

Play to kick off program year

Meeting to be held at Jefferson Sept. 9

"Fanny Kemble at the Slave Plantation," a one-woman play that examines the rights of women in the first half of the 19th century, will be performed at the September open meeting of the Erie Branch of the American Association of University Women.

Performed by Lydia Axelrod and produced by Ron Flucker, the program is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 9, at the Jefferson Educational Society. The program is free and open to the public. Members are encouraged to bring guests.

The 40-minute production to be presented is an edited version of "Shame on the Devil," a production created by author and actress Anne Ludlam in 1980.

"Fanny Kemble at the Slave Plantation" illustrates famous British actress and author Fanny Kemble's reaction to the conditions faced by enslaved people in the 1880's using facts gleaned from a journal Kemble kept after her marriage to a wealthy Georgia plantation owner and grandson of a U.S. senator. The monograph examines the rights of women at the time and provides a description of slave treatment on the plantation.

"Fanny Kemble at the Slave Plantation" re-creates a scene wherein Kemble addresses an audience in a New England town with a thriving textile industry.

Axelrod, a professionally trained actress and motivational speaker, received her doctorate from Columbia University in school administration and has taught English and drama at the high school and college levels. Flucker, the producer, was trained as a structural engineer but derives great pleasure from his "side gig" of writing and producing presentations.



Lydia Axelrod

Erie Gives raises over \$4,300 for scholarships

Erie Gives was a huge success.

Preliminary tallies from the Erie Community Foundation show that our branch raised \$4,375 from 31 individual donations.

I would like to extend a big thank you to every branch member that believed in our mission and made donations that will fund our scholarship fund.

Final figures, including the match, should be available in October's *Pressible*.

By Candy Brown

Reservations due for wine tasting tour

Food and Friends, the new AAUW Erie study group, is taking reservations for a Wine-Tasting Tour to North East's Wine Country.

Con't. on P. 3

President's Message

Greetings to all ...

We are proudly starting a new year of AAUW programming. You will have the full calendar of our monthly programs in our new Yearbook and I hope you will put all of them in your personal calendars...

Over the next 10 issues of the *Pressible*, I plan to bring to your attention the various topics that are of importance to us on women and girls' education, career development and legal/political advocacy for their causes. You will have much more detail on these topics from our Public Policy Chair and our past President, Loretta Seigley, as the year progresses... Current events promise to make these especially relevant, so please stay tuned and take note of our emails.

I wish to start with the education front, as many of us have been professionals in that field. Our schools are under stress. The famous (infamous?) triangle (student-teacher-parent) seems to be unraveling, and public schools are caught between retaining students to get funding vs. losing their authority over how best to educate them. More specifically, the PA state budget passed with no funding set aside for vouchers – for now. One might think that a Democratic governor would not even entertain a voucher system at taxpayer expense, but the State House is split, hence politics weighed heavily, until public pushback allowed him to sideline the funding. But there is more... Not a day passes by that some of us hear something about school curricula being tampered with or books being banned, not by the curriculum directors or librarians who are trained professionals but by self-described groups calling for long lists of topics and books to be stricken from the curriculum... School boards yield as they are elected officials, not professional educators. Then there is the counter movement pushing against equity and diversity in schools.

These are hefty issues, and one often feels overwhelmed and is tempted not to get involved. However, we are university educated women and mostly of the generation that will turn over a world bereft with these issues to the younger women soon... We don't have the luxury of complacency.

My way of dealing with this is to start at the local extensions of at least one or two of these topics, seek out those who think alike or are willing to debate in a civil manner and go from there. I invite you to do the same if you aren't already...

Take note of the webinars the State or National AAUW sends out on these or other topics close to you, sign up and just click to join the podcast. You don't have to have an opinion or speak up...

Con't. on P. 4



Asuman Baskan

President's Message

Con't. from P. 2

Just be aware of the information that has been compiled and you may form an opinion or revise one, perhaps support the one you already have... It feels good to know that there are others who think like you, or to find out more about something you thought you knew enough on. You also become aware of groups you can join or support, if not become actively involved with, sharing the burden of activism.

