AAUW ERIE BRANCH NEWSLETTER November 2026

ERIE PRESSIBLE

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Keep Our Library Public

Are public assets and funding being squandered without public knowledge? Why transparancy and independent oversight are necessary to protect public funds and assets. Learn how a private Catholic university, Erie Couty, and $1.5 million in federal pandemic recovery funds awarded under a drinking water category transformed a public library into a private benefit.

Hear all about it at **6:30 p.m.** on **Monday, November 9** in the **Admiral Room** at the **Blasco Library**.

Anna McCartney, our speaker, is a national award-winning writer, editor, and educator. Anna holds a B.S. in Education and has taught junior and senior high school general science, biology, physical science, chemistry and Ecology. Her more than 20 years of experience in creating and managing community programs has not gone unnoticed. Many of her programs and work have received national, state and local recognition and awards, from the White House to the National Newspaper Association, the PA Newspaper Association and more.





Thinking Ahead - Save the Date

Our annual Holiday Luncheon will be held on Saturday, December 5th at the Kahkwa Club. Reservations need to be made with Barb Hutzelman (814-881-7339) will be due by Nov. 27th. More information to come in the December issue of the Pressible.

President's Message: Your Voice, Your Rights, Your Vote



Dear AAUW Erie Branch Members,

During the AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference, themed "Unfinished Revolution: Together We Stand," voting rights emerged as an important focus. The theme reminded us that protecting access to the ballot remains unfinished work and a shared responsibility.

Women's participation can help shape this election's outcome. Voting rights remain connected to educational opportunity, economic security, and equal representation, concerns central to AAUW's mission.

Approximately 90 million eligible Americans did not vote in the 2024 presidential election. Every election offers an opportunity to influence decisions affecting our communities.

As you reflect on your ballot, ask yourself: What is my pain point? Perhaps it is housing costs, education, healthcare, or employment. Identify which office has authority over that concern. Research the candidates, examine their records, and consider contacting your elected officials with specific questions and requests. Accountability continues after Election Day.

Student perspectives also belong in conversations about public policy. Research projects, public forums, and respectful discussions can connect classroom learning with community concerns and meaningful civic understanding.

Protect your ballot, too. USPS advises that voters seeking a postmark matching their mailing date should bring their ballot return envelope inside a post office and request a free manual postmark at the counter. Automated postmarks may reflect a later processing date.

In Pennsylvania, mailing your ballot by Election Day is not enough. Your county election office must receive it by 8 p.m. on November 3, 2026, even if postmarked on or before that date. Mail early or personally deliver your ballot to an authorized ballot drop box or county election office before the deadline.

For nonpartisan voting assistance, call or text 1-866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683). Visit VOTE411.org and enter your address for personalized election information.

Stay informed, ask questions, and remain engaged with the decisions shaping our shared future.

In Love, Collaboration and Community!
Matasha

Public Policy Highlights

I want to take this opportunity to say "THANK YOU" to the AAUW ladies who took the opportunity on Wednesday, October 14th to address post cards encouraging 600 registered voters in Erie County to Get Out To Vote in this year's election. These individuals were all registered but did not vote in the previous election.

This endeavor was shared with Erie County's League of Women Voters. A shout out goes to Mary Coleman, Erie County's LWV's President, who took big steps organizing and hosting this evening --- filled with good conversation, food and purpose.

Ellen DiPlacido, Public Policy Chairperson





Trunk or Treat Event at Harding Elementary School



Global Friends October Meeting



Welcome New Branch Members

We extend a warm welcome to our newest members. Please update your new Yearbook to reflect the addition of our new members.

