



Branch Beat

Mission Statement

Advancing gender equity through research, education and advocacy

Vision

Equity for all

Values

Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Principled. Inclusive and Intersectional

November Meeting

November 3
at 6:30 at the
Trinity
Lutheran
Church.

November Meeting Presentation

Myths and Misconceptions about Autism

The Diversity Committee is scheduled to host the November meeting being held Monday, November 3rd, at the Trinity Lutheran Church.



Our own member Pam Dennis will be facilitating the program. The topic for her presentation is autism. She will share a 30 minute video titled "Myths and Misconceptions about Autism." The video was part of a longer webinar from spring 2025 from the Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN).

ASAN is a national organization and their motto is "nothing about us without us." The 4 speakers in the video are autistic adults, and each speaker contributes to the broader discussion of autism and what is helpful and unhelpful for autistic people.

Pam will also leave you with a hand-out (the teacher never leaves you!) with more information - websites, book, and videos - if you want to delve deeper into this topic.



President's Corner



Fundraising Can Do More than Just Raise Funds

I attended the Beaver Dam scholarship fundraising event in Beaver Dam on October 15 with my husband, nephew and my nephew's girlfriend (my nephew and his GF live in Beaver Dam). The Beaver Dam members gave us all a warm welcome and made an effort to get to know us. It made me think about two things: fund raising, and raising a sense of community.

In regard to fundraising, there was a dinner (with bar) followed by a live auction of several baskets- baskets donated by both AAUW members and community businesses. It was fun and very successful! The audience had more non AAUW than AAUW members. It reminded me of our holiday auction on steroids (or on old fashioned cocktails!).

The event engaged the community in several ways. They reached out to community members and businesses to provide baskets for the auction, come to the event, purchase baskets at the auction, and provide an opportunity to donate directly to the clearly stated cause: to raise money for scholarships. It wasn't about the community being asked to donate money to the AAUW for it's mission, it was using the AAUW as a vehicle to raise money for a shared mission: to provide scholarships to women and girls in their community. A common way to elicit support from community businesses is to ask them for a donation in exchange for a "thank you to our partners" on an event program or poster. While there is nothing bad about doing that (combining good will with advertising a product), the Beaver Dam event gave me a deeper understanding of what a community partnership can be: to come together to support a shared value.

The AAUW members were generous in sharing the logistical and financial details of the event, and I will share them with our board and with our fund raising committee. But in addition to coming back with ideas about how to raise money, I have a better understanding of why fundraising is about more than raising money. It is not asking for money to support the AAUW, but to identify shared values with community members both within and outside of the AAUW and to join forces -form partnerships- to support those missions.

— Barbara Rohland, Branch President

MEETING MINUTES

October 6, 2025

Dwight Foster Library

Called to order at 7:00 pm by President Barbara Rohland

- Program by Policy Committee
- Frankie Fuller introduced Rep. Joan Fitzgerald who gave a presentation about her position in the WI State Legislature.
- Business meeting initiated at 7:54pm.
- Holiday Party will be December 8 at the Hoard Museum. Theme is Carols and Cocoa. Feel free to invite a guest.
- Mary Kay Weston gave an update regarding the Outreach Committee. There will be a contest held on January 31, 2026 at the Hoard Museum. Teams will compete to create sculptures out of food items to be donated to the Food Pantry. Additionally, members are encouraged to bring items to our monthly meetings to donate to the Food Pantry.
- Membership was advised of the Board's decision to discontinue the annual Book Sale. A motion was made to endorse the Board's decision. (K. Townsend/P. Ogren) Approved.
- Motion to adjourn at 8:08pm.





October 20, 2025

Account activity as of on-line view of accounts: \$12,833.32

Checking Account	\$10,824.79
Saving Account	\$2,008.53

Expenses since 09.23.2025 (non- membership related – by check #): -\$5,119.99

Kathy Marr | Canva Subscription Reimbursement - \$119.99 #3948

Fort Atkinson Community Foundation | Book Sale Scholarship Donation - \$5,000.00
#3949

Deposits since 09.23.2025 (non-membership or book sale related): \$165.00

School Supply Donations - \$140.00

Trinity Lutheran Church | Reimbursement for 1 Meeting - \$25.00

Book Sale Deposits (01.01.2025 – 12.31.2025): \$8,146.50

Book Sale Event - \$6,007.16

Book Sale Online - \$2,139.34

**\$200 online sale from Pam Dennis received 10.06.2025*

Membership deposited: \$78.00

2025-2026 Philanthropic Funds Reserved: \$8,150.00

Scholarships: \$5,000 to Knox Scholarship Fund with Book Sale proceeds (funded 10.09.2025)

