

JANUARY MEETING

When: Saturday, Jan 9th, 10 am

Where: The comfort of your home!

1) SYKM, not a mystery!

Presenter: Sandy Seacrest,
Branch Member

SYKM is an award winning mystery website (Stop, You're Killing Me!). It indexes over 5,200 authors and 6,200 mystery series. Can't remember who wrote the Molly Malone mysteries? Just use the character index. Want to find out what other books a favorite author has written? Use the author index and sometimes discover she writes under five different names. There are indices for locations, jobs, time periods, diversity, and mystery genres. Whether you want cozy cat mysteries or gritty police procedurals, they are all sorted by author. There is also information on newly published books, award winning books, book reviews, etc.



2) The Creative Process: What Is It And How To Foster It.

Presenter: Jan Eriksen,
Branch Member



Creative thinking is the search for something new. We can all be creative thinkers and problem-solvers; an awareness of the creative process helps.

The four stages of the process are: 1) Preparation, information gathering and analysis; 2) Incubation, letting the mind work to continue the process subconsciously; 3) Illumination, inspiration, which can come when the person is not necessarily thinking about the problem but is in a relaxed frame of mind; and 4) Verification, testing ideas or a solution for applicability. This has happened to nearly all of us without us being fully aware of it: we've researched and thought about a problem or situation and then put it aside temporarily. Later, when perhaps taking a walk or falling asleep at night, an idea or solution comes to us. That's the creative process at work.



The Current

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

We Are They

by Ann Brice, AAUW-La Crosse Branch President

When I was in graduate school, I took a year-long course focused on public policy and how it affects social justice issues. Every time we met, my professor Darnell Bradley would say "We are They." He meant we can fret and complain what "they" are doing, but in reality, we are the ones who need to make change happen. The events of 2020 have made me reflect repeatedly on this concept. In this year alone, 220 Black people were shot and killed by police, according to the Washington Post. The COVID-19 pandemic has shined a spotlight on disparities in healthcare, compensation, housing and food disparity. Even worse, these disparities, combined with the overall lack of and scorn for education in our country, have caused deep division among our citizens.

Quite a few times this year, I've been tempted to feel hopeless about the problems we share in the United States. But then I remember Dr. Bradley's words "We are They." I remember that I can write and call my legislators about issues that are important

to me, and you can do this too! If you are shy about calling (like me) or unsure of what to write (also like me), you can find sample scripts and letters and use them as a starting point. I've found it helpful to familiarize myself with the background of the issue before I make the call or write the letter.



I also try to model behaviors that I want

to see in our own country. On December 17th, David Brooks wrote an opinion piece for the New York Times in which he spoke about his long-time co-correspondent Mark Shields. He said "[Mark] comes from a generation that highly

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NEXT BOARD MEETING

Virtual Meeting
Tuesday, January 5
6:00 p.m

Meetings are open to any member who is interested in attending.

Contact Ann at: 780-5026 or
bricea@westerntc.edu

to place items on the agenda and for the Zoom link to the meeting.

We Are They... (continued from page 1)

prized egalitarian manners: "I'm no better than anyone else and nobody is better than me." I too, try to embody that idea. Every semester, I tell my new students about President George H. W. Bush calling for a "kinder, gentler nation" in his 1988 acceptance speech for the Republican Party's nomination. Every semester, I see their eyes rolling when I follow that up with, "Being kind and gentle is a GOOD THING." But I hope that they remember these words, even if it is not until sometime in the future.

I'm looking forward to working together with you in the coming year as we remember that "We are They" and we can change things for the better.

Work Smart & Start Smart: Salary Negotiations

Most of you have already seen articles that the AAUW national office has developed Start Smart workshops for college women; and Work Smart online for women in the workforce to improve their economic security. Now that you have some extra time at home, this would be a great opportunity to actually take one or both of the courses!



It's free, takes less than 2 hours, can be done at your own pace, and will be a great resource for you to share with friends and family members, including granddaughters (and grandsons!). While it's true that you might not need the information for yourself, becoming familiar with how it works and the content will help you share it with others.

