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**WELCOME  
ALL**

# FROM OUR PRESIDENT

*“If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”*

*-attributed to an African proverb*



The quote accurately captures what faces the AAUW Minneapolis Branch and how we are responding to the needs of our community and the nation at this time. None of us can do this alone. It will take all of us to live out our mission, focus on our vision, and move forward as was intended by those who went before us. Let us find joy in giving back to our community. How can we inject new vigor into our branch? Member involvement and leadership are key. We can do this.

Our theme this year is Connections. Connections with others are achieved through conversation, eating together and working on committees together. As we forge ahead with our planning in March for the 2026-2027 AAUW year, it is a great time to come forward and join one of the program planning committees. You can bring new ideas and prospective speakers to the committee, but most of all, you can make Connections with other AAUW members. All

the committees need fresh and new ideas. It is an opportunity to share your knowledge and connections. Every Monday our program is a result of the efforts of those committees. We all need to help with those efforts. You will never regret your contributions to those committees. We often hear from visitors about members contributing to make this richness continue. Let's go together.

To those who have worked hard to assemble our programs this year, many thanks. You have contributed to our lives in ways you will never know. We are richer because we have been exposed to new thoughts and ideas that have furthered our knowledge. Good work!!

Becky Farber, President  
Minneapolis Branch AAUW



### PAST PRESIDENTS

Sheila Lind, Barbara Link, Mary Heller, Lois  
Petersen, Diane Boruff, Shari Parsons, Julie Ollila,  
Ann Vanvick, Carol Sheldon

# OFFICERS OF THE BRANCH

## Executive Committee

**2025-2026**

President	Becky Farber
Membership Co-Vice Presidents	Nancy Sjquist Chris Stromgren
Program Vice President	Jan Mosman
Marketing Vice President	Gini Hickman
Development Vice President	Nell Wegmann
Treasurer	Marilyn Listvan
Secretary for Recording	Ann Roach
Director at Large	Lois Demers

## MEMBERSHIP

One of the most frequently cited reasons for being a member of Minneapolis AAUW is the programs. Our speakers are incredible experts in their fields.

1. Our programs open a door to the arts in the Twin Cities. Architects, painters, photographers, and writers all share with us the wonderful works they create.
2. Our programs inspire us as we learn about the many organizations working to make our community a better place.
3. Our programs introduce us to scientific research that is pushing the envelope in so many different areas.
4. Our programs introduce us to women who are making a difference in our world.

Share your good fortune in being a member of Minneapolis AAUW with a friend. New member dues are \$257 for the first year. For more information or for a membership application go to <https://minneapolis-mn.aauw.net> email: [office@aauwmpls.org](mailto:office@aauwmpls.org), or call 612-870-1661.

Nancy Sjoquist, Membership Co-chair  
Chris Stromgren, Membership Co-chair

## **SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Our AAUW Minneapolis Branch scholarships were set up to advance equity for women and girls through education. The Fund was established in 2000, and the first scholarship was awarded in 2001.

The purpose of the scholarships is to enable young women from Minneapolis public high schools to attend college. Our scholarship recipients will receive this award annually through their four years of college as long as they remain in good standing. Each scholar is partnered with a mentor who works with her for her four years of study. We think the mentorship program has been very important in the high graduation success of our scholars.

Thirty-five women graduates from Minneapolis Public Schools have completed four years of college with the help of this branch's AAUW Scholarship Fund. Because of the continuing generosity of our members, in 2025-2026, we will be supporting 19 scholars.

Tax-deductible contributions may be designated for current use or for the endowment to ensure continuation of the fund into the future.

Members may also designate the AAUW Minneapolis Branch Scholarship Fund in their estate planning.

Carol Sheldon,  
Scholarship Board Chair

## **OUT AND ABOUT**

January - The Kerlin Collection of Children's Literature – University of Minnesota

February - Frankenstein  
The Bakken Museum

March – Julia Child: A Recipe for Life  
Minnesota History Center

April - “Little Women” and possible tour  
Guthrie Theater

May - Bell Museum

# **AAUW PROGRAM TOPICS**

- The Arts
- Education
- Empowering Women
- Environment
- Equity/Justice/Inclusion
- Health
- Literary Pursuits
- Public Policy
- Science & Technology

## **International Day and Focus Day**

- March 30 Focus Day  
Food for Thought
- April 27 International Day  
India

**Be kind whenever possible.  
It is always possible.  
Dalai Lama**

## **INTEREST GROUPS**

**Fourth Mondays at 9:30 a.m.**

Great Decisions and Travel alternate monthly.  
Fiction book discussions meet most months.  
Nonfiction discussions and Hot Topics alternate monthly.

## Book Discussions

Fiction: Julie Ollila      Nonfiction: DeDe Scanlon      Heritage Room      Founders Room

The list of books selected for this year are on pages 11-13 of this Bulletin. Discussion of the book is facilitated by a branch member.

## Great Decisions

## Presidents' Hall

Leader: Ruth Andersen

Great Decisions topics are about the most critical issues of the year ahead for global policy makers. We will explore topics of current concern with input from videos and discussion.

## Hot Topics

## Founders Room

Leader: Lil Lindsey

Join us for lively, interactive discussions on newsworthy events and more.

## Travel

## Presidents' Hall

Leader: Kate Johnson

Members travel all across the globe. Join us as they share their experiences.



# BOOKS

## Fiction

January	<i>Lone Dog Road</i> Kent Nerburn
February	<i>There Are Rivers in the Sky</i> Elif Shafak
March	<i>A Lesser Light</i> Peter Geye
April	<i>James</i> Percival Everett

## Nonfiction

January	<i>Hidden Recipes: A Holocaust Memoir</i> Eva Moreimi
March	<i>The In-Between: Unforgettable Encounters During Life's Final Moments</i> Hadley Vlahos, RN

## **Mystery Book Club Books**

All Mystery Book Club meetings are on Zoom.  
Please look for the link in the Zoom invitation  
email.