Tech Savvy: \$250.00

Grants for Gals Donations: \$1,000.00

Adopt-a-School Fund: \$1,000 (from 2025 Book Sale + Pi Day Sale)

AAUW Greatest Needs Fund: \$1,900
(\$30 per member (2/26 number) + 15% over 2025 contribution)

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT ON LAURIE ANDERSON

I was born in Illinois and lived there with my family until I was 10. We moved to Waukesha and I graduated from high school (Waukesha South) in 1979. Following graduation, I went to UW-Whitewater. I have a BA in Political Science with a minor in History. While at Whitewater, I participated in The Student Government Association, Young Democrats, was Chair of the Segregated University Fee Allocation Committee for 2 years, Voter Registrar and Democratic Ward Committee Chairperson. I worked at the University Police Department for 2 years. I married between my junior and senior year, and my then-husband and I moved to Fort Atkinson in 1983. I have lived here ever since.

I worked at the Fort Hospital for 3 years in the Business Office and then in Discharge planning. In 1989, I was hired as the first Victim Witness Coordinator for the Jefferson County District Attorney's office. I held that position until my retirement in June 2024. It was work that I was deeply passionate about and very much enjoyed. I was a member of the Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals starting in 1991 and continue with Associate Membership today. I served on their Board of Directors for many years in every capacity available including President. I testified at Legislative hearings and actively lobbied legislators on behalf of the Association. I also served on the Board of Directors for People Against Domestic & Sexual Abuse and Fort Atkinson Area Crime Stoppers. While working for the county, I served as President of the AFSCME Courthouse Employees Union for several years and was a member of the Contract Negotiation Committee multiple times.

My former husband and I raised 3 children here, all of whom graduated from Fort Atkinson High School. My daughter and her family still live in Fort and her 2 children currently attend Rockwell School. My current husband has 4 daughters and 4 grandchildren. As a side note, his oldest daughter is the Assistant Dean of the Business School at Whitewater.

I am enjoying retirement and the freedom from schedules! I watch grandchildren as needed. I play cards at the Gathering Place in Milton with my mother a couple times a month. I enjoy reading, fishing and gardening. My husband and I enjoy antique stores and thrift stores and wineries. I have a VERY large extended family and enjoy attending my nieces and nephews sporting events and family gatherings.



NO KINGS PROTEST - FORT ATKINSON

OCTOBER 18th

It is estimated that more than 7 million people turned out and participated in the October 19th “No Kings” protest in the US, with many more protests held across other parts of the world. People were protesting perceived government overreach and fear of losing future fair elections, excessive crackdowns on immigrations, deployment of National Guard Units to Democratic leaning states, firing of federal workers, among other issues. AAUW National is fully in support of the “No Kings” movement because it supports what we represent as an organization.

The “No Kings” movement draws directly from America’s revolutionary roots—its slogan and message echo the Declaration of Independence and Constitution’s rejection of monarchy. The scale and peaceful nature of the rallies have drawn comparisons to historic protest waves, such as the Women’s March or anti-war demonstrations, but with a unique focus on resisting perceived executive overreach and reviving foundational democratic principles.

According to branch member Kathleen Townsend, the “No Kings” march in Fort Atkinson included over 600 people. It was peaceful and up-lifting. Protesters marched from the Main Street bridge to Barrie Park where Representative (and branch member) Joan Fitzgerald and others spoke.



Branch FUNdraising

On October 9th, the newly formed Fundraising Committee met for the first time at the Dwight Foster Public Library at 6:30. Attending the meeting were Kathy Marr, Chair, Barbara Hanser, Kathy Cheek, Katie Logsdon, Carla Cheek, and Barbara Rohland.

The purpose of this meeting was to brainstorm possible fundraising ideas and narrow down that list of projects that seemed most doable for a small group in the first year. We started with a list of 25 ideas running from small easy-to-do/smaller reward projects to large scale/big reward projects.



