

# AAUW TIMES

Elgin Area Branch

1920-2023

October / November 2023

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AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.



## Forum

### ELGIN CHILDREN IN POVERTY: FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH

Thursday, October 19, 6:30 p.m.

Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin

At WOTB's third public forum, keynote speaker Bernie May of the Family Service Association of Elgin will address the importance of mental health to children's overall well-being. Underscoring her message will be stories from local families. A panel of community experts will then discuss the mental health services available to children and the impact the pandemic has had on the pressing need for them. The program will end with a call to action: What can you do to help?

*AAUW-Elgin Area is an active member of WOTB.*

### OTHER OCTOBER EVENTS

- 4: **Current Movie Discussion Group**, 4:30 p.m.  
The Grumpy Goat, 975 Sports Way, Elgin  
*My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3*
- 12: **Great Books**, 7 p.m.  
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin  
*Beowulf*, trans. by Heaney or Headley
- 14: **Morning Book Group**, 9:30 a.m.  
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin  
*Demon Copperhead*, Barbara Kingsolver
- 18: **Elgin Image Awards**, 4:30-6:00 p.m.  
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin  
Linda Rock, our branch's nominee
- 19-21: **Central States AAUW Regional Conference**
- 25: **Evening Book Group**, 7 p.m.  
Hostess: Patty Golden  
*Fellowship Point*, Alice Elliot Dark
- 26: **Women in Culture**, 1 p.m.  
Zion Lutheran Church, Elgin  
LGBTQ Awareness



### ARTIFICIAL INTELLEGEENCE: THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Saturday, November 4, 1:00 p.m.

St. Hughes of Lincoln Episcopal Church

36W957 Highland Ave., Elgin

The son of our branch Co-Vice President Jane, David Watson has spent more than 30 years in the field of technology, often as a consultant. As a favor to his mother and a stroke of good luck for us, he is flying in from Seattle to walk us through the development, impact and potential of AI as it continues to reshape industry, society and human imagination.

*A Note from the Membership Committee: Please consider bringing prospective members to this program.*

### OTHER NOVEMBER EVENTS

- 1: **Current Movie Discussion Group**, 4:30 p.m.  
Place & Movie TBA
- 9: **Morning Book Group**, 9:30 a.m.  
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin  
*Speed of Dark: A Novel*, Patricia Ricketts
- 13: **Branch Board Meeting**, 6:30 p.m.  
Hostess: Cathy Malm
- 13: **Great Books**, 7:00 p.m.  
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin  
*Frankenstein*, Mary Shelly
- 15: **Evening Book Group**, 7:00 p.m.  
Hostess: Cindy Maldonado  
*The Marriage Portrait*, Maggie O'Farrell
- 25: **International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**

## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

We were delighted to see so many of you at our September luncheon. Thank you to Judi Tepe and Jane Watson for organizing it and to our Board members for providing so many delicious salads and desserts.

Adding to this gathering was our guest speaker, IL State Representative from District 66 Suzanne Ness, who answered questions from our members about issues before the legislature. As many of them dealt with education, she spoke at length about the expenditures that had been made in support of public education. She also noted her opposition to a bill that would greatly expand the ways in which charter schools have access to locally appropriated school funding. We are also pleased that she has organized the women in the state legislature to work together to encourage more women to run for office.

Because it occurred after the September newsletter was issued, detailed in this one is Women and Culture's exchange with the Schaumburg branch in late August. Many thanks to all involved in making it happen.

Productive, too, was our August 28th Board meeting. First, we devised a plan that will create a well-rounded Nominating Committee for 2024: each interest group will provide one person for it. Rita Shaw has already volunteered to represent the Current Movie Discussion Group. Other interest groups need to inform Jane Watson of their volunteers ASAP, please.

Also resulting from a discussion at this meeting was the formation of a Technology Committee to address our need for a new webmaster to succeed Marcia Cameron and Nancy Lamia, to revive our Facebook page and to establish a Master List of email addresses and passwords to facilitate transition of leadership.

