



Branch Beat

Mission Statement

Advancing gender equity through research, education and advocacy

Vision

Equity for all

Values

Nonpartisan. Fact-based.
Principled. Inclusive and
Intersectional

October Meeting

**October 6th at
6:30 at the
Dwight Foster
Public Library.**

October Speaker:

Rep. Joan Fitzgerald



Please Join Us!

Joan Marie Fitzgerald is a member of the [Wisconsin State Assembly](#), representing [Wisconsin's 46th Assembly district](#) since 2025. She previously served five years as a member of the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors.

Joan was raised and educated in [Greendale, Wisconsin](#), graduating from [Greendale High School](#) in 1982. She attended the [University of Wisconsin–Whitewater](#), earning her bachelor's degree in secondary education, and then her master's in educational curriculum and instruction. She worked for 33 years as a high school math teacher for the School District of Jefferson before retiring in 2020.

Joan Fitzgerald obtained her first public office in 2019, when she was appointed to the Jefferson County Board of Supervisors.

In February 2024, Fitzgerald announced that she would run for [Wisconsin State Assembly](#). Her district, the 46th, is comprised of most of the western half of Jefferson County along with part of eastern Dane County. Fitzgerald won the election by 1,766 votes.

Representative Fitzgerald has authored two assembly bills related to firearms and two resolutions related to violence awareness. Her current committees are: Committee on Ways and Means, Committee on Workforce Development, Labor, and Integrated Employment.

Our format for the evening will be a question and answer session by our Public Policy Committee.



President's Corner



Where Will We Put Our Resources This Year?

While I know that Halloween and Thanksgiving come before Christmas and New Year, I have been thinking of donations that I will make at the end of this year. What do I want to support? What causes do I believe are the most important, or central to the others? Perhaps because I have no exceptional knowledge (or talent) related to the arts, I tend to support basic needs related to food and shelter (food pantry and Salvation Army). And, because I am a physician, access to medical care (e.g., Doctors Without Borders). As an animal lover, I give a monthly contribution to the Humane Society. I often worry that I am taking the easy way out by giving money rather than time and energy (volunteering or attending demonstrations of support).

Thinking of our AAUW branch, where do we want to put our financial and human resources? How can our thoughts and prayers make an impact on changing things that matter to us? Identifying what is important to us and finding like-minded people is an important step toward action. We have all declared our support for women in education by joining AAUW. We try to be good stewards of the scholarship endowment that our branch is fortunate to have for scholarships. Many members have contributed to fund raising efforts to raise even more funds for philanthropic purposes. I have given a lot of thought this year to the members who put an enormous amount of work (this year and years past) into the book sale, and the trust that they give to the branch and national organization that they will be good stewards of those hard-earned funds. I wonder what we should expect of our members/ourselves in finding the balance between efforts in raising funds, expecting action (work & advocacy) , and distributing funds. Although our talents, time and personal bank accounts may vary, I think the work of the branch has to be a cooperative effort: all hands on deck, so to speak.

We are going to be talking a lot about fundraising this year. How we do it, why we do it, and who we are doing it for. Thought, talk, action, making a difference. We all are for it, but now lies the harder work of moving it forward.

— Barbara Rohland, Branch President



September 23, 2025

Account activity as of on-line view of accounts: \$17,512.15

Checking Account \$15,501.78

Saving Account \$2,010.37

Expenses since 08.21.2025 (non- membership related – by check #): -\$1,041.63

Premier Bank (Cash for Book Sale Till) - \$220.00 (cash withdrawal)

Fort Atkinson Parks & Recreation (Book Sale Venue Rental) - \$246.00 #3946

Opportunities Inc. (Membership Booklet) - \$84.93 #3945

School Supply Expense Reimbursement to Member - \$490.70 #3947

Deposits since 08.21.2025 (non-membership or book sale related): \$1,443.00

Grants for Gals Donation - \$1,000.00

Cash Donation for Scholarships - \$303.00

School Supply Expense Donations - \$140.00

Book Sale Deposits (01.01.2025 – 12.31.2025): \$7,946.50

Book Sale Event - \$6,007.16

Book Sale Online - \$1,367.55

Book Sale Donations - \$200.00

Membership deposited: \$26.00

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

Scholarships: \$5,000 promised to Knox Scholarship Fund with Book Sale proceeds (to be sent after 2025 Book Sale completion)

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)



2025 AAUW Book Sales

The 2025 Book Sale was held September 5th and 6th at the Fort Atkinson Municipal gymnasium. There was a moderate crowd and a steady flow of sales both days. We were able to donate a fair number of books to various groups after the sales was concluded which reduced the number of books that had to be recycled post sale.

