



## Newsletter of the

# Kirkwood–Webster Groves Branch

Founded April 1971 ~ **Celebrating 53 Years!**

2024-2025, No. 4, December 2024

**AAUW Mission:** AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

**AAUW Vision:** Equity for all. **AAUW Values:** Nonpartisan, fact-based, integrity, inclusion, and intersectionality.

AAUW is open to graduates who hold the associate, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a qualified college or university.

The Kirkwood-Webster Groves Branch of AAUW supports the full range of the AAUW mission through its monthly program meetings, special interest groups, and public outreach events, by engaging in social action, collaborating with local organizations and educational institutions regarding AAUW topics, and supporting area young women and girls directly. We are one of five branches in the St. Louis, MO, area that comprise the AAUW Metro St Louis Interbranch Council (IBC).

### **Branch Officers, 2024-2025**

#### **Co-President:**

Lynne Roney  
roneyeditorial@gmail.com

#### **Co-President:**

Nancy Hutchins  
bodaciouspsycho-  
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#### **Program Vice President:**

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#### **Secretary:**

Marsha Koch  
mkwkoch@outlook.com

<https://kwg-mo.aauw.net/>

## HOLIDAY EVENT

Sunday, December 8, 2024

### Boar's Head Festival Concert

Meet at 2:00 pm. Concert begins at 2:30 pm

Peace Lutheran Church

737 Barracksview Road, St. Louis 63125

For our December meeting, we will gather for a holiday concert on Sunday, December 8. We have 10 free tickets to the medieval-themed Boar's Head Festival at Peace Lutheran Church, 737 Barracksview Rd, St. Louis, MO 63125. **This event is sold out, so we need to know who is planning to use a ticket.** Please call or email Lynne at 314-223-3426 or roneyeditorial@gmail.com by **Friday, December 6**, if you plan to attend.

A long-standing tradition in South St. Louis, the Festival features four choirs, dozens of actors, and gorgeous costumes. These ceremonies date back to Oxford University in England in the 1300s, mixing the Christmas story with medieval music, King Wenceslas, the Beefeaters, and the Yule log.



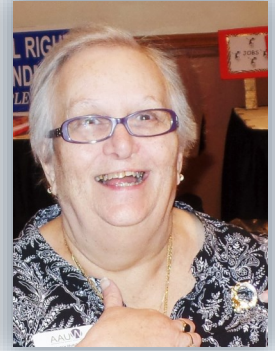


*Lynne*

## *Presidents' Message ...*

At our November branch meeting, we discussed ways to get messages to our elected officials such as encouraging publication of the Equal Rights Amendment, supporting reproductive rights, and focusing on AAUW issues of public education, economic security, and equality. The collective voice of AAUW members is our strength.

One of our first efforts will be to send messages to the President to publish the ERA. An easy way to do this is to use AAUW's 2-Minute Activist: <https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/era/>. Try it—it's quick and easy!



*Nancy*

Links with talking points specific to each issue are listed on the 2-Minute Activist page. As an example, here is the message provided for the ERA:

As your constituent, I join with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to urge you to support the Equal Rights Amendment. It's been 100 years since the ERA was first introduced in Congress, and a century is too long to wait!

I hope you will support the ERA by signing and supporting Discharge Petition No. 6, which would allow a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives on the bill to remove the timeline and recognize the ratification of the ERA (HJ Res 25).

Sex discrimination does not have the same legal protection as other constitutional classes, such as race, religion, or nationality. This constitutional double standard means that hard-won legislative and court victories against sex discrimination are not permanent—and can be rolled back or difficult to enforce.

The lack of constitutional equality reaches every aspect of women's lives. And a majority of Americans support the ERA, which has had bipartisan and multigenerational support for decades. It is past time we take action to ensure constitutional equality for all.

Women in the United States have waited long enough—Please sign the discharge petition and let HJ Res 25 come to the floor for a vote!

Thank you, and I look forward to your response.

Or, contact the White House: Its website says email is the best way to contact the President (postal mail is often delayed for security checks). The fill-in site is easy to use: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/share/>

Here are some other news sources and commentators mentioned by our members.

- ◇ AAUW Webinars: [Project 2025](#); [Securing the Future](#): A Post-Election Conversation on Women's Economic Security
- ◇ [Substack.com](#): Heather Cox Richardson, Amy Siskind, Mark Mansour, Robert Reich, Sarah Kendzior, The Capitol Hill Reader
- ◇ "Women's Issues, Women's Voices," [KOPN.org](#). Feminist talk show, Columbia, MO.
- ◇ [The Hill](#)
- ◇ [National Conference of State Legislatures](#). [Town hall Dec. 20 on Shaping the Future of Higher Education](#).

