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Mission Statement

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

Vision Statement

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

A Message from our President – Snippets from Sue

Welcome to a brand new AAUW Austin Program Year!

I am very excited about this year. We have exciting programs planned as well as opportunities to get together and become better acquainted. We really need each other now more than ever!

For our new members, there are many opportunities outside of regular meetings to connect: two book groups, a Great Decisions public policy group, a Travel Group, and a Saturday morning group at the Coffee House that gathers to do knitting, crocheting, needlework, and chat.

We are open to forming other small groups if there is interest.

I look forward to seeing all of you.

Sue

New (Old) Small Group

Needlework

Do you crochet, knit, embroider, or participate in any other needlework hobbies? Do you like to sit in coffee shops and enjoy delicious beverages while talking with other people? If you answered yes to either of these questions, then the Needlework Small Group is for you. We will gather on Saturdays at 10a at Coffee on Main starting September 6 Bring whatever crafting project you are working on and enjoy some time creating with others. If you don't know how to crochet or knit, bring some needles and yarn and we will teach you. Contact Catherine Haslag at cshaslag@gmail.com if you have any questions.

September Meeting

Female superheroes wield a unique kind of power—not just through their abilities or weapons, but through the inspiration they provide to audiences around the world. Characters like Wonder Woman, Storm, and Shuri challenge outdated stereotypes and redefine what it means to be strong, smart, and heroic. They demonstrate that courage, leadership, and compassion are not limited by gender. These heroes fight not only supervillains, but also social norms, pushing boundaries in both their fictional worlds and in real life. As representation in media grows, so does the message that greatness isn't defined by gender, but by character, courage, and conviction. Female superheroes are more than symbols—they are sparks for change, empowerment, and hope.

This year, our overarching program theme is "I Need a Hero" as in a superhero. All of our programs will tie into this theme, from taking time to care for ourselves, exploring and advocating for our community and its members, to becoming a superhero ourselves. We hope this theme will be fun, interesting, and inspiring.

Our September program kicks off this theme with some fun. We will gather at the large meeting room in the Austin Public Library on September 9 from 6:30-8p to share information about programs and events for the coming year and test our superhero knowledge. We look forward to seeing you there!

Branch Updates

Evening Book Group

Evening book group will meet at 7:00 on September 15th at Sue Grove's home to discuss "In the Shade of the Olive Trees" by Kate Laack.

Morning Book Group

We will meet at 9:00AM at Perkins on Thursday, September 18, 2025.

The book we will be discussing is "The Four Winds" by Kristin Hannah. The leader for our discussion will be Nancy Krouse.

Great Decisions

Great Decisions will meet on Monday, September 25th at noon at KSMQ. We will be discussing **The Future of NATO.**

Travel Club

The Travel Club is going to travel to the "Rooted Flower Co." which is owned and grown by McKenzie Besel Wise and her husband. It is just north of Lansing. We will meet at the southeast corner of the parking lot at Riverland College (east of the theater) at 12:45 and carpool together. We will be able to walk among their lovely flowers and McKenzie will share information concerning the flowers, their business, etc. After our tour, we will stop at Culver's for a quick treat and to chat about our future plans. Do wear comfortable shoes and dress casually as we will be walking on the grass areas among the flowers. Please let me know by Tuesday, September 9th if you are planning to join us. Thank you very much. - DedaRae

Story Show

As we look to kick off a new year with AAUW, we have started the planning and work to bring for the 6th Story Show. This year the theme will be "The Power of Hope" and once again, we will be asking 4 women and 4 men to write personal stories of hope in their lives to be shared at the show on Saturday, January 10. We have five confirmed story tellers which we will share at a later date, once the full line up has been confirmed. Due to the continued growth and success of this show, we have been able to expand to three, \$1,500 scholarships to Riverland for non-traditional students. In a time of many discouraging events taking place in our world, doing good in our community, with supporting non-traditional students, does provide us with some hope for the future. We count on all AAUW members to assist with supporting this show through and have sincerely appreciated all the past work to make it a success. We look forward to 2026! - Jen and Jenni

Public Policy

This year, I will be serving as the public policy person for our branch. In this capacity, I will try to keep members up to date on issues that are the focus of the state and national AAUW.

