

South Haven, Michigan AAUW

Newsletter: March 2026

President's Message

Hello and almost Welcome to Spring!

For those of you who love snow, this has been a delightful winter. For those of you who aren't fans, I hope you've been able to get away for a bit to other climes. Whatever the case may be, I hope you've had a pleasant time and as few disruptions as possible. And if you have had some challenging issues I wish you hopefulness and peace.

There has been just a little AAUW activity the past few months. The Lunch Bunches are still a welcome opportunity to get together. The Book Clubs are going strong and the interest groups offer other opportunities to socialize. At this time, we are looking forward to much more activity. The Scholarship Committee is ramping up to interview candidates to determine recipients for the 2026 Awards. The Executive Board is in the planning stages for our Annual Meeting which will be May 6th at LMC. Open Door has a new chair - Thank you so much, **Chris Flood!**

And welcome new members **Kathy Radakovich and Sally Kurfirst and Katherine Ellis!**

Many organizations that rely on volunteers to continue their viability are facing a tough time recruiting people for leadership positions. We, as AAUW, are fortunate to have a wealth of talented women but are still finding it difficult to fill these positions. If any of you who have thought, maybe I could do something more but not sure how, I and the Board would be so very pleased to hear from you and discuss those opportunities.

One more thing - The Michigan AAUW is having their 2026 Convention April 24-25 at the Firekeepers Casino and Hotel. You should have received an email from AAUW of Michigan on February 6 with the details and a link to register online or download a printable registration form. If you can't find that email and are interested, please email me at judyp4904@gmail.com and I'll forward it to you. The meetings and such will be on Saturday but I plan on being there and staying Friday night at the hotel. Should be fun!
~Judy Pollock

DEI Update



Equality is everyone getting a pair of shoes.



Diversity is everyone getting a different type of shoe.



Equity is everyone getting a pair of shoes that fits.



Acceptance is understanding we all wear different kinds of shoes.



Belonging is wearing the shoes you want without fear of judgment.

Membership

Please welcome:

Katherine Elsis

10110 Compton Dr. South Haven, MI 49090
772-341-1026 elsisk@bellsouth.net

Katherine Radakovich

765 St. Joseph St. South Haven, MI 49090
517-745-9257 radakat@hotmail.com

Fundraising



Book Groups

Monday Afternoon Group

Mar 23 *Happy Land* by Dolen Perkins-Valdez

Hostess: **TBD**

Apr 27 *How to Stop Time* by Matt Haig

Hostess: **Barbara Samson**

Wednesday Evening

Note: Returning to 7:00 pm meetings

Mar 11 *The Briar Club* by Kate Quinn

Hostess: **Sue Cunningham**

Apr 8 *A Fashionably French Murder* by Colleen Cambridge

Wednesday Nighters 2.0

Mar 11 *The Book Club for Troublesome Women* by Marie Bostwick

Apr 8 *The Engineer's Wife* by Traci Enerson Wood

Thursday Night Book Club

Mar 19 *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans

Hostess: **Suzanne Robinson**

Apr 16 *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters

Hostess: **Marla Zwolan**



The Thursday group enjoyed a February meeting.

For members wishing to form a FIFTH book group, I will facilitate an organizational meeting, where the When, Where, What and How Often can be determined. Forming a fifth book group will allow more members to enjoy the many benefits that reading together can bring. Leave me a message at ahabicht@rocketmail.com.

We are connected in life by a **red thread** that brings us together to dream, to extend our hands and to open our hearts. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of women and girls in our local community.

I love this graphic! The loose threads spilling off the heart remind me of how we have the opportunity every day to draw from the fullness of our hearts to address the many needs of our families, our neighbors and the larger community in which we live.

As members of AAUWSH, each of our individual threads intertwines with each other's and has the power to make an even greater impact. We are stronger when we join together. We lend our hands and warm welcome as volunteers for Open Door dinners; provide essential items and encouragement to young parents visiting the H.O.P.E. Center; collect, sort and sell books at our Used Book Sale to grow our Scholarship Program. We are advocates for women and girls with our legislators and make our voices heard on behalf of those who may not have a voice. We are stronger when we stand together.

But you also give more than time. Because you believe in the mission of AAUWSH, because you want to make a brighter future for women and girls, because you want the **red thread** of hope to connect and grow stronger, you open your checkbooks along with your hearts. Every time you make a gift, the thread becomes longer, more intertwined and more beautiful. For you, and for your continuing generosity, we are most grateful.

Bernice (Bernie) Lopata

Chair, Fundraising Committee

Public Policy Committee

The first of a series of Community Conversations to help inform the public about local impacts of current cuts in federal funding that was planned for Feb. 26 has been postponed to a later date as yet to be determined. We look forward to hearing representatives from the Area Agency on Aging, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and Meals on Wheels.

