

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, JULY 29TH VOLUNTEER!

Viterbo College is our new venue, and we'll be needing workers in many positions! If you're an early bird, come at 5:30, yes, that's A. M. !! Folks are needed to get the day started, putting up signs, as well as a couple of tents.

If you have a spouse or significant other, their help is always welcome.

As in the past few years, there will be no admission charge, but donation boxes will be set up around the grounds. So instead of selling tickets, you'll be greeting the guests, handing out programs, and ENTHUSIASTICALLY encouraging their generous donations, reminding them of the many scholarships we give to area students.

Along with GREETERS, we need folks to sell tickets for the RAFFLE. This is the one job that doesn't require moving around much, so is perfect if you have mobility issues.

Three BOOTH SITTERS are needed between noon and 2:00, allowing a short break for the artists who have no one else to cover their booth.

At 5:00, as the fair ends, TAKE DOWN help is needed. We're all tired at the end of the day, so with many hands, the job will be expedited and we can all go home happy, instead of totally exhausted!

Please contact me, Marla French, by phone, text, or email with your availability. I'll respond as soon as possible, very appreciative that I didn't have to initiate the contact!

608-385-7432
mmfrench1959@gmail.com

AAUW

LA CROSSE (WI)

The Current

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch



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SUMMER 2023



65th Art Fair on the Green

by Carol Robertson, Art Fair Chair

The 65th AAUW Art Fair on the Green will soon be here and committee members are busy arranging all the details. The art fair will again be held for one day but in a new location: **Viterbo University Courtyard, July 29th from 10:00am -5:00pm.** We will have 75+ artists, food trucks, and of course, the raffle will be held. We will not be charging admission again this year. There is ample room for parking.

It takes many people to make this event run smoothly so look at the volunteer opportunities Marla French, Volunteer Coordinator, has outlined elsewhere in the Current. We will still need greeters at the entrance tents to welcome patrons and request donations.

Raffle ticket sellers are also needed as well as others who can help sell water at the AAUW tent.

Volunteers are needed to assist with Grounds also. We need people to help set up starting at about 6:30 am on July 29th and to assist with takedown at 5:00 pm.

If you aren't able to volunteer, you

can still participate by contributing to the awards and scholarship funds. You will receive a form on how to donate. The art fair is our main source of income to support the scholarships we give each year. We were able to award \$25,000 in grants and scholarships in 2023. This event is a great place to find that unusual gift as well as to buy artwork for your own enjoyment.

Please check out the list of the scholarship recipients this year. These awards and scholarships are made possible by your dedication and hard work on AAUW Art Fair on the Green.

Come out and support us on July 29!

www.artfaironthegreen.org



NEXT BOARD MEETING

Transitional Board Potluck
Tuesday, Sept 5
location/time TBA

This is a chance for new board members to get acquainted as we move into the new year.

Questions? Andrea at 608-487-5571 or ahansen@uwlax.edu

Get all the CURRENT news at our website: www.aauwlacrosse.org

Art Fair Concessions *by Betty Kruck*



The food vendors from the art fair last year are returning for our 65th AAUW Art Fair on the Green. We will have two food trucks, Apothik and 5 Star Egg Rolls, and Jean luc will work his griddles to provide crepes along with his delicious prepared pastries.

Roncalli Newman will provide hot fudge sundaes and root beer floats, and Ice Cold Refreshments will serve lemonade, Hawaiian shaved ice, boba tea and Thai ice cream rolls.



AAUW will sell water and a limited amount of soda. Donations of bottled water or soda from AAUW members will be appreciated, and will help our profits for scholarships.



Contact Betty Kruck, krux@mwt.net, if you have donations to offer.

Art Fair Contributions Needed *by Jan Eriksen*

We had no live Art Fair on the Green in 2020 and we haven't been charging admission since the move from the UWL campus to other venues in 2021. Therefore, we need financial donations more than ever to help us continue to award our scholarships! As you know, Art Fair on the Green is AAUW La Crosse Branch's biggest fundraiser of the year. Please donate generously to the AAUW La Crosse Scholarship Fund.