176,000 people have already taken the workshop!
Unless things change, the pay gap will not close til 2106 (that's 85 years).
Take the online course now: aauw.org/resources/programs/salary/

Membership News

by Marilyn Hempstead, Chair

Address Change

Grace Nicholson-Maly is happily settled in a new apartment.
Her address is:
1631 Sandlake Rd. #107
Onalaska, WI 54650

New Year's Wish



Here's hoping that you, our members, are doing well. It is good to see each other on the Zoom meetings, but it will be even better when we can greet in person.

NAME GRANTS 2020-2021

It's not too early to begin thinking about nominees for the 2020-2021 AAUW La Crosse Branch Name Grant(s). A nominee should have provided service to the branch and cannot have received the honor previously. For a list of past recipients, dating back to 1960, please see the end pages of your membership directory.

Please call or email Jan Eriksen, Name Grant Chair (jperiksen@viterbo.edu), with your nominee's name and brief information about her or him by the deadline of March 20.

A small committee of past Name Grant awardees will select the winner(s) for 2020-2021 and a donation will be sent to AAUW national in their honor. Winners will be announced at the April 10 branch meeting.

SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS COMMITTEE (SGC)

by Robert Richardson, Co-Chair

The committee gets quite active in February when we begin application reviews.



And, we need YOU to nominate a woman 30 years of age and older who could benefit from AAUW support at any level of education. YOU would need to write a letter of support; the letter can be short and to the point or long and to the point. In Karen Wilson's name, I invite YOU to nominate a deserving individual. YOU or your nominee can download the application from our AAUW-La Crosse Branch website.

Nomination/application forms are available on our website:
www.aauwlacrosse.org

SANE: New Study Group

By Ann Brice, Branch President



Are you interested in examining issues facing women, girls, our nation, and our world? Join me on one of two introductory sessions to talk about what a SANE group could be like.

SANE stands for Salient and Newsworthy Events. In the last few years, I've been wondering about how we can address issues that are negatively affecting how we live and work together. We could read books, watch documentaries, attend seminars, and strategize ways to make our community and world better. Thank you to the members who have already reached out to indicate their interest in getting together to contemplate, learn, and act.

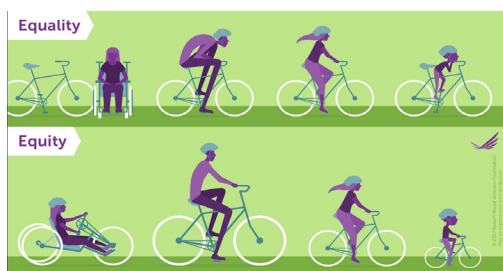
Please join me on January 12th at 1 p.m. or January 14th at 10 a.m. via Zoom. You can fill out this Doodle poll with your session of choice: https://doodle.com/poll/bq5diazbeii44rz5?utm_source=poll&utm_medium=link

I will then send you a Zoom link for the meeting. You can also email me your choice at annbrice@bricecohey.com.

Equity vs. Equality

What is the difference between Equity and Equality? There is a common misconception that equity and equality mean the same thing — and that they can be used interchangeably, especially when talking about education. But the truth is they do not — and cannot.

Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome. This graphic helps to understand it better:



Read more about this topic [HERE](#).

Study Group News

AAUW IN ACTION (AIA)

See this page for meeting info
Contact: Erica Koonmen, 366-1509

HEARTH & HOME

See below for meeting info
Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS

3rd Tuesday of the month at 2pm
Contact: Alice Ross, 788-4206

SCHOLARSHIP BRIDGE/CARD GAMES

TBA; Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

AAUW IN ACTION

AAUW in Action is a study group that serves as a springboard for community service activities for our branch that promote AAUW's mission.

If you are interested in joining us for a meeting, or just knowing what we're planning, please ask to be on our email list by sending an email to Erica at moogs56@hotmail.com

Next meeting: Email meeting on Tues, January 12, 2021.

A Zoom meeting to talk about how the **International Women's Day event in March** could look this year will be on Monday, January 11th at 1:00pm. If you would like to join us, please email Erica for the link. We are looking for someone willing to take over the chair position. There is an active committee with representatives from 10 local organizations who are involved!

