

ERIE PRESSIBLE

September 2026

Welcome back to our first program of the 2026-2027 year for AAUW!
Join us at the Jefferson Educational Society on Monday, September 14th for
an open meeting. Feel free to bring or invite friends who might be interested.
Learn about the fight for women's right to vote in Pennsylvania.

Cosponsored by our friends at the League of Women Voters,
Friends of the Erie County Library, and Zonta Club of Erie.

AN EVENING WITH AMANDA OWEN

Executive Director of the
Justice Bell Foundation



JUSTICE BELL
FOUNDATION

www.justicebell.org



September 14, 2026



**Jefferson Education Society
3207 State St, Erie, PA**



6:30PM



**NEW
BOOK!**
Published
December
2025

Amanda Owen is coming to Erie to share the story of **women fighting for the right to vote** in Pennsylvania.

She will share a 19 minute documentary of the historical account of a band of intrepid women who traveled around Pennsylvania to gain support for their movement. Amanda will also recount how the bell became a national sensation during a months-long tour before fading from public memory, and why it remains one of the most significant surviving artifacts of the suffrage era.

She will then open up the program for a **Q&A**.



**Amanda will bring signed copies
available for purchase.**

President's Message

Hello Everyone,

I wanted to begin this new fiscal year by introducing myself to some and reintroducing myself to others. I am a July baby. I celebrated my birthday on the 21st this year, the same month the United States celebrated its 250th anniversary of independence in 2026.

I have been an AAUW member since 2022. I had the pleasure of being invited by Candy Brown to an arts and crafts Saturday session and met such lovely people that I kept coming back. I volunteered to be the Secretary of the Board and served in that role for two years, as the Scholarship committee chair for two years, and now I will be serving as your President. I am excited to serve not only our branch, but also to work on being a visible face in our community.

I have been married for 23 years, and we have three children. Two are college graduates living in other states, and our youngest will be entering the 10th grade at Fairview High School in the Fall. I have lived on three continents and love not only learning about new cultures but also embracing and understanding them as well. My favorite food is Indian cuisine and anything with a good hot spice! I enjoy traveling and try to schedule at least one international trip annually. I still have approximately 12 states left to visit in the USA, and my dream is to visit Israel. I paid for and scheduled a wonderful trip to Israel to explore the steps that Jesus took, but it was canceled due to the war. Prayerfully, I will be able to reschedule and maybe go with my son, who loves to travel.



Matasha Murrel Jones

I am a Lead Faculty member at a university, where I hire, mentor, and support faculty members and facilitate and develop online courses for our students. In addition, I am working on completing two additional master's degrees, one of which I hope will be completed this month, in Business Analytics. I enjoy the arts, crafts, martial arts, singing, playing the keyboard, working in my garden, writing, drawing, and painting. I love spending time with my family and being a homebody. I lean on the introvert side, so you will find me sitting or standing alone, just come and chat with me! I look forward to meeting you all!

It is my goal in our 2026–2027 year to build our AAUW community presence and support our younger female leaders in alignment with our vision for the future. Please share any and all ideas, concerns, and feedback. The more feedback and collaboration we have from our members, the more we can grow and be a strong presence in our community. I believe that it is important to listen to all perspectives, whether we agree or not. Every voice, every opinion is important. I prefer to agree to disagree because there will be many items of differing opinions, but the power is in finding common ground. I look forward to hearing and developing strong plans to support our branch for a sustainable future.

President's Message Continued...

There are so many significant accomplishments for women that occurred in the month of September. I wanted to share a few as we prepare for our September program.

