

ERIE PRESSIBLE December 2023

Annual Holiday Luncheon set at Kahkwa *Reservations are needed by Nov. 30*

Please plan to join your AAUW friends at our branch's annual holiday luncheon! The date is Saturday, Dec. 9, at the Kahkwa Club, 3300 Kahkwa Club Road. We will begin with a time to socialize at 11:30 a.m., followed by lunch at noon.



By tradition, members donate to the LAF (Legal Advocacy Fund) at the December luncheon. There will be an opportunity to do so this year also.

Our entertainment is being provided by pianist Jim Madden, husband of member Marilyn Livosky.

Mr. Madden has been teaching and performing music in and out of the Erie area for the last 25 years.

He has performed in all types of venues, including the Philharmonic Orchestra and chamber orchestras.

He has also been music director for many shows as well as choir director of ensembles and jazz big

bands. We look forward to enjoying his music!

Paid reservations of \$30 are due by Thursday, Nov. 30, to Barbara Hutzelman, 3226 Rustic Lane, Erie PA 16506 (check payable to AAUW-Erie Branch, Inc.)

Registration is also available via Stripe from the link on our web site, www.aauwerie.org. If using the website, please go to December Holiday Luncheon under Events and do not forget to click your meal choice.

Entrées

***Salmon with a Dill Cream Sauce
or
Beef Kabobs***

Accompaniments include Cranberry Walnut Salad with a maple mustard vinaigrette, Rice Pilaf, Asparagus, Rolls & Butter, Coffee or Tea, and Holiday Berry Crisp.

When paying online a \$1.20 Stripe surcharge (total cost \$31.20) will be billed to your credit card. Please indicate your choice of entrée.

Contact Barbara for special dietary requirements by phone at 814-881-7339 or email at barbhutz@yahoo.com. Valet parking and a cash bar will be available.

President's Message

Tech Savvy, a day-long hands-on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) career conference sponsored by AAUW Erie and offered to girls in sixth through ninth grades several years ago, will soon be taking a new form at a new location.

Offered from 2015 to 2018, Tech Savvy was funded through a variety of grants. AAUW National underwrote the first three years' expenses, and the final year was funded through grant dollars received from a variety of Erie area businesses.

Co-chairs for Tech Savvy were Beth Zewe (Edinboro University) and Corrine Egan (AAUW). The late Julie Lawrence (AAUW) was the Fundraising Coordinator who contacted the businesses. Edinboro University provided the site, and its faculty developed the curriculum. The presenters were faculty from local universities.

Since 2018, \$4,929.05 in unspent Tech Savvy dollars has been in the AAUW Erie budget. Since grant funds must always be spent for the stated purpose of the grant proposal, these funds could only be spent for a STEAM related project. The AAUW Erie Board formed a committee to investigate potential local STEAM projects. It found that the landscape has changed somewhat since 2018.

Many schools now imbed STEAM activities in the curriculum so that all students benefit. However, some schools in our area are unable to afford the equipment and faculty required for such an option, so Committee members explored the option of assisting a school which may lack the means to fund STEAM projects.

Julie Chacona, Chief Development Officer for United Way, presented that organization's Community Schools Model to AAUW Erie via a Zoom program last year. Since her presentation, AAUW members have been volunteering in various capacities at Harding Elementary and have been impressed with the Community School.

Shanna Potter, the Community School Director at Harding was contacted. Shanna developed a proposal for a six-week Science Explorers after-school program.

Science Explorers is a group from ExpERIENCE Children's Museum which would supply equipment and staff to offer hands-on activities for students. In addition, Shanna also proposed a family engagement activity, allowing parents and students to participate in STEAM activities together. The cost of Shanna's proposal was \$3,250.



Loretta Seigley

Cont. on P. 3



Gourmet sets holiday open house Dec. 17

Gourmet will meet for a Holiday Open House on Sunday, Dec. 17, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the home of Asuman Baskan, 3838 State St.

Please RSVP by Dec. 10 to abaskan@neo.com or call/text (814)282-8277.

BYOB and a hearty appetizer to share!

Email Correction

Please make note of the correct email for Marilyn Livosky.

The email address in the last *Pressible* is not correct. It should be mlivosky866@gmail.com

State Board posts merit consideration

Have you thought about serving on the Pennsylvania State Board of AAUW?

If you would consider doing so, it would help AAUW Erie more easily maintain relations with the rest of our state.

I am currently serving on the Selection Committee that is seeking nominations for the two-year term of 2024-2026. We are looking for PA State President, PA Program Vice President and Marketing and Communications Vice President for the state.

