

# Update

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December 2023

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## CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITES:

AAUW Michigan  
<https://www.aauwmi.org>

AAUW National  
<https://www.aauw.org>  
[connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org)

AAUW Northville–Novi  
<https://aauwnn.org/>  
[info@aauwnn.org](mailto:info@aauwnn.org)

AAUW–NN  
 P.O. Box 511  
 Northville, MI 48167

## AAUWNN MEETING FESTIVE GATHERING Tuesday, December 12, 6:00 PM Novi Civic Center - 45175 W 10 Mile Road

*VP Programs*  
 Lee Doyle  
[leedoyle@umich.edu](mailto:leedoyle@umich.edu)

### AMY PETERSON CO-FOUNDER and C.E.O. REBEL NELL

Amy Peterson, Co-Founder, and C.E.O. of Rebel Nell, a verified social enterprise and women-owned Jewelry company with a purpose, employs women with barriers to employment to help them transition, from a life of dependence into self-reliance. The inspirational stories many of the women shared of overcoming emotional, physical, and financial abuse were the catalyst for creating Rebel Nell. Living next to the city’s most well-known shelters gave Amy the unique opportunity to build relationships with many residents. Amy was adamant about providing women in the shelters an opportunity to lead independent lives.



Come join in the spirit of the holidays at our Festive Gathering at the Novi Civic Center, 45175 W 10 Mile Road.

Get ready to deck the halls and be jolly at the December 12 Holiday Party. Wear your ugliest Christmas sweater and you may win a prize. Indulge in the goodies supplied by our

volunteers, and enjoy some Christmas shopping for jewelry and goods offered by our guest, Rebel Nell.



## Northville–Novi (MI) update



### NORTHVILLE–NOVI (MI)

<https://aauwnn.org/>

#### President

Karen Zyczynski  
(734) 718–3341

[jhecker101@gmail.com](mailto:jhecker101@gmail.com)

#### Vice President Programs

Lee Doyle  
(734) 277–4677

[leedoyle@umich.edu](mailto:leedoyle@umich.edu)

#### Vice President Membership/

##### Diversity

Corinne Vincent  
(586) 747–9886

[vincorinn@yahoo.com](mailto:vincorinn@yahoo.com)

##### Secretary

Caryn Doehler  
(248) 982–1029

[caryn@wowway.com](mailto:caryn@wowway.com)

##### Treasurer

Janice Wargo  
(248) 719–2900

[janicewargo@gmail.com](mailto:janicewargo@gmail.com)

#### Communication Chair

Mary Ann MacLaren  
(734) 306–3991

[info@aauwnn.org](mailto:info@aauwnn.org)

#### Editor

Mary Ann MacLaren  
(734) 306–3991

[info@aauwnn.org](mailto:info@aauwnn.org)

#### AAUW Mission

The AAUW MISSION is to advance gender equality for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

#### AAUW Diversity Statement

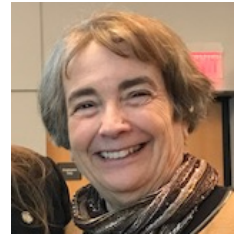
AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership teams and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic basis.

Update is published monthly, August through June, for the members and friends of the American Association of University Women Northville–Novi (MI)

### President's Message

Karen Zyczynski

[zyczynski2002@aol.com](mailto:zyczynski2002@aol.com)



## REFLECTIONS ON 2023

As the year rapidly comes to a close, I thought I would take the opportunity to do a quick review of all the educational, inspiring and fun activities of 2023. As an organization, AAUWNN is involved in a multitude of activities that may go unrecognized by those not directly involved but have a positive impact on the community we serve.

In 2023, thanks to Jane Hecker and her helpers, we were able to reinstitute Career Path Day for eighth grade girls at Meads Mill School on March 17 and Hillside Middle School on May 19. The girls enjoyed a tour of the Schoolcraft College Manufacturing and Engineering Center, lunch at Genetti's and an excellent presentation by Nancy Darga who shared opportunities for young people to be involved in the Rouge River Project. Rose Dankis is taking the lead in 2024.

At our Annual Meeting in May we were able to introduce the recipients of our high school scholarships, including their Moms; and in October we met the recipients of our NCCWSL Scholarships (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders), another very impressive group of women! Our Remember the Ladies (RTL) Program benefited Northville/Novi elementary school libraries and their students. Caryn Doehler is coordinating the scholarship program again in 2024. Corinne Vincent coordinates our NCCWSL Program with Schoolcraft College. At our November Meeting Silent Auction we raised over \$900 for RTL.

