

South Haven, Michigan

AAUW Newsletter: November 2024

From the President

Hello, South Haven AAUW! I hope you're enjoying the fall colors and cooler weather as we head towards the holiday season. It's been quite a busy September/October with several events. The Pillow Picnic was a delight, the September 30th School Board Candidate Forum was well attended, and we were blessed with beautiful weather for the New Member Event at Cogdal.



At that event we recognized new members **Paula Harer, Amy Fracker, Merrily Brannigan, Devona Jones and Joan Bauer**. And we are so pleased to welcome 5 new Members who attended the event as guests: **Pam Leiter, Janae Condit, Mary Dezelsky, Sharon Chapple and Jeanette Meyer!** Thanks again, **Jackie Mcaninch** for pulling it all together, and thank you **Darlene Buresch** for your beautiful decorations.

The October Lunch Bunch on the 17th at Lakeside by our Domestic Violence Chairs (**Mary Hosley and Julie Molnar**) was a wonderful kickoff for our Lunch Bunch events. Which, reminds me - we need a volunteer to arrange the November Lunch Bunch.

I would also invite you to speak with me about volunteer opportunities coming up soon. We are looking for members to form a Nominating Committee to scout for three upcoming (2025/27) positions: Treasurer, Membership VP and President Elect (President Elect would take over the President position in 2026).

Please feel free to call, text or email me about this. judyp4904@gmail.com 630-310-4904
Thanks to all of you for being South Haven AAUW Members! **Judy Pollack**

Lunches

Volunteers Needed to Organize Winter Lunch Bunches

During the Winter months we all enjoy getting together at the monthly Lunch Bunch. We need volunteers to organize a Lunch Bunch for the coming months of November, December, February, March and April. It is the easiest AAUW volunteer job you will find. All you have to do is select a restaurant and consult with the management on a good date to host 30-40 AAUW members for lunch - preferably seated together with separate checks. You do not have to decorate...unless you want. You don't have to provide door prizes...unless you want. You can always ask the Events Committee to help you if you want to jazz it up. You don't have to write individual invitations. Name Tags, however, are a desired.

If you would like to volunteer to organize one or more of the Winter Lunch Bunches, please contact Mary Tobin at tobinmm1947@comcast.net.

Book Groups

Monday Afternoon Group:

Nov 25 *Horse: A Novel* by Geraldine Brooks

Thursday Night Book Group

Nov 21 *The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn

Host: **Carol Kaim**

Wednesday Night Book Group

Nov 13: Two selections:

Small things Like These by Claire Keegan and

Address Unknown by Kathrine Taylor.

Host: **Julie Molnar**

Dec 11 *Table for Two* by Amor Towles

Host: **Janice Varney**

Wednesday Nighters 2.0

Nov 13 *The Sympathizer* by Viet Thanh Nguyen

Host: **Kellie Terry**

Dec 11 *Comfort of Crows* by Margaret Renkl

Host: **Kellie Terry**

Book groups are bursting. Contact **Mary Tobin** (tobinmm1947@comcast.net) if you are new to AAUW and willing to participate in a NEW book group. Get in on the inception, and fashion a community that suits your interests, schedule and desire to gather.

Scholarships

For those of us who knew Nancy Kayse, her passing this summer brought sadness, but also light. A retired nurse, Nancy's passion to support young women, and her commitment to AAUWSH and its mission has changed lives. And now, thanks to the generosity of family and friends, Nancy's belief in the power of education will continue.



Since Nancy's passing, AAUWSH has received over \$11,000 in memorial donations honoring Nancy's life. With input from the AAUWSH Board and Fundraising Committee, Scholarship Committee

chairperson Teresa Gibbons has worked with Nancy's family to decide how best to use the memorial donations. In 2025, three scholarships will be named after Nancy:

The Nancy Kayse Adult Education Award (\$1500) will be given to InterCare's medical/dental assistant training program. The majority of students enrolled in this program are women, and many are single moms. The funds from this award will be used to reimburse travel expenses for the women who must drive to Benton Harbor for clinical training.