Final revenue number directly from the sale were \$6,007.17. This was down approximately 30% from 2024. Luckily, our crack online sales team of Barb Rohland and Pam Dennis sold an addition \$1,939.34 in eBay sales since January. This gave us total sales of \$7,946.51 — less expenses of \$606 — for a grand total of **\$7,340.51**.

Announcement:

At the July and August Board Meetings, the Book Sale Committee presented a proposal to the “Board” to discontinue the book sale operations as of the 2025 sale. Much thought, consideration, and discussion amongst the committee went into making such a hard and painful proposition. It was not made lightly.

Some of the issues leading to the decision:

***Changes to the book buying and reading habits of reader**

- increased use of libraries, more use of e-books, more use of audio books

***Decline in quantity and quality of book donations over last several years**

- down approximately 30-35% year-over-year

***Decline in Summer warehouse volunteer hours over last five years**

- some current volunteers retiring



***Struggle to keep volunteer vendors**

***Decline in book sellers attending and purchasing in last few years**

Decline in attendance at the sale over last several years

AAUW Fort Atkinson has had a very successful history with the book sale, 47 years in fact, but the reward to effort ratio shows that now is the right time to find new money raising activities to focus on, activities that are less time and labor intensive.

You will be asked to vote on this at the October meeting.

September Scholarship Salad Supper



Congratulations to the Branch on Achieving
5 Star Recognition Once Again!



Branch FUNdraising

With the 2025/2026 Business Year, our Fort Atkinson Branch has elected to activate a Fundraising Committee to develop new sources of revenue. As an example, last year we held our first fundraiser (outside of the Holiday Party and Book Sale) in a long time with the Pi(E) Sale on March 14. The sale was a sweet success by any measure!

Given the success of the Pi(e) sale (low effort=nice reward) we will be looking for more of those types of activities. We will also be looking for activities where more members can be involved throughout the year, but unlike Book Sale, not have to be involved ALL year!

By joining the Fundraising Committee you are not committing yourself to more than brainstorming. If we can get enough members together to create ideas and several ideas hopefully folks can pick and choose a project that interests them to help on — if they so choose.



If you want to learn more, join me at a FUNdraising meeting:

October 9th, 6:30-8

Rotary Room at the Library

Just bring your thinking caps!

Really, fundraising is something that should involve all members to a certain extent so this invitation is for EVERYONE— not just those whose name got listed on the committee signup sheets!

AAUW Two-Minute Activist Alerts

Have you checked out and signed up for the Two-Minute Activist Alerts yet? It is a quick and easy way to stay involved and active in important issues facing women RIGHT NOW!

From the website:

Join the AAUW advocates in the fight for equity in education, equal pay, paid leave, protections against sexual harassment and more. Sign up to get regular alerts on when and how to engage, including sending letters to your legislators, writing letters to the editor and other timely calls to action.

Current Alerts:

- **Department of Ed: Remove Barriers for Student Parents**
- **Tell Congress: Support Working Women and Families**
- **Tell the Senate: Oppose the SAVE Act**



<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

Meeting Dates and Locations at a Glance

October, 6, 2025	Library Large Meeting Room, 209 Merchants St.
November 3, 2025	Trinity Lutheran Church, 314 Barrie St.
December 8, 2025	Hoard Historical Museum, 401 Whitewater Ave.
February 2, 2026	Trinity Lutheran Church, 314 Barrie St.
March 2, 2026	Trinity Lutheran Church, 314 Barrie St.
April, 6 2026	Trinity Lutheran Church, 314 Barrie St.
May 4, 2026	Trinity Lutheran Church, 314 Barrie St.
June 15, 2026	The Clubhouse - Rock River Park

"A Seat at the Table"

I walked through doors both wide and new,
Where voices were strong and purpose grew.

A sisterhood with vision clear—

At AAUW, I found my sphere.

With every step, a story shared,

Of battles fought, of how they dared

To challenge norms, to break the mold,

To lift up truth, both brave and bold.