Lynne and Nancy

## Pecan Sales!!



Barb Johnson, left, and Kay Meyer handle pecan sales for the branch.

Thanks to Kay Meyer, Barb Johnson, and Christine Nobbe for helping sell pecans at the Affton Craft Fair on November 8. We made more than \$400! An innovation this year was accepting Venmo payments. Carol Davis McDonald set up the account for us. Dee Loris is the amazing organizer of this spectacular event and makes sure that we have a great location for our table. Thanks, team, for all your work!

Some of the pre-ordered pecans have arrived. We are waiting on the milk chocolate and caramel pecan clusters. If you forgot to order, there will be extras of all but the milk chocolate. Kay will have some at the branch in-person meetings or available for pick-up at her house.

## AAUW Fellows and Grant Recipients in Missouri 2024

Among the more than 200 grant recipients of AAUW Fellowships and Community Action Grants this year are five in Missouri. KWG hopes to schedule one or more for upcoming programs. Those awardees and their fields are:

### American Fellowships

- ◆ Jennifer Bean, doctor of philosophy in nutritional sciences, University of Missouri, Columbia
- ◆ Merve Fejzula, post-doctoral work in African history and Black political thought, University of Missouri, Columbia

### International Fellowships

- ◆ Jolie Sifa Kpaka, master of business administration, international affairs and relations, Missouri State University, Springfield
- ◆ Onyekachi Ilpasuo, doctorate, cancer immunotherapy, University of Missouri, Columbia

### Community Action Grant

- ◆ Satonya Booker, project on transitional housing and job readiness for young moms and their families, Almost Home, St. Louis

## Save the Date!

### January Branch Meeting by Zoom

January 16, 7 p.m.

**Speaker:** Jessica Meyers, Director, St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission (VPC)

**Topic:** Working to reduce violent crime

We will send out a special Zoom invitation with a dedicated Zoom link asking for RSVP, so that other branches and groups may join us. Be looking for it!

### CALENDAR

Dec 2 Board meeting, 7 pm  
 Dec 3 Expressions Craft Group  
 Dec 8 Holiday Get-Together, Boar's Head Festival, Peace Lutheran Church, 2 pm

#### 2025

Jan 14 International Relations Lecture, 10:45 am  
 Jan 16 KWG branch meeting, 6:30 pm, via Zoom RSVP  
 Jan 23 Adelante Book Group, 1:30 pm

Feb 3 KWG board meeting via Zoom, 7 pm  
 Feb 4 Expressions craft group  
 Feb 11 International Relations lecture, 10:45 am  
 Feb 27 Adelante Book Group, 1:30 pm  
 Mar 8 International Women's Day  
 Mar 27 International Relations lecture, 10:45 am  
 Mar 29 IBC 2025 Spring Luncheon Honoring Sherones and Barbara Lackritz Honorees

## AAUW METRO ST LOUIS INTERBRANCH COUNCIL (IBC)

KWG is **one of the five branches** that form the AAUW Metro St. Louis Interbranch Council, more commonly known as IBC. They meet 4 times a year, some virtually and some in person. Each branch is allowed 3 voting delegates, and historically the officers of each branch have served as those delegates.

The purpose of IBC is to foster cooperation among member branches and to financially support programs and projects and to open channels of communication among branches for the sharing of ideas and interests.

The next quarterly meeting will be on Tuesday, February 25, 2024. The website is <https://stlouis-ibc.aauw.net/>. All AAUW members are welcome to attend.

### Metro St. Louis Branch Programs

**Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch**—Winter party and fundraising event on December 12, 10 am—1 pm. Box lunches by The Art of Entertaining. Entertainment by the Parkway West High Jazz Choir. Silent auction of elegant edibles.

**Ferguson-Florissant Branch**—Contact [Patty Murray](mailto:PattyMurray@gmail.com) for meeting information, 314-838-7887.

**Saint Charles Branch**—Meets the first Thursday at 1 p.m. at First St. Charles UMC, 801 First Capitol Drive, St. Charles 63301. December 5: Holiday Honey Singers (with branch member Teri Brecht) entertained with a variety of seasonal songs sung in four-part *a capella* harmony.