We then voted unanimously to include a one-year student membership in AAUW gratis with every scholarship awarded. (As a student would only be charged \$18.50 for it, we made it retroactive to include our 2023 recipients.)

Last but by no means least, thank you to Ruth Bradburn, Cathy Malm and Bonnie Hill, who worked overtime this summer to grow our membership to 96. And kudos to Marti Jernberg, who once again single handedly produced our yearbook, a valuable resource for all members.

As you've seen from the write-ups about them on page 1, meaningful programs are scheduled for October and November. We hope to see you at them and encourage you to bring prospective members with you.

—Linda and Brooke

## AT OUR SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON

photos courtesy of Jennifer Ford



*Socializing before the luncheon*



*Our co-presidents with State Rep. Suzanne Ness, who, when she spoke, had the full attention of our members, some of whom are pictured below*



*And of course the food, glorious food*

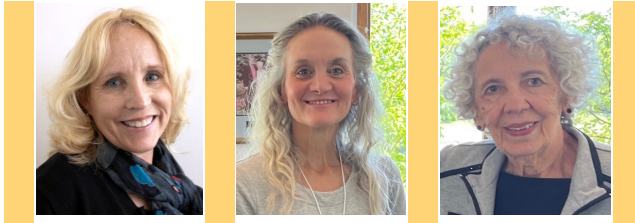




## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

from Cathy Malm

Thanks to all who rejoined our branch and nine new women, our membership roster now numbers 96 and is the third largest in the state. Getting to know each other and sharing our interests is, of course, key to maintaining our membership, which is the reason we publish biographical introductions of our new members. Some were included in the September issue; others will be in the December/January one. For this issue we're introducing you to the following:



Julia

Beth

Elaine

**Julia McClenden** received her B.S. and M.S. degrees from Iowa State University and began her career working with a migrant population in Minnesota. Next she coordinated the work of another area's social service agencies to provide seamless services to the homeless. Since 2002 she has served as the Executive Director of YWCA Elgin, which since 1906 has worked to improve the lives of women and children. Firmly believing that education, training and continued involvement is necessary to empower them, it is not surprising that Julia has long been a member of AAUW national. Given her contributions to our community, we're proud to finally have her as a member of our branch.

**Beth Small** graduated with a B.A. from Aurora U. and eventually got an M.A. in the Art of Pastoral Studies from Loyola U-Chicago. She then taught English as a Second Language classes at ECC for over 25 years and has just retired from District U-46, where for over the past 20 years she taught 6th grade, 8th grade and freshman, junior and senior English. She and her husband Jon, who have two adult children and three young grandchildren, have been married for over 40 years and enjoy traveling. Recently they visited Scotland, France and Italy; in 2024 Costa Rica is on their agenda. Beth also loves to do yoga and counter-cross stitch as well as to read, paint, draw, cook/bake & walk/run. *Editor's Note: And she also finds time to serve as a house captain for the Historic Elgin House Tour.*

**Elaine Kadakia's** write up was in the Sept. newsletter. Thanks to luncheon photographer Jennifer Ford, we now have a photo of this former AAUW-Springfield member who has turned to sculpture to celebrate women.

## WOMEN AND CULTURE

from Jennifer Ford

In June, Rosemary Dyson, Mary Navin and I met with Schaumburg branch members Peg Gallagher and Lynn Priebe to share experiences and exchange ideas. Subsequently we extended an invitation to all in their branch to join Women and Culture members at an Aug. 21st garden party. To be held at Sue Schulz's, wine, cheese and desserts were on the menu; a musical interlude by harpist Taylor Headley, one of our 2023 scholarship recipients, was to be featured.

Mother Nature, however, intervened: a very humid 100°. So no outdoor setting, no harp. Saving the day was Mary Navin, who offered her house, and Gareth Sitz, who read a poem, then led us in song to "There's Something About the Women." And in lieu of a garden, a lovely summer bouquet graced Mary's coffee table. *(Editor: Provided by Jennifer; it was taken home by Lynn Priebe, whose name was drawn from the "hat.")*

The energy in Mary's house was electric as 23 women, eight of whom were from Schaumburg, mingled and chatted, laughed and ate. What fun! And what a great introduction to our branch for new member Renee Skrabcz and Gareth's guest Kim Lian Pham.