The committee then narrowed the list down to four ideas to proceed with in year one. This list does include the Pi(e) Day sale which we participated in last March in conjunction with Heart of the City and Friends of the Library. We got off to a late start on the fundraising activities because of the book sale this Fall so we want to keep our first year's goals realistic and achievable.

We also discussed the goals of the Fundraising Committee. We acknowledged that obviously we need to raise funds (heck, its in the name!) but we also believe part of our mission is to gain exposure for AAUW-Fort Atkinson in the Community and to build partnerships and alliances where possible.

The four projects we decided to focus on in the 2025/26 year are:

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| • Pi(e) Day | | March 14 |
| • Brat Sale | with Jones Dairy Farm | Summer 2026 |
| • Culver's Share | | TBD |
| • Winter Market | Soup /packet Sale | TBD |

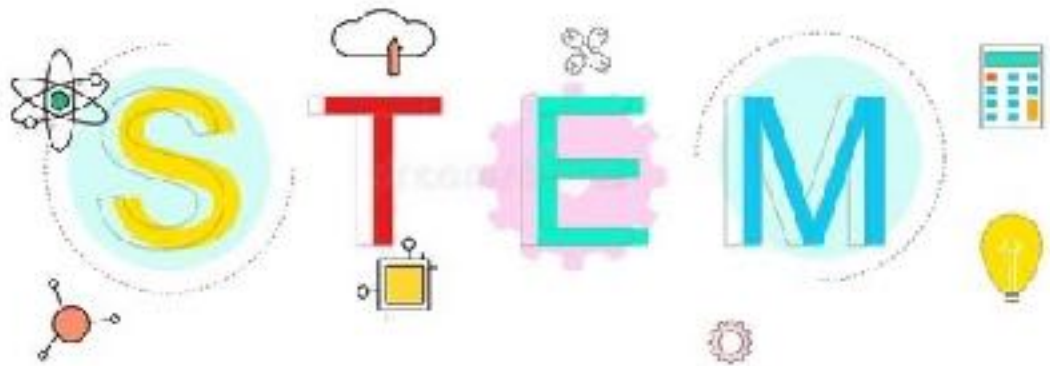
If you would like to participate in any of these activities stay tuned on how you can join!

Tech Savvy 2026 Coming in March

The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields will account for some of the fastest growing — and highest paying — jobs of the future. Yet girls and women are still not on par with boys and men in preparing for or entering these fields. The Fort Atkinson and Janesville AAUW branches are working to improve the number of females entering STEM occupations by planning, preparing and presenting our annual Tech Savvy conference on March 14, 2026.

Fort Atkinson planning committee members are Maggie Winz, Pam Dennis, and Vicki Wright. Janesville AAUW planning members are Carol Salinas and Pat Phillips. The conference will be held on the campus of UW-Whitewater. Workshops will cover the areas of biology, physics, chemistry, forensic science, electricity, medicine, robotics geology, engineering and veterinary science.

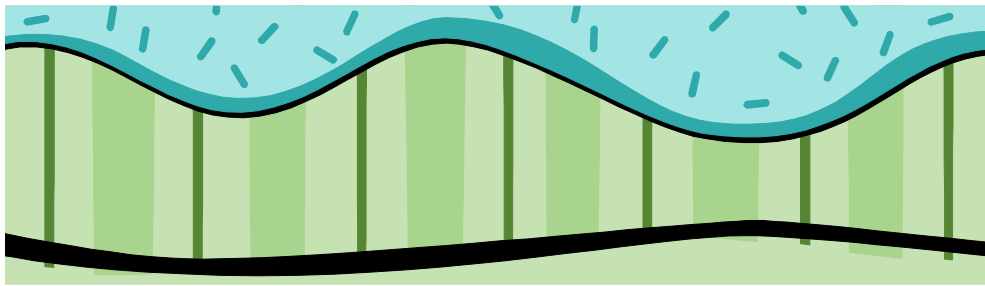
All Fort Atkinson branch members will have the opportunity to help on **March 14** as guides, registration volunteers, and before that as recruiters for the event. Be sure to check out how you can help with this great AAUW event.



Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee is still continuing our Fort Atkinson Food Pantry – CAN-DO Challenge. We are finishing up on gathering 4 sponsors to cover prize money along with seeking 10 teams to participate. If you are a member of any club/business/organization that would be interested in putting together a team, please see one of our committee members – Mary Kay, Kathy C, Susan D. Renee B, Vicki W, or Lisa T.

Also we are continuing to collect donated food items at each of our general meetings to drop off at the food pantry directly.



TEAMS BUILD. THE COMMUNITY WINS.

AAUW – FORT ATKINSON CAN-DO CHALLENGE!!

TEAMS BUILD STRUCTURES OF NON-PERISHABLE GOODS TO BENEFIT THE FORT ATKINSON FOOD PANTRY.
VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD! BRING DONATIONS!

JANUARY 31, 2026, 9:00 AM. - 3:00 P.M.

LOCATION: HOARD HISTORICAL MUSEUM

**REGISTER YOUR TEAM TODAY! SPACE IS LIMITED. FORMS AND INFO AVAILABLE AT:
[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/AAUWFORTATKINSONWI/](https://www.facebook.com/AAUWFORTATKINSONWI/) OR THE MUSEUM.
BRING COMPLETED FORMS AND REGISTRATION FEE TO THE MUSEUM.**



Book Sale

In case you missed this Letter to the Editor when it ran in the Jefferson County Daily Union.

Dear Editor:

AAUW Book Sale -- The End of an Era

For 47 years the Fort Atkinson Branch of AAUW has held an annual Fall book sale. The books for these sales were generously donated by the members of the local community and bought back by others in the community. Local businesses donated space, equipment, and labor annually, contributing greatly to the events success each year. The Fall book sales were widely anticipated each year and with that, we are sad to announce that the 2025 sale was the last AAUW book sale.

The original purpose of this book sale fundraiser was to create scholarships to help send local young women to college. Over the years, the proceeds from sales and other donations have resulted in fully vested funds which are held at the Fort Atkinson Community Foundation and provide multiple scholarships each year to local women pursuing Bachelor's, Graduate, or Technical degrees. The book sales have been very successful and have helped hundreds of local women pursue their educational goals.

AAUW Fort Atkinson could not have made all this happen over the year without the generous donations of our partners. We'd like to publicly thank Jones Dairy Farm for warehouse space to collect, store, sort and box the thousands of books every year and their yard team for table set up at the gym. Yerges Moving and Storage has been our transportation partner to get the books and supplies from the warehouse to the municipal building every year. Among the thousands of donated books, some can't be sold and we're grateful to Johns Disposal for providing recycling services instead of sending them to landfills. Various organizations, classes, teachers and students from Fort Atkinson High School—Crossroads, FAA, Government – have been unpaid labor over the years and deserve a shout out as well. Over the years, Scouting groups and other volunteers have offered assistance wherever needed. This project always took a village.

While we are discontinuing our annual book sale, we are planning new and different fundraising activities to fund local community needs and projects. You will actually see us out in the community more that before!

Sincerely, Kathy Marr and Kathy Cheek, AAUW Book Sale Co-Chairs

Women's History

Marie Curie was one of the first recipients of an AAUW grant which she used to purchase a small amount of uranium to begin her breakthrough research.

One photograph. Two daughters. Three Nobel Prizes.

In this quiet moment captured in the early 1900s, Marie Curie stands with her daughters, Irène and Ève. It's a tender scene—a mother with her children. But behind this gentle photograph lies a story of brilliance that would echo across generations.

Marie had already made history. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize, and later became the only person ever to win Nobel Prizes in two different sciences. But her greatest legacy might not have been her discoveries.

It might have been what she passed down.

Irène, the elder daughter, grew up in her mother's laboratory. She watched Marie measure, test, question, and discover. She saw what passion and precision could unlock. That example took root deeply.

Years later, Irène and her husband Frédéric Joliot-Curie discovered artificial radioactivity—a breakthrough that transformed our understanding of atomic physics. In 1935, they won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. Their work became the foundation for nuclear medicine and energy, carrying forward the scientific torch Marie had lit.



But genius doesn't follow a single path. Ève, the younger daughter, chose something completely different. Gifted in music and language, she became a concert pianist, then a writer and journalist. After Marie died in 1934, Ève wrote "Madame Curie"—a biography that introduced millions worldwide to her mother's quiet strength and revolutionary discoveries.

During World War II, while her sister worked in laboratories, Ève traveled as a war correspondent, documenting humanity's darkest and finest hours. Later, she devoted herself to humanitarian work with UNICEF, advocating for children across the globe.

One became a physicist who changed science. The other became a storyteller who changed hearts. Both carried their mother's legacy—not by copying her path, but by embodying her values: curiosity, courage, and purpose.

This photograph captures more than a moment. It holds a truth that resonates today: greatness isn't about following the same road. It's about walking your own path with passion and integrity.

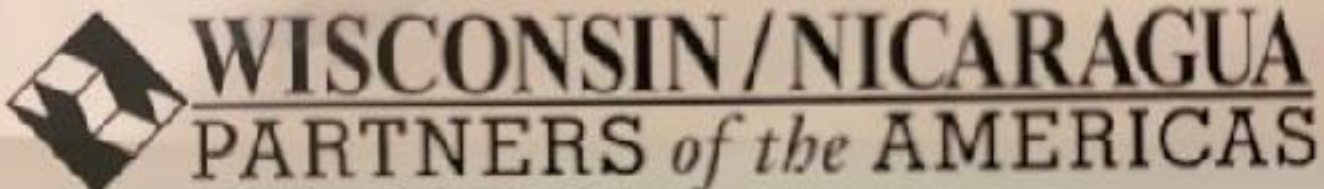
A Bit of History - Nicaragua Project

In the Wisconsin Blue Book 2025-2026, chapter “About Wisconsin: Going Global”, I read Wisconsin’s Sister States with special attention to our partnership with Nicaragua. Our Fort Atkinson AAUW Branch, Diversity committee had a program with Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners. We were reintroduced to the partnership our state of Wisconsin has with Nicaragua. Remember the American Girl doll dresses, coffee, baskets and other items made by Nicaraguan women sold to support their families.

Members of our branch reestablished the WI/Nicaragua Partners that had been formed in the 1960s with Fort Atkinson community leaders: Hugh Highsmith, Glenn Lepley, Barbara Lorman to name a few. The Fort Atkinson/Puerto Cabezas partnership with Ruth Schauer as president was active through 2018. We collected fabric, sewing machines, sports equipment; held garage sales at Barbara Lorman’s home with proceeds used to support the sewing centers in Nicaragua and education of Nicaraguan students. Fort Atkinson branch AAUW supported with donations, purchasing product and working the garage sales.

The Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc is celebrating 60 years (1965-2025) in Stevens Point on November 15, 2025. For more information, become a member or donate, contact through email: wnp@uwsp.edu; phone: 715-346-4702; or www.wisnic.org.

- by Kathy Cheek



Cocoa & Carols Holiday Auction

Please join AAUW-Fort Atkinson
Monday December 8th
at the Hoard Museum

5:30p social

6p dinner with auction to follow

Members are encouraged to bring:

- an auction item
- a white elephant item
- Guests!

Brought to you by the
Special Events Committee

It's already time to start thinking of the holidays! And the Holiday Auction is the highlight of the AAUW year! So start thinking about what white elephant gift, and auction item you will be bringing, but more importantly think about who you might want to ***bring as a guest!*** Imagine what a party it will be if we have a bunch of guests join us this year! The more the merrier!

Until then ...



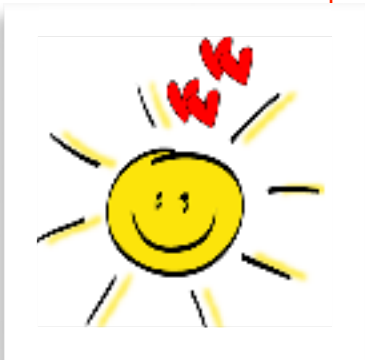
Fort Atkinson Food Pantry's Current Wish List:

- ✦ Pancake Mix
- ✦ Pancake Syrup
- ✦ Pork N Beans
- ✦ Apple Sauce
- ✦ 1lb Rice
- ✦ Canned Pasta
- ✦ Canned Chicken
- ✦ Peanut Butter
- ✦ Canned Fruit



Don't forget to bring your non-perishable food donations to the November 3rd meeting!

This and That



Sunshine Chair!

If you know someone who is in need of a little sunshine in their life, please let our Sunshine Chair, Carla C. know!

She will send get well, congratulations, or sympathy cards on behalf of the Fort Atkinson Branch.

Do you need a ride to a meeting?

It can sometimes be a struggle at night, especially in the Winter. Don't let a lack of wheels make you miss a meeting! If you do need a ride, give **Kathy** a call at **920-309-2668** or text her and she will organize a ride for you.

