



Branch Beat

Mission Statement

Advancing gender equity through research, education and advocacy

Vision

Equity for all

Values

Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Principled. Inclusive and Intersectional

Summer Vacation!

Branch Beat will be taking a couple of months off and will resume publishing with the September issue. If you have any important information for the membership during my Summer break, please feel



free to share it with me and it will get sent to the

membership. K. Marr

The June Picnic Coming Soon!

We will be meeting June 16th at 5:30 at The Clubhouse at Rock River Park. This will be another fun gathering!

A reminder, this meeting is not sponsored by any committee so it is being run as a branch-wide potluck. We would like members with last names **beginning** with **A-L to bring an appetizer** and members whose names begin with

M-Z to bring a dessert. Plates, cups, and beverages will be provided by members of the Board of Directors.





President's Corner

As I close out my first year as president, I am thinking about what I have learned and what I hope to do better next year. I have thought a lot about leadership. What it is and what it requires. Sometimes it just means taking responsibility for doing a task that needs to be done. And often means taking the blame for things that go wrong. My goal for next year (besides reading the AAUW bylaws) is to find someone to take on the role of the branch president in 2026-27. I don't know if it will be through guilt, flattery, or stumbling across someone who feels divinely inspired. I hope it will be influenced by observing me in this role—either to be inspired by example, or convinced that you can do a better job. Things I have liked about this job are getting to know people better, preparing meeting agendas, chairing the board meetings, attending –and being an active participant in– the general meetings. I have enjoyed meeting the presidents of other AAUW branches though zoom calls and lunches.

I have fallen short on expectations related to rules of order and knowing the organization's by-laws. After all, if you know them, you have to follow them.. In my career as a physician, there was a clear hierarchy of authority and a protocol for everything. There were rules and there was order. There was a dress code 5 pages long. What I had hoped for most in retirement was freedom from the bonds of rules . But the chaos, inconsistency and uncertainty that we

have experienced in our political environment has been unsettling. I never envisioned finding myself in a world where adherence to a law or a code of decency was arbitrary. I'm starting to realize the value of having rules and laws and understanding the importance of following them. Most of them.

I took on the role of branch President reluctantly. I felt that I was too new to the organization and have never aspired to a leadership role beyond middle management (the sweet spot where you get the inside scoop on what's coming down the pike but don't have to try to impress people you don't really like in order to climb to a higher limb in the tree to actually see it). And I was tired of being responsible for the well-being of other people. But it didn't take long to realize that being free of responsibility is not all that fulfilling. Retirement has to be more than doing a bunch of fun stuff (or doing nothing at all) until you die. I tell people that I blame my Lutheran upbringing, but I can't be happy without feeling that I am doing something productive. So, I assumed the role and the responsibility of branch President, and I figure that next year will easier now that I know some of the ropes and more people that can help me climb them.

But, next year, it will be YOUR turn. But I will be around to help you. I think it is part of the AAUW By Laws.



June 5, 2025

Account activity as of on-line view of accounts: \$11,278.81

Checking Account \$9,262.59

Saving Account \$2,016.22

Expenses since 05.02.2025 (non- membership related – by check #): -\$150.00

Trinity Lutheran Church #3934: \$150.00

**12-month payment for meeting location for the 2025 – 2026 year*

Deposits since 05.02.2025 (non-membership or book sale related): \$7.00

Happy Bucks (May Meeting): \$7.00

Book Sale Deposits (01.01.2025 – 12.31.2025): \$571.79

B. Rohland Online Sales: \$291.79

Membership deposited: \$39.00

2024-2025 Philanthropic Funds Reserved: \$6,750.00

Scholarships (Fort Community Foundation): \$5,000 sent to Knox Scholarship Fund

Tech Savvy: \$250.00

NCCWSL: \$0

Grants for Gals Donations: \$1,500 sent to Fort Community Foundation



**Fort Atkinson Branch
May General Meeting
May 5th, 2025
The Community Room/Dwight
Foster Public Library**

Program Host: Membership Committee

Agenda

6:30-6:50 Enjoy Snacks and Social Time

6:50 Welcome
visitors

6:55 Happy Bucks

7:00 Meeting:

June 16 Meeting:

To be held at Rock River Park. This will be a potluck refreshments event.