Barbara Chambers
2030 Station Road
Erie 16510
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440-477-0192 (cell)
bachambers@sbcglobal.net

B.A. Chemistry, Mercyhurst
M.S. Guidance and Counseling, John Carroll
D.Ed. Secondary Science Education, University of Maryland

Linda Lyons King
320 West 7th Street
Erie 16502
814-464-5694
LKing5352@gmail.com

B.A. English, University of Michigan
Great Society Fellowship concentration in Appalachian Poverty, University of West Virginia

Clemence Mershon
17050 Mershon Road
Conneautville, PA 16406-1850
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A.B. German, minor French, Colby College
MA Linguistics, University of Pennsylvania

Carolyn Ruth
7830 East Lake Road
Erie 16511-1631
814-899-1506 (landline)
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B.A. Chemistry, minors biology & education, Mercyhurst College
M.S. Chemistry, Rochester Institute of Technology



New and prospective members are invited for an evening of welcome and information on Wednesday, November 11th at 7:00 pm at Asuman Baskan's home. Enjoy a relaxed evening of connection and conversation, get to know us better, and discover ways to get involved. An invitation will be arriving in your mailbox soon! RSVP to Asuman Baskan at 814-282-8277 or irrespressibleturk@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 Bellcini.



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! Everyone is invited to join on Thursday, November 5th. The November book is The Chemist by Stephenie Meyer. Barbara Hutzelman will lead the discussion. Cindy Belczyk is the coordinator for the group (814-873-5401 or BelczykCA@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 last Monday of the month at 7 PM and is chaired by Sharmin Khundker (814-490-2301 or sehersharmin@yahoo.com). The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 16 at Sharmin Khundker's home, located at 5976 Deerfield Dr. in Fairview. We look forward to enjoying a Thanksgiving potluck meal together.



Gourmet is an opportunity to experience the various menus of our local restaurants while dining with friends. Lets meet for lunch on Monday, Nov 23 at 11:30 AM at La Patrona restaurant at 3725 West Lake Road. The Gourmet Group chairwoman is Diane Wisniewski (814-602-9344 or at her email nanaddwiz@gmail.com).



Politalk is an unstructured discussion about domestic and international political events which leads to brainstorming about ways of coping with such events. This month Politalk will meet on Tuesday, November 17 at 1 PM. 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).

AAUW Erie Branch - Five Star Program Winner of Four Stars!

AAUW Erie Branch Earns Four Stars in FY26 Five-Star Program

The AAUW Erie Branch has earned four stars in AAUW's FY26 Five-Star Program, recognizing the branch's commitment to advancing AAUW's mission while building a strong, engaged, and sustainable presence in the Erie community.

Based on the FY26 Branch & Affiliate Annual Report, the Erie Branch received recognition in four areas:

- Public Policy & Advocacy
- Governance & Sustainability
- Programming
- Communications & External Relations

Each star represents meaningful work accomplished throughout the year. Public Policy & Advocacy recognizes the branch's commitment to civic engagement and advocacy on issues affecting women and girls. Governance & Sustainability reflects the leadership and organizational practices that support a strong and sustainable branch.

The Programming star recognizes the educational and community experiences that bring AAUW's mission to life. Communications & External Relations highlights efforts to keep members informed, strengthen community connections, and increase awareness of AAUW Erie and its work.

The recognition also comes during the first year of AAUW's expanded Branch & Affiliate Annual Report process. AAUW noted that participation in the new process helped provide a stronger understanding of the work taking place throughout its branch network and supported important organizational reporting efforts.

Most importantly, these four stars represent the collective efforts of AAUW Erie branch members. Every program attended, committee served, scholarship supported, advocacy effort completed, community partnership developed, and volunteer hour contributed helped make this recognition possible.

The individual contributions made throughout the year come together to tell a larger story about the strength and impact of AAUW Erie. This is the 2nd year in in a row that the Erie Branch has received 4 stars!!!

Congratulations to the entire AAUW Erie Branch on this four-star recognition and a successful FY26!



What are you grateful for?

- Family
- Friends
- Health
- Education
- Career
- AAUW
- .
- .

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5 Book Club 1-2:30 pm Springhill	6	7
8	9 AAUW Branch Mtg 6:30 pm Blasco Library	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Global Friends 7 pm Sharmin's	17 Politalk 1 pm Asuman's	18	19	20	21
22	23 Gourmet 11:30 am La Patrona	24	25	26 Thanksgiving Day	27	28
29	30					

AAUW

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.

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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

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*

JEFFERSON EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

Erie's Think Tank for Community Progress
Examine the Past. Study the Present. Explore the Future.
Visit us at www.JESerie.org. 3207 State Street, Erie, PA 16508

Become a Friend of the Library Today!



Membership levels and details are at: **erielibraryfriends .org**

friends of the erie county library

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