January 28      *Where the Dead Sleep*  
3pm                Joshua Moehling  
                      Leader: Glenna Case

February 25      *The Grey Wolf*  
3pm                Louise Penny  
                      Leader: Carol Sheldon

March 25           *Triptych A Will Trent Mystery*  
3pm                Karin Slaughter  
                      Leader: Mary Moriarty

April 22           *Three Bags Full*  
3pm                Leonie Swann  
                      Leader: Carole Clemens

## Books by Authors Speaking

February 2 *Lies I Taught in Medical School*  
Robert Lufkin  
Science and Technology

February 23 *The Cello Still Sings*  
Janet Horvath  
Literary Pursuits

March 23 *Frostbite: How Refrigeration  
Changed Our Food, Our Planet, and  
Ourselves*  
Nicola Twilley  
Science and Technology

April 20 *Lone Dog Road*  
Kent Nerburn  
Literary Pursuits



Out and About  
at Second Chance Recycling Tour

# MONDAY PROGRAMS

**January 12, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Public Policy

## **Barriers, Borders, and Care: Understanding Abortion Access in Minnesota and Beyond**

**Nicole Quinones**, PhD, Health Services Researcher, Minnesota Population Center, U of MN

Quinones will explore the shifting landscape of abortion access in the United States with a focus on Minnesota as a critical access point in the Midwest. She will discuss key challenges and barriers, evolving models of health service delivery, and the experiences of patients traveling from restrictive states to seek abortion care in Minnesota.

Introduced by: Kim Krohn

10:45 – 11:45 Literary Pursuits

## **Books: Now More Than Ever!**

**Kerri Miller**, Host, MPR's *Big Books & Bold Ideas, Talking Volumes*

Miller will discuss how she chooses authors and books for *Talking Volumes* and the weekly book

show, why fewer and fewer college students are reading deeply, and how the experience of seeing the world is enriched by a great reading list and lively discussions about books along the way.

Introduced by: DeDe Scanlon

11:45 Announcements  
Luncheon  
New Member Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 No scheduled program  
Check the newsletter for activities/committee meetings.

If we were not meant to have midnight snacks, why is there a light in the refrigerator?"



# **January 19, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Education

## **Transforming the Lives of High-Achieving Students from Low-Income Families**

**Margaret Jaques-Leslie**, Executive Director, Minds Matter Twin Cities

Minds Matter Twin Cities connects driven and determined students from low-income families with the people and possibilities to succeed in college, create their future, and change the world. This three-year program empowers ambitious students from across the metro to prepare for, apply to, and get into college. All of the program graduates leave with multiple four-year acceptances.

Introduced by: Susan Tasa

10:45 – 11:45 Equity/Justice/Inclusion

## **What the Community Must Want for All of Its Children**

**Sondra Samuels**, President and CEO, Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ)

Samuels will share the state of education for our children and what we need to do to guarantee an excellent education for all. Samuels, a 29-year resident of North Minneapolis, is committed to

comprehensive place-based solutions to end poverty. Her team, along with 35 collaborative partners and schools, works to ensure the integration of effective professional services spanning prenatal through high school for northside children.

Introduced by: Kay Borchert

11:45 Announcements  
Business Meeting  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Empowering Women

### **How to Remain a Powerful Woman Through Adversity**

**Sam Knight**, Author, Founder of Breakthrough Wellness Center, Professional Public Speaker

Knight's story began with adversity. She was born into it. As she relates the story of her life and the many challenges she faced, she will highlight how she turned the pain in her life into power. Knight will discuss how in her private practice she now inspires women to do the same.

Introduced by: Rae Cornelius

**January 26, 2026  
Holocaust Remembrance Day**

## 9:30 – 10:30 **Fourth Monday Interest Groups**

Please see the Bulletin page 10.

## Nonfiction

## Founders Room

# *Hidden Recipes: A Holocaust Memoir.* Eva Moreimi

Before World War II, Ica and Ernő each lived a comfortable life in Czechoslovakia. Their lives were shattered when they were imprisoned by the Nazis. Ica secretly wrote down hundreds of recipes that she and her fellow inmates shared, many of which were written on the reverse sides of papers that carried information about ammunition used to annihilate the Jews during the Holocaust.

## Discussion Leaders: DeDe Scanlon/Eva Morejimi

Trayel

## Presidents' Hall

## Civil Rights Tour

"Journey south into the heart of the civil rights movement to gain a deeper understanding of the historic and continued struggle for racial equality in the United States." These words, describing the Road Scholar Civil Rights Tour, struck a chord. Join us as we share many sights including where Dr. Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks and John Lewis brought peaceful protests against

racial discrimination and violence to the attention of the entire country.

Discussion Leaders: Mary Aspnes  
Janet Triplett

**Fiction Book Discussion**      Heritage Room  
*Lone Dog Road*  
by Kent Nerburn

Kent Nerburn's new novel takes place in South Dakota in 1950 when Indian children were being removed from their families to attend boarding schools. This is a story about brotherly love and the journey of two young Lakota brothers as they avoid being abducted from their family. The story highlights the lives they changed along with their quest to honor their grandpa.

Discussion Leader: Sheila Grow

10:45 – 11:45 Health

**Changing Landscapes in Public Health:  
Consequences of  
the US Withdrawal from WHO**

**Melinda Pettigrew, PhD**, Dean of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health

The U.S. withdrawal from the World Health Organization in January 2025 has the potential to significantly impact public health including weakening the WHO's capacity to coordinate pandemic responses and set global health

standards; loss of the U.S. health system's access to critical disease surveillance and data networks; and fragmentation of health communication and erosion of trust in medical institutions.