We hosted a number of outstanding guest speakers at our monthly meetings, thanks to Patty Domin/Lee Doyle and the Program Committee, starting with Nancy Darga on the History of Hines Park. The AAUWMI Public Policy Coordinator Mary Pollock in March on "*Issues Important to Women*" being addressed by our State Legislature. In April our very own member, Dr. Michelle Dushee' Williams, demonstrated her technique for creating beautiful scarves. In September Sally Doty, Treasurer for AAUWMI, talked about why our work matters. And finally in November State Senator Rosemary Bayer filled us in on legislation around gun safety and Lieutenant Adam Elsen of the Novi Police about common sense gun safety.

In between we managed some fun activities including raising money at our two well-attended Mahjong Tournaments, our various interest groups met regularly and our very first "*Girls Wanna Have Fun*" trip to Stratford in June. Thank you Susan Schanne for organizing the trip! In February Val Gagnon led our meeting focusing on creating 'Quilted Hearts' as a random act of kindness to spread some positive energy and joy within our community. In December Rebel Nell joins us as our guest speaker.

*Continued on page 3...*

## Northville–Novi (MI) update

*Continued from page 2...*

Thank you to everyone who helped make this a successful AAUWNN year. Every donation of time, money, creativity and energy helped make this an exciting, impressive and event filled year!

Join us for some holiday treats and fun at our Holiday Party on December 12. Hope to see you there!



Vice President Membership/Diversity  
Corinne Vincent  
[vincorinn@yahoo.com](mailto:vincorinn@yahoo.com)



### MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Building an AAUWNN Community of Members has been an organizational target for some years. It is exciting and fun that its newest member class of 2023 made it a “family affair.”

Recent New members- Alaina Strzalka, Allison Friedman, Melinda Mims, Marquetta Williams, Olivia Warner, Reem Alam, Rhonda Donovan, Caitlin Bearer help make it a family affair in slightly different ways.

- Marquetta Williams, with a Wayne State MSW background, joined at the suggestion of daughter Michelle Williams, a featured designer at the 2022 Michigan Fashion Designer Showcase.
- Practicing registered nurse Reem Alam joined her sister Deena and Mom Jeri in membership.
- Ohio State 2021 biochemistry grad Olivia Warner decided that her Grandmother Betty Mooney had a great idea.
- Allison Friedman, with an MSN child psych. background, has been an active AAUW Birmingham member, then Ann Arbor. When Allison recently retired to Novi, she knew that an AAUW family would be ready to welcome, where ever she moved.
- Malinda Mims is an entrepreneur ... a new Novi State Farm agent. An AAUWNN member reached out and invited Malinda to join the AAUW family.
- Alaina Strzalka, a 2020 Central Michigan biology grad focused on ecology, evolution and conservation, has already landed a job in her field. She decided AAUWNN was for her after learning of its volunteer opportunities to actually “empower women and girls.”
- Caitlin Bearer, an Estate Attorney, was drawn into the organization by her mother, Lee Doyle, and already serves on the Program Committee.
- Rhonda Donovan, Coordinator Student Resource Center, Schoolcraft College joined as a College/University Partner. Those who attended the on-campus October College University Celebration met and heard our student delegates to the spring National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. We witnessed the results of Rhonda’s hard work, on AAUW’s behalf, to get the word out to exceptional young women to apply.

Hearing from these talented young leaders certainly helped Alaina and Olivia decide to become AAUWNN family members. Olivia wrote, “Thank you so much for the opportunity to join your organization. Participating in the October meeting transformed how I saw myself....”

*Public Policy*  
Mary Jane Kearns  
[mjkearns1@outlook.com](mailto:mjkearns1@outlook.com)



## **PUBLIC POLICY MATTERS**

If you weren't at our November branch meeting you missed a wonderful example of a program focused on a very important public policy issue – that of gun legislation changes and safety. Michigan Senator Rosemary Bayer and Lieutenant Adan Elson of the Novi Police each spoke with conviction and knowledge, making this a wonderful program. Kudos to those on the Program Committee who organized this very educational meeting. I'd like to remind everyone that if you are unable to attend in person, that all our programs can be attended via Zoom.