Our Branch has a collaboration with Harding School. We have contributed in all ways possible to meet the needs of the students and teachers there and we hope to continue... But we should be well informed about, and ready to respond to, the approaching challenges as students become more diverse socio-economically and culturally. Many students are New Americans and Erie is a designated Welcoming City which must live up to that status in schools as well, creating welcoming environments for youth of diverse backgrounds – this is the future of America. And this is only one example of how we can make a difference at the local level.

Hoping that in our new year, we will all be in the same endeavor, in our own ways but together.

All the best,
Asuman.

Wine tasting

Con't. from P. 1

Seats are still available at \$75 per person. This fee includes round trip transportation from Millcreek Mall on Oct. 2, your share of limo rental for the afternoon, cash tip, visit to four wineries (Johnson Estates, Arrowhead, Courtyard, and Penn Shore) and wine samples (three at Johnson, five at Arrowhead, and four at both Courtyard and Penn Shore.)

You will also be able to purchase products at the wineries visited and there is room available on the limo bus to store your purchase(s). Departure from the mall is at noon, return at 5 p.m. Loretto Bellicini is the Event Chair and you may direct questions to her at 814-449-8839 or email loretto.bellicini1@gmail.com

Reservations are being accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Your \$75 check, made out to Loretto Bellicini and sent to her attention at 4139 Sierra Drive, Erie PA 16506, will be your reservation.

Welcome to our new members!

Erie Branch is delighted to welcome two new members, Shannon Onderko and Kathleen Horan.

Shannon Onderko owns her own business, Elevate Consulting Service, and provides grant writing services.

She earned her degrees from Edinboro University — a bachelor degree in Psychology in 2009 and a Masters in Education in 2011.

Kathleen Horan holds a BA in Political Science Public Administration from Edinboro University in 1981.

The Vice President of the Friends of the Library, she is a former president of NOW in Erie, was President of Zonta Two from 1988-89 and served as the first Woman President of Erie Rotary from 1996-1997.

She has three children, two daughters, Jennifer and Jessica, and one son, Joshua.

By Loretto Bellicini

Branch’s collaboration with Harding School continues

Opportunities for AAUW Erie Branch members to volunteer at Harding School continue. Shanna Potter, Community School Director at Harding, is inviting members to get involved and volunteer to support a variety of initiatives planned for students this year.

Last Fall, AAUW Erie Branch donated funds to support a STEAM (Science Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) project at Harding which is being held this year. Members are invited to volunteer and/or contribute school supplies to support Harding students Thank you in advance for your support!

Loretta Seigley, Public Policy chair

Hello, AAUW Friends!

A new school year is approaching and we have a lot of upcoming opportunities for AAUW to get involved! The school district has also updated the process for unpaid volunteers to make it much easier to get all of the necessary clearances, so if folks are interested in volunteering more than once - we can set up a day to help everyone with that!!

I know this is a lot, so if you'd like to get together to chat before school starts, just let me know!

Welcome Back - Monday, Aug. 26.

Harding Centennial Celebration - Thursday, Sept. 26.

Looking for basket donations valued between \$25-\$50.

Harding STEAM Fair - Tuesday, Oct. 8.

This is one of the things we will be doing to incorporate the STEAM funding donation that AAUW gave to Harding. This will be a family engagement event, bringing various community organizations in to do STEAM-based activities with students and families. AAUW members are welcome to join us!

Harding Fall Fest/Trunk or Treat - Friday, Oct. 25.

Same deal as last year, so many of you know the drill now! Volunteers can donate candy or come and decorate a trunk and pass out treats to students!

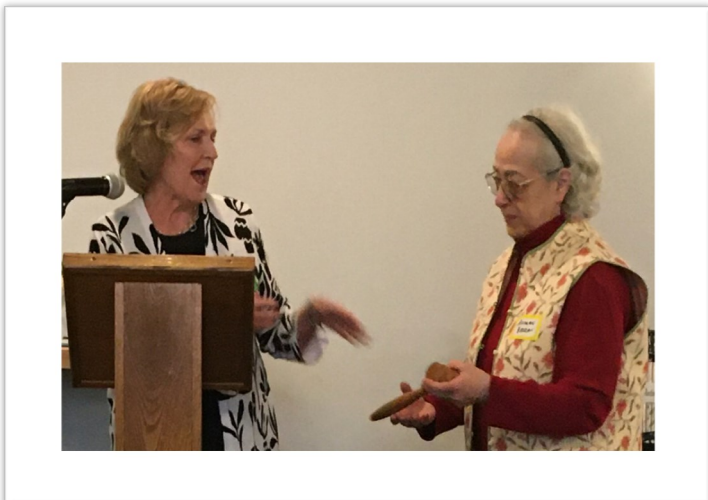
Thank you, Shanna Potter, *Community School Director*, **Harding Elementary School** Cell: (814) 440-9734 | Desk: (814) 874 - 6561 | email: spotter@eriesd.org

