

Advocate

Together Making a Difference...

OCTOBER 2025



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NOVEMBER ADVOCATE

The new deadline for each issue of the Advocate is the 5th of the previous month. Submit articles to the editor via email by October 5 to:

newsletter@AAUWBuffalo.org

Join us for a Celebration of The Bicentennial of the Erie Canal!

- See p. 2 for Details

Book Sorting Starts This Month

- See p. 7 for Details



Join us for a Celebration of The Bicentennial of the Erie Canal!

Erie Canal Side Banquets – Lockport Locks
210 Market Street, Lockport, NY 14094

Saturday, October 11, 2025 - 11:00am

We will Enjoy Lunch,
Erie Canal Mixer Activity with Prizes
&
“Explore Buffalo”
Speaker Cheryl McDonald



Famous 3-Entrée Lunch Buffet

Fresh Leaf Lettuce & Baby Spinach Garden Salad
Carved Roast Beef ➤ Carved Roast Turkey ➤ Corned Beef
Roasted Potatoes
Pasta Station with Marinara Sauce on the side
Maple-glazed Carrots
Apple & Cranberry Sauces
Various Condiments
Freshly Baked Rolls
Chef's Choice of Dessert
Coffee & Tea Station



➤ RSVP by Saturday, October 4th, 2025 ➤

To Register: Either Mail the form below with your \$34.00 Check made out to “AAUW Buffalo Branch” or Register Online – [Click Here](#)

AAUW Buffalo October Program Registration

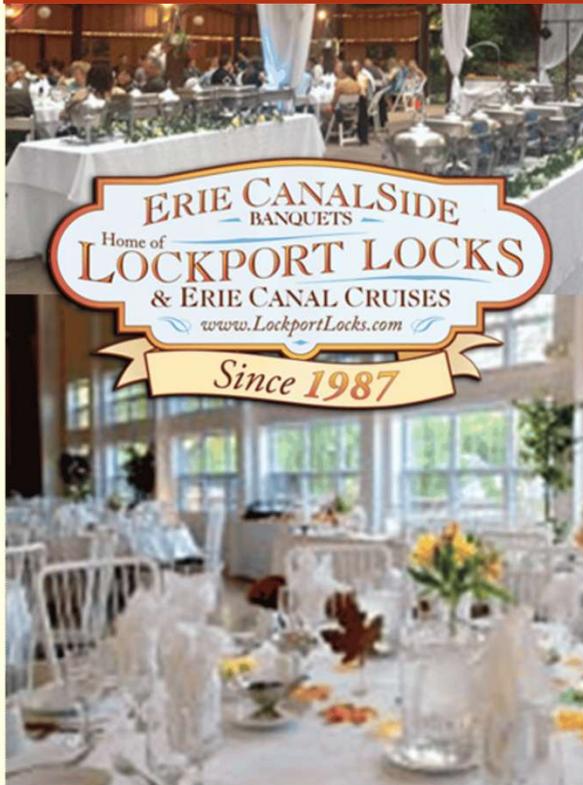
Name(s) of those attending – for Name Tags:

Email of Registrant: _____

Allergy Alert: _____

Mail to: AAUW Buffalo, P.O. Box 894, Buffalo, New York 14225-0894

For those interested: A Canal Cruise departs at 3pm see p. 5 for details



ADVOCATE

Published monthly, September to June, as a bulletin of events for members and as an update on AAUW issues and programs.

The opinions expressed within the newsletter are those of the individual writers and may or may not reflect those of the Branch.

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For prospective or new member questions, please contact:
Membership Recruitment VP: Diane O'Brien
recruitment@aauwbuffalo.org

Send address changes to:
Mary Crocker
375 Parkhurst Blvd.
Buffalo, NY 14223
mlcrock@msn.com

National AAUW Funding Opportunities...

Whether you're advancing your academic journey or spearheading community programming, AAUW has fellowship and grant opportunities to support your vision. From funding academic pursuits across diverse fields to empowering K-12 STEM initiatives for girls, we're here to help you make an impact.

Ready to see if you qualify? Review the eligibility requirements and application instructions to find the best fit for your goals!

Application Deadline: **September 30**
[Fellowships & Grants – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

[Local Scholarship Information Coming Soon]

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Pat Micelli



"With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts"
~Eleanor Roosevelt

It's Bylaws time.

Periodically, AAUW Buffalo Branch reviews its bylaws for updates. At the September Board Meeting, the bylaws committee presented suggested updates for board consideration.

An overview of the main suggested changes are included below.

1. Combine the offices of Membership Recruitment Vice President and Membership Retention Vice President. There will be one office, Membership Vice President which would be elected in odd years.
2. The Office of Treasurer for Education Accounts and Programs would be eliminated. The duties would be divided between Operations Treasurer and Treasurer for Scholarship and Fundraising.
3. There is currently a section about pro-rating dues paid during the year. Dues are now paid and renewed on a "joined date" basis, not a fiscal year basis, so the phrase is unnecessary and will be removed.
4. Special meetings of the board may be called by the president or shall be called upon written request of six (6) members of the board. The number needed is reduced because the number of officers is reduced. The percent of the board required remains approximately the same.
5. Voting on bylaws may be in person or by electronic means. At this point revising the bylaws requires an in-person vote. The change gives us more flexibility.

The reason the bylaws aren't being voted on at the May luncheon is due to the proposed officer reduction, May does not allow sufficient time to nominate officers and to vote and install them prior to June 30.