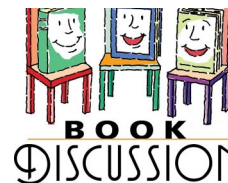
**St. Louis Branch**—No events until January late holiday get-together, Dim Sum at LuLu Seafood.

### Expressions Craft Group

1st Tuesday, 1-3 p.m. Next meeting in February  
Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 13014 Olive Blvd.,  
Creve Coeur. Entrance in back, no steps.

Our focus is to make and learn crafts and projects. All AAUW members and their guests are welcome. Contact Kay Meyer ([kicmeyer51@gmail.com](mailto:kicmeyer51@gmail.com)) or Nancy Hutchins

### IBC ¡ADELANTE! BOOK GROUP



This group, started in 1996 as a component of AAUW's diversity outreach program, discusses books written from diverse perspectives. It currently is meeting virtually.

Where: Join Zoom meeting:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85338959790?pwd=NFNKS01FMXh6bXpiaXh0ci80VC9rUT09>

When: 1:30 pm the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month in September, October, January, February, March, April, May

Contact: [PattyMurrayAAUW@gmail.com](mailto:PattyMurrayAAUW@gmail.com)

Zoom access: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87393625222?pwd=Z8LmoZpCgqVwS6wAZmPoNEcUa0b2Pq.1>

Meeting ID: 873 9362 5222

Passcode: 922338

Dial your location: 1-312-626-6799 (US Chicago)

#### Upcoming selections:

Jan 23 ***Circling the Sun***, by Paula McLain, 384 pages, published July 2015. Deb McWard, facilitator. This powerful novel transports readers to the breathtaking world of Out of Africa—1920s Kenya—and reveals the extraordinary adventures of Beryl Markham, a woman before her time.

Feb 27 ***The Women***, by Kristin Hannah, 480 pages, published 2-6-2024. Jan Barrett, facilitator. Women can be heroes—a nursing student joins the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam war.

Mar 27 ***The Island of Missing Trees***, by Elif Shafak, 368 pages, published November 2021. Lynne Roney, facilitator. Two teenagers, a Greek Cypriot and a Turkish Cypriot, war, and the untangling of years of secrets.

Apr 24 ***Light on Bone***, by Kathryn Lasky, 298 pages, published 9-6-2022. Teri Brecht, facilitator. Kathryn Lasky has written an exciting new adult amateur sleuth mystery set in New Mexico in the 1930s.

May 29 ***Mad Honey***, by Jodi Picoult, 464 pages, published 10-4-2022. Patty Murray, facilitator. A riveting novel of suspense, an unforgettable love story, and a moving and powerful exploration of the secrets we keep and the risks we take in order to become ourselves. In development for a series/film.



## The public is cordially invited to the International Relations Lecture Series (IRLS) 2024

Ethical Society of St. Louis  
9001 Clayton Road  
St. Louis, MO 63117

**10:45 am Second Tuesday of January, February, March and April**

The TWA and AAUW invite you to learn from experts about the most critical issues affecting our global community. The 45-50 minute lectures begin promptly at 10:45 am in the upper auditorium and are followed by a question and answer session. Admission is free, but donations are gratefully accepted. Free parking is available behind the building. In case of inclement weather, please call 314-991-0955, ext. 224.

*Sponsored by the Tuesday Women's Association (TWA) of the Ethical Society of St. Louis  
and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Metro St. Louis Branches*

Usha Sathe, Chair

### **January 14, 2025 Our Planet's Plastic Crisis**

**Dana Ripper, M.S.**

There is growing awareness of the plastic crisis amongst people around the world. What we previously thought of as simply unsightly, plastics - particularly single-use disposables - now pose serious climate, water, and air quality threat as well as being detrimental to human health. This presentation will consist of an in-depth discussion of our planet's plastic crisis. From the extraction of component materials to various manufacturing processes, to its end destination in human bodies, waterways, and incinerators, plastic is one issue that needs to be tackled immediately. We'll talk about the various points in plastic production and waste management where change can be made and how you can become involved in that change.



Dana Ripper is the Executive Director and Co-founder of the Missouri River Bird Observatory and a wildlife ecologist who focuses on conservation via ecosystem health. She has an MS in ecology from Arkansas State University (2002) and worked on wildlife research projects across the U.S. before making Missouri home in 2008. In 2010, Dana co-founded the MRBO, a nonprofit organization dedicated to conservation via science, education, and advocacy. Since plastic production and waste mismanagement pose significant threats to climate stability, biotic and abiotic natural resources, and human health and quality of life, one of Dana's major emphases in her work with MRBO is systemic reduction in single-use plastics. MRBO is an



affiliate organization of Break Free From Plastic and Beyond Plastics.