Lois Gilbert, who has been writing the Women's History Month daily blurbs for the La Crosse Tribune these past 5-6 years, is not able to do it this year. Is anyone interested in taking on this project? It's all done from home via computer. The theme this year is "Valiant Women of the Vote: Refusing to Be Silenced." Please contact Erica if you'd like more information.

HEARTH & HOME

Hearth & Home study group meets monthly to explore new ideas, culinary experiences, fun activities and our area through visits to local businesses or in-home happenings.

Currently on hiatus, the group is looking for ideas and at ways to do activities. Please contact Sharon at sharon.decicco@gmail.com for more information.

Public Policy

by Ann Brice, Public Policy Chair



Our justice system lost another icon this year when Shirley Abrahamson, Wisconsin's longest-serving Supreme Court Justice died on December 19 at age 87. Abrahamson's passing follows Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg's death on September 18th. The losses of Ginsberg and Abrahamson are especially painful in this year of tumult.

Women like Ginsberg and Abrahamson serve to inspire women and girls to strive for positions of power in the United States. However, even though women make up 51% of the nation's population, they still make up fewer than a third of the country's elected leaders. Hopefully, following the historic election of Vice President Elect Harris, more women will be encouraged to get involved in politics.

In 1933, Frances Perkins became the first woman and first LGBT person to hold a United States Cabinet position. She was appointed by President Franklin Roosevelt to serve as the Secretary of Labor, and she retained this position until 1945. According to data provided by the United States House of Representatives, only eight other women have served as Cabinet members since that time. If all of President-Elect Biden's cabinet picks are confirmed, this Cabinet will have a record-breaking number of women, including the first Native American Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland.



AAUW continues to strive for equity for women. This year, our national branch is focusing on economic security, and women in STEM fields. Our state Public Policy committee is in the process of prioritizing a variety of topics ranging from Fair Maps to down ballot races to investigating support for caregivers.

<https://sheshouldrun.org/>

<https://cawp.rutgers.edu/facts/milestones-for-women>

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/a-record-breaking-number-of-women-will-be-in-bidens-cabinet/>

<https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/WIC/Historical-Data/Women-Members-Who-Became-Cabinet-Members-and-United-States-Diplomats/>

AAUW State Convention 2021

by Jan Eriksen, Convention Committee

The AAUW Wisconsin 2021 Convention committee continues to meet monthly via Zoom to plan what promises to be an outstanding conference. As a reminder, the dates are Friday evening, April 23 and Saturday, April 24. There will be no charge for the convention, but participants must register for it online and can come and go as they wish.

Featured speaker for the conference is Shelia Stubbs, a member of the Wisconsin State Assembly representing the 77th district (Madison). She will address her own activism and pursuit of racial equity. Also included will be break-out sessions on a variety of topics plus an opportunity to connect, via small chat rooms, with longtime and new AAUW colleagues.

The event will introduce the state organization's first virtual auction to take the place of the customary live silent auctions usually occurring at annual AAUW-WI conventions. Another fundraiser will be the option for convention participants to donate \$10 or more and receive an attractive AAUW Wisconsin commemorative suffrage pin (designed by Tegan Jerde-Koonmen) in gratitude for the contribution. Money raised will be used to cover convention expenses, as needed, with the remainder going as a donation to AAUW Wisconsin.



Explore Where Women Made History

In 2020, the United States commemorated the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote, providing an important opportunity to celebrate the place of women in American history. While history, of course, is complicated, and voting rights for many women continued to be denied because of discriminatory practices, the National Trust for Historic Preservation wants to tell the full history—to uncover and uplift women across the centuries whose vision, passion, and determination have shaped the country we are today.

When the Trust started the "Where Women Made History" campaign in January 2020, the initial goal was to discover 1,000 places connected to women's history. They reached that milestone on none other than Women's Equality Day (August 26, 2020) ... and now want to keep going!

Let them know: What places have you encountered where women made history? They can be famous or unknown, protected or threatened, existing or lost. No matter their condition or status, these places matter, and you're encouraged to share them with the world.

Send a photograph and a short description of a place where a woman made history by clicking "[Submit Your Entry](#)" and filling out the form.

Visit <https://savingplaces.org/womens-history> to read about places already listed.