As you read this, the Michigan legislature has been 'home' for a couple of weeks. This is the first time since 1968 that it has adjourned before December. There were several reasons for this:

- The state government passed a bill earlier this year to move Michigan's presidential primary date to February 27. Before, it was March 10. The move makes Michigan one of the first states to hold a primary; however, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed the legislation without immediate effect. That means, according to state law, the law will take effect 90 days after what is called "sine die," or the official end date. Several factors went into the decision, including the 2024 presidential election. For the primary bill to apply to next year's election cycle, lawmakers would have to order sine die by November 28.
- Two democratic state representatives from the east side of the state won mayoral races on election Tuesday. Democrats previously had just a two-seat majority but with two of them leaving, the House is split 54-54. Democrats still control the agenda, but they would no longer hold a voting advantage— making it difficult to pass legislation. A special election will now be held to fill those two seats; the governor will determine when.

Lawmakers will re-convene officially by January 10, 2024.

At the national level, the U.S. Supreme Court adopted its first-ever ethics code, bowing to pressure from Congress and the public. All nine justices signed onto the new code, which was instantly criticized for lack of an enforcement mechanism.

In an unsigned statement, the justices said though there has been no formal code, they have long abided by certain standards. With the release of the code, the court is trying to be somewhat specific about what justices can and cannot do. But there is a lot they can do and no enforcement mechanism as to what they are supposed not to do.

For example, the code is quite specific about financial transactions: Justices can make a real estate transaction, as long as it's not before the court. But the code simply reaffirms the commitment to the disclosure provisions that are in the existing code for all federal judges.

The code is also specific about recusal if family members, such as spouses, children or grandchildren, have a case before the court or is a lawyer before the court.

Secretary  
Caryn Doehler  
[caryn@wowway.com](mailto:caryn@wowway.com)



## BOARD BRIEFS - NOVEMBER

### BOARD MEETING

- Program: Plans are in place for December meeting at the Novi Civic Center. January, February, and March meetings will be lunch meetings at the Sports Den in Northville .
- Membership: 91 members to date, including 12 new since April. Committee active is planning ways to recruit, engage and retain member. National AAUW has agreed to not raise dues.
- Northville Chamber of Commerce has reached out to AAUWNN, asking us to be a more active networking presence at their events.
- Interest Groups: Please update in the newsletter: meeting dates, times, locations, contact person so new members have accurate information.
- Mah Jong's November tournament hosted 48 players, netting \$1,000.00
- Silent Auction: 21 items sold for \$955.00, \$355.00 more than anticipated
- Newsletter: Joyce Murdock is the new editor.
- NEEDED - A member to help with our social media presence



Financial Development  
Mary Ann MacLaren  
[info@aauwnn.org](mailto:info@aauwnn.org)



## FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT [PEEK AT THE UNIQUE II](#)

The “Peek at the Unique II” is April 13, 2024 9:15 A.M. - 1:15 P.M. VisTaTech Center, DiPonio Room, Schoolcraft College. A brunch will be served. Postcards to “Save the Date” are available. You can contact Mary Ann or pick up some at the December meeting.

We need sponsor and advertisers. Packets for both are available from Mary Jane Kearns. Sponsors may choose from back cover, inside front or back cover, full page and half page. For a \$20 donation anyone can be a “Friend of AAUWNN.”

We have five runway fashion designers. Two returning and three new ones. If you know of a designer contact Karen Zyczynski.

Any member not already working on a Designer Fashion Showcase Committee is encouraged to volunteer. There is a meeting of all committees December 6 at 6:30 at the home of Karen Zyczynski. If interested in attending or more details of what you can do, please contact Chair Mary Ann MacLaren at [maryann@maclareninc.com](mailto:maryann@maclareninc.com)

### [OTHER FUNDRAISING](#)

Other fundraising events this fall are:

- Mah Jongg tournament, held on November 10, was a huge success. Forty-eight ladies, twelve tables, enjoyed a fabulous lunch by Fins Kitchen and Bar (Detroit Marriott), followed by three rounds of games. The fundraiser netted \$1,000.
- Twenty-one items that featured member travels were purchased during our silent auction fundraising activity on November 14 to benefit our “Remember The Ladies” initiative. We raised \$955.

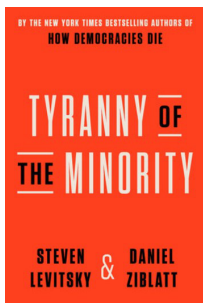
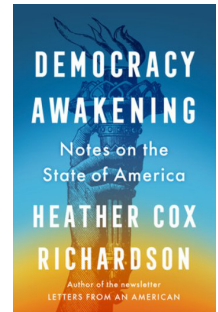
## Northville–Novi (MI) update

Great Decisions  
Diane Chirillo, Chair  
[chirillodlc@gmail.com](mailto:chirillodlc@gmail.com)

### GREAT DECISIONS

Our Great Decisions topical discussions from the Foreign Policy Association will begin in March 2024. To kick off our season, we have once again selected two books for discussion in January and February. These books give us a chance to explore our self-selected topics of interest. Both books were published in September 2023.

