Germany and after retirement continued her love of travel to many other locations.

Barbara had a long love affair with rivers and took special joy in waking up every morning in her dream home with its view of the Mississippi River. Every morning upon waking she would say, "Thank you, God, for another day of grace!" She deeply enjoyed all the flowers, birds and animals that visited her yard.

Barbara is survived by her sister-in-law, Harlean; nephews and nieces, Russell (Merry) Thaden, Dennis Mary Jo) Thaden, Beth (Bruce) Andersland, Diane Hulstein, Brian Bloomer, Sue (Jeff) Funk, Kathy (Jeff) Blowers; cousins, Rica (Jeff) Van, Mark Jensen, Curt Lang, Susan Myslicki, Karen Thorpe; dear friend, Michael Peterson-Burr; and many great nephews and nieces.

She was preceded in death by her parents; sister, Helen Bloomer Thaden; brother, Harold Bloomer; brother-in-law, Harold Thaden; nephew, Russell Bloomer, nephew-in-law, Brian Hulstein, and grandnephew-in-law, Mitch Olson.

Barbara was loved and respected by many people and will be dearly missed.

www.sctimes.com/obituaries/pmns1304816