The Scholarship Fund Contribution Form is attached to this newsletter Email. Please print it out, complete it, and send it, along with your check, to: AAUW Art Fair on the Green, Post Office Box 2112, La Crosse, WI 54602.

We will note your name, get it in the Art Fair program, and forward your check on to the La Crosse Community Foundation. Contributions are tax exempt. You will receive a receipt from LCF. **We need to receive your donation by July 10 to meet the deadline for printing the program.**

Thank you very much for your donation!

Art Fair Publicity

Yard signs will be ready to go up around the 4th of July. If you would like to post a sign in your yard or business, contact Cindy Mischnick(cydnick7@gmail.com). A sign will be delivered to you and be picked up the day after the Art Fair.

Art fair posters and bookmarks have been posted and distributed in La Crosse, Onalaska, West Salem and La Crescent, MN. They will also be up in Sparta, Stoddard and Genoa.

THE 65th ANNUAL AAUW Art Fair on the Green

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL JURIED ART FAIR FEATURING
OVER 80 TALENTED ARTISTS!

Saturday,
July 29

10 A.M. – 5 P.M.

VITERBO UNIVERSITY COURTYARD
LA CROSSE, WI

FEATURING ARTIST RAFFLE
AND LOCAL FOOD TRUCKS

Free Admission
Donations gratefully accepted

All proceeds from this event go
to local scholarships and grants

Presented by:
AAUW La Crosse



AAUW WI PUBLIC POLICY NOTE

The State AAUW Public Policy Committee presented information at the state convention that will assist you in making contact with your government representatives and with submitting letters to the editor in local newspapers. It is critical that as AAUW members you take action on issues that are important to you, as well as to women and children in our state and country. You amplify your voice by contacting legislators and composing letters to the editor.

Click on this link to see all the resources:

[AAUW Public Policy Toolkit](#)

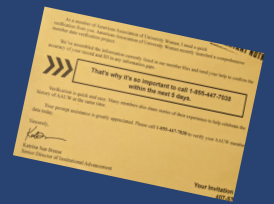


Membership Data Verification Postcards

I received a yellow postcard in the mail about an AAUW data verification/oral history project--is this a scam?

No, it is not a scam – AAUW is working with PCI to update member data and ask members to participate in an Oral History Project.

The Oral History Project is an effort to collect and memorialize the memories, experiences and impact that AAUW membership has had on the lives of our individual members across the country. These stories will be compiled into both a digital and hardcopy bound book. There is also an opportunity for members to purchase their own copy of the book, as well as other AAUW branded items, if they so choose.



We want to assure you that participation in this project is purely voluntary and you are NOT obligated to purchase any products to update your member information or to share your story and be a part of the Oral History Project.

Get more answers to your questions [HERE](#)

Membership News

by Barb Fischer, VP Membership



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBER

Josie Hower is a recent graduate of UW-L with a Masters Degree in Clinical Exercise Physiology. Address: E4798 Church Road, Kewaunee, WI 54216 Phone: 920-585-3579, Email: howerjosie12@gmail.com

AN INTERVIEW WITH MONICA FOSTER

We are trying to interview new members. Some of the interview with Monica is below. For her full interview click on this link:

<https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/2023/05/19/newmembers/>

Dr. Monica Foster received her Ph.D. as a specialist in Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine. Presently she is a Senior Associate Consultant at Mayo Clinic in La Crosse.

Monica joined AAUW because she sees it as a good fit for her and she wanted to get involved.

Some of her interests include hiking, photography, dogs, travel, and reading. She is presently reading the book "Invisible Kingdom: Reimagining Chronic Illness" by Meghan O'Rourke which examines the challenges faced by those with chronic illnesses. She highly recommends the book. It was delightful to talk with Monica. A huge welcome to you from AAUW-La Crosse!

GET WELL WISHES

Joan Koonmen is presently in the hospital. We want to let her know that we are all thinking of her.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Lila Seager has now returned home after a recovery stay at Bethany St. Joe because of a fall. Her address is: W5856 Carla Ct., Stoddard, WI 54658-9706 email: lila.seager@gmail.com; phone 608-780-2244.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

We have nine new Honorary Life Members this year. When you see them please congratulate them. At our September social gathering we will look forward to honoring all of them. Carol Taebel, Katie Webster, Beverly Bodine, Patt Boge, Clara Peterson, Alice Gassere, Lila Seager, Sharon De Cicco, and Marilyn Hempstead have all been members of AAUW for over 50 years.



FUTURE SURVEYS FOR MEMBERS - PLEASE COMPLETE WHEN THEY ARE AVAILABLE

The Membership Committee and the DEI Committee have put together surveys for various reasons. Both are important to us as members. If you wish to make directory changes, completing the Membership survey will be especially important. Soon the surveys will be available to you in many different ways.

THANK YOU!

I deeply appreciate the recent Name Grant Award! AAUW is a wonderful organization with lots of fantastic people who do great things. I am honored to be a part of AAUW.



On The Web

by Barb Fischer, Branch Web Manager & Art Fair on the Green Web Designer



The Art Fair on the Green website will be open in early July. Be sure to visit: www.artfaironthegreen.org. It is a good tool to use for planning your visit or for shopping later. All donations collected for this event goes to student scholarships.

Wisconsin Pride Series on PBS

By Andrea Hansen, Branch President



Congratulations to our own Mary O'Sullivan who is featured in the film [Wisconsin Pride from PBS-WI!](#) This two-part documentary lifts up the stories of ordinary people who blazed trails and organized for human and civil rights of LGBTQ Wisconsites.

In 1979, Mary became the founding editor of Leaping La Crosse News, an 8-page publication providing information, support and community for lesbians in La Crosse. The newspaper announced potlucks, outings, and even an annual tux party when Mary bought-out a stockpile of discontinued tuxes from Desmond's Formal Wear! For decades, Mary helped others find acceptance, safety, and a place of freedom to be themselves. Mary observes in the film, "It was like a big family. And, for some women, we were their family because they got kicked out. The world wasn't all that safe then."



A big thank you to Mary O'Sullivan and the community she helped build throughout the decades. Mary's leadership, writing, passion for justice, and sense of fun empowered, challenged and contributed to positive and lasting change in La Crosse. La Crosse is mentioned, and Mary's story starts at 31 minutes into Part 2. Be sure to watch the full film for the rest of this important Wisconsin story!

Mary's story is also told on La Crosse's "Hear, Here", a walking tour program that shares the diverse stories and voices of downtown La Crosse by calling the phone number on a sign to hear the story at that particular spot. You can read Mary's story here : <https://www.hearherela-crosse.org/stories/mary-osullivan/> and you can find the sign to listen to it at 112 South 4th Street, La Crosse.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

by June Reinert, DEI Chair

Privilege and White Supremacy

DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) committees have been charged with the development of programs to make our AAUW branches more inclusive of a wide range of diversity within its local, state, and national membership. We know that our members care about issues related to DEI, and live and work with people from diverse backgrounds. Obviously, our branch membership does not reflect the diversity within our region, however. We are wrapping up our first year with these initiatives with a series of programs (long and short presentations) highlighting diversity issues, as well as monthly articles in the Current. Our branch's web site contains diversity information and the objectives of our committee. We will be asking you to complete a questionnaire indicating your evaluation of these programs and giving input into our programs next year. Our DEI committee is committed to these issues. The members of our committee are June Reinert, Erica Koonmen, Diana Moran Thundercloud, and Carlene Roberts.

Definition of privilege

1: a right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor

Source: [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)

The notion of privilege is not new; it has been around for many decades. In fact, many of us remember the seminal workplace from the 1980's by Peggy McIntosh, **White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack**, where she identified the privileges, she a rights activist W. E. B. Du Bois wrote about the phenomena, proving that we have been trying to understand privilege for quite some time. It seems that these days, because we've gained some ground in terms of equality, the notion of privilege is no longer applicable. But, in fact, it is. So, let's be sure we understand what it means and how we can become aware of it.

The "advantages" that privilege provides to some can be based on [different dimensions of diversity](#) — the most commonly referenced are those based on race and gender. White privilege, for example, is defined as "inherent advantages possessed by a white person on the basis of their race in a society characterized by racial inequality and injustice." Can you think of examples of privilege or white privilege? How do these examples affect you and/or your loved ones?

The sense of privilege can also be tied to any aspect of diversity. Other types of privilege may be for straight individuals, men versus other genders, those who belong to a certain religious group, and/or members of a given political party. Examples of these types of privilege include only allowing heterosexual couples to marry and medical care differences and laws founded on one religion (such as anti-abortion laws).

Considering the current state of our nation, it is time to have tough conversations concerning race, bias, and privilege. Ideas for starting these conversations can be found in our resource on having difficult conversations.

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Historian's Corner

by Marilyn Hempstead, Branch Historian

If It's Summer, It's Art Fair

First here are a few fun facts from the early history of ART FAIR on the GREEN:

1959 – The first fair was on the State St. lawn of Murphy Center and put on by the La Crosse Fine Arts Association

1967 - Our branch took over the fair! Joan Koonmen was the first chair. She is still a member.

1970 - Proceeds went for scholarships in the arts to La Crosse State College and Viterbo students, but also provided funds for a girls' summer art camp and a children's concert series.

1977 – The location was moved from State St. to the campus mall.

1980s – Admission was \$1.50. The Scholarship Brunch was held at the old La Crosse Country Club Saturday mornings.

1990 – Entry fee for artists went up to \$50.

1999 – 56 artists participated in the fair.

Then in remembering more recent history, the 1990s was a challenging time for the fair. Being difficult to find a chair (a couple of years there was none) and other problems, there was talk of giving up the fundraiser. In 2000, Pat Staupe took over and revived it followed ably in 2014 by present chair Carol Robertson.

More challenges came in 2020 when it was not feasible to hold the fair because of the COVID epidemic. With the construction at UW-L making the mall unavailable the 2021/22 fairs became one day events at Myrick Park.

We work together to plan, to overcome obstacles, to accomplish and to have fun doing it. Countless valiant members over the years have contributed and we continue.



1970



1974



1989



2008

FROM THE TREASURER

Ann Brice

Financial Report as of
May 8, 2023

Checking Account.....\$7,044.21

Scholarship Bridge.....\$321.00

.....

Reminder -Dues

IT IS TIME TO RENEW FOR 2023-24

AAUW dues have increased slightly to \$93.00. The breakdown is:

- National \$72.00 (\$69.00 is tax-deductible)
- State \$13.00
- Branch \$8.00

For renewal information go to: https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/files/2023/04/aauw2023mem_dues_renewal-2.pdf

When renewing online, be sure to login as a present member.

Or you can send your dues to:

Ann Brice, VP Finance.
211 29th Street So.,
La Crosse, WI 54601-4312.

For step-by-step online instructions and mailing instructions you can go to: <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/2023/05/19/membership-dues/>



Scholarships & Grants

by Robert Richardson, Co-Chair

SGC Members: Francie Ball, Sharon De Cicco, Jan Eriksen, Andrea Hansen, Betty Kruck, Mary O’Sullivan, Robert Richardson, Silvana Richardson, Carol Robertson, Sandy Sechrest.

Additional SGC Sub-committee Members: Marilyn Hempstead & Michele Strange. Managed by the La Crosse Community Foundation, the La Crosse Branch of the American Association of University Women awarded twenty-six scholarships and grants.

Each year these awards are funded by the investment art fair profits and from the generosity of member-donors and art fair attendee donors.

AAUW Art Fair on the Green – at Viterbo University on Saturday, July 29, 2023.

SCHOLARSHIPS Awarded in 2023

High School Graduates:

Aubrey Hass (Central HS); Hayle Dayton (Holmen HS); Mai See Xiong (Logan HS); and KaitlynKnutson, Annika Parry, & Morgan Quackenbush (West Salem HS).

University of Wisconsin - La Crosse:

Olivia Sarasio Meyer (Spanish Ed/TESOL), Natalie Manfort (Nuclear Medicine Technology), Sidney Paulson (Cultural Anthropology), Katie Banie (School Psychology), Caitlin Herminath (Math Education), 7 & Alexis Tate (Recreation Management).

Viterbo University:

Amy Luedtke (Nursing), Elaine Nevin (Nursing), Madeline Franzmeier (Nursing), & Rebecca York (Nursing).

Western Technical College:

Pathways Scholarship recipients and Transitions Scholarship recipients.

GRANTS Awarded in 2023

- Monroe County Brighter Tomorrows Program
- New Horizons, La Crosse
- Self-Sufficiency Program
- WTC Student Assistance Program
- YWCA Restorative Justice Program
- Hope Restores
- Cia Siab, Inc
- Fostering Success for Independent Scholars



Top picture: 2023 Scholarship recipients attended the May 13th reception and shared their stories with the branch members.



Left: Carol Robertson presented the scholarship to Hayle Dayton at Holmen High School on May 26th.

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion by June Reinert, DEI Chair

If you don't know whether you are part of a privileged group, ask yourself what parts of your identity you think about least. The trait you identify is connected to your sense of privilege.

If you are in a privileged group, it is possible to use your privilege to help others by becoming an ally. Determine what underprivileged people lack or are challenged with and how to best help. Most importantly, be mindful of your actions. You may not mean to speak over others, particularly those you want to support. But, if you speak for them instead of taking their lead, you may cause more damage than good.

If you're not in a privileged group, be open to having civil yet constructive conversations with those that are privileged. Find collaborative ways to help yourself and those around you. Be active in your community, particularly in voting for legislation and/or candidates that support equality and equity efforts. Awareness of our privilege is necessary to help AAUW be able to grow and thrive as an organization.

Definition of white supremacy

1 : the belief that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that white people should have control over people of other races. The alt-right is a reactionary conservative movement

2 : the social, economic and political systems that collectively enable white people to maintain power over people of other races

Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary

When you think of white supremacy, what images that come to mind? Do you think of the 1960's and the Ku Klux Klan? Or do you recall the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2017? Or the Proud Boys marching to the statehouse in Oregon last summer? One thing we've learned in recent years is that white supremacist groups are alive and thriving in America, and we must do something to dismantle them. Let's start by understanding what we're dealing with.

White supremacists aim to oppress non-Whites, while telling followers that the white race is superior and deserves wealth, power, and privilege. This belief can be traced back to the foundations of the U.S., with the marginalization of Native Americans and the enslavement of Africans and African Americans.

In the U.S., there are numerous white supremacist groups. These range from political entities such as the American Identity Movement (AIM) to internet followers of QAnon, and all the way to groups such as Skinheads and the White Aryan Resistance, who promote violence.

White supremacy has recently entered the conversation of mainstream politics. As witnessed in the 2020 Presidential debate, not outright rebuking white supremacist groups and ideology can lead to further division in the U.S. The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery have further fueled race discussions, protests, and riots, specifically between Black Lives Matter leaders and white supremacist groups.

We are certainly capable of disrupting racism within our communities — and this starts with having [difficult conversations](#). Another step is to understand the [resources available](#) to fight white supremacy groups. The most important actions we can take are to recognize racism and white supremacy and to believe others and their stories. Together, we can ensure a safe and supportive environment for our community and loved ones.

Branch Opportunites

This summer, while you're relaxing by the pool and pondering what you could do to help the branch next year, we have a few suggestions for you to mull!

These positions are appointed, not elected, so they usually have a 1 year commitment but are not limited to that. They are a great way to be part of something positive in our branch and work with people you already know you like! Everyone on the board is more than willing to help you settle in to a position as well as provide aid and encouragement as needed.

Publicity: This person is responsible for getting the word out to the community about who we are and what we're doing. You'd work with the president and the board for content and use print, radio and social media. This position would work well with 2 people sharing duties.

Fundraising: Responsible for coming up with ideas on generating funds for the branch. This would be a good committee job so grab a couple of friends and work together on it.

Newsletter editor: This fun job involves putting out a newsletter (almost entirely via email) 10 times a year. It does require good computer skills and the current editor would be happy to share her many, many years of files and templates with you!

Public Policy: A vital position for sharing AAUW National's policies and creating awareness of actions that can be taken. You'll receive bulletins and information from National then you decide which ones to focus on each month when you write a column for the newsletter.



If it's difficult to choose which one excites you most, talk with president Andrea or any board member for more information. Orientation to the positions can begin this summer and actual responsibilities begin in September. C'mon, it'll be FUN!

AAUW La Crosse Board Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2023 Board Meeting 5-6 p.m. Via Zoom

Members present: Andrea Hansen, Marilyn Hempstead, Barb Fischer, Jan Eriksen, Erica Koonmen, June Reinert

Andrea called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Volunteer needed to take minutes today: Erica volunteered. The minutes from the April 2023 board meeting approved. Barb made a motion, Marilyn 2nd, motion passed.

Treasurer's report: Ann: \$7,044.21 in checking.

New Business:

1. Volunteer needed to fill in for Ann at the May 13 general meeting. Erica will do that; Barb will pick up the cash box and bring it.
2. Renewal of artfaironthegreen.org domain name is due before June 6. Erica asked for approval to renew. Jan made a motion to pay it; Marilyn 2nd, motion passed. Erica will renew for 1 yr.
3. La Crosse Women's Literary & Debating Society Project: Rebecca Mormann, LaX Public Library, asked for our branch involvement. There is a Zoom meeting planned to determine our role; possibly writing a grant for National funds. We all support working with them; June, Marilyn & Robert will be initial contacts. June sees the possibility of having the group as a program for next year. Jan, Barb and Erica are willing to help in supporting roles.
4. Discussion was had on the order of minutes and publishing them in the newsletter. The ones that are published have not yet been approved and sometimes there are changes made after publishing. We agreed it is a good communication vehicle so we'll keep doing it but note that they are not yet approved.
5. A postcard from National about member data verification has gone out to all members. This was addressed at the convention in April; members were assured that it's legit. It is an optional program that is collecting member histories, memories and comments. It will all be compiled into a book available for about \$170; there are also options that include a t-shirt and tote. We might put a small article in the Summer newsletter about it. Purchasing a copy of the book for the branch was discussed; to be continued later.

Old Business:

1. NCCWSL follow up: Jan reported that NCCWSL is at the end of May. It was suggested that we ask the participants to attend the Sept meeting and give a report.
2. State Convention follow up: Barb, Jan, Pam and Megan attended. Our donated Silent Auction baskets sold for a good amount.

Committee Reports:

Program: Everything is set for the scholarship reception.

Membership: Barb: We have 9 new honorary Life Members who will be honored in Sept. and 1 new member: Jossie Hower. Our branch was recognized at the convention for increasing membership as well as our 100 anniversary. The committee is working on a survey to get updated info from all members. A draft will be sent to the board for review. Dues are due: it's best to pay them online at Nationa's website.

AIA: Erica: The April 20th talk by Dr Sona Kazemi was well attended with 40 people. The Women Supporting Women Globally group will pick up in the fall with more activities. The AIA end of year potluck is May 17, 5pm, at Erica's.

Website: Barb: Watch for videos from the conference to be posted soon. The Art Fair website is being worked on and will be ready around the end of June. www.artfaironthegreen.org

Historian: Marilyn: The plan is to display the anniversary posters for the final time at the May 13th meeting.

Public Policy: Andrea: Would like to find a way of publicizing that our branch supports transgender youth.

Diversity: June: The committee has been working on a survey to send out to the membership; it will be sent to the board for review first. They are thinking of starting a new study group to explore all aspects of diversity.

Art Fair: 13 new artists were accepted. Coordination continues with grounds people at Viterbo and it looks good as far as placement and flow. The Summer issue of The Current will have details and requests for specific help.

Name Grant: Jan: Congrats again to Barb! The funds have been sent to National in Barb's name.

Meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Erica Koonmen, acting secretary.