Introduced by: Kim Krohn

## 11:45 Announcements Luncheon

## 1:15 – 2:15 Public Policy

### **So Many Statuses**

**Rachele King**, State Refugee Coordinator of the Resettlement Programs Office, Minnesota Department of Human Services

King will take you beyond the headlines to explore the systems and resources that guide new arrivals as they restart their lives in Minnesota. Learn who qualifies for refugee status, uncover the diverse populations calling Minnesota home, and see how resettlement agencies, our state, and the federal government work together—each playing a unique role—in this complex, life-changing process.

Introduced by: Veronica Johnson

**February 2, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 The Arts

**Cultural Heritage Theft and Destruction in the Ancient and Modern World**

**Vanessa Rousseau, PhD, Faculty St. Thomas, Art Historian, Archaeologist, Curator, Educator**

Rousseau will present the history of looting and the destruction of art and cultural property from antiquity to the present. Contemporary assaults on cultural heritage will be put into historical perspective, and she will discuss the mercenary and ideological motivations for looting and destruction, as well as the consequences, challenges and potential solutions to this growing problem.

Introduced by: Nan Beman



Ellen Hughes interviews Michael Osterholm.

10:45 – 11:45 Science and Technology

## **Health Longevity Secrets**

**Robert Lufkin**, Physician, Medical School Professor, Author

The New York Times bestselling author of *Lies I Taught in Medical School*, Lufkin reconsidered what he learned about medicine and pursued a new model. He exposed the outdated truths in medicine with courage and clarity, urging a much-needed shift in how we view health and disease. His insights offer a new perspective on health, crucial for anyone. (Zoom presentation)  
Introduced by: Lil Lindsey

11:45 Announcements  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 No scheduled program  
Check the newsletter for activities/committee meetings.



The Gala,

2025

A wonderful  
time!

**February 9, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Empowering Women

**Empowering Women in Law Enforcement**

**Katie Blackwell**, Assistant Police Chief,  
Minneapolis Police Department

Blackwell will share her journey of empowering women in law enforcement during turbulent times. Her presentation focuses on rebuilding with resilience, fostering meaningful relationships, and strengthening unity among officers and the community. She will highlight how empowerment, empathy, and collaboration drive progress and leadership in public safety.

Introduced by: Barbara Blacklock

10:45 – 11:45 Environment

**Caring for Our Environment  
Using Native American Expertise**

**Stephen Thomforde**, Senior Ecologist, Stantec

Can we restore native ecosystems, while producing high quality (energy dense) foods and fibers in ways that increase native biological diversity, water quality, soil health, landscape aesthetics, human health, and prosperous communities, while providing meaningful employment and

research opportunities? This presentation explores historic native grazing ecosystems, including native herbivore grazing patterns and cycles, native vegetation, and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) strategies applicable to current agricultural systems.

Introduced by: Leslie Swenson

11:45 Announcements

Board Meeting

Luncheon

New Member Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Equity/Justice/Inclusion

## **Wrongful Conviction**

**Jack Reuler**, Speaker's Bureau Coordinator of Great North Innocence Project, Founder of Mixed Blood Theater

With over 100,000 innocent people incarcerated in the U.S., the Great North Innocence Project (GNIP) frees people convicted of crimes they did not commit. Reuler will draw on real cases to explain the primary causes and consequences of wrongful convictions as well as how to remedy them. He will also discuss how GNIP works to prevent wrongful convictions.

Introduced by: Chris Stromgren

## **February 16, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Health

### **Urinary Incontinence in Women**

**Kathryn McKenzie**, Physician Assistant,  
Urology, Park Nicollet Clinic

Many women over the age of 50 have trouble with urinary incontinence. While there are available treatments and possible solutions, it remains an issue for many. What can we do about it? Are there any new ways to deal with this common problem? McKenzie will review the subject and bring us up to date.

Introduced by: Bobbi Dering

10:45 – 11:45 Public Policy

### **A Nuanced View of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine**

**John Athanasios Mazis**, Professor of History,  
Hamline University

Since it invaded Ukraine, Putin's Russia has been portrayed as a villain and a pariah while the US and the West are "on the right side" of history. A closer look, however, reveals that while the story

in general might be true, there are many nuanced details that might help us to better understand the issue.

Introduced by: Nan Beman

11:45 Announcements  
Business Meeting  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 The Arts

### **Native American Influences on the Creative Arts**

**Gwen Westerman**, Native American Writer,  
Fiber Artist, and Educator

Westerman's roots are deep in the landscape of the tall grass prairie and reveal themselves in her art and writing through the languages and traditions of her family. She is a member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota Oyate and the Cherokee Nation. Currently she teaches literature, technical communication, and humanities at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Introduced by: Bobbi Dering

**February 23, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Fourth Monday Interest Groups  
Please see the Bulletin **page 10**.

**Nonfiction Book Discussion** Founders Room  
*On the Hippie Trail: Istanbul to Kathmandu and the Making of a Travel Writer*  
by Rick Steves

In the 1970s, the ultimate trip for any backpacker was the storied “Hippie Trail” from Istanbul to Kathmandu. A 23-year-old Rick Steves made the trek, and like a travel writer in training, he documented everything along the way: jumping off a moving train, making friends in Tehran, getting lost in Lahore, getting high for the first time in Herat, battling leeches in Pokhara, and much more. The experience ignited his love of travel and forever broadened his perspective on the world.

Discussion Leader: Lynn Hjelmeland

**Great Decisions** Presidents' Hall

**Ukraine and the Future of European Security**

With reduced US support for NATO and Ukraine, Europe faces strategic uncertainty. The current administration has signaled an intention to reduce its security role in Europe. What are America's stakes in NATO and Europe's strategic dilemmas, and how might Europe

respond? Join the discussion on how rising geopolitical tensions and challenges on global trade and economics can be mitigated.