January's selection is "**Democracy Awakening: Notes on the State of America**" by Heather Cox Richardson. She is a professor of history at Boston College and the author of several books. In 2019, she launched a daily Facebook essay providing a historical background for the turbulent politics in DC at the time. This turned into a newsletter, "Letters from an American," with over 2 million dedicated readers who rely on her plainspoken and educated take on the present and past in America. In this book, Richardson describes how to use our nation's history as a roadmap to guide us through the future.



In February, we will discuss "**Tyranny of the Minority**" by Steven Levitsky & Daniel Ziblatt. In 2022, our group read another book by these authors, "How Democracies Die" and look forward to this new book which is a call to examine and reform our politics, and how to thrive as a multicultural democracy.

We invite you to join us in what promises to be two interesting book discussions, on January 16th and February 20th.

Great Decisions meetings take place via Zoom the third Tuesday of every month at 1:30pm. Contact Diana Chirillo at [chirillodlc@gmail.com](mailto:chirillodlc@gmail.com) for details.



### \$\$\$ PASSIVE FUNDRAISING \$\$\$

Shopping, it's what we all do well, several times a week. We visit Kroger for food and gasoline, browse the treasures of Amazon in our pajamas, and purchase AAUWNN spirit clothing from Big Frog. You can EASILY add to the coffers of AAUWNN by signing up with these three companies. A portion of your purchase will go directly into our account. You do not have to do a thing but shop! You know how to do that, don't you??? Sign up now!

#### KROGER

Sign up for the Kroger Community Rewards Program to help AAUWNN achieve its financial goals! Go online to <https://www.kroger.com/o/store-services/community-rewards>. Sign in using your email address and designate American Association of University Women Northville/Novi as the recipient of your rewards. If you do not already have a Kroger Plus Card, you will be issued one.

#### BIG FROG

Sign up from the homepage of our website: <https://aauwnn.org>. Scroll down to Spirit Wear and click to be linked to Big Frog, Novi.

## Northville–Novi (MI) update

Treasurer  
Janice Wargo  
[janicewargo@gmail.com](mailto:janicewargo@gmail.com)



### OUR ENDOWMENT AT CFSEM CAN SAVE YOU TAX \$\$\$\$\$

Written by Joyce Murdock

At the November 14 branch meeting Jan Wargo, our treasurer, announced that the market value of our endowment at the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSEM) was \$131,878.13 as of August 31, 2023. When the endowment was established, the branch felt that when the value reached the \$100,000 mark, we would start making withdrawals. We did wait a little bit longer, but we have been taking withdrawals the last several years.

Just because we reached our goal of \$100,000 and are taking withdrawals should not deter you from making contributions to it, especially since it can save you tax dollars. How can you do this? You can do it by making a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from your IRA to CFSEM. If you are taking Required Minimum Distributions (RMD), the QCD would count as part of your RMD. You would not have to count it as income. However, on the other hand, you would not be able to take it as a charitable contribution on Schedule A (the Schedule where you itemize). But how many of you itemize these days anyway? Most people take the standard deduction unless they have large medical expenses.

**The QCD must go directly from your IRA to the CFSEM. It CANNOT go to you and then to the CFSEM.** You need to make sure you receive a letter from either the CFSEM or from the holder of your IRA stating a transfer has been made. You include this letter with your tax information when you give it to your tax preparer.

If you don't take a Required Minimum Distribution yet, a charitable gift to our AAUWNN Endowment with CFSEM is a very smart end of the year decision and very much appreciated. Another reason to donate to CFSEM is that it helps our branch **WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER.**



Remember the Ladies  
Joyce Murdock, chair  
[jgmurdock12051942@wowway.com](mailto:jgmurdock12051942@wowway.com)



### REMEMBER THE LADIES

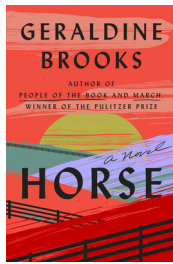
The holidays are here and it's time to think about what a great gift for a mom, sister, daughter, granddaughter, father, son, brother, or grandson or anyone else on your list who tells you not to get them anything unless they can eat it or wear it. A donation of a book to one of the Novi or Northville elementary schools through our **"Remember the Ladies" Program** might be just the thing you've been looking for. It would make a great hostess gift, too. To donate a book call me at (313) 381-2350 or contact me at my e-mail address, [jgmurock12051942@wowway.com](mailto:jgmurock12051942@wowway.com). The minimum contribution is only \$15. Order form is on page 9 of this newsletter.