They spoke of wage gaps, glass and high,

Of ceilings cracked beneath the sky.

Of science, tech, and dreams long stalled—

And how together, we could call

For equity not just in name,

But in the systems we reclaim.

Education, rights, and space—

We rise to lift the human race.

I found in them not just a cause,

But friendships formed without a pause.

Mentors, learners, advocates—

We challenge fear, dismantle gates.

So here I stand, and proudly say,

I joined AAUW so we may

Build, to learn, to light the flame—

Be a change maker who signs her name.

— Kathy Marr

Don't forget to bring your non-perishables donation to the meeting on Monday night! This will be a regular occurrence throughout the year as part of the Outreach Committee's annual project!

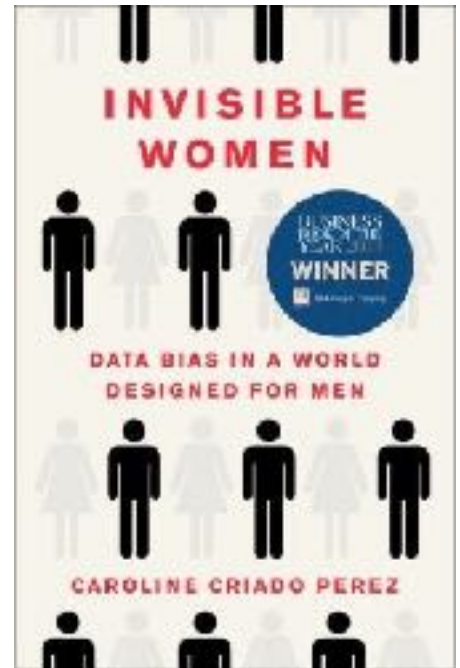


Book Recommendation

By Kathy Marr

Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men by Caroline Criado Perez

On the advice of a fellow member of our branch, Merrilee Lee, I read “Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men” by Caroline Criado Perez. I’m extremely glad I did. Obviously, I was aware of much of the bias (it was a part of my marketing studies in my MBA program) and for the simple fact that I’ve been a woman in a man’s world for a *lot* of years. But I would be lying if I said I didn’t have my eyes opened, my mind blown and my heart hurt through the reading of the book. I was frustrated, angry, cursing, and yelling into the void at various points throughout the reading. I thought we had come further than we had. All the glass ceilings I had crashed through were my personal exceptions, not the rule...so demoralizing. I think everyone in our branch would get a lot out of reading this book and I encourage you to do so.



Here’s a bit about the book according to an Amazon review:

Data is fundamental to the modern world. From economic development to health care to education and public policy, we rely on numbers to allocate resources and make crucial decisions. But because so much data fails to take into account gender, because it treats men as the default and women as atypical, bias and discrimination are baked into our systems.

And women pay tremendous costs for this insidious bias: in time, in money, and often with their lives.

Celebrated feminist advocate Caroline Criado Perez investigates this shocking root cause of gender inequality in *Invisible Women*. Examining the home, the workplace, the public square, the doctor’s office, and more, Criado Perez unearths a dangerous pattern in data and its consequences on women’s lives.

*You and Your Guest are Invited to
The 29th Annual American Association of University
Women (A.A.U.W.)*

***Scholarship Gift Basket Auction
Wednesday, October 15, 2025
Beaver Dam Country Club***

*All proceeds go towards education/scholarships.
Good food, great company, excellent cause.
Please join us!*



5:00 pm Social, Silent Auction Bidding,
Viewing of Live Auction Baskets

6:00 pm Dinner \$35

*Family Style meal consisting of salad, dinner rolls,
grilled salmon, parmesan chicken, roasted pork loin,
garlic mashed potatoes, vegetable blend, and cheesecake.*

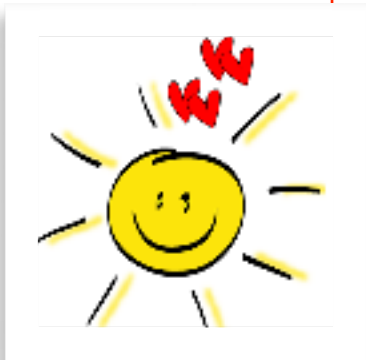
6:50 pm Silent Auction Ends

7:00 pm Live Auction Starts

***See you there!
Thank you for attending!***

***No Credit Cards
Cash and Checks Only***

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.