These three positions currently have officers who are eligible to serve two more years after their current 2-year term ends on June 30, 2024. And I'm encouraged to see that the three of them are considering serving a second term.

This is where you come in. It may seem daunting to jump right onto the State AAUW board. So the selection committee would like to know if you are interested in helping one of the existing officers. That way you'll be familiar with the operations at the state level and you won't feel like you're making such a gigantic leap if you do decide to move along to one of the elected board positions in the next term.

You will find all the board positions on the last page of the *Keystoner*. Here is the link to September 2023 issue: <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/files/2023/09/202309-September-Keystoner.pdf>

Please let me know which position you would like to assist with in the next two years. I will pass your name along to the committee.

Thank you,

Loretto Bellicini Membership VP-Elect

President's message

Con't. from P. 2

The Board voted to approve funding the project at Harding using the unspent Tech Savvy funds. The remaining \$1,679.05 remains in the AAUW Erie Branch budget to be spent on a future STEAM project.

Speaking of Harding School, we have a wonderful opportunity to share Seasons' Greetings with Harding students. You will find details about Shanna Potter's Holiday Project in this issue of the *Pressible*.

Wishing you all joy, peace, and love during this holiday season!

Gourmet to meet November 30

Gourmet will meet on Thursday, Nov. 30, at Firebird's in the Millcreek Mall at 5 p.m.

Please call, text or email Candy Brown before Nov. 25 if you plan to attend.

Branch members invited to support Harding Elementary Holiday Project

Shanna Potter, United Way Community School Director, Harding Elementary School, has shared details of the upcoming Holiday Project with AAUW members. Harding supplies each student with a gift box for the holidays regardless of need. You will find an online wish list below.

If you order items from the list, you can have them shipped directly to Harding School. If you choose, you can also purchase items and bring them to our Holiday Luncheon on Dec. 9. We will deliver them to Harding School (Shanna knows our gifts may be delivered after the Dec. 8 deadline) Thank you so much for your generosity!

Harding Elementary Holiday Project 2023

Thank you for your support as we come together as a Harding community to bring joy to our families this holiday season. This year, each student at our school will receive a small gift package with items to enjoy over the holiday break and throughout the season. Your contribution will help to ensure that each Harding student has a happy holiday season and knows how much the Erie community loves them.

❄️ Three Ways to Give ❄️

- 1. Monetary Donation:** A \$5 donation is all it takes to provide a gift bag for one student. Sponsor as many students as you would like!
Cash or checks can be directed to:
Harding Elementary School
Attention: Shanna Potter
820 Lincoln Avenue
Erie, PA 16505
- 2. Shop Online:** Shop online through our Amazon Wishlist and ship items directly to the school by selecting "Shanna Potter's Gift Registry Address" at checkout.
<https://bit.ly/hardingholidaylist> 
- 3. Shop Local:** Shop local for gift items at your favorite stores and drop off your items at the school.
Suggested Items:
 - **New** Paperback Books for ages 4-10
 - Hot Chocolate Packets
 - Play-doh

Deadline:

Please have all donations to Harding Elementary by **Friday December 8th.**

Project Contact:

For any questions or to arrange drop off of donations, contact:
Shanna Potter, Harding Elementary Community School Director
814-440-9734 or spottereeriesd.org

Public Policy Highlights

This information is taken from a report from Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director, Institutional Advancement, that I received in early November.

1. A calculation comparing all women with earnings last year (including part-time and seasonal workers) found women were paid a mere 78 percent of men's wages in 2022.

2. Two thirds of student loan debt is carried by women, and Black and Brown women take on the most debt, due to pay discrimination, systemic racism, and wealth gaps.

3. When you factor in the costs of housing, transportation and childcare, student debt makes it nearly impossible for many women to afford basic living expenses.

4. A typical STEM worker earns two-thirds more than those employed in other fields. Yet women make up only 34 percent of the STEM workforce.

5. According to a 2022 report by AAUW and the Eos Foundation, women comprise just 22 percent of the presidents of our nation's top universities and only 5 percent are women of color.

A good education is the cornerstone of future economic security. To thrive in school all children need to feel safe and supported in the school environment. Unfortunately, harassment and bullying continue to have a negative impact in elementary, middle, and high schools across our country.

Meghan Kissell, MSW, Senior Director, Policy and Member Advocacy reported that AAUW endorsed the Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act. This endorsement that has been introduced in the Safe Schools Improvement Act focuses on strategies to prevent harassment which will have a particular impact on students of color and LGBTQ+ students.