Discussion Leaders: Ruth Andersen,  
Marilyn Listvan

**Fiction Book Discussion**      Heritage Room

*There Are Rivers in the Sky*

by Elif Shafak

This is the story of one lost poem, two great rivers, and three remarkable lives, connected by a single drop of water. We follow Arthur to ancient Nineveh where he finds fragments of the poem, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. We follow Narin, a Yazidi girl to the sacred valley of her people. We follow Zaleekhah, a British hydrologist, in a quest to find love and meaning in her life.

Discussion Leader: Sheryl Sostarich

**Hot Topics**      Founders Room

Join us for a lively interactive discussion on newsworthy events and more.

Leader: Lil Lindsey

10:45 – 11:45    Literary Pursuits

***The Cello Still Sings***  
**Courage and Conscience**  
**One Conversation at a Time**

**Janet Horvath, Author, Musician**

Horvath is a lifelong performing classical musician, soloist, author, speaker, and educator. *The Cello Still Sings: A Generational Story of the Holocaust and of the Transformative Power of Music*, her recently released memoir, is a sweeping and true history of three generations darkened by the long shadow of the Holocaust. Introduced by: Victoria Dunn

11:45 Announcements  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Health

### **Healthcare in America**

**Rose Roach**, National Coordinator for the Labor Campaign for Single Payer, former Executive Director of the MN Nurses Association

Healthcare remains an issue for a majority of Americans. Why is the United States the only industrialized nation in the world without some form of a universal health care system? Roach will provide a history of America's employer-based, complex and fragmented healthcare system. She will explore the impact of treating healthcare like a consumable good instead of a public good and propose steps toward a system that centers on public health and the patient/provider relationship.

Introduced by: Karen Kaverman

## **March 2, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Environment

### **Is This Water Safe to Drink?**

**Tannie Eshenaur**, Planning Director, Drinking Water Protection at the Minnesota Department of Health

Minnesotans have myriad connections with water: recreational, physical, social, personal, and cultural. Our most intimate water connection is with our drinking water. Every Minnesotan “owns” a waterfront property in that our bodies are more than 50% water. Eshenaur will look at the invisible systems that bring our drinking water to us. These systems, however, are not invincible, and each of us plays an important part in protecting our drinking water.

Introduced by: Sheila Grow

10:45 – 11:45 Education

### **Understanding the Unique Mission of Tribal Colleges and Universities**

**Nadine King**, Executive Director of Red Lake Nation College, Minneapolis

King’s presentation will highlight the development of the new Minneapolis Red Lake

Nation College as one of the first tribal colleges in a major metro area and the important role it fulfills for Native American students. She will also provide a background and history of tribal colleges and universities.

Introduced by: Peggy Pluimer

11:45 Announcements  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 No scheduled program  
Check the newsletter for activities/committee meetings.

**“You can’t help what you feel,  
but you can help how you behave.”**

Margaret Atwood

# **March 9, 2026**

**9:30 – 10:30 Empowering Women**

## **The Pursuit of Innovation: Science, Society & Sentimentality**

**Dr. Jayshree Seth, 3M Chief Science Advocate and Corporate Scientist**

How does one create a culture of innovation? In this talk, Seth will share her perspective on innovation against the backdrop of her own STEM journey from “not the science type” to “chief science advocate.” What does it take to drive much-needed innovation in current times?  
Introduced by: DeDe Scanlon

**10:45 – 11:45 Equity/Justice/Inclusion**

## **Responding to Crises**

**Sidney Frye, Manager, Crisis Response Team, Olmsted County, MN**

Frye will discuss how men experience discrimination, stigma, and stereotypes. Drawing from his personal story and professional work with fatherhood programs, adolescent males, and justice-involved individuals, he will explore how gendered expectations shape emotional expression, identity, and belonging.  
Introduced by: Carole Clemens

11:45 Announcements  
Business Meeting  
Luncheon  
New Member Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Environment

## **Target Field is the Greenest Field in America**

**Dale Wolpers**, Tour Guide/Education Development, Minnesota Twins Baseball Club

Baseball can serve as an engaging platform for learning. The Minnesota Twins have developed a “Learning Through Baseball” program for all ages. This presentation will show how and why Target Field is classified as the “Greenest Ballpark in America.” Environment and sustainability are key parts of making the fan experience at Target Field a joy to behold, and to promote a greener, healthier world.

Introduced by: Barb Swanson and Stephanie Carlson

In preparation for our India Focus Day, Jennifer Olson will be holding a book discussion on April 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:15pm.

The book is *Vagabond Princess, The Great Adventures of Gulbadan* by Ruby Lal.

Gulbadan was born in Afghanistan in 1523. She led a unique pilgrimage to Mecca with women, survived a shipwreck, and had other true life adventures.

## **March 16, 2026**

**9:30 – 10:30** Literary Pursuits

### **Romance and Community Building at Tropes and Trifles**

**Lauren Richards**, Co-owner, Tropes and Trifles

Tropes and Trifles, the romance-specific independent bookstore in Minneapolis, is dedicated to building community within its diverse neighborhood. The female-run store is a gathering spot for anyone looking for a book featuring BIPOC or LGBTQ protagonists, or a book that will whisk the reader away and end happily. Richards will share the store's story as well as recommend a few hot titles that will sweep us off our feet.

Introduced by: Wendy Woodfill

**10:45 – 11:45** Health

### **Hearing Loss, Interventions and Associated Health Conditions**

**Dr. Carrie Meyer**, Director of Clinical Programs, Amplifon Hearing Health Care

Hearing and hearing loss impact all aspects of our lives. Chronic health conditions and comorbidities and their relationship to hearing

and hearing loss will be explored. Evaluating hearing and treating hearing loss early are keys to healthy aging.

Introduced by: DeDe Scanlon

11:45 Announcements  
Business Meeting  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Education

### **Resisting the Attention Economy: A Case for Art**

**Dr. Melissa Geppert**, Associate Lecturer, Art History, University of Central Florida

How has attention become central to multi-billion-dollar industries? How can the arts help us reclaim our attention from extractive technologies? This talk will discuss how attention emerges in the late nineteenth century as a distinctly modern issue; how today's 'attention economy' mines our attentional resources for huge profits; and how, in this context, the arts can serve as sanctuaries for attention wherein we reconnect with our inner and outer worlds beyond our digital devices.

Introduced by: Judy Geppert

## March 23, 2026

9:30 – 10:30 Fourth Monday Interest  
Groups

Please see the Bulletin **page 10**

**Nonfiction** **Founders Room**  
*The In-Between: Unforgettable Encounters  
During Life's Final Moments*  
Hadley Vlahos

Our ideas about dying are confusing at best. Will memories flash before our eyes? Does a light appear at the end of a tunnel? For most, death is a slow process, eased with preparedness, good humor, and a bit of faith. Vlahos, a hospice nurse, shows that end-of-life care can teach us just as much about how to live as it does about how to die.

Discussion Leader: Wendy Woodfill

**Fiction** **Heritage Room**  
*The Lesser Light*  
Peter Geye

Set in 1910 along the North Shore of Lake Superior, this is an achingly beautiful story of an ill-suited couple caught up in a complex web of societal expectations. Geye wrote this book with tenderness and humor.

Discussion Leader: Lynn Hjelmeland

## **Experiential Learning and Travel Adventures with Road Scholar**

Leader: Laurel Ostrow

Venturing forth into travel abroad or on our continent provides opportunities for growth, gratitude and understanding. Road Scholar has provided these adventures to adults over 55 (and younger companions) for fifty years. Ostrow will present the history of Road Scholar and its model as a travel company based on the need for learning and community opportunities for older adults.

Introduced by: DeDe Scanlon

10:45 – 11:45 Public Policy

## **American Politics in the Age of Trump**

**David Schultz, JD, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Legal Studies, Hamline University**

American democracy is at an inflection point. The Trump presidency challenges our political system in ways not seen in decades, if at all. Established norms and procedures have been abandoned and court decisions disregarded. Schultz assesses the current state and future of American democracy both under Donald Trump and beyond.

Introduced by: Rae Cornelius

11:15 Announcements  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Science and Technology

***Frostbite: How Refrigeration Changed Our Food, Our Planet and Ourselves***

**Nicola Twilley**, Author, contributor to *The New Yorker*, Co-host of *Gastropod*, a podcast

Nearly three-quarters of everything on the average American plate is processed, shipped, stored, and sold under refrigeration. Drawing on decades of research, Twilley will tease out how refrigeration has transformed what we eat, how it tastes, where it's grown, and how good it is for both us and the planet.

Introduced by: Leslie Swenson



Sally Pundt, Elaine Lindstrom and  
Marilyn Dean enjoy sweet treats.

# **March 30, 2026**

## **FOCUS DAY**

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

9:30 – 10:30

#### **Child Hunger and Every Meal's Solution**

**Lindsey Torkilsen**, Vice President, Every Meal: Fighting Child Hunger

Hunger affects more than just health. Beyond increased illness and developmental delays, children can have poor academic performance, behavioral challenges, and difficulty adapting socially and emotionally. Consistent access to nourishing food can change their trajectories. When children receive weekend food support, they are better able to learn, grow, and thrive. Every Meal's Weekend Meal Program ensures that kids in Minnesota don't go hungry on the weekends.

Introduced by: Lori Miske

10:45 – 11:45

#### **Catching Butterflies: Why Is Good Sleep So Elusive?**

**Dr. Michael DeSanctis**, Licensed Psychologist

Our 24-hour cycle of wakefulness and somnolence affects the brain. DeSanctis will

discuss the mysteries and benefits of healthy slumber. Impacts of light, technology, disruptions of present-day culture, urbanization, and personal lifestyles in this frenzied epoch will be addressed, with suggested remedies for creating positive sleep space.

Introduced by: Jan Mosman

### 11:45 Announcements Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15

### Improving Gut Health

**Emily Maxson**, author of *Emily's Fresh Kitchen: Cook Your Way to Better Health*

Emily will share her personal story of struggling with Crohn's disease and finding healing through food. She discusses how a healthy gut microbiome adds to your overall health and how to foster a healthy microbiome through what you eat.

Introduced by: Lori Miske

Loading up  
for  
Groveland  
Food Shelf



# **April 6, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Education

## **Understanding Gender Identity**

**A. Kade Goepferd, MD**

This presentation will help us understand what diverse gender identity means and how it differs from sexual identity. Goepferd will discuss how inclusion and acceptance of diverse gender identities can be exemplified.

Introduced by: Sharon Etemad

10:45 – 11:45 The Arts

## **Untold Narratives**

**Alejandra Peña Gutiérrez, Director, Weisman Art Museum**

In an effort to remain relevant, museums have been shifting their focus from objects to people. But putting ALL people at the center of their labor has forced institutions to acknowledge a past where bias and misrepresentation have been incessant.

This critical introspection, aimed to gain back the trust of all of our communities, has brought

to the surface a reckoning with cultural exclusion that has been the norm for centuries.

Introduced by: Kim Krohn

11:45 Announcements  
Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 No scheduled program  
Check the newsletter for activities/committee meetings.



AAUW Minneapolis members  
at AAUW State Convention 2025

**April 13, 2026**

9:30 –10:30 Science and Technology

## **How to Change Your Mind**

**Kristine Martin**, Psychologist

In her work with clients, Martin employs a multidisciplinary approach including ketamine-assisted therapy in the treatment of PTSD, depression and other emotional disorders. She will discuss Michael Pollan's ground-breaking book, *How to Change Your Mind*, a survey of consciousness-expanding experiments. Pollan makes a case for why shaking up the brain's old habits can be therapeutic.

Introduced by: Lil Lindsey

10:45 – 11:45 Environment

## **The Pragmatic Case for Environmental Optimism**

**Charlie Sellars**, Author, Director of Sustainability at Microsoft

Sellars describes himself as an author, advisor and optimist. At Microsoft he is in charge of achieving the Microsoft pledge to become carbon negative, water positive and zero waste to

protect ecosystems by 2030 and has helped launch several sustainability-forward products. In his book *What We Can Do*, Sellars believes we are not powerless against climate change. He will share how “solutions to big problems start with small steps.”

Introduced by: Kate Garner

11:45 Announcements  
Business Meeting  
Luncheon  
New Member Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 Equity/Justice/Inclusion

### **A Fever in the Heartland**

**Phil Fishman, Attorney**

Longtime Minneapolis attorney Phil Fishman will discuss Timothy Egan’s book, *A Fever in the Heartland: The Ku Klux Klan’s Plot to Take Over America and the Woman Who Stopped Them*. This award-winning 2023 historical thriller details the Klan’s phenomenal resurgence in the Roaring ‘20s. In addition, Mr. Fishman will draw parallels to current events.

Introduced by: Donna Hackler

**April 20, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 The Arts

**My Very Special Intersection of  
Law and Music**

**Phillip Gainsley, Attorney**

A practicing attorney by profession, Gainsley has had a life-long interest in music and music theater. That interest morphed into a second career of writing, speaking, broadcasting and podcasting on the performing arts. Gainsley will talk about his journey and what he has encountered along the way.

Introduced by: DeDe Scanlon

10:45 – 11:45 Empowering Women

**My Journey to the Hockey Hall of Fame**

**Natalie Darwitz, Hockey Hall of Fame, 2024,  
Team USA Olympian, 2018**

Darwitz is a two-time Olympic silver medalist and three-time International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) World gold medalist. She represented the United States in three Olympics, eight IIHF World Women's Championships, and ten Women's 4 Nations Cups. In the 2002 Winter Olympics, Darwitz was named to the All-Tournament Team on her way to winning

bronze. She was the youngest player to be selected to the national team at age 15.  
Introduced by: DeDe Scanlon

11:45 Announcements

12:00 Luncheon

1:15 – 2 :15 Literary Pursuits

**Quiet Voices, Important Truths:  
Lessons Learned from 40 Years of  
Working in Native America**

**Dr. Kent Nerburn, Author**

The Native American experience has been expunged from American historical narrative, and important core values of the Native way of living have been ignored. Noted author Nerburn reflects on years of working and living in Native America. These values have much to offer us in these difficult and confusing times. Today he will share what he thinks we can all learn from the elder cultures on our land.

Introduced by: Jan

Brue Enright

Out and About

Pat Deckas  
Becerra golfing at  
Big Stone Mini  
Golf

(It is rumored that  
three people got  
holes in one!)



**April 27, 2026**

**INTERNATIONAL DAY  
INDIA**

9:30 – 10:30

**Roles of Women in Present Day India**

**Mubina Qureshi**, Executive Co-Director, Self-Employed Women's Association-Asian Indian Family Wellness (SEWA-AIFW)

Qureshi is an Indian American first-generation immigrant and is the Executive Co-Director at SEWA-AIFW, a nonprofit dedicated to serve South Asian Communities in Minnesota. She was a Humphrey Policy Fellow 2022-23, and MINN Fellow 2023-24, with a decade of teaching/research experience in Languages, Literature, Humanities and Gender Studies.

Introduced by: Shari Durdin

10:45 – 11:45

**India and Climate Change**

**Anne Walter**, PhD, St. Olaf College Professor Emerita of Biology

India is the most populous country in the world with almost 1.5 billion people in a country that claims only 2.4% of the world's land mass. It experiences damaging droughts, floods, and heat waves that affect humans and also its unique animal population. India is the third-largest national emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> behind China and the United States. Reducing its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is part of its Climate Action Plan.

Introduced by: Jennifer Olson

11:45 Announcements

Special luncheon on this special day

1:15 – 2:15

## **Growing Up in India, Adapting to the World**

**Aratrika Ghose**, Chemical Engineering PhD  
Student, U of Minnesota

Born in Calcutta, Ghose was the child of non-practicing Hindu parents. They lived in a Muslim neighborhood, and she attended a Methodist convent school. This blend of cultures, identities, and belief systems shaped her early understanding of diversity and remains a core part of who she is. She worked in Bangalore at ExxonMobil's Technology Center, supporting oil and gas assets worldwide for five years, and is now getting her PhD in Chemical Engineering.

Introduced by: Jennifer Olson

# **May 4, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Education

## **Parker and the Franklin Center: How I Became an Advocate for the Neurodiverse**

**Kim Snow**, Executive Director, Franklin Center

Imagine walking into the doctor's office and hearing the doctor say, "I hate meeting people for the first time when I have to deliver bad news." Snow will share her journey as a mother of Parker, her neurodivergent son, as well as her experience leading the Franklin Center, a school that embraces a therapeutic model which partners academics with social, emotional, and mental health to serve the whole child.

Introduced by: Ginny Wheeler

10:45 – 11:45 Science and Technology

## **Smartphones for Health and Emergencies**

**Joanne Killian**, Founder, J. Killian Consulting

This session is designed for anyone who owns an iPhone and wants to be prepared in case of an emergency. You will learn different ways to call 911, how to add and manage emergency

contacts, and how to create and update your Medical ID in the Health app. Android users have the same capabilities. This session will help you think about how to use your smartphone in an emergency.

Introduced by: Nan Beman

## 11:45 Announcements Luncheon

1:15 – 2:15 No scheduled program  
Check the newsletter for activities/committee meetings.



Visiting the Red Lake Nation College

## **May 11, 2026**

9:30 – 10:30 Annual Meeting

We will review the past year, thank outgoing leaders for their work, and welcome incoming officers.

### ***Aging But Dangerous Embracing Life with Fun, Spirit, and Style***

**Jean Ketcham**, Author

Ketcham is the founder of the Aging But Dangerous movement, which is the title of her newest book. The book focuses on healthy aging and living dangerously through fun, spirit and style. After retiring, Ketcham discovered that a number of 55+ women were not living up to their true potential. She believes that aging is not just about surviving but thriving with a dash of adventure!

Introduced by: Becky Farber

10:45 – 11:45

### ***Questions About A Precarious State***

**Rick Kupchella**, Documentary Producer and former KARE 11 Reporter

*A Precarious State*, a documentary produced by Kupchella, paints a stark portrait of Minnesota's crossroads: mounting job losses, a shrinking or stagnating population, faltering educational outcomes, and an exodus of business investment that threatens the very appeal of the state for new employers and residents alike. What does Kupchella suggest as the remedy? What can we, as citizens of Minnesota, do to help remedy this situation?

Introduced by: Becky Farber

11:45 Announcements  
Luncheon  
Business Meeting

1:15 – 2:15 Summer Reading  
**Sue Zumberge**, Owner, Subtext Bookstore

Zumberge will again treat us to a review of books that not only make good reading but also make wonderful gifts.

# **LUNCH POLICY**

## **RESERVATIONS**

Lunch reservations MUST be **made and/or cancelled before noon on the Wednesday before the Monday meeting**. If you do not cancel in time, you are expected to pay for that meal as a meal has already been ordered for you.

## **MONDAY MORNING CHECK IN**

**General Seating and Guests:** There are two clearly marked “Check in and Pay” tables (main floor near elevator and lower level opposite the elevator). Payment is accepted at the check-in tables before 9:30 and 10:45 sessions. **If you arrive later than 10:45 a.m.,** please check in at the second-floor office.

**President’s Table:** Check in and pay on the main floor.

**Same-Day Reservation:** There will be an **extremely limited number of same-day reservations available each week**. The reservations can be purchased on a first come-first serve basis at the cashiers’ table.

**Table Reservations:** To reserve a lunch table with your guest, reservations must be made in person on Monday morning at the Arrangements Table on the first floor.

## **PAYMENT**

**Cash** and checks are accepted at the check-in tables. Cash is the preferred method of payment. **Credit cards** are accepted in the second-floor office. Then bring the receipt down to a cashier.

At the time of payment, you will receive a wrist band which will signify to the servers that you have paid for lunch.

## **PRICING**

Member lunches: \$25

Guest lunches: \$20

## **SPECIAL DIET MEALS**

Please request a form for special diet meals from Office Manager Sharon Rauenhorst in the office. Although you are welcome to note your meal choice when you make your reservation it does not replace the diet card you must fill out in the office. Once you fill out the diet card, all your meals this year will honor that request unless you tell our office manager otherwise. **For any changes at all, see Sharon in the office.** Please pick up a dietary card from Sharon that you will continue to use throughout the year. Display this card at your table and alert the server to your meal request. If you have made a reservation for

a special meal, that will be your meal. Please do not switch meals.

## On-Line Lunch Reservations

1. Click on **Lunch Reservations** in the weekly branch Newsletter or in the weekly Zoom Invitation email.  
You may also use  
<https://signup.com/go/buScVkB>
2. Find the **date** you would like to attend.  
Make sure on the computer that the little arrow next to the date is pointed down. If it is not, just click on it.
3. Click on the **green Sign-Up button**.
4. Enter your **email address** and **confirm it** (your reminders will come to that email).
5. Type in your name if it is not there. Select '1 spot' if it is not already indicated. Press **SAVE AND DONE**.

### TO ADD A GUEST/SPEAKER (YOU KNOW THEIR NAME)

1. Do steps 1-5 above but instead of pressing Save and Done, click on **Save and Add Another Person**. Put **1** in "# of Spots" box and fill in the guest's name and information. (You can use your own phone number and email.) Repeat for additional guests.
2. When you are done reserving, click **Save And Done**.

## **TO ADD A GUEST/SPEAKER (YOU DON'T KNOW THEIR NAME)**

1. Do steps 1-5 above.
2. Before you click **Save and Done**, change the number of spots to represent the total of yourself plus the number of additional spots that you want.
3. Now click **Save and Done**.

## **TO CANCEL A RESERVATION**

1. Do steps 1-2 above.
2. Click on the date you wish to cancel.
  - a. You may notice the green Sign Up button is now blue and says **My Spots**. Click on the My Spots. A drop down box will show. Click on Edit and change the # of spots to 0(zero).
  - b. It may say **You Have a Spot** with a blue button that says **Review Spot**. Click on Review Spot and change the # to 0(zero).
3. Remember: If you do not cancel by the prior Wednesday, you are responsible for paying for the meal.

## **Guests**

Prospective members and guests may attend up to three meetings each program year.

Prospective members and guests must register at the Membership Table in the lower level. Guests will receive nametags and be recognized during the meeting.

# **ROOM RESERVATIONS FOR FIRST MONDAY AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES**

There are no scheduled 1:15 p.m. programs on the first Monday of each month. Instead, much of the Gale Mansion will be available for committee meetings and social activities.

