

AAUW TIMES

Elgin Area Branch

Established in 1920

December 2024 - January 2025

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



Saturday, December 21, 2024, 11:30 a.m.
Elgin Country Club, 2575 Weld Road

Branches that lunch together stay together, so plan to join our annual December gathering to celebrate our common bonds as we dine in style at one of our favorite venues and are entertained with a selection of piano music.

Because to offer more than one entrée selection would result in an additional \$3 charge for every person attending, we have opted to go with a fixed menu with chicken piccata. The cost of the meal, gratuity and tax will be \$35 per person. Please send your checks, made payable to AAUW Elgin Branch, to Jane Watson by Tuesday, December 10.

Our holiday charity will again be Food for Greater Elgin. If you choose to contribute by a check made payable to it, you may also send it to Jane or bring it (or cash) to the luncheon.

OTHER DECEMBER EVENTS

- 4: AAUW Silicone Valley Webinar**, 6 p.m. CST
- 4: Current Movie Discussion Group**, 4:30 p.m.
The Grumpy Goat, Elgin
Wicked (in theaters Nov. 22)
- 5: Brainstorming on Fundraising**, 10 a.m.
Briana's Pancake House, Elgin
- 6: Women and Culture**, 1:30 p.m.
Planning Committee Meeting (all welcome)
Hostess: Rachel Campbell
- 12: Morning Book Group**, 9:30 a.m.
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin
The Covenant of Water, Abraham Verghese
- 18: Evening Book Group**, 7 p.m.
Hostess: Mary Navin
Table for Two: Fictions, Amor Towles



Saturday, January 11, 2025, 1:00 p.m.
ECC's Spartan Auditorium (G100)
1700 Spartan Drive, Elgin

elgin.edu/about/campus-visitor-information/campus-map

This is a program you do not want to miss, for in the first part of her presentation, **Renee Skrabacz**—our branch's STEM chair and the Associate Dean of Math, Science and Engineering at ECC—will highlight the challenges and triumphs she has experienced as a woman in science as well as explain how they have shaped her career.

In the second part, Renee—who received her Masters in Medical Microbiology and Immunology—will explain how biological, hormonal and immune system differences contribute to varying disease outcomes between the sexes. She will also present current research on whether viruses, such as influenza and coronavirus, affect men and women differently.

OTHER JANUARY EVENTS

- 9: Morning Book Group**, 9:30 a.m.
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin
Tom Lake: A Novel, Ann Patchett
- 13: Great Books**, 7 p.m.
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin + Zoom
The Master and Margarita, M. Bulgakov
- 13: Branch Board Meeting**, 6:30 p.m.
Hostess: Mary Navin
- 20: Needlework Group**, 1 p.m.
Hostess: Patty Harkin
- 22: Evening Book Group**, 7 p.m.
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin
Unfinished Love Story, Doris Kerns Goodwin
- 23: Women in Culture**, 1:30 p.m.
Place/Program TBA

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from Judi Tepe

Jennifer and I attended an informative Fall Conference. We heard an excellent speaker, Dr. Nolan Higdon, from the University of California, San Cruz. He explored the critical intersections of fake news, disinformation, artificial intelligence (AI), and electoral politics. It was interesting to see how easy it is to create images to tell the story you want told, whether it's true or not.

AAUW 5 Star Branch Survey for 2023-2024FY was completed and sent to National. It will be interesting to learn how our sister branches feel about vying for 5 Star status.

A grateful shout-out and appreciation to Carol Weig and Vivenne Bailey for their fabulous Trash to Treasure auction and fund raiser on Saturday, November 16. We collected \$620.50, which will give us a nice cushion to start our scholarship fund for the next year. In addition, our speaker Robin Migalla donated \$50.00 as well as gave us food for thought on ways to become more environmentally conscious. The yummy treats and excellent treasures we could bid on made for a delightful afternoon.

As always, please remember to let our newsletter editor Barbara Evans know that she does a fabulous job with our branch bulletin. We appreciate her!

AAUW Silicon Valley is hosting a webinar at 6 p.m. CST on Wednesday, December 4th. Featured will be AAUW Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy Megan Kissell, who will talk about ways our association will be moving forward in light of the recent national election. You can register for it at <https://siliconvalley-ca.aauw.net>. If you plan to attend, please inform Sue Schulz, for she is willing to organize a brainstorming session afterwards to discuss what was learned and what realistic actions our branch can take.

As we look forward to our December 21st Holiday Luncheon, Jennifer and I want to send a special and well-deserved thank you to our own party planner extraordinaire, Jane Watson. Jane makes every holiday memorable, and this year promises to be no exception.

We also wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

At Elgin's Centro de Información's fundraising gala, Executive Director Dianha Ortega-Ehreth thanked our nine branch members who attended for AAUW Elgin Area's support.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

from Cathy Malm

Our branch now numbers 95, which includes two student associates. While that is a healthy number, any promoting you can do to increase it will be appreciated.

Also please welcome new member **Nancy Rascher**, who wrote, "I went to Elgin High and then on to Lawrence College and then Iowa State University, where I graduated with a BS in Sociology.....worked at Marshall Field's for a year at Old Orchard and then moved to Albuquerque where I went to UNM, got married and taught second grade for five years. Moved to San Francisco and began rearing two boys. Moved to France in 1971, then London and Zurich.....moved on to Frankfurt, Germany and started teaching basic skills to US soldiers there.....then got a position running a US Army child care program in Darmstadt, Nuremberg and NATO hdqts in Brussels. Retired in 2002 and returned to Elgin. I am so happy to have made great friends here and enjoy participating in some local organizations."

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

from Linda Youngren

Some of our AAUW Elgin Branch members recently attended two meetings: the Women and Culture discussion on Project 2025 and the post-election wine and cheese party. These gatherings stimulated conversation about what we as AAUW members should be doing to advance gender equity and economic security for women in light of the threats posed by the new administration.

As our AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell wrote on the day after the election, *The election results are extremely sobering, especially on the heels of a hyper-partisan, gridlocked Congress. AAUW is committed to holding all elected officials accountable about women's rights, bodily autonomy, and access to education and economic opportunity, particularly for women of color...This electoral outcome means AAUW will double-down in its preparation for the Trump administration and Congress.*

Subsequently, at its November 11th meeting, our AAUW Elgin Board voted unanimously to re-activate our Public Policy Committee to explore how we might be educated activists in support of AAUW's mission. If you are interested in serving as chairperson or as a member of this committee, please contact Jennifer Ford.

THE PEOPLE'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Organized by leading civil rights, racial justice and reproductive health organizations, plans are underway for a massive rally scheduled for January 18th, two days before Donald Trump's inauguration.

THE "F" WORD

from Carol Wieg

Yes, this is an article on the "F" word—however, not *that* "F" word! And now, that I have your attention.....

The "F" word I'm speaking about is FUNDRAISING. Note that the word begins with "fun". And believe it or not, fundraising can be fun! However, by our own collective choice, we have not held any fundraising events to replenish the operating budget of our chapter's treasury in the last several years. In fact, for this year, we will be taking money from our savings in order to continue the tradition of fully funding the two name grants that we award to our members at the end-of-the year banquet.

Therefore, we will be holding a brainstorming session on Thursday, December 5, at 10 a.m. at Brianna's Pancake House at 1568 Larkin Avenue in Elgin to discuss ways that we can replenish our operating budget without dipping into our savings. Come and have some breakfast while thinking of creative ways to fundraise. Vivienne Bailey and I will facilitate the discussion, and all ideas are welcome. See you then.

If you have ideas but can't make our December 5th session, please email them to me in advance

CURRENT MOVIE DISCUSSION GROUP

from Peggie Caughlin

Wicked, the movie we have chosen for discussion on December 4th, will not be in the theaters until November 22, which gives us but a little time to see it. But I hope many will because it received rave reviews after its Los Angeles' premier in early November.

Rotten Tomatoes' plot summary: "Misunderstood because of her green skin, a young woman named Elphaba forges an unlikely but profound friendship with Glinda, a student with an unflinching desire for popularity. Following an encounter with the Wizard of Oz, their relationship soon reaches a crossroad as their lives begin to take very different paths."

Note: Because our January 2025 meeting date is New Year's Day, we will not meet this month.

Note: To adhere to AAUW-IL's three megabyte limit on newsletters, nine photos (11 MBs' worth) that were in the one sent out to members have been omitted on this website edition.

AAUW-Elgin Area publishes the following issues of *The AAUW Times*: September; October/November; December/January; February/March; April/May; and June/July/August.

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.

AAUW's Value Promise

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

AAUW's Educational Foundation

AAUW provides funds to advance education, research and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive social change.

AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund

AAUW invests in activities that prevent and combat sex discrimination and promote gender equity through support of litigation and educational programs.