The Nancy Kayse Pathfinder Award (\$1500) will be given to a female South Haven High School senior making a positive contribution to her school, home or community and whose parents do not hold a bachelor's degree.

The Nancy Kayse Luminary Award (\$1500) will be given to a female South Haven High School senior who demonstrates leadership, integrity, advocacy, and awareness of key issues facing women today.

The remaining balance of donations honoring Nancy will be earmarked for **Achievement Awards**, \$1500 grants given to previous Pathfinder and Luminary Award recipients who finish their current college semester with a minimum 2.7 GPA. Nancy's influence and dedication to AAUWSH and the donations honoring her will help our organization achieve its goal of providing local young women with financial support beyond year-one of college and through graduation.

Public Policy



Your Public Policy Committee hosted a forum for five candidates running for three positions on the South Haven School Board. The September 30 forum, moderated by PPC co-chair Amy Nichols, filled the seats at LMC. There was much interest with a range of issues discussed in answers to questions raised by attendees.

With the overall results of the November 5 election, the committee's attention will once again return to legislative issues. Our PPC has long depended upon up-to-the date information on state legislative information from Mary Pollock, AAUW MI's Government Relations Coordinator, whose knowledge and experience have been invaluable. Her retirement will represent a hole that will not be easily filled and will require our group to be particularly attentive to alternative means with which to educate ourselves. We will press AAUW MI to help us in these efforts.

Book Sale

Jean Bevevino and **Edna Kent** are the co-chairs for the next book sale. They will be welcoming assistance from everyone!

DEI

Wednesday, October 30th from 5:00-6:00 pm at the Art Center, the DEI Committee invites all AAUW members to join us to view the SH Center for the Arts Exhibit "Soulsapes". This exhibit is based on the South Haven Black History



Leadership Society's historical archives. The Curator, Jen Sistrunk, will be there to tell us about the exhibit, along with Bishop Dorothy Sherrod and **Gail Patterson-Gladney**, members of the SH Black Leadership Society. Don't miss this interesting

Membership

Please welcome:

Amy Fracker

310 Van Buren South Haven, MI 49090
Amyfracker@gmail.com 517 990 2382

Janae Condit

864 Monroe Blvd South Haven, MI 49090
conditjanae@gmail.com 248-760-0022
BS Business/Journalism Indiana University

Mary Dezelsky

225 Huron Street South Haven, MI 49090
dmdezel@hotmail.com 269-668-2744
BS CMU - MA WMU

Pamella Leiter

15978 77th Street South Haven, MI 49090
plleiter@gmail.com 847-420-1138
BS - Occupational Therapy, University of Illinois
MSA - University of Notre Dame, Indiana

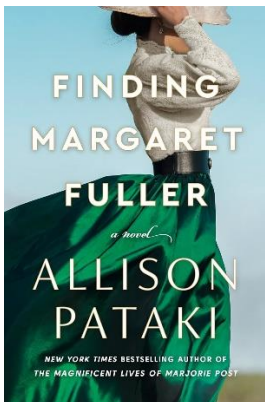
Jeanette Meyer

523 Lyon Street South Haven, MI 49090
Jamjar20@aol.com 269-358-0535
BA Western Michigan University

Sharon Chapple

210 North Shore Dr. #4 South Haven, MI 49090
Sharon.chapple@comcast.net 248/231/1926
BA & MA - MSU

DEI recommended read:



Finding Margaret Fuller by Allison Pataki. A “sweeping” (Entertainment Weekly) novel of America’s forgotten leading lady, the central figure of a movement that defined a nation—from the New York Times bestselling author of *The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post*. Whether

exploring Margaret’s remarkable friendships or delving into her crucial legacy as a journalist, writer, and feminist, *Finding Margaret Fuller* promises to transform every reader it touches.”—Marie Benedict, co-author of *The Personal Librarian*

Breakfast



Gathering at Dave’s Landing on the second Tuesday of the month, AAUW members can share breakfast and socialize in a casual setting.

Make a plan for the next outing:

The second Tuesday of each month
8:30 am

Dave’s Landing (05110 Blue Star) South Haven
COMPLETELY CASUAL

Come if you can for conversation and camaraderie.