Bylaws changes must be approved by the board AND the entire branch. The Board will vote on the bylaw changes at its October 1, 2025 Board Meeting. **At the November 5, 2025 Board Meeting all branch members are welcomed to attend to vote on the acceptance of the bylaw changes. This will be a special branch meeting per the bylaws.**

Continued on next page...



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued...

Pat Micelli

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

The branch meeting to accept the bylaws changes will be at the:

Ebenezer United Church of Christ
Fellowship Hall
630 Main St. West Seneca

November 5, 2025

In conjunction with that evening's regular board meeting - 6:15 pm gather 6:30 meeting begins.

If you have any questions about the bylaw changes, please contact:

Pat Miceli pwmiceli@gmail.com
716-626-0234 home 716-880-0042 cell
OR email bylaws@aauwbuffalo.org.

A current copy of the bylaws may be found on our branch website – click [HERE](#) to view them.

<https://aauwbuffalo.org>, then click on "about us", then "Policies and procedures", then "Branch Bylaws". The first seven articles are dictated by national and may not be amended by the branch.

The following link explains the proposed changes in more detail.

[\(Fall-2025-proposed-bylaws-changes.pdf\)](#).

Please Note:

The nominating committee is comprised of at least three members. The board will choose members of the nominating committee at the first board meeting of each fiscal year (Sept. 3, 2025). If possible, there shall be representation by a past president, a current board member, and a branch member who is not on the board. They are seeking the third branch member who is currently not a board member.

Please contact Pat Miceli if interested – see above for contact information.

Vastye Gillespie

115 Greenway Road Amherst NY 14226
716-837-6449

Vwgillespielaw@aol.com

BA Public Communication Buffalo State
College 1989

J.D. Law SUNY Law School 1993

Interest/Skills: 'Clueless Mystery Book Club,
Antiques & Collectibles group, Book Sale
Committee, Education Equity/Legal Advocacy
Committee, Public Policy, Community Action,
Cultural Interests, Human/Civil Rights

Patricia Andrea

735 Renaissance Dr. K 306 Williamsville NY 14221
Cell: 520-904-4832

Email: whatsnewpat@gmail.com

B.S. Medical Technical University at Buffalo 1969

M.S. Health Science Education U.B.1978

Certificate in Public School Education Biology,
Chemistry, Earth Science SUNY at
Fredonia/Buffalo State colleges 1992

Retired Science Teacher

Interests: Book Sale Committee, Diversity,
Human/Civil Rights, International Relations

Sandra Mundier

193 Maldiner Ave. Tonawanda NY 14150

Home phone: 716-694-2632 Cell: 716-548-7256

Email: smundier@buffalo.edu

B.A. History Alma College 1970 Retired

Interests: Dinner by the Book, Happy Wanderers,
Professional Development Book Grp.,
Book Sale, Scholarships, Event Arrangements,
Public Policy, Cultural Interests

DINNER BY THE BOOK

When: Wed., October 15th at 5:30 pm

Where: Family Tree Restaurant
4346 Bailey Avenue

Book: *Brave the Wild River* by Melissa L. Seigny

Facilitator: Maryann Hope

Discussion Leader: Kate Collins

RSVP: Judy Malamas 716-632-0461

Email: tsagewood@aol.com

THE HAPPY WANDERERS

When: TBD – Please contact Judy for Information

Where: Buffalo City Hall – Free tour with a docent

Includes the Observation Deck!

Lunch: West Side Bazaar, 1432 Niagara St., Buffalo
Carpooling Suggested – Judy will arrange

Guests Welcome!

Contact Judy Huber 716-529-9881 or

judyhuber62@yahoo.com

LET'S TALK PUBLIC POLICY!

When: Thursday, Sept 25 - approximately 2:00 pm.

Please contact Marian for confirmation of
Date & Time

Where: Dash's, 1770 Hertel Avenue – 2nd floor

Discussion: Current Public Policy

R.S.V.P. Marian Deutschman 716-634-2412 or

mardeu15@verizon.net

Please call or email Marian to let her know you will
be attending.



CLUELESS MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

When: Wednesday, October 22nd at noon

Where: Family Tree Restaurant,
4346 Bailey Ave.

Book: *The Death of Mrs. Westaway*
by Ruth Ware

Discussion Leader: Stacy Johnson

RSVP: Barbara Libby at 716-836-8303
or bplibby1@verizon.net



We Have Exciting News!!!!

Paula and Lisa have offered to start up two New Special Interest Groups!



Scrabble Club

Lisa Casey would like to start a monthly Scrabble Club. Due to her work schedule, it would be early evening, possibly 6:30-8:00pm

Please contact Lisa if interested
Contact: Lisa Casey 716-957-2136 – Email: lisamcfail@gmail.com

When: Early Evenings 6:30-8:00pm
Where: A Public Library - TBD

LIBRARY PERKS...

Paula Salamone, a retired librarian would like to start a program where she would help one or two people at a time learn how to take advantage of all these “perks” at the library. (i.e., Libby App - You can get all kinds of books and magazines right on your mobile phone!) Please contact Paula if interested.

Contact: Paula Salamone – 716-479-1088 or Salamonepaula@yahoo.com



Coming in November...

You asked for it & we listened!
Join us on November 13 at 5:30 pm for

Dinner & Our 1st Ever Trivia Night!

Dinner: \$34.00 each
More info to follow.

My Tomato Pie

3055 Niagara Falