

# ERIE PRESSIBLE

October 2026

## LAKE ERIE: A Geological, Political, Transportation, Industrial, and Recreational History

Our October program highlights the biggest and arguably best part of our region, Lake Erie itself. The familiar body of water, which forms our northern border, has a stunningly rich, multifaceted history. Beginning with its geological birth as two separate lakes and continuing through Pennsylvania's struggle to claim the corner of land where the city of Erie developed as a port, its impact on the region has been nothing short of astonishing. Lake Erie became the transportation gateway to the Northwest Territories, housed a local Naval Base, served as a testing ground for Great Lakes lighthouses, spawned an enormous commercial fishing industry, and became a testing ground for the welding and shipbuilding that led to boiler-making and pipefitting. In recent years, one of its five succession-sandspits, Presque Isle, has evolved into a state park that hosts more than four million annual guests. Lake Erie's story continues into the next century with the arrival of modern artificial intelligence (AI) data centers threaten its health.

Hear all about it at **6:30 p.m. on Monday, October 19** in the Admiral Room at the **Blasco Library**.

**David Frew**, a retired university professor, consultant and author, is an organizational psychologist who began his career as an engineer. He served as faculty member and administrator at Gannon University for 35 years and retired as emeritus professor. At Gannon he became full-professor and dean of the graduate school. After leaving Gannon, he served as executive director of Erie County Historical Society and as visiting professor at Mercyhurst University.

He is currently a scholar in residence at the Jefferson Educational Society. He has operated his own consulting company, Frew Associates, since 1976 and numbers among clients GE Crotonville, NASA, AMSCO/ Steris, GE Medical, Hammermill, Lord Manufacturing, FMC, and Lockheed Martin. In addition to more than one hundred journal articles and technical papers in applied psychology, he has authored or coauthored 45 books, including fifteen that deal with the Great Lakes and shipping.



Growing up on Erie's lower west side as a proud "Bay Rat," Frew was known to join neighborhood kids playing and marauding along the west bayfront. He has written for years about his beloved Presque Isle and his adventures on the Great Lakes. In the "On the Waterfront Series" for the Jefferson Educational Society, the Scholar-in-Residence takes note of life in and around the water.

## President's Message: Women Who Reclaim, Restore, and Lead

Dear AAUW Erie Branch Members,

October gives us several opportunities to recognize the experiences, leadership, and contributions of women and girls. It is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We also observe the International Day of the Girl on October 11 and the International Day of Rural Women on October 15.

October also holds special meaning in Erie's history. In October 1999, the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, the Sisters of Mercy, and the Sisters of St. Joseph began the Take Back the Site vigils. These women responded to violence with prayer, presence, and a commitment to peace. Their example reminds us that women's history is not only something we remember. We continue writing it through the ways we serve and show up for others.



Matasha Murrell Jones

As AAUW Erie branch continues its work, let us remain committed to showing up for women and girls through education, advocacy, scholarships, and community service. I encourage each member to participate in one program, volunteer opportunity in our community, or branch initiative this month. Together, we can honor the women who came before us while creating a stronger legacy for those who will follow.

As a reminder, Nurturing Hearts is seeking volunteers for its upcoming event on October 22 and 23 at Gannon University. Volunteer opportunities include event setup and breakdown, registration, decorations, photography, and other areas of support.

[View the volunteer information and sign up form](#)

As we move through October, may we remember that every act of service matters. When we share our time, knowledge and presence, we strengthen our community and help to create greater opportunities for women and girls. Thank you for the many ways you continue to support the mission of AAUW Erie. Let us keep moving forward together as we belong, grow, and serve.

In Love, Collaboration and Community!  
Matasha

## Public Policy Highlights

Did you know that it only takes an average of 2 minutes to register to vote?

You can update your voter registration online, by mail or in person. September 25, 2026 is National Voter Registration Day.

**October 19, 2026 is the deadline to register to vote** in the 2026 general election. Request it early and return it early!

Pennsylvania voters will settle a Governor's race, all 17 U.S. House seats, and control of the legislature in 2026.

AAUW and the League of Women Voters in PA have come together to mail postcards to all registered voters encouraging them to Get Out to Vote! Erie AAUW will be addressing and mailing 200 postage paid post cards to registered voters in Pennsylvania.

### Frightening Food and Friends —or— Ghostly Gourmet Pick Your Poison!



We have not one, but two, mystery meals afoot!

Someone is up to no good! On Saturday, **October 24 at 1 PM** join **Food and Friends** for the "**Case of the Disappearing Golden Ladle Mystery**". It will be an afternoon of delicious soups, fresh salads, and a mystery that may have you questioning everyone! Put on your detective hat, sharpen your powers of observation, and prepare to interrogate suspects, uncover clues, and make a few accusations. Will you be able to solve the mystery before dessert?

The mystery will take place at **St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1070 Dutch Rd.** in Fairview. The fee is \$10. Reserve a spot with Barb Hutzelman (814-881-7339) or her email [barbhutz@yahoo.com](mailto:barbhutz@yahoo.com)). Let her know by Oct. 21st.

... Or gather with **Gourmet Group** for another Murder Mystery Dinner, "**Mystic Murder, The Coven**" on Thursday, **Oct 29 at 6 PM** at the **Masonic Temple** located at **32 W. 8th St.** for a spook-tacular time! The buffet by Cali's West includes: chicken bruschetta, eggplant parmesan, salad, au gratin potatoes, broccoli, etc. The cost is \$65 for dinner and the show.

Make a reservation with Diane for this fun seasonal outing. The Gourmet Study Group chair is Diane Wisniewski (814-602-9344 or email her at [nanaddwiz@gmail.com](mailto:nanaddwiz@gmail.com)).

## Branch Study/Interest Groups

The Study Group program provides opportunities for members to connect with like-minded people on various issues. As an AAUW Erie member, you may attend any Study Group event just by letting the facilitator of that group know that you will be attending. The scoop from the Study Group coordinator, Loretto Bellicini.

**AAUW Book Club** meets the **first Thursday** of every month at **1-2:30 PM** at **Springhill**, 2323 Edinboro Road, Room 316. Book Club members choose the books to read and discuss. The list includes fiction, non-fiction, historical fiction, political science, mystery, thriller, fantasy, and of course romance! New members are welcome and everyone is invited to join on **Thursday, October 1st**.

The October book is ***Elderhood: Redefining Aging, Transforming Medicine, Reimagining Life*** by Louise Aronson. Linda Lorah will be presenting. Cindy Belczyk is the coordinator for the group (814-873-5401 or BelczykCA@gmail.com).

**Food and Friends** is a group who plan engaging activities designed to bring everyone together at events that involve good food, exploring new experiences, shared laughter, and the joy of friendship through creative gatherings.

The first program of the year will be **Soup & Mystery** on Saturday **October 24th** at **1 p.m.** for \$10.00 per person. Save the date! If you have questions ask any Committee member: Barbara Hutzelman, Ann Marie Kumhera, Asuman Baskan, Karen Miller, Loretta Seigley or Loretto Bellicini.

Food and Friends is chaired by Anne Marie Kumhera (440-670-5899) (annemarieku@gmail.com).

**Global Friends** is an outreach program to immigrant women in our community. It is open to both AAUW members and immigrant women. The intent is to understand and respect other cultures. Global Friends usually meets the **fourth/last Monday** of the month at **7 PM** and is chaired by Sharmin Khundker (814-490-2301 or seherasharmin@yahoo.com).

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, October 26** at Sharmin Khundker's home, located at **5976 Deerfield Dr.** in Fairview. The presenter will be Seemal Essa, who will share her experience as a Pakistani-born woman raised in Bahrain. We look forward to an engaging and meaningful evening together.

**Gourmet** is an opportunity to experience the various menus of our local restaurants while dining with friends. Let's get into the season with a **Murder Mystery Dinner!** Thursday, **Oct 29 at 6 PM** at the **Masonic Temple** located at **32 W. 8th St.** Have a spook-tacular time! The buffet includes: chicken bruschetta, eggplant parmesan, salad, au gratin potatoes, broccoli, etc. The cost is \$65 for dinner and the show.

Make a reservation right away with Diane for this fun seasonal outing. The Gourmet Study Group chair is Diane Wisniewski (814-602-9344 or at her email nanaddwiz@gmail.com).

(Continued on the next page)

*Study Groups Continued...*

**Politalk** is an unstructured discussion about domestic and international political events which leads to brainstorming about ways of coping with such events. Starting this month Politalk will meet on **Tuesday, October 20 at 1 PM** instead of Thursday. There won't be an evening session this month. We will meet at the home of chair, Asuman Baskan's house at 3838 State St. Please R.S.V.P. to Asuman (814-282-8277 or email her at [irrepressibleturk@gmail.com](mailto:irrepressibleturk@gmail.com)).

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Member **Cindy Belczyk** was presented with a **Named Gift Honoree** award by past president, Loretta Seigley, after the meeting of the Book Club. Cindy was not available to receive her award at our May banquet.



**Please update to your new Yearbook** to reflect the address change for **Mary Ann Frew**. Her new address is: 1324 South Shore Dr. Apt. 707, Erie, PA 16505.

## Fall Fest and Trunk or Treat (volunteers needed)

Shanna Potter, Community School Director at Harding, has invited AAUW members to **volunteer** at Harding's annual **Fall Fest and Trunk-or-Treat** event on **Friday, October 16** from **5:30 to 7:00 PM**.

Candy donations are greatly appreciated. If you plan to attend Global Friends on September 28, you may bring your candy then. If you prefer another arrangement, feel free to contact Sharmin at [Sehersharmmin@yahoo.com](mailto:Sehersharmmin@yahoo.com) to coordinate a drop-off. She can submit the sign-up form on behalf of all AAUW members. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

The parking lot will be filled with decorated trunks passing out treats to students. Staff, families, and community partners are welcome to participate by decorating a trunk or by offering another activity such as a game or craft. If you plan to hand out candy, please prepare for approximately 400 attendees.

Candy donations are collected to help replenish supplies if needed.



# October 2026

**Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat**

|    |                                                               |                                                 |                                                 |                                                                           |                                                          |                                                                                                                 |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    |                                                               |                                                 |                                                 | 1<br><b>Book Club</b><br>1-2:30 pm<br>Springhill                          | 2                                                        | 3                                                                                                               |
| 4  | 5                                                             | 6                                               | 7                                               | 8                                                                         | 9                                                        | 10                                                                                                              |
| 11 | 12                                                            | 13                                              | 14<br><b>Get out<br/>the Vote<br/>Postcards</b> | 15                                                                        | 16<br><b>Trunk or Treat</b><br>5:30 pm<br>Harding School | 17                                                                                                              |
| 18 | 19<br><b>David Frew<br/>Talk</b><br>6:30 pm<br>Blasco Library | 20<br><b>Politalk</b><br>1:00 pm<br>at Asuman's | 21                                              | 22<br><b>Nurturing Hearts<br/>Workshop</b><br>Oct 22 & 23<br>Gannon Univ. | 23                                                       | 24<br><b>Food &amp;<br/>Friends</b><br>1 pm<br>St Stephen's<br>Episcopal                                        |
| 25 | 26<br><b>Global<br/>Friends</b><br>7 pm<br>Sharmin's<br>home  | 27                                              | 28                                              | 29<br><b>Gourmet</b><br>6 pm at<br>Masonic<br>Temple                      | 30                                                       | 31<br><br><b>Halloween</b> |

## Welcome New Members

We are delighted to welcome two new members: **Grazyna Wierzbicki** and **Emily Davis**.

Until the end of this school year **Grazyna** taught at Child Development Centers, Inc., however, she has accepted a new position as the Mentor Lead Teacher. She truly enjoys the work and finds it deeply rewarding. She holds degrees in Education, as well as Curriculum and Instruction from Gannon University.

Outside the classroom, Grazyna and her husband enjoy traveling together. She has a love of classical music, plays the accordion and the piano, and enjoys dancing to the lively rhythms of the '80s and '90s. She is also fluent in both Polish and Russian.

We are pleased to welcome her and look forward to getting to know her better as she becomes involved in our branch.

Please also welcome **Emily Davis** to the Erie Branch of AAUW! Emily earned her BSN from Edinboro University and began her nursing career in Erie, where she worked primarily in mental health. Over the years, she also taught nursing and worked in utilization review. After several moves, Emily and her husband have returned to Erie in retirement—and we're delighted that AAUW is part of their return!

Emily has long felt that women's education and health issues have not received the attention they deserve, and she was drawn to AAUW because of its commitment to advancing women. She was previously an AAUW member in Beaver County, so we're especially happy to welcome her back to AAUW.

Outside of AAUW, Emily enjoys hiking, spending time with her children and grandchildren, and, since retiring, getting her hands muddy with pottery. We look forward to getting to know Emily and sharing many AAUW experiences with her!

## Join the Fundraising Committee

We are exploring new ways to strengthen our fundraising efforts while reintroducing AAUW Erie Branch to the community. Members have already shared ideas for revitalizing Lunch & Literature or creating new events that bring people together, highlight our mission, and support our programs.

If you enjoy developing ideas, planning events, building community partnerships, or helping behind the scenes, we would value your participation on the Fundraising Committee. Please reach out to Matasha MurrellJones if you are interested in joining or learning more.



empowering women since 1881  
Erie Branch—Founded in 1902

### AAUW's Mission

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through education, philanthropy, and research. By joining AAUW you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance. In principle and in practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in the organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

Published by: American Association of University Women — Erie Branch, Inc.  
P.O. Box 9264, Erie, PA 16505  
Branch email: [eriebranchaauw@gmail.com](mailto:eriebranchaauw@gmail.com)  
Editor email: [eriepressible@gmail.com](mailto:eriepressible@gmail.com)  
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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Contact us at: [lwverie@gmail.com](mailto:lwverie@gmail.com)

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