All members are welcome to sit in on committee meetings and learn about the wide variety of activities going on in our branch. The social activities will be an opportunity to play a game, learn a skill, have an interesting discussion, make new friends and more.

We tentatively have the following rooms available: Presidents' Hall, the Founders Room, the Minneapolis Room and the Fellowship Room. Some of the larger rooms may be shared with more than one activity. See the Gale map on p.63 for locations.

If you would like to reserve a space for a meeting or social event, contact Theresa Palmersheim, Meeting Scheduler, at [tpalmersheim@gmail.com](mailto:tpalmersheim@gmail.com). Please describe the activity you would like to sponsor, how many people you expect to attend, and whether you need a table or other equipment.

If you have reserved a space for an activity and want to encourage participation, please contact Sharon Rauenhorst to put an announcement in our weekly email. Sharon's email address is: [office@aauwmppls.com](mailto:office@aauwmppls.com)

## DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for your support.

\$140,336 Monetary Contributions

\$299,818 Volunteer Time Contributions  
converted to equivalent money

Total \$440,154



## TOILETRIES

Traveling? Free items from your dentist or cosmetic purchases? Bring your new shampoos (and any other self-care products of any size) and paper grocery bags with handles and place them in the specially marked box in the coat room. For those with little, it means so much.

Questions? Contact Lil Lindsey

## THE LIBRARY

Come On Up and See Us

Want to check out the latest best seller? Need a new mystery to read? How about a jigsaw puzzle to stimulate your brain? They are all here in your AAUW library. Our location is in the Association Room on the second floor across the hall from the office and the elevator. Come up and visit us; we would be delighted to see you.

There are no fines for overdue books. We are just grateful when the books are returned. We continue to sell used books and proceeds from the used book sales allow us to buy more books for the collection. Please bring us your used books, preferably not more than five years old. And don't forget to bring us your puzzles. Free will donations are also welcome.

## AAUW FUNDS

Thanks to generous members, our branch contributed close to \$5000 to AAUW Funds as of Dec 1, 2025. Thank you for your support! A great opportunity to donate will be included in your membership renewal this spring but don't hesitate to give before then.

According to Barb Wonson Liukkonen, MN AAUW Funds VP, there are two **new** AAUW Funds addressing urgent and timely concerns: Defend Higher Education (#4513) and Public Policy (#4514). Consider donating to them.

Details about these and all funds can be found in the Fall Pine newsletter sent to you by email.

You can also access it through AAUW MN website at <https://aauw-mn.aauw.net/> and click on *Fall Pine* on the homepage. A note of caution, know that Mpls Branch AAUW does not have a Go Fund Me page for AAUW Funds. You need to donate directly through our branch. Another way to support AAUW Funds is to consider donating items for the silent auction at our MN State Convention, April 24-25, 2026, Rutger's Bay Lake Resort near Brainerd, MN. The convention is always a good time!

I hope information on NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) 2026 will be available soon. Our branch has funds to send young women to this conference, so think about delegates for the annual end of May event.

Shari Parsons, Mpls Branch AAUW Funds Chair

## **BAD WEATHER CLOSING OF AAUW**

Check your email or call 612-870-1661 for a recorded message. Bad weather closings will also be announced on the home screen of AAUW Minneapolis website: minneapolis-mn.aauw.net. If you have a speaker, check the Presenter's packet for snow day instructions.



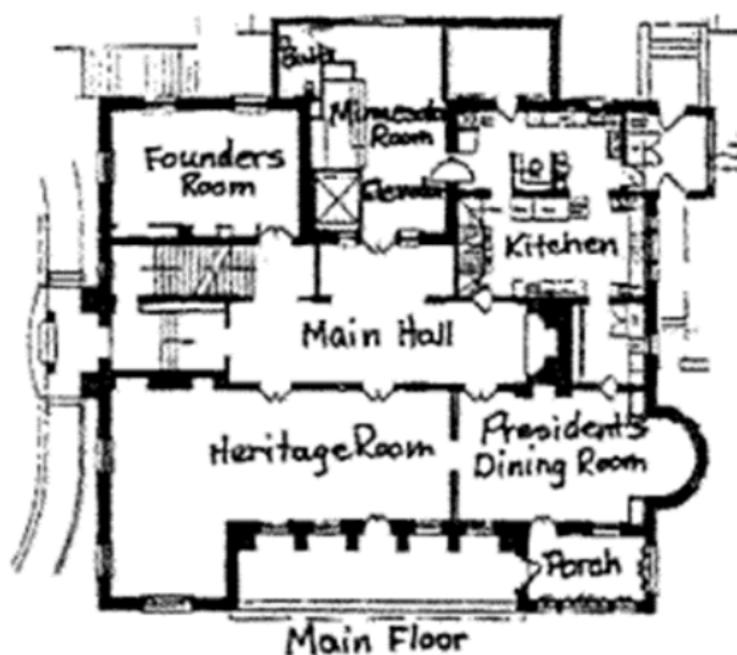
Marilyn Listvan, Nell Wegmann, Kerry Noyes

# COURTESY REQUESTS

To make the AAUW meeting time a good experience for ALL:

- Check to see that your cell phone and all other electronic devices are silent.
- Reserve the last row for hostesses who need to leave early.
- When asking a question, stand, if you are able, and say your name.
- Refrain from unnecessary/lengthy comments.
- Do not wear any fragrance.
- Sit near the back of the room if you do needlework or puzzles.
- At lunch, unless there is a reserve sign on the table, all seats are open. Do not save seats.
- Do not sit in the reserved seats at the front of the hall. They are for members for members and guests with walkers, wheelchairs or other issues.

# GALE MANSION FLOOR PLAN



## NOTES