- September 20, 1973: Tennis icon Billie Jean King defeated self-proclaimed male chauvinist Bobby Riggs in the televised "Battle of the Sexes" exhibition match, a major cultural victory for women in sports.
- September 25, 1981: Sandra Day O'Connor was sworn in as the first female justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.
- September 19, 1893: New Zealand became the first self-governing country in the world to grant women the parliamentary right to vote.
- September 12, 1910: Alice Stebbins Wells became the first policewoman in the United States to possess full arrest powers, serving with the Los Angeles Police Department.
- September 5, 1981: The Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp was established in Berkshire, England, initiating a historic, women-led anti-nuclear protest that lasted for nearly two decades.
- September 26, 1971: Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress, announced her historic entry into the Democratic presidential primaries.

I am excited about our upcoming program, an evening with Amanda Owens. This will be a great opportunity to explore the story of women fighting for the right to vote in Pennsylvania. This is an open meeting so please spread the word and bring a friend. Thank you to our Program Chairs, Soledad Traverso and Pat Benekos and the program committee for planning thoughtful programs for our upcoming year.

In Love, Collaboration and Community!
Matasha

*September's Program Continued...***Program Information — Pennsylvania Women and Their Fight for the Vote**

Join us for a **19-minute documentary**, Finding Justice: The Untold Story of Women's Fight for the Vote, **followed by a Q&A with Amanda Owen, the filmmaker and executive director of the Justice Bell Foundation**. Signed copies of Owen's new book, The Justice Bell: Tracing the Journey of a Forgotten Symbol, will be available for purchase. Learn about it and read reviews at: <https://www.justicebell.org/justicebellbook>

Documentary Description

Part present-day detective story and part a historical account of the movement for voting rights, **Finding Justice: The Untold Story of Women's Fight for the Vote** tells the story of a band of intrepid women and their one-ton bronze bell that became a celebrated icon of the women's suffrage movement. Learn more here: <https://www.justicebell.org/documentary>

Branch Study/Interest Groups

The scoop from the Study Group coordinator, Loretto Bellicini.

The Study Group program provides opportunities for members to connect with like-minded people on various issues. Each Study Group is managed by a facilitator. 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. There will be an opportunity to sign up for Study Groups at the September Branch meeting and your name will be on the contact list for the group.

Meeting times and places are listed in the AAUW Erie Yearbook, although sometimes changes become necessary in which case you will find updates in the monthly Pressible newsletters. Also, new groups can be organized by contacting the Study Group Coordinator.

At this time we have six study groups: Book Discussion, Food & Friends, Global Friends, Gourmet, and an afternoon Politalk and an evening Politalk.

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 every is invited to join the first session on **Thursday, September 3**.

The September book is ***The Justice Bell*** by Amanda Owen. 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. Plans for this year are currently being designed and will be published monthly in the Pressible.

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 sehersharmin@yahoo.com).

The September meeting will be **Monday, September 28th** at Edie Cultu's home, at **638 Vermont Ave.**

Study Groups Continued...

Gourmet is an opportunity to experience the various menus of our local restaurants while dining with friends. Members take turns contacting the restaurant and taking the reservations. Gourmet usually meets the **3rd Friday of the month at 6 PM**. Seasons and events may change the date and times of the meetings which will be noted in the Pressible.

Make a reservation with Diane for dinner at **6 PM Wednesday, September 23** at **Lucero** in the West Erie Plaza (940 West Erie Drive).

The Gourmet Study Group chair is Diane Wisniewski (814-602-9344 or 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. Politalk meets the **3rd Thursday** of the month at chair, Asuman Baskan's house 3838 State St.

- Daytime Politalk meets from **1-3 PM**.
- Evening Politalk meets from **6:30-8:30 PM**.

The September Politalk will be held **Thursday, September 17** at **1:00 PM** for the **daytime session** and **6:30 PM** for the **evening session**.

Please R.S.V.P. to Asuman (814-282-8277 or irrepressibleturk@gmail.com). Feel free to switch between afternoon and evening groups as they will meet on the same day.

Help Guide Our Mission: Become our Local AAUW National Funds Chair!

What does the National Funds Chair do?

