

ERIE PRESSIBLE

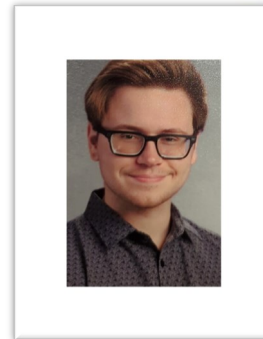
December 2024

Our holiday luncheon is almost here!

Reservations are due by Monday, Dec. 2

Please come celebrate this beautiful time of year with branch members on Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Kahkwa Club, 3300 Kahkwa Club Road, for one of our branch's most anticipated events of the year. Festivities begin at 11:30 a.m., thereby allowing you time to mingle with your AAUW friends in Kahkwa's elegantly decorated private room before lunch commences at noon.

Our entertainment will be provided by Jacob Perry, a local pianist. He received his early musical training from pianist Charlie Meyer and his collegiate training from Dr. Nathan Hess at Mercyhurst University. With his Music Education degree, Jacob currently teaches music in Millcreek Township School District at Chestnut Hill Elementary. Through seven years of private lesson teaching and two years of public-school teaching, Jacob has been able to encourage appreciation for a wide variety of musical genres and styles, ranging from classical to jazz to pop. Jacob has developed a personable style of performing that mixes various genres and abilities. He specializes in performative jazz music and always looks forward to engaging with the audience!



Jacob Perry

Please choose from one of the following meals: (1) Salmon with Cucumber Dill Sauce, (2) Grilled Chicken Breast with Velouté Sauce, or (3) Zucchini Boat Stuffed with Vegetable Ragout. All entrees will be accompanied by a Winter Salad with mustard vinaigrette dressing, Parmesan Risotto, Vegetable Medley, Rolls & Butter, Coffee or Tea. Dessert is a Mixed Berry Crumble with Ice Cream.

Please ***make your reservation by Monday, Dec. 2*** by sending a check for \$30 payable to "AAUW Erie Branch Inc." to Barbara Hutzelman, 3226 Rustic Lane, Erie 16506 (814-881-7339) or online (with a small surcharge) via our branch website <http://www.aauwerie.org> under the Events tab.

Valet parking is available. Attendees will be asked to contribute to the AAUW LAF (cash or check).

We hope you will be there to wish one another much happiness in the new year!

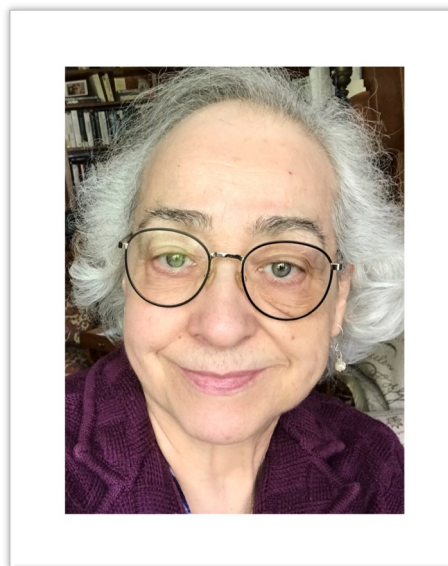
President's Message

Greetings!

It is hard to believe but the Holidays are almost here... It is another time of year when giving is more important than taking. Our mission of advocacy for girls and women takes various forms during this time as well.

One way to give is through our support for the kiddoes at Harding School. At this community school we support, there are many families who are hoping for school items **we** can provide so they can use more of what they have for the Holidays.

Please find the instructions for shopping for school supplies in this issue of the *Pressible*. It is easy to buy and send your gifts to the school online. Dedicated as they are, teachers will also appreciate your gifts... many often pay out of pocket so no student will have to go without.



Asuman Baskan

Another way to give is to get closer to our long-time members. As we age, we are absent more frequently from the programs of our Branch. Some of us try to avoid driving at night, others of us are no longer able to navigate the stairs, various challenges keep us from meeting and greeting one another in person. The pandemic made us keenly aware of the fact that in-person is a far cry from online interactions. The pandemic is over but aging is still a factor that keeps us from in-person involvement.

I would like us to make the effort to keep our most senior members in mind and especially for the Holidays, seek them out, call them for a chat, visit, send cards to let them know we appreciate them for their membership, and are thinking of them.

Our longest standing members, whom I think of as our Golden Girls, have pursued our mission in their time and have turned over the responsibility to us. As we accept this responsibility, keeping in touch would be showing the gratitude they deserve.