We continue to track progress of current state legislation proposals: the bill regarding insurance coverage for mammograms and the three bills that would mandate abortion reporting details and penalties in direct conflict with The Reproductive Health Act signed into law in 2023.

In the Community ... More Book News

The South Haven Library has added 11 additional digital libraries that a South Haven Library patron can add to their Libby account for reading with Kindle. This gives readers additional places to find books that may have very long wait times at our local library. Some libraries' digital book collections are very small and may not even have a digital copy of the book to lend, but every once in a while, they do and it's readily available or has a

shorter wait time than our library.

Three Blondes Brewery has Silent Book Club nights once a week in their upstairs loft area and Freshwater Fiction is on site selling

new books. First and Third Tuesdays of the month, and the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month

5:30 – 6:00 Grab some food or drink from the bar and find a seat upstairs in “The Library” at Three Blonds Brewing.

6:00-7:00 Silent reading

7:00 – 7:30 Share book recommendations, or just keep reading.

No required reading, no discussions, just bring your own reading material or peruse the selection of new books from Freshwater Fiction, a mobile bookstore bringing bestselling fiction and bookish finds to southwest Michigan.



Scholarships

The Scholarship Committee need a new chairperson. **Margaret Sleeper and Stephanie Timmer** have agreed to take over the selection process of the scholarship applications. They have been working with Dene Hadden to revise AAUW's portion of the online scholarship application, and Stephanie and Margaret have everything in place for the review team to begin reading the applications in early March.



In addition, the SHHS cafeteria has already been reserved for the Spring Scholarship Celebration (June 9, 4:00-5:30), and the materials, plans, program template, etc.

are ready to be passed on to the new chairperson.

Providing scholarships to local young women is a key part of our organization, and our members couldn't do this important work without the Scholarship Committee. Are you willing to serve as chairperson of the Scholarship Committee so AAUW SH can continue its long tradition of supporting women's education? This can be a collaborative position with co-chairs, if you'd like to share the responsibilities.

Women's History

The Scott Club has invited The Silver Bag Ladies, AAUWSH's premier acting troupe, to perform "Remembering Remarkable Michigan Women" on Tuesday, March 3, at 1:00 p.m. at the Congregational Church - as the Scott Club building is under construction for an elevator addition. **Ann Habicht, Lois Schwartz, Jean Bevevino, Renee Kaplan, Liz Smith, Julie Molnar, Marge Lampe, Sue Murphey, Sherry Saenz, Elaine Kitchin, and Mary Lynn Bugge** will participate, while our author/director/supervisor **Elaine Fluck** will also be pressed into service in a speaking (reading) role.



Open Door

Did you know AAUW has a team that supports Open Door, a free community meal program for people in need of a hot meal? Our AAUW Open Door team has two new co-chairs, **Chris Flood** and **Amy Nichols**. Chris and Amy love food and cooking and are excited about leading the AAUW Open Door team who will plan, prepare, and serve four Open Door community meals in 2026. Our next Open Door date is March 31 and we are currently in need of a few servers. Want to know more about this program or to join the team? Amy and Chris would love to welcome you. Contact Chris Flood at floodcm@comcast.net.

Lunch Bunch



The Mason Jar in St. Joseph welcomed The AAUW Lunch Bunch in January.



Rapid Responders

Copy this list so it is readily accessible.

President Donald J. Trump	202-456-1111
Vice President JD Vance	202-456-1111
US Senator Gary Peters	202-224-6221
US Senator Elissa Slotkin	202-224-4822
US Representative Bill Huizenga (4 th Congressional District)	202-225-4401
Governor Gretchen Whitmer	517-373-3400
MI State Senator Aric Nesbitt (20 th State Senate District)	517-373-0793
MI House Joey Andrews (38 th State House District)	517-373-0827
MI House Pauline Wendzel (39 th State House District)	517-373-1799



On Your Calendar?

- Mar 3 Silver Bag Ladies
- Mar 11 Wednesday Book Groups
- Mar 19 Thursday Book Group
- Mar 19 Public Policy meeting
- Mar 23 Monday Book Group
- Mar 31 Open Door
- Apr 8 Wednesday Book Groups
- Apr 16 Thursday Book Group
- Apr 16 Public Policy meeting
- Apr 24-25 MI AAUW 2026 Convention
- Apr 27 Monday Book Group
- May 6 Annual meeting – save the date

To Do List ✓

- Read with a group
- Chair the Scholarship committee
- Volunteer for Open Door
- Invite friends to AAUW events.
- Donate some Diapers.
- Volunteer to serve as an officer of AAUWSH.
- Organize a Lunch Bunch opportunity.
- Donate to the LMC pantry & school supply collection
- Stay in touch with your legislators