No invitations

No RSVP’s

No name tags

Hope to see you there and then, OR as you wait for your order, snap a photo and send it in for the next newsletter. (ahabicht@rocketmail.com)

Domestic Violence Prevention



Wow! What a great time for all of us to connect after the summer and support our community. In September, the DV Prevention Committee organized the Fall Pillow Picnic. A total of 40 people attended. **Darlene Buresch** did such a fantastic job

decorating the hall. Thank you again Dar! Members donated a total of 62 pillows and 15 mattress pads. It took two trips to Sylvia's Place to deliver them. The pillows exploded upon arrival as we opened doors to take them into the storage area.

In October, in recognition of Domestic Violence (DV) Awareness Month, we organized the LunchBunch. Van Buren County Prosecutor Susan Zuiderveen and Assistant Prosecutor Rachel Kelley gave us all kinds of information and lead some great discussion. Melanie Hooker from the Domestic

Violence Coalition and our own **Robin McGinnis** from The Empowerment Center were present. Officer Ledger from the SHPD joined us. We express gratitude for what our law enforcement, prosecutors, and nonprofit groups do to help victims become survivors of domestic violence. The discussion was eye opening and we hope those in attendance feel more empowered to help someone who may be a DV victim. The key learning: Believe the victim.



If you want to appreciate this message, consider watching [Woman of the Hour](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woman_of_the_Hour) about a serial killer who appeared on The Dating Game.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woman_of_the_Hour
 At the October event, we collected many twin sheet sets for the Empowerment Center. Thank you everyone who has helped us help victims of domestic violence. Thank you also to those who contributed to a very nice selection of treats for LMC students.



Golf

The AAUW golf league that plays on Wednesdays at Hawkeshead during the season held its inaugural *Nancy Kayse Intergenerational Invitational* outing with the SHHS girl's golf team. Nancy Kayse first held this outing to partner up with the girl's team, honor them and provide additional monies to help support the team. This year, with a matching donation from Phil Kayse, Nancy's husband, and Phil Kayse, their son. We gave over \$900 to the team to use to buy equipment, uniforms and travel expense. It is great fun to play with the girls and help support the team's growth. Thanks especially to **Becky Vasco**, who took up where Nancy left off and ran this year's event.



For those members who still wish to donate in honor of Nancy, there are two paths. One is to send a check to AAUW-SH (PO Box 343, South Haven), with a note in the memo line where it's to be applied. The other is to go to the AAUW-SH website. Using the "Donate" button, one is taken to our PayPal page and can follow the steps to donate. There is a place to designate where the funds go.

To Do List ✓

- ___ Read with a book group. Or start a new one!
- ___ Visit our website.
- ___ Volunteer for the Diaper Bank.
- ___ Put Breakfast on your calendar
- ___ Serve on the Nomination Team
- ___ Organize a lunch for Nov. or Dec.
- ___ Write a legislator.
- ___ Start and Interest Group.
- ___ Look for SHAAUW on Facebook. Like!

In the Community

Sheryl Postma, Executive Director at the H.O.P.E. Parent Resource Center/Hopeful Beginnings thanked AAUW for our support of monthly meals for their parenting project. They also support a Diaper Bank and Period Pantry, open on the first Monday of each month from 10:00am - 1:00pm. **Elaine Fluck** (r) is seen here volunteering for this project. Please contact her if you are interested in assisting. (elainejf707@yahoo.com)



Blessings in a Backpack

The first Blessings packers for AAUW this school year - off to a great start. Sandy Olsen's daughter, Heather, joined us. Blessings in a Backpack mobilizes communities, individuals, and resources to provide food on the weekends for school-aged children across America who might otherwise go hungry.



Rosemary Fitzer, Cathy Duda, Sandy Olsen, Heather, Peggy Murnighan and Sue Cunningham.



Will this year's Open Door team surpass previous Hallowe'en efforts? Inquiring minds want to know.