In the more structured part of the evening, we reviewed our programs planned for 2023-24. We also emphasized not only the cost-savings' advantage of working with other groups but also the increased public exposure and larger attendance that result. In turn Schaumburg members noted their partnership with their public library to hold a series of programs on civics and occasionally author talks. And of course we exchanged information about our book groups. Schaumburg also described their autumn and spring flower sales as fund raisers most successful.



Though with approximately 16 active members theirs is a much smaller branch than ours and our communities quite different, all agreed that we had learned much from each other and had a good time doing so. On the way out, I heard one of the visitors say, "We should do this again." YES! ABSOLUTELY!

*Note: Our two branches are co-sponsoring the program "Challenges to Intellectual Freedom: It's More than Book Banning" in April of 2024.*

# International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

from Barbara Evans

On November 25, 1960, three Mirabal sisters were assassinated on order of Rafael Trujillo, the Dominican Republic dictator whose rule they actively opposed. Since 1981, Latin American activists have observed this as a day to raise public awareness about gender violence. However, it wasn't 2000—after the sisters' story was told in Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies* (1994) and a film made of it—that the United Nations designated November 25th as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Unofficially, "and Girls" is added to this title.

Calling this gender-based violence "one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights' violations in the world," UN Women launched UNITE, calling on "governments, civil society, women's organizations, young people, the private sector, media and the UN system to join forces to address [it]."

In the news most recently is the push of Greek activists to deal with its "conservative macho culture that has long excused gender-related killings perpetrated by an intimate partner or family member." Dismissing the arguments that murder is already against the law and that in 2020 Greek police began registering crimes of domestic violence, these activists want femicide to be a legally described crime in the penal code, for it also includes murder by someone unknown to the victim, such as can be the case in rape and gender-related hate crimes. For a detailed article about this, see <https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/femicide-victims-families-are-struggling-for-recognition-in-greece>

If Greek activists succeed, their country will join a mere 17 others (mostly in Latin America) in which femicide—the most extreme form of violence against women/girls—is specifically against the law and accurate data about it is on the record.

For UN Women's November 2022 detailed report on other forms of violence against women/girls, their extent and their consequences, see <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

For an illuminating explanation of why violence against women/girls has become so prominent world-wide, go to Amazon.com's listing for Jacqueline Rose's *On Violence and On Violence Against Women* (2021). Under the photo of its cover is "Read Sample," which is Rose's detailed introduction to her book.

## HEADING TO JUPITER'S MOON EUROPA from Barbara Evans

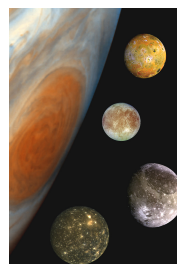
Although NASA's Europa Clipper is not scheduled to lift off on its 1.8 billion mile journey to Jupiter's orbit until October of next year, **you only have until Dec. 31 of this year to have your name implanted in a microchip that will be aboard this spacecraft.** This you can do by clicking on "Send Your Name" at <https://europa.nasa.gov>

This news item caught my attention because engraved on the spacecraft itself will be U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón's "In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa," a copy of which can be found at "Send Your Name."

If you wish to hear Limón reading it, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgWbeDNPd6o>

If you are interested in her thoughts about it, see an interview with her at [www.npr.org/transcripts/1179612115](http://www.npr.org/transcripts/1179612115)

In brief, the Europa Clipper, which is not scheduled to reach its destination until 2030, will spend several years investigating whether the ocean thought to lie beneath the icy surface of Jupiter's moon Europa could support life. At the NASA site noted above are links to detailed information about the mission.



Edging Jupiter are its 4 largest moons, with Europa at the top.



Ada Limón

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The Elgin Area branch of AAUW was organized in 1920 with 40 charter members.

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

AAUW is open to all graduates who hold an associate or baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university. An undergraduate student enrolled in a regionally accredited educational institution shall be eligible for student affiliation.

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