You will help educate our local members on the massive impact of AAUW's National Funds, such as the *Greatest Needs Fund* and the *Defend Higher Education Fund*. The Funds Chair coordinates creative branch fundraising initiatives, tracks donations, and collaborates with our Finance Officer to ensure our contributions are promptly remitted to National.

Why volunteer?

While our historic local scholarships directly change lives right here in Erie County, our national funds tackle the structural, macro-level equity battles on Capitol Hill and college campuses nationwide. As Funds Chair, you ensure our branch has a powerful voice in both arenas!

No prior fundraising experience is required, just a passion for equity and a willingness to help our branch make history. AAUW provides complete leader toolkits, pre-made presentation resources, and mentoring from the state level to ensure your success. In addition, our goal is to assist with the creation of a committee to support you! If you are interested, contact Mata-sha MurrellJones.

Erie Gives 2026

Thank you to all who donated to AAUW and supported the Adella B. Woods Scholarship Fund which provides essential assistance to women in Erie County pursuing higher education. This cause helps drive our mission. We will share the results once all tallies are in.

Sharmin and Asuman represented our branch at the Erie Insurance table event on Erie Gives Day.



September 2026

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1	2	3 Book Club 1-2:30 pm Springhill	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11 9/11 Remembrance Day	12
13	14 Branch Meeting 6:30 pm Jefferson Ed. Society	15	16	17 Politalk 1:00 pm & 6:30 pm at Asuman's	18	19
20	21 1st Day of Fall	22	23 Gourmet 6 pm at Lucero	24	25	26
27	28 Global Friends 7 pm Edie's home	29	30			

AAUW Facebook updates

You may have noticed the re-activation of our external Facebook page, [AAUW Erie PA Branch](#). Why are we using this page in addition to our members and friends profile page [AAUW AAUW Erie](#)? The external page is effective for reaching a broad audience. Anyone can follow the page; they don't need approval as a "friend." The public-facing page will also be more visible in web searches, provide analytics, and support ads. This lets us widely advertise our two open meetings, Erie Gives, and scholarship opportunities. We will still use the members page [AAUW AAUW Erie](#) for updates on monthly meetings and other branch news. We will just have some duplicate posts on public-facing information for a while.

We do ask that members share information on open meetings, Erie Gives, and scholarships from our external page, AAUW Erie PA Branch. These will reach a wider audience than our members-only page.

Christy Rieger - Website Administrator

Sepideh Javadpour - Public Information Chair

PLEASE **LIKE** AND **FOLLOW** our local, state and national social media pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/AAUWEriePA/>

<https://www.facebook.com/AAUWPennsylvania>

<https://www.facebook.com/AAUW.National>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/aauw-pennsylvania>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/aauw/>

\$\$\$ Boscov's Coupon Fundraiser \$\$\$

Over the last couple of years our branch has successfully raised a significant amount of money using **Friends Helping Friends program at Boscov's**. The coupons save you up to 25% off of the lowest sale price of almost everything in the store on October 21st. The coupons are \$5 each to purchase.

Members can arrange to pick them up from Asuman or she can deliver them if you contact her (irrepressibleturk@gmail.com or 814-282-8277).

Please consider participating!



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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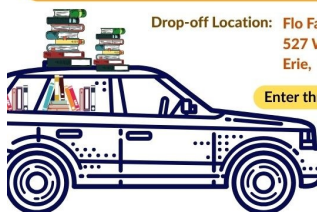
www.dusckasfuneralhomes.com

Fall Drive-Thru Book Drive

Saturday, September 26 - 10 am to 2 pm



ONLY Used Books, Audiobooks, Graphic Novels, CDs, DVD, Vinyl Records, Puzzles and Video Games accepted!



Drop-off Location: Flo Fabrizio Ice Arena
527 West 38th Street
Erie, PA 16509

Enter through Zoo Entrance

Please NO:

- Encyclopedias
- Reader's Digest
- Condensed Books
- Textbooks
- Magazines
- VHS or cassettes



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

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