DEI Update

You probably have heard about the antisemitic flyers that were distributed in South Haven in late September. This was followed by an anti-Black display in a neighboring township. These incidents hitting close to home are unfortunate and sad reminders that hate and discrimination are still with us in 2024.

You may have wondered why we need a DEI Committee for AAUW and what the purpose of it is. Our goals are to educate ourselves and our members about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues and to support other groups in the community that are working towards progress in these areas. The article below from MLive is a very good explanation of what DEI programs are intended to accomplish and what they are not.

Readers: Our company, like most in America, is committed to principles of diversity and inclusiveness in our work force, work environment and our journalism. Today's column is written by Bob Johnson, an editor in Saginaw who has taken an important new role for MLive. – John Hiner, MLive president.

I recently stepped into a role in our company as the statewide DEI editor and will focus on building, initiating and incorporating our DEI practices.

While I've received congratulatory comments from most people, many people seemed perplexed at the mention of DEI.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion or DEI. You've probably heard these words thrown around a lot

lately. But after some of the not-so-excited conversations, I've noticed DEI seems to be getting dragged into the same conversation as Affirmative Action, as if it's a tool to force companies to check off some diversity box.

I went to the theater to watch the new Ben Shapiro-produced mockumentary "Am I Racist?"

Matt Walsh was hilarious in his attempt to point out how people are making money by keeping white people in constant fear that they may be racist – even if they are not.

That day I watched the movie was the same day I stepped into my new role. A few seats down from me was a white woman. She and I were the only two in the theater.

We laughed during most of the show and developed an odd bond in which we were communicating and agreeing with one other without actually directly looking at or speaking to each other.

Afterward, I introduced myself and told her I wanted to watch the movie because of my new role at MLive.

And there it was. She had an awkward look, which prompted me to ask her how she felt about DEI.

She told me she felt like DEI is being forced and stated her concern that we have to center things around race.

It really hit when I told a fellow coworker about my new role and they voiced the same sentiments. It was at that moment I realized that DEI has an image problem and my new role was going to be an uphill battle.

Let's set the record straight: DEI is *not* Affirmative Action and not about lowering the bar or handing out jobs based on race, gender or any other category. It's about making sure everyone gets an equal shot to be seen, heard and considered — no matter where they come from, how they look or identify, or what physical or mental differences they may have.

I'll summarize a great example a mentor shared with me.

She told me to look at DEI like planning a party. Diversity is making sure you invite people from different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives to the party. Equity is making sure everyone has a fair chance to enjoy the party by being accommodating to their needs. And inclusion is making sure no one is left standing

awkwardly in a corner, wondering why they were even invited.

I was granted an internship from MLive in 2010 while I was completing an associate's degree. At the time, internships were only offered to those pursuing undergraduate degrees. Someone opened a door for me that might not have been opened had they continued with the same thinking and processes they have always used.

I was able to bring different perspectives to the newsroom and even won some significant awards.

This opened a door for a photographer — who also was pursuing an associate's degree — to intern for us as well. That photographer has now traveled across the country and held some impressive jobs.

DEI isn't about checking boxes or giving out jobs just to "look good" on paper. It's about recognizing that our differences bring value — innovation, creativity and new ideas that help organizations grow.

Where Affirmative Action was about creating opportunities for certain people in opportunities they were actively shut out of, DEI is about creating inclusive environments where everyone feels like they belong and invisible barriers don't limit opportunities.

In this new role, I hope we find that the best ideas will come from the voices we haven't heard yet.

On Your Calendar?

Oct 28 Monday Afternoon Books
Oct 29 Open Door
Oct 30 Soulscapes at the SH Center for the Arts
Nov 4 Diaper Bank & Period Pantry
Nov 5 Surely you have voted.
Nov 5 Teen Dinner
Nov 12 Breakfast – Dave's Landing
Nov 13 Both Wednesday book groups
Nov 13 School Board @ Lincoln
Nov 21 Thursday Night Books
Nov 25 Monday Afternoon Books
Dec 2 Diaper Bank & Period Pantry
Dec 10 Breakfast – Dave's Landing
Dec 11 Both Wednesday book groups
Dec 11 School Board
Dec 31 Open Door