Just to review—the stated mission of the AAUW is "to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy". For 2024-2026 the MN AAUW has chosen three main topics of concern:

1. Economic security of all women
2. Equal access to quality public education for all students
3. Social and racial justice for all members of society

As a non-profit organization we are non-partisan. However, we certainly can be politically active on issues related to the mission of the AAUW. I encourage everyone to check out the National AAUW (<https://www.aauw.org>) and the Minnesota AAUW (<https://aauw-mn.net>) websites for more information. (The MN website has a nice report on the spring conference that we hosted here in Austin.) Jan Carey is the State VP of Public Policy. She can be reached at: jmcfree@aol.com. Another helpful resource is AAUW MN PINE NEWSLETTER which is published quarterly and can be accessed through the MN AAUW website.

FYI—You might want to check out the film "Zurawski vs Texas". It is available on some streaming apps. Produced by Jennifer Lawrence and Hilary and Chelsea Clinton. Have a great month. And remember to never underestimate what a group of determined women can accomplish! Submitted by: Angie Loecke

Membership Update

We had a fantastic turnout at the ice cream social. We welcomed 8 new members at the event and 1 member who couldn't attend and joined prior to the event. A special thanks to Sue Grove for welcoming guests, Catherine Haslag for providing information, and Kat Linaker for inviting the majority of our new members!



AAUW Website

Did you know we have a website and a Facebook group? You can join the AAUW – Austin MN page on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1GYhTSffZW/>. Any member can share/post to the AAUW Facebook group.

The website contains information on upcoming events and current newsletters. You can find this information at <https://austin-mn.aauw.net/>. Catherine Haslag is our webmaster and will do her best to keep the website updated with events and other information. If you have anything to post to the website, please contact Catherine at cshaslag@gmail.com. Please provide at least 1-week notice for Catherine to prepare and post information.

Financial Report

| AAUW | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| 4/19/25-8/25/25 | | |
| Period: 4/19/25-8/25/25 | | |
| Opening Balance: | | \$22,318.81 |
| Income: | | |
| Membership Dues (National + State + Local) | \$ 3,402.00 | |
| State Convention - Registration & Meal Fees | \$ 828.93 | |
| | | |
| Total Income: | \$ 4,230.93 | \$26,549.74 |
| Disbursements: | | |
| State Convention - Table Décor/ Flowers | \$ 150.00 | |
| State Convention - Printing for Programs | \$ 363.00 | |
| State Convention - Sound System | \$ 100.00 | |
| State Convention - Name Badges | \$ 33.59 | |
| State Convention - Silent Auction Items | \$ 76.06 | |
| State Convention - Beverage Supplies | \$ 116.34 | |
| State Convention - Homel Historic Home - Dessert | \$ 215.00 | |
| State Convention - Friday Evening Meal & Rental | \$ 4,095.00 | |
| State Convention - Cedar Valley Services | \$ 1,555.33 | |
| State Convention - Homel Institute Rental | \$ 900.00 | |
| State Convention - Guest Performer Honorarium | \$ 50.00 | |
| State Convention - State AAUW Seed Money Repayment | \$ 1,000.00 | |
| State Convention - State AAUW Event Profit Split | \$ 1,200.43 | |
| Gift - Chapter Year End Recognitions | \$ 50.00 | |
| Membership Dues (National + State) | \$ 3,282.00 | |
| Riverland Scholarships 25-26 School Year | \$ 4,500.00 | |
| | | |
| Total Disbursements: | \$17,686.75 | \$8,862.99 |
| Closing Balance 8/25/25 | | \$8,862.99 |