So reach out and say hello to someone you have not spoken to in a while... and enjoy the Holidays with added joy!

Collection set for Legal Advocacy Fund

Erie Branch members support **AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund** through our individual donations at the annual holiday luncheon on Dec. 7.

Unfair pay, pregnancy discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and violations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 can affect both women and men.

AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund addresses these barriers by informing people of their rights and using the legal system to seek justice and change.

LAF was created in 1981 by AAUW members and has provided millions of dollars to balance the scales of justice for people working toward gender equity through the legal system.

We support brave plaintiffs seeking legal redress for equal pay, Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and tenure denial violations. We allocate \$100,000 annually to help fund landmark cases, such as *Wal-Mart v. Dukes* and *Cioca v. Rumsfeld*, as well as cases with the potential to set future precedents like *Rizo v. Fresno County Office of Education*.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. v. Dukes

In 2001, female employees at Wal-Mart filed a class action sex discrimination lawsuit against Wal-Mart Stores in the U. S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

Cioca et al. v. Rumsfeld et al.

Sixteen veteran and active-duty servicemen and service-women who, while serving in the US Military, have been raped, sexually assaulted, and harassed by active duty members of the military filed a lawsuit against the Department of Defense.

Yovino v. Rizo (former *Rizo v. Fresno County Office of Education*)

In 2012, Rizo says, a male colleague who had recently been hired mentioned that he had been placed at step nine on the county's 10-step pay scale. Rizo was shocked — she had been placed at step one on the scale when she began her job, even though she understood that she had more experience and seniority than her male colleague. For the full story, and outcome, of these and other cases, visit national's web site at www.aauw.org.

Welcome to
our new
member!

Pat Benekos is currently retired and volunteers as a tutor with I.U. 5 and as a volunteer at Presque Isle Lighthouse.

Pat retired in 2012 as Director of I.T. at Mercyhurst College.

Prior to that she was Systems Manager for GE for 8 years and then Manager of Academic Computing at Gannon for 6 years.

Before her career in I.T., she had taught German at John F. Kennedy High School in Cleveland.

Pat received her BA in German and her M.Ed. from Allegheny College. She received her BA in Computer Management Information Systems from Mercyhurst.

Pat and her husband Pete enjoy sailing the Great Lakes and the Caribbean and racing in MORC. They also enjoy traveling to many countries and go to Hilton Head and Maine every year. Pat is also a dedicated Jazzercise student for many years.

PLEASE ADD TO
YOUR YEARBOOK

NEW MEMBER
PAT BENEKOS
4641 VICTORIA WAY,
ERIE PA 16509
(H) 814-866-2320; (C)
814-403-8377
Pbenekos2@gmail.com

Harding Elementary Holiday Project 2024

Shanna Potter, Community School Director at Harding School has requested that AAUW members consider a donation to the Harding School 2024 Holiday Project. Your contributions will add to the holiday gift bag that is distributed to each child. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

In addition to a special Harding winter item from our corporate partner, Eriez Magnetics, they are also hoping to send each student home with drawing/coloring items.

Loretta Seigley

Three Ways to Give



Monetary Donation: A \$5 donation is all it takes to provide a gift bag for one student. Sponsor as many as you would like, and we will handle the shopping.

Cash or checks can be directed to:
Harding Elementary School
Attention: Shanna Potter
820 Lincoln Avenue
Erie, PA 16505

Or Venmo: @shannapotter with "Harding Holiday Project" in the "What's this for?" field.

Shop Online:

Shop online through our Amazon Wishlist and ship items to school by selecting "Shanna Potter's Gift Registry" Address at checkout.

<https://bit.ly/hardingholidaylist>



Shop Local: Shop local for the following gift items at your favorite stores

- ****Most Wanted Item: Blank drawing or sketch pads**
- **Colored Pencils**
- **Crayons**
- **Markers**

Deadline: Please have all donations to Harding Elementary by Friday, Dec. 13.

Project Contact: For any questions or to arrange drop off of donations, contact :

Shanna Potter, Harding Elementary Community School Director
814-440-9734 or spotter@eriesd.org

“Kids play to learn. Adults learn to play.”

Ainslie Brosig



November meeting showcases Children’s Museum remodel

AAUW members enjoyed visiting and experimenting in the many different areas at the Children’s Museum. Ms. Ainslie Brosig, who became the Director in 1995, guided our group through the many areas where children are able to learn by playing.

With financial support and guidance from numerous entities, the Museum is one of Erie’s greatest assets. It has become the anchor for family-friendly activity in downtown Erie.

We saw areas that provide every child regardless of age or ability an opportunity to be creative, imaginative and playful.

As Ms. Brosig said, “Kids play to learn. Adults learn to play.”

By Ellen DiPlacido

Boscov’s fund drive nets over \$2,000

The recently concluded Boscov's fundraiser has been successful, bringing in \$2,080.80 this year.

Thank you to all who participated.

Branch Study Groups

Book Discussion Politalk

Book Discussion will meet on Thursday, Dec. 5, from 1-3 p.m. at Springhill 317.

Politalk will meet on Nov. 19 at 2 p.m. at Asuman’s home, 3838 State St.



Members boost Harding project

Erie Branch members Joan Benson Cacchione (left) and Asuman Baskan get ready to pass out candy at Harding School's recent Trunk or Treat event. Participants decorated their cars and passed out donated candy to almost 500 children.

Public Policy Highlights

Recently I have noticed more news about an alarming increase in decisions to ban books in public schools. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania is not an exception. The Education Law Center, a non-profit legal advocacy organization, reports that Pennsylvania ranks third in the nation for the highest number of book bans.

A book ban occurs when a school administrator or other personnel removes or restricts student access to books based on the content of the book. Bans typically occur when parents and/or school board members object to content an individual finds objectionable. Often, targeted books include main characters of color or books that focus on racism, LGBTQ+ issues or themes and books that allegedly include sexual conduct. Objections often focus on specific words or passages and ignore the educational or literary merits of the book.

In Pennsylvania, school boards have the power to remove books so long as they comply with federal and state law, including the First Amendment. Students have a First Amendment right to read and receive information and school boards cannot target certain viewpoints to be prohibited. School boards have far greater authority to remove books that are part of an approved curriculum. They have less power to remove optional books such as library books. Federal Courts have approved the ability to remove approved curriculum materials as long as the decision is reasonably related to a legitimate concern related to denying students access to potentially sensitive topics. This low bar makes it difficult to mount legal challenges to the actions of a school board on its choice of curriculum materials.

Several states have passed book banning legislation making it easier to ban books of all types. Pennsylvania does not have such a state law. In fact, legislation (HB1506) also known as The Freedom to Read Act, has been introduced and seeks to limit school district book censorship while protecting parental oversight of their children's book choices.

Our AAUW Mission, Value Promise and Diversity Statement focus on advancing equity, breaking through educational barriers and diversity in principle and practice. These principles align with a need to pay attention to and understand actions of our local school board members related to the important issue of book bans.

By Loretta Seigley

Study Groups Challenge!!

With a new year approaching, many individuals set up lofty goals for themselves.

Can members of our branch come up with some new ideas for some additional study groups? The study groups don't necessarily have to meet monthly. Members can get together several times to discuss a topic, meet every other month, etc.

Members can suggest a "pop-up" event for branch members to attend and enjoy/learn together.

I am personally interested in topics such as AI and how it will impact our lives in the near future. How can we detect and safeguard ourselves from scams? What are the most popular social media sites and how do they impact our current lives? All of the above suggested issues can be explored in a totally non-partisan manner.

Every branch member likely has interests that they would like to explore. If anyone has such interests, please contact me, and I will see if others want to explore the topic in greater detail. Depending on the topic and the number of interested individuals, I will personally try to set up a location for the group.

Please feel free to contact me by text or phone at (814) 873-0486 or by email at candycbrown@gmail.com.

Please put on your thinking caps!!!

By Candy Brown

December 2024

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	2 Board mtg. 6:30 p.m. Zoom	3	4	5 Book Club 1-3 p.m. Springhill 317	6	7 Holiday luncheon Kahkwa Club 11:30 a.m.
	9	10	11	12	13	14
	16	17	18	19 Politalk 2 p.m. at Asuman's	20	21
	23	24	25	26	27 Gourmet No meeting	28
	30	31				



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.

Published by: American Association of University Women — Erie Branch, Inc.
Branch email: eriebranchaauw@gmail.com
Editor email: eriepressible@gmail.com
Facebook: @AAUWEriePA
Web page: <http://www.aauwerie.org>

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Erie's Think Tank for Community Progress
Examine the Past. Study the Present. Explore the Future.
Visit us at www.JESerie.org. 3207 State Street, Erie, PA 16508

friends of the erie county library

The Friends of the Erie County Library is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to the support and advancement of the Erie library system. Become a member and get involved to be a "Friend" to your library.

facebook.com/EriePAFriendsOfTheLibrary
erielibraryfriends.org

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Chris Spoto
 image master

2827 West 26th St.
 Erie, PA 16506

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