Members with last names between A and L are asked to bring Appetizers

Members with last names between M and Z are asked to bring Desserts

All are encouraged to bring a friend.

Committees: K. Townsend routed signup sheets for each of the 12 committees. Chairs can continue from previous years, or will be selected by the members of each committee.

Book Sale:

Collecting and sorting donations has begun. Books are processed and stored at Jones Dairy Farm, near the Food Pantry. The sorting schedule is Tuesday 9-11, Thursday 4:30-6, and Saturday 9-11.

Sign-ups for the sale is ongoing, sheets were routed at the meeting, or may be done on Google Docs, request a link by email from K. Marr.

Posters will be available at the Picnic for distribution.

On-line sales are ongoing for special price or vintage books, they will not be made available at the physical sale in September.

Adopt a School: Membership voted to donate \$250 to each of the 4 Fort Atkinson Elementary schools for school supplies. A member will attend each of the schools end of year awards program to present the donation.

Treasurer's Report: Distributed prior to the meeting in the Branch Beat. Funds approved for allocation at the April meeting are being disbursed.

Motion to approve K. Townsend, seconded B. Rohland. Approved.



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Foster Public Library**

Reminder: Dues

National dues have been increased by \$2. National, state, and local dues for 2025-2026 are \$100. Most memberships expire on June 30, members should receive a reminder email, and may either renew on-line or ask the Treasurer to renew for them.

Secretary's Minutes: Distributed via Branch Beat (Board and General meetings)

Motion to accept L. Anderson, seconded M.K. Weston. Accepted.

Wisconsin 2025 State Convention:

- Was held at Beaver Dam in April, several members attended.
- Much discussion about how to attract more new members of various ages.
- Key Note by Amanda Florence Garcia, a mixed race woman. She spoke about implicit bias.
- Resolutions may be raised by branches.
- A quorum of 15 of the 22 Wisconsin branches must be present to vote on resolutions.
- Resolution one called for elimination of big money in politics
- Resolution two called for upholding the civil rights of Americans who identify as LGBTQ+
- Both passed

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**Fort Atkinson Branch
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Officer Elections:

The following were nominated and elected:

- President: Barbara Rohland
- Vice President: (open)
- Secretary (General Meetings): Laurie Anderson
- Secretary (Board Meetings): Merrilee Lee
- Membership V.P.: Thea Thompson

Final announcement:

The Name Tag box has been lost. Replacements have been printed.

If you have the old name tag box, please return it to Membership VP.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00.

Committee Chairs

AAUW Funds – Kathy Cheek
Book Sale – Kathy Marr
By-Laws – Vicki Wright
Diversity – Carla Cheek
Education – M. Lee, K. Cheek
Fundraising – Kathy Marr
Grants for Gals – Alyssa Thompson
Outreach – Mary Kay Weston
Public Policy – Frankie Fuller
Scholarships – Vicki Wright
Special Events –Brittany Noe
Tech Savvy – V. Wright, M. Winz

If you haven't signed up for a committee yet, please reach out to Kathleen Townsend

Branch Communication

Directory – Renee Barr
Newsletter – Kathy Marr
Public Relations – Kathy Marr
Social Media – Sarah Weh
Sunshine – Carla Cheek
Website – K. Logsdon, M. Winz



**Fort Atkinson Branch
May Board Meeting
May 5th, 2025
The Community Room/Dwight
Foster Public Library**

June Pot Luck Picnic

The Board will be responsible for beverages and paper products, membership will be asked to bring appetizers if last name A-L, or desserts for last name M-Z. Signup sheet routed.

Board to do set-up at 5, start at 5:30.

All committee's lists will be passed in General Meeting. Committees without a chair should decide on one, members to confirm they still want to be on each committee. Chairs are to call non-present members to determine interest.

Renew dues for membership – should receive an email from national. Be sure to review information for membership directory updates.

Funds dispersal - Checks have been written and are available for representative members to bring to elementary principals at awards ceremonies at end of school year, as approved in April.

State AAUW

Need someone to represent District 1 on state Nominating Committee for State Board positions. Zoom meetings until year end.

Proposed slate for officer nominations:

- President – Barbara Rohland for second term
- VP - open, ask for floor nomination
- Secretary (Board meetings) – Merrilee Lee
- Secretary (General meetings) – Laurie Anderson
- Membership VP – Thea Reeves

2025-2026 Meeting sites:

The Dwight Foster Library has a new policy to limit room reservations to 3 months future

To ensure we have a plan for the entire year, we are looking for a new site for 6 meetings not held at the Hoard Museum or other venue.

Proposal to meet at Trinity Lutheran Church – K. Townsend investigated:

- Classroom is available, 30 seats would be optimal capacity
 - Handicap access
 - Tables available for refreshments, and large round tables for members
 - \$50 per use
 - Additional \$50 for technical support and custodial setup, or they will train an AAUW member to do technical setups, and waive \$25 fee
- Question: is another room available for Board meetings before General meetings, and Board meetings not held prior to a General meeting
- Resolved – Commit for 1 year at Trinity Lutheran Church and form a committee to explore alternate sites in future

Next meeting: Membership Drive Pot Luck on Monday, June 16, 2025 at Rock River Park

Adjourned at 6:30.

SCHOLARSHIPS

submitted by Vicki W, Scholarship Chair

AAUW Scholarships Totaling \$29,000 Presented to Fourteen Local Women

The Fort Atkinson branch of AAUW (American Association of University Women) has presented fourteen scholarships to area women for the 2025-26 school year. The Fort Atkinson Community Foundation administers these funds which are supported by individual donations and our local AAUW's annual Used Book Sale is slated to take place on September 5 and 6 at the Fort Atkinson Municipal Building. The Fort Foundation manages the Jane Shaw Knox Undergraduate and Graduate scholarships along with the Second Chance Scholarship.

AAUW Second Chance Scholarship

The AAUW Second Chance Scholarship is available to women who plan to continue their education at a vocational or technical college or for undergraduate work, after having been out of the mainstream of education for more than one year. Applicants must be either a graduate of Fort Atkinson High School, a resident of Fort Atkinson, or be currently employed in Fort Atkinson. This year, a \$7,000 Second Chance Scholarship was awarded to Sage Simmons who will complete her undergraduate work. She is enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater seeking a bachelor's in finance. A \$4,000 Second Chance Scholarship was awarded to Jordan Hynum. She will be pursuing a degree in Marketing at UW- Madison. Jessica Penfield-Cruz received \$2,000 to complete her work in Spanish Education at UW-Whitewater under the Project Teach Program. Summer Semrau was granted a \$1,000 scholarship for a MATC program in Radiology.

AAUW Undergraduate Scholarship

The AAUW Jane Shaw Knox Undergraduate Scholarship is offered to women who are pursuing a bachelor's degree at an accredited college or university. Applicants must have already earned 45 credits toward their bachelor's degree to qualify for this scholarship. This year, a \$1,000 Undergraduate Scholarship was awarded to Lily Congdon who is pursuing a degree in Nursing from Carroll College, Tayanna Schwefel, working on her program in Occupational Therapy at UW-La Crosse. Evelyn Cruz Palacios will receive \$2,000 toward her program in Elementary Education. Kiara Wolfram is also receiving \$2,000 for UW-Madison majoring in Biochemistry.

AAUW Jane Shaw Knox Graduate Scholarship

The Jane Shaw Knox AAUW Graduate Scholarship is offered to women who are pursuing a graduate degree at an accredited college. Applicants must be either graduates of Fort Atkinson High School, residents of Fort Atkinson, or be employed in Fort Atkinson. This year, five Knox Graduate Scholarships were awarded. Juanita Tarp and Kaitlyn Schneider who are pursuing a master's degree were awarded \$1,000. Amy Griffin is pursuing Doctor of Physical Therapy from UW-Stevens Point and will receive \$2,000. Alexis Zweg is pursuing a Nurse Practitioner degree in Women's Health and will also receive \$2,000. Erin Springstroh was granted \$2,000 at Edgewood College for a master's degree in education.



Book Sale Activities in Full Swing

Book donations are starting to come into the warehouse and sorting and boxing is well in progress. Our posters and book marks will be ready at the printers any day now which leads to our next request for volunteers. We need help disseminating the posters to local business in Fort Atkinson, Whitewater, and Jefferson. If you are interested in helping with that task, just give Kathy C or Kathy M a call, or stop by during one of the book sorting sessions at the Jones Warehouse, 715 Jones Ave., next to the Fort Food Pantry.

Book Sorting:

Tuesdays: 9-11

Thursdays: 4:30-6

Saturdays: 9-11

Sale Dates:

Thursday, Sept. 4	Set up date
Friday, Sept. 5	10-6
Saturday, Sept. 6	9-3
	3-6 Clean up



Fundraising

We have a new committee this year: Fundraising! We will be looking for new and fun ways to raise funds for scholarships, grants and operating expenses. So, if you have any ideas or experiences you would like to share, please give me a shout at 920-309-2668 or Marr.kathy@gmail.com.

Membership Renewals Due

Membership renewals are currently due. You should have recently received a notice by email. Just follow the link on the email and renew. If you didn't receive an invoice or have misplaced it, just go online and take care of it directly.

You will see a slight increase this year of \$2.00, reflected on your renewal notice. Nationals felt they needed to increase this year and next year to help offset ever increasing costs



Why Be a Member of AAUW?

AAUW offers a strong community for women, advocates for gender equity, and provides benefits and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Membership can help you make your voice heard on important issues, access discounts and perks, and connect with other women in your area or on a larger scale.

Short History of Pride Month

And the Uprising at the Stonewall Inn

During this June, Pride month, we thought it might be a good time to offer a bit of history around what has become such a identifiable and celebratory month for so many members of the LGBTQIA+ community. 2025 marks the 52nd year since the first Pride parade was organized by Brenda Howard, a bisexual activist; however, Pride month was first recognized on a national level by President Bill Clinton in 1999 and 2000. During his term, President Barack Obama declared the month of June LGBT Pride Month. This declaration is the result of a decades long battle for equality after a brave group of LGBT community members decided to take a stand in New York City.



On June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay bar on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village, New York City. During this time, in every state but Illinois, acts of homosexuality were illegal and bars and restaurants that publicly served or had employees that identified as part of the LGBT community risked being shut down. Furthermore, the Stonewall Inn was one of many bars owned by the Mob – which both took advantage of and provided refuge for the LGBT community. During the raid police were met with retaliation from the patrons, staff members, and other members of the surrounding community – many of which were young, displaced gay men that considered Stonewall their only safe space. The uprising persisted until the early morning and police were forced to barricade themselves in the bar before things de-escalated and the crowd cleared out.

One year later, the first Pride Week and Pride Parade took place on Christopher Street, organized by Brenda Howard and a group of other activists in New York. The parade would amass a crowd numbering into the thousands and stretched 15 city blocks at its longest. Soon after, many other cities worldwide began having their own Pride parades – but the New York Pride Parade is still one of the largest and most well-known parades to take place, with over 2 million people estimated to have taken part in 2019.



BOOK CLUB

July Book Club Meeting

Our next selection is The Women by Kristin Hannah. We will be meeting to discuss this book on July 23 from 6:00-8:00, at the Dwight Foster Public Library.

At the July meeting we will also be deciding our next year's book selections so please start considering your recommendations and send them to Kathy M. by July 7th. Include title, author, fiction or non fiction, brief book description and reason you are recommending it. We will vote on our choices at the July meeting.



All AAUW members are welcome to join the book club! Just read the next book and show up at the meeting!

Help Us Continue to be a Five Star Branch!

Last year we were a four star branch. We did not make the cut because we were not aware of Action Network. In fact, only one branch in Wisconsin was aware of it and thus they were a five star. Help us meet the standard and attract new members who see on our website that we earned all of our stars again! I signed up following the directions step by step. It truly is easy, easy, easy to do and I think the benefits will be tremendous in so many ways.

Take Action, Action Network, and Two-Minute Activist

"You will see all three of these terms on AAUW.org.

1. Take Action is on the menu bar on the home page.
2. By clicking on Take Action, you will be directed to the following menu selections: Two-Minute Activist, Policy Center, Advocacy ToolKit, and Support AAUW.
3. When you click on Two-Minute Activist, you will see: Join Our Action Network which is where you can sign up to get regular alerts on how and when to engage.

AAUW provides all the tools you need to call or send messages to your members of Congress, contact your state legislators about pressing issues, and more. When you sign up, you will start receiving emails from Action Network with the link to Two-Minute Activist.

Many of you may already be signed up for these alerts. They truly take less than two-minutes to complete! If you have not signed up, please consider doing so. It is a great way to easily have your voice heard on current issues pertaining to women."

As a Two-Minute Activist, you will receive urgent e-mail notices when your advocacy is needed most. We'll provide all the tools you need to contact your members of Congress, write letters to the editor in your local newspapers, connect with your state legislators about pressing issues and more. With your help, our Action Network can continue to boost AAUW's influence on Capitol Hill and in statehouses across the nation.

AAUW is non-partisan but we are all about issues related to advancement for women. We need to let our legislatures know how we feel about issues pertaining to us and other women.

Vicki Wright



Why Belong to AAUW

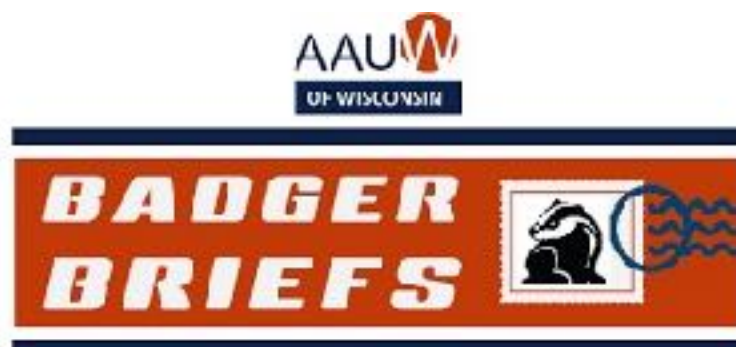
[Reprinted in part from the AAUW Wisconsin State President's Message
by Deb Thiel in the May 2025 Badger Brief]

Communing with others who care about equity and education; and who willingly spend their time and energy raising up other women and girls, both invigorating and inspiring, is what belonging to AAUW is all about! Through our relationships we can do much to advocate and fight for a just society that recognizes, values and lifts us all. We respect all colors, races, religions, identities, and socio-economic backgrounds. Collectively we are an array of skills, temperaments, views, and values which inspire us in various ways. We value and learn from our differences! In this ever-chaotic world, our different ideas and approaches to action will broaden and strengthen us when we serve in complimentary and coordinated ways.

When you join AAUW you are not just a member, you also belong. We don't need to judge each other – there is plenty of that in the outside world. We are part of each other's support network. Though we are non-partisan we should be political and fight for the policies we believe in. When wearing your AAUW hat, focus on AAUW issues and display AAUW ethics, i.e., non-partisan, treat others with respect and dignity, free from discrimination, harassment or disrespectful behavior. We work to listen, promote fact-based information, and serve as a voice of reason. That's a tall order everyday – but striving is the way to achieve better. I certainly have not achieved paragon status, but I try most days. We each wear many hats and belong to multiple groups, so feel free to expand your activism! Bridging with other groups will only strengthen our individual and collective voices.

We need 'all hands-on deck'. So, I ask you to take time to consider what you are willing and able to offer our cause. This could be as simple as engaging the 2-minute activist and communicating with your legislatures, fundraising for scholarships, staying engaged and current with AAUW toolkits/workshops, sharing with others and much more. There is a ton of info coming from AAUW National these days, so be alert! Check out National Policy's first 100 days fact sheet .

https://aauw-wi.aauw.net/files/2025/05/AAUW_First_100_Days_Fact_Sheet.pdf



2025/2026 Membership Directory

Updates and Changes

If you need any updates to your listing in the upcoming 2025/2026 Membership Directory...address, phone number, college, degree, employment...please contact Renee Barr at reneebarr254@gmail.com or 920-723-9877.

Please get those changes and updates to her as soon as possible as she has begun work on the directory and it will need to get it to the printer by early August.



If someone needs a card sent on behalf of the Branch, please reach out to our Sunshine Member, Carla Cheek at carlahans867@yahoo.com or 262-510-6884. Please be sure to give her all of the pertinent details.