Committee: Kathryn Meyer

### **February 11, 2025 Water Security in a Changing Climate**

**Jason Knouft, Ph.D.**



Access to clean water is essential for all aspects of society. As the climate changes and access to water becomes more uncertain, perceptions of water security may also change, leading to social, economic, and political instability, and even conflict. This conflict could be addressed through cooperation, or, alternatively, result in the weaponization of water to oppress individuals or gain advantage over rivals. This lecture will explore water security in a changing climate and examine the implications of perceived declines in water security for society.



Jason Knouft is a Professor in the Biology Department at Saint Louis University and the Director of the Freshwater Policy Institute at the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center. He has served as a Climate and Water Security Analyst for the U.S. Department of State in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR), an INR deputy representative to the Climate Security Advisory Council, an INR ex officio deputy representative to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Climate Security Roundtable, a member of the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and a Scientific Review Committee member at the National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center. His research focuses on the investigation of freshwater system responses to environmental perturbations, with a particular interest in water security, climate change, contaminants, land use change, and adaptation strategies to address these issues. Knouft received a Ph.D. in biology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Committee: Sue Williams, Kari Estes

# National News

From Susan Barley  
National Advancement Committee and  
AAUW MO Fund Chair  
November 23, 2024  
314-361-2920  
[barley702@gmail.com](mailto:barley702@gmail.com)



1. **AAUW reacts** to 2024 national election results:  
<https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/media/press-releases/aauw-reacts-to-2024-national-election-results/>
2. **NCCWSL**
  - a. The AAUW Advancement team is organizing a meeting with NASPA staff to discuss promotion of NCCWSL to members in the next 2-3 weeks. There is no more information to share at this point.
  - b. NASPA Event Page Link is here (please note that NCCWSL is not here yet, but may be posted here in the future) <https://www.naspa.org/events>
  - c. Scholarships and Eligibility – AAUW plans to continue to distribute scholarships to Student Affiliate Members who are interested, and as funding becomes available. Student Affiliates can join for free if their college/university is a CU Member and for \$18.81 if their college/university is not a member.
  - d. Donations - For individuals and/or branches interested in making a donation to the scholarship fund, 80% will be designated to direct support and 20% to administrative expenses to manage the scholarship outreach, selection and distribution.
3. **National Match Status**
  - a. Amount Raised = \$95k+ (up over \$10k from last year!) from Board Directors, Committee Chairs and Members, and from staff.
  - b. Donations to the Greatest Needs Fund by December 31 are matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling your branch's impact!
4. **Online tools for giving.** Link to Smart Giving Tools: [https://www.freewill.com/smartgiving/aauw?utm\\_source=partner&utm\\_medium=website&utm\\_campaign=aauw\\_waystogivepg](https://www.freewill.com/smartgiving/aauw?utm_source=partner&utm_medium=website&utm_campaign=aauw_waystogivepg)
5. **To view AAUW webinar recordings:**  
On our website: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/>  
On YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@AAUW/videos>

## 6. Office Hours

- a. Previously, the AAUW team would cancel office hours on days where we had low registration/attendance, and instead addressed questions asked via email. Moving forward AAUW will no longer be cancelling in cases of low attendance
- b. To register for Office Hours – visit our State and Branch Tools page and scroll to the bottom: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/state-branch/>

7. **FY25 Five Star Information:** <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/>



## What Does National Do?

**Subject Matter Expertise:** Historically, we have produced in-depth studies on topics like gender pay gap and women in leadership roles.

- While we haven't produced reports due to limited funding, we have done high-level analysis of pay gap data recently released. We are frequently asked to comment on topics related to pay equity, student loan debt, and other issues related to gender equity. You can see our recently updated page on Latinas and the pay gap, for example, here: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/article/latinas-and-the-pay-gap/>.
- We have tens of thousands of social media followers across all platforms and have well over one million website viewers, ensuring that our brand remains prominent and relevant. AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell has been invited to White House events on at least three occasions recently.
- On a global level, Gloria is AAUW's representative to the UN, and our work in this capacity provides great reputational value related to global gender equity work.