The bill would prohibit the use of federal funds to increase police presence in schools and instead provide \$5 billion in new grant funding to help schools hire more counselors, social workers, and other behavioral health personnel, and implement services in schools that create positive and safe climates for all students.

AAUW encourages its membership to contact your members of Congress and urge them to support the Safe Schools Improvement Act.

Ellen DiPlacido, Public Policy Chairperson



Members learn about Mercy Center programs

Jennie Haggerty, executive director for the Mercy Center for Women, (above) outlined the services provided by the Mercy Center for Women and the Mercy Anchor Center at the Branch's November meeting.

The nonprofit provides transitional housing and support services to homeless women and their children.

On an average day in Erie there are 334 children under 18 who need housing, she said.

Erie's homeless population has increased 35 percent over the last year, Haggerty said, adding that while the number one cause of homelessness is the high cost of housing, about 85 percent of residents have substance abuse issues.

The agency partners with numerous local agencies to meet its residents' various needs, Haggerty said, as it only provides housing. Residents may stay up to one year at Mercy Center and up to two at Mercy Anchor Center.

All available units are currently full, and it has a waiting list of 50.

Consider a Study/Interest Group in 2024

In addition to monthly branch meetings which are open to all members, we also offer study or interest groups for additional opportunities to learn and to get to know other members.

Most groups meet monthly, except for months in which holidays conflict with regularly scheduled times. Meeting dates and times are posted in the *Pressible* newsletter which is emailed (or mailed, by request) prior to the beginning of each month.

Any member can attend any study group at any time. One may become a "regular" and attend most of a study group's meetings throughout the year, or one might just attend a meeting for a study group occasionally. Reservations are not required unless the meeting includes a luncheon or dinner. If so, instructions for attending the meeting will be spelled out in the *Pressible*.

At this point in time, we have five study/interest groups:

Book club: The books that club will be reading and discussing this year will be included in this issue of the *Pressible*. This gives members an opportunity to read a book well in advance of a meeting. Reservations are only necessary for the holiday luncheon and end of year picnic.

Politalk: This group meets monthly to discuss national and international political issues.

Global Friends: Branch members are introduced to cultures around the world, and they are given the opportunities to develop friendships with those who have moved to America. Reservations are required for meetings that include a dinner.

Games for the Brain: Members meet to play games.

Gourmet: Members gather for a meal at a chosen restaurant, (usually) monthly, throughout the year. Reservations and the deadline for making a reservation are posted in the *Pressible*.

If anyone would like to start a new study group, please contact me. Study groups have changed over time depending on the interests of current members of our branch. I can be reached at (814) 873-0486, by phone or text.

Book club offers 2024 book list

Erie Branch's Book Club will discuss the following books in 2024. Members who don't normally go to Book Club reviews, but may be interested in the books to be discussed and want to check out the book club, are warmly welcome to attend.

Jan. 4 "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus

Feb. 1 "There is Nothing for You Here" by Fiona Hill

Mar. 7 "The Book of Two Ways" by Jodi Picoult

April 4 "Other Minds" by Peter Godfrey

May 2 "Mad Honey" by Jodi Picoult

Candy Brown, Study Group Chair

Branch Study Groups

Book Discussion

The AAUW book group will be celebrating the holidays with a luncheon at noon on Thursday, Dec. 7, at the Fairview Presbyterian Church in Fairview.

Group members will be providing soup, rolls, appetizers and finger foods. Anne Marie Kumhera will be leading the discussion about poetry. Members are looking forward to our annual festive event!

RSVP to Sarah Larson, 585-403-1366 or sarahellenlarson@gmail.com

Games for your Brain!

GAMES for the BRAIN

TBA

Global Friends

There will be no Global Friends meeting in December.

Gourmet

Gourmet will meet for a Holiday Open House on Sunday, Dec. 17, from 3-5 p.m. at the home of Asuman Baskan, 3838 State St. Please **RSVP by Dec. 10 to abaskan@neo.com or call/text (814) 282-8277.**

BYOB and a hearty appetizer to share!

Politalk

Politalk will meet on Thursday, Dec. 21, 2 - 4 p.m. at Asuman's house, 3838 State St.

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	4 Board mtg. 6:30 p.m. Zoom	5	6	7 Book Noon Fairview Presbyterian	8	9 Holiday lunch Kahkwa Club 11:30 a.m.
17 Gourmet 3-5 p.m. at Asuman's	11	12	13	14	15	16
	18	19	20	21 Politalk 2 p.m. at Asuman's	22	23
	25 Global Friends no meeting	26	27	28	29	30



Erie Branch ♦ Founded in 1902

P.O. Box 9264 Erie PA 16505

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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