FROM THE TREASURER

Michele Strange

Financial Report as of December 28, 2020

Checking Account..... \$9,441.96

CDsnone at this time

Scholarship Bridge..... \$321.00

Impact of Covid-19 on Gender Equality

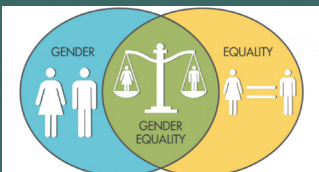
From The National Bureau of Economic Research

“Compared to “regular” recessions, which affect men’s employment more severely than women’s employment, [the pandemic] employment drop has a large impact on ... female employment ... In addition, closures of schools and daycare centers have massively increased child care needs, which has a particularly large impact on working mothers.

The effects of the crisis on working mothers are likely to be persistent...[and] there are opposing forces which may ultimately promote gender equality in the labor market.

First, businesses are rapidly adopting flexible work arrangements, which are likely to persist. Second, there are also many fathers who now have to take primary responsibility for child care, which may erode social norms that currently lead to a lopsided distribution of the division of labor in house work and child care.”

Read the full paper [HERE](#)



NCCWSL Scholarship Opportunity

By Robert Richardson



- National Conference for College Women Student Leaders
- Three days of leadership training, inspiration, and networking.
- May 26-29, 2021, College Park Maryland

To learn more about the conference: www.nccwsl.org or www.aauw.org.

February 16, 2021: Early-Bird Registration and National Scholarship Application Closes

- Last day to register with fully refundable registration.
- Early-bird registrations must be paid in full by February 21, 2021, at 11:59 p.m. ET
- Last day to apply for our national scholarship
- Accepted applicants will be registered by AAUW staff and declined applicants will be eligible to register at the early-bird rate.

Eligible nominees must be currently enrolled in a program leading to an Associate degree, Bachelor’s degree, or Master’s degree at a technical college or two- or four- year public or private college. Candidates must be nominated by an AAUW Branch with a limit of one nominee per Branch. Each year National AAUW awards over 100 full and partial scholarships to the conference. Full scholarships cover regular residential or commuter registration as well as scheduled meals.

Our AAUW- Wisconsin state board will offer two \$500 scholarships for students to attend NCCWSL in May 2021, but only if the conference is held virtually. We want to support our future leaders, but it must be done safely. The winner will be notified and payment sent as soon as possible, to ensure a space at the conference.

For more info and an application, please visit our website: www.aauwlacrosse.org

LWV of La Crosse invitation



January Lunch & Learn

When: Tuesday, January 12; 11:30 AM - 1 PM

Program: Democracy Found: Nonpartisan Political Innovation in Wisconsin

Presenter: Sara Eskrich, Executive Director of Democracy Found

Many Americans are horrified about the dysfunction and abysmal results from Washington, D.C., but feel hopeless and disengaged. Democracy Found takes a unique approach—using the Gehl Porter Politics Industry Theory, which applies traditional tools of business analysis to politics.

This presentation raises awareness of the underlying analysis and provides a nonpartisan call to action in Wisconsin, for the sake of our democracy. The talk is about politics, but it is not political.

Democracy Found is a Wisconsin-based initiative committed to revitalizing democracy. The organization is nonpartisan, with cross-partisan supporters. Sara Eskrich is the Executive Director of Democracy Found, a Wisconsin-based nonpartisan initiative committed to revitalizing democracy. Sara is a graduate of the UW- Madison; holds a Masters of Public Affairs from the Robert M. La Follette School and Masters of Public Health from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

For complete information about the program and to register for the virtual Lunch & Learn [HERE](#).



American Association of University Women

La Crosse Branch

P.O. BOX 2112 • LA CROSSE, WI 54602-2112



THE CURRENT

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch

AAUW's Mission

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

For 130 years, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day: educational, social, economic, and political. Our commitment to our mission is reflected in all aspects of our work.

Newsletter Contact & Deadlines

Newsletter EditorErica Koonmen (moogs56@hotmail.com)

Webminder Barb Fischer (fischerba@live.com)

Newsletter content submission deadline:

Please send all content for *The Current* to Erica by the 20th of the month.

Problems receiving the CURRENT? Let us know at:

aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com