HARDING ELEMENTARY SUPPLY LIST

Thank you for helping to support our school with supplies for students in Pre-K through 5th Grade (ages 4-11) to use throughout the school year. Items needed are:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Backpacks | Pencil cases |
| Kleenex | Headphones/Earbuds |
| Expo Dry Erase Markers | Glue Sticks |
| Folders | Markers |
| Youth Socks | Clorox Wipe |
| Erasers | Crayons |
| Notebooks | Colored Pencils |
| Pencil Sharpeners | |
| Scissors | |

HOW TO GIVE Shop online using our Amazon Wishlist: <http://bit.ly/hardingwishlist> or shop local and deliver to Harding Elementary: 820 Lincoln Avenue Monday - Friday from 8-3. Use the Lincoln Ave. entrance or contact Shanna to arrange drop-off or pick up!



Branch president Asuman Baskan (right) receives the gavel from Immediate Past President Loretta Seigley (left) at the May meeting.

In memoriam

Ed Tonkin

It is with deep sadness that we report the passing of our fellow member Ed Tonkin on Monday, July 29.

Ed blazed new trails by joining our Branch as the first male member and we enjoyed his participation in Politalk. His wife, Debbie Tonkin, has been leading our Scholarship Committee.

The couple has three children, son, Edward "Ted" H. Tonkin, daughter Virginia "Ginny" K. Tonkin, and son, Collier W. Tonkin.

Public Policy Highlights

This fall, we will experience what many describe as a decade defining election. Currently, there are challenges to fundamental rights and equity issues supported by the AAUW Mission Including:

- Diversity Issues in Education
- Persistence of the Gender Pay Gap
- Workplace and campus Sexual Harassment
- Access to affordable childcare for working mothers

Election work will be a major AAUW focus this fall. We are fortunate to have opportunities to expand our knowledge about Public Policy, Diversity, Leadership and many other important topics through webinars shared by both AAUW National and AAUW PA. AAUW National offers informative webinars to assist with identifying important issues and voter readiness, including:

- Election Resources -AAUW: Empowering Women Since 1881
- Voter Registration Webinar Recording ([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com))
- Its- My- Vote-2024- Voter- Issue- Guide- English. pdf ([aauw.org](https://www.aauw.org))

In addition, AAUW PA will offer the following monthly webinars:

- September—Election Public Policy
- October — Work/Life Balance focused on childcare and paid leave issues
- November - Women's Health

Announcements and dates for each webinar will be emailed to all members.

AAUW PA has also announced that the Board has submitted a request to join the coalition: Pennsylvania for Welcoming and Inclusive Schools. This coalition supports communities and advocates that are working to assist historically marginalized students (often including LGBTQ+ students and students of color) who may be facing harmful policies.

Loretta Seigley, Public Policy chair

Branch Study/Interest Groups 2024-25

In addition to our monthly branch meetings which are open to all members, Erie Branch also offers study or interest groups for additional opportunities to learn and to get to know branch members. Most of these groups meet monthly, except when the regularly scheduled times conflict with holidays. The times and dates for each meeting are posted in the *Pressible* news-letter members receive prior to the beginning of each month. Any member can attend any of the study groups at any time. One may become a "regular" and attend most of a study group's meetings throughout the year, or one might just attend a meeting for that study group occasionally. Reservations are generally not required unless the meeting requires payment in advance, for example, for a luncheon or a dinner. If so, instructions for attending the meeting will be spelled out in the *Pressible*.

At this point in time, we have five study/interest groups:

Book club: The books that the club will discuss each month are posted in each *Pressible*. This year meetings will take place at Springhill Independent Living.

Politalk: This group meets monthly to discuss national and international political issues.

Global Friends: Branch members are introduced to cultures around the world, and they are given the opportunities to develop friendships with those who have moved to America. Reservations are required for meetings that include a dinner.

Gourmet: Members gather for a dinner at a chosen restaurant monthly throughout the year. Reservations and the deadline for making a reservation are posted in the *Pressible*.

Food and Friends: This is a new and unique group that is offering a variety of events designed to strengthen social bonds and enrich one's life. During the upcoming year, this group will explore ethnic dining, hands on baking, a winery tour, feeding the hungry, and having a cookie exchange. This group will pique your interest. Please look forward to reading about each month's upcoming event in the *Pressible*.

If anyone would like to explore starting a new study group, please contact me. Study groups have changed over time depending on the interests of current members of our branch. A study group does not have to have many members. It can be composed of several members who share a particular interest. There is no monthly meeting requirement. Members of a group can decide to meet monthly, quarterly, etc., depending upon the topic to be explored. I can be reached at (814) 873-0486 by phone or text if you have any questions about how to start a new interest group.

Candy Brown, Study Group Chair

Reservations due Sept. 6 for exciting food tasting experience!

Join Food and Friends on Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 5 p.m. at Saigon Nights, 2430 W. 8th St., for a tantalizing culinary adventure! Indulge in a unique experience as Nga, our chef, presents four delectable samples of her most popular Vietnamese dishes.

After sampling these exquisite creations, order dinner from her diverse menu, where you'll discover a world of flavors waiting to be explored. Guests are welcome to this event.

Don't miss out, reserve your spot by Sept. 6. Text Anne Marie Kumhera at 440-670-5899 or email annemarieku@gmail.com

Dues overdue?

Dues for fiscal year 2024-25 were due by June 30. Annual dues are \$105, \$33 for Life Members. Honorary Life Members do not pay dues.

If you wish to receive a paper copy of the *Pressible*, please add \$10 to help defray the cost of printing and mailing. This does not apply to Honorary Life Members.

Make checks payable to "AAUW Erie Branch Inc." and mail to Branch Finance Officer, P.O. Box 9264, Erie PA 16505, or pay on line at www.aauwerie.org.

Branch Study Groups

Book Discussion

Book Discussion will meet on Sept. 5 from 1-3 p.m. at Springhill Independent Living, Room 317. "Hello Beautiful" by Ann Napolitano will be reviewed by Ann Marie Kumhera.

Food and Friends

Food and Friends will meet on Wednesday, Sept. 11, at 5 p.m. at Saigon Nights, 2430 W. 8th St. Reserve by Sept. 6 to Anne Marie Kumhera at 440-670-5899 or email annemarieku@gmail.com

Global Friends

Global Friends will meet on Monday, Sept. 30, at 7 p.m. at Edie's home,

638 Vermont Ave. Program: TBD

Gourmet

Gourmet will meet at Thai Taste Cuisine, 36 Peninsula Dr., Erie, on Friday, Sept. 27, at 5 p.m.

If you are planning to attend, please call Nickie Azicri at 814-835-3780 or 814-504-8258 or email speedyzeek8@gmail.com by Sept. 23 to reserve your place.

See you soon!

Politalk

Politalk will meet on Friday Sept. 20, 2:30 p.m. at Asuman's house.

September 2024

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3 Board mtg. 6:30 p.m. Zoom	4	5 Book Club 1-3 p.m. Springhill 317	6	7
9 Branch Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Jefferson Educational Society	10	11 Food/ Friends 5 p.m. Saigon Nights	12	13	14
16	17	18	19 Politalk 2:30 p.m. at Asuman's	20	21
23	24	25	26	27 Gourmet 5 p.m. Thai Taste Cuisine	28
30 Global Friends 7 p.m. at Edie's					



Erie Branch ♦ Founded in 1902

P.O. Box 9264 Erie PA 16505

AAUW's Mission

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through education, philanthropy, and research. By joining AAUW you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance. In principle and in practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in the organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

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Branch email: eriebranchaauw@gmail.com
Editor email: eriepressible@gmail.com
Facebook: @AAUWEriePA
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