2024-25 BUDGET vs. PROPOSED BUDGET 2025-2026

| | ACTUAL | Estimated |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | RECEIPTS | Receipts |
| | 2024-2025 | 2025-2026 |
| RECEIPTS | | |
| Membership Dues | 4,170.50 | 4,500.00 |
| Fund Raiser - Story Show | 5,040.00 | 5,000.00 |
| Donation - Kaye Schulz Memorial | 150.00 | - |
| Grant - Mower Freeborn | - | 500 |
| Fund Raiser - Event TBD | | 700 |
| State Convention Net Chapter Profit | 1,202.92 | - |
| Total Receipts | \$ 10,563.42 | \$ 10,700.00 |
| | ACTUAL | Budgeted |
| | SPENT | Expenses |
| | 2024-2025 | 2025-2026 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| National & State Dues | 3,906.00 | 4,350.00 |
| AAUW Fund | - | 750.00 |
| Gifts & banquet flowers | 50.00 | 75.00 |
| Insurance | 200.00 | 200.00 |
| Story Show Expenses | 598.00 | 500.00 |
| Membership Directory | 35.00 | 35.00 |
| Scholarships | 3,000.00 | 4,500.00 |
| Networking/membership events | 87.50 | 75.00 |
| Spring banquet (net expense) | - | 100.00 |
| Speakers/Programs | 406.09 | 400.00 |
| Meeting space rental | 160.00 | 100.00 |
| State Convention | - | 500.00 |
| <i>Wom Hist Initiative</i> | | |
| Awards | 451.00 | 500.00 |
| Program Director/ Speaker Donation | 479.36 | 500.00 |
| Miscellaneous | - | 100.00 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 9,372.95 | 12,685.00 |
| Receipts vs Expenses | \$ 1,190.47 | \$ (1,985.00) |

Board Minutes

Minutes of AAUW Austin Board Planning Session - August 20, 2025

Present: Sue Grove, Catherine Haslag, Rae Dawn Rao, Jen Lawhead, Angie Loecke, Becky Churchill, Ellie Jones, Morgan Carlson, Carolyn Bogott.

Call to order: Sue welcomed us and we went around the table for introductions. Rae Dawn announced the good news that we made a profit of \$1200 from the convention. Sue thanked all for their help on the convention.

Membership updates: Becky and Ellie reported that the ice cream social was a great success with eight new members joining. Special thanks for Sue for welcoming and to Catherine for orienting attendees to what AAUW is. There will be a write-up and photo about this event in the September newsletter. Others have renewed and joined since then, so no new total of membership is available yet. Ellie has found a new simplified form to use for those joining. Reminders will be sent for monthly meetings. Next year the new member rate for our chapter will only reflect the 1/2 off national dues rate plus full price on state dues (plus whatever we may or may not tack on for local dues.) That was agreed on. Sue Grove will become a life member with 50 years of continuous membership. She will be honored in a way to be determined in the future.

Budget Proposal: Rae Dawn presented the proposed budget, item by item, and minor adjustments were made. She will email the revisions and a vote will be taken by the board on line in the next few days so that it can be included in the newsletter for September. A discussion was held regarding other fundraising ideas besides the Story Show. The best ideas that emerged were either a Trivia night, or a Lego kit building competition similar to the Puzzle Palooza at the library, only perhaps with alcohol. Rae Dawn will check with our insurance to see if we can have alcohol at a fundraising event, and Morgan and Catherine will do some more thinking about a Lego competition.

Program Highlights: Catherine and Morgan presented a plan for programs and places for the year. These included, Female Super Heros, LGBTQ+ Advocacy, Local Female Super Heros, Holiday Social and Book Swap, Charcuterie, Wine, and Action, The Story of Jane, Brunch Potluck in members' homes, Bookstore Crawl, Spring Banquet.

Women's History Month: Carolyn had no report at this time. She asked for any suggestions of speakers that would appeal to a high school audience.

Story Show: Jen reported that the theme is "The Power of Hope" and the date will be January 10. Three storytellers are confirmed at this time.

Newsletter: Jen asked who would be reporting to her for evening book group and Morgan said she would send the schedule and book choices.

Website: Catherine asked that board members let her know of anything they want on the website or Facebook. She will put a write up in the newsletter about how she can use these methods to improve communication, and a link to the website will be included each month.

Small Groups: The Saturday morning knitting group will be reinstituted as per a member request.

Public Policy: Angie understands her role to be that of communicating state and national issues to the membership as she is alerted by AAUW. She also wants to get out information to members about how to get "plugged in" on how to express opinions to legislators.

Possible Initiatives for 25-26: It is hoped to recruit more student members at Riverland and perhaps form a special student group. Perhaps a new members group also could be organized. Catherine will create an orientation "infographic" to be given to visitors and prospective members.

Future Board meetings: Board members will meet at least quarterly this year. The next board meeting will be October 6, at 5:30 and Christ Episcopal church. Other meetings will be in January and April, or as needed. Respectfully submitted, Carolyn Bogott, Secretary.