## Northville–Novi (MI) update

### Daytime Book Group

Marian Brockie, Contact

On Friday, December 14, 2023 we will discuss **“Horse”** by Geraldine Brooks. Discussion Leader is Pat Metz. We are meeting at the Northville Library Friendship Community Room, 10:00-11:30 A.M.



Also, for more information on joining this group please contact Marian Brockie at [mbrockie@umich.edu](mailto:mbrockie@umich.edu).

### Bridge Group

Marian Brockie, Contact

The Bridge Group currently is meeting at Laurel Park Food Court area every Wednesday at 1:00 P.M.



For more information on joining contact Marian Brockie at [mbrockie@umich.edu](mailto:mbrockie@umich.edu).

### Restaurant Rovers

Joyce Murdock, Contact

The Restaurant Rovers will not meet in December. We will get back on schedule January 17 at noon at Brentwood Grill, 43150 Grand River, Novi.



**NOTE: During the winter we will be meeting at lunch time.**

All members are welcome to join.

If you have questions, please contact Joyce Murdock at [jgmurdock12051942@wowway.com](mailto:jgmurdock12051942@wowway.com) or at (313) 381-2350.

### Evening Book Group

Mary Jane Kearns, Contact

The Evening Book Group does not meet in December. Enjoy the Holidays and stay safe and healthy.



‘See’ you in January when we will discuss **“Black Cake”** by Charmaine Wilkerson over Zoom. Lee will lead our discussion.

Interested in joining? We’d love to have you. Contact Mary Jane at [mjkearns1@outlook.com](mailto:mjkearns1@outlook.com) or 248 449-8693.

### Movie Goers

Rhonda York, Contact

Movie Goers are now meeting the first Tuesday of the month in the late morning. Rhonda will send an email to those on the list. To be added or for information contact Rhonda York at [rlYork03@gmail.com](mailto:rlYork03@gmail.com).



### Mah Jongg

Mary Jane Kearns, Contact

The group meets every Friday 1:00–4:00 P.M. in a player’s home.



To join the group or learn how to play please contact Mary Jane at [mjkearns1@outlook.com](mailto:mjkearns1@outlook.com)

### Great Decisions

Diana Chirillo, Contact

The Great Decisions group will NOT meet in December. **See Page 6** in this newsletter for information about January’s book discussion.



Great Decisions meetings take place via Zoom the third Tuesday of every month at 1:30pm. Contact Diana Chirillo at [chirillodlc@gmail.com](mailto:chirillodlc@gmail.com) for details.



**Northville–Novi (MI) update**

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

NORTHVILLE-NOVI BRANCH

**“Remember the Ladies” Order Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

School District (Please check one) Northville \_\_\_\_\_ Novi \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred school library \_\_\_\_\_

This donation is for the purpose of purchasing women’s biographies, histories, or related resources for the media center.

In honor \_\_\_\_\_ In memory \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like a certificate sent to the person or family of the person listed above?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, to whom and where would you like it sent?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Send this form along with a check (minimum \$15) made payable to the proper school district with “Remember the Ladies” on the memo line to:

Remember the Ladies Committee, 12338 Woodlands Ct., Plymouth, MI 48170

**Office use only:**

Order form # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt # \_\_\_\_\_

Book plate completed \_\_\_\_\_ sent \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (date)

Certificate completed \_\_\_\_\_ sent \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) (date)

Thank You completed \_\_\_\_\_



Articles for the January, 2024  
issue due **December 20, 2023**  
to:  
[Mary Ann MacLaren](mailto:MaryAnnMacLaren@aauwnn.org)  
[info@aauwnn.org](mailto:info@aauwnn.org)

**AAUW Northville–Novi (MI) Calendar of Events**  
visit the website for more information at

<https://aauwnn.org/>

Board Meeting ..... Fourth Tuesday, 6:45 P.M.  
Bridge Group.....Wednesdays, 1:00 P.M.  
Mah Jong.....Fridays, 1:00 P.M.  
Restaurant Rovers.....Third Wednesday, 6:00 P.M.  
Day Book Group.....Second Friday, 10:00 A.M.  
Evening Book Group..... Fourth Monday, 7:00 P.M.  
Great Decisions .....Third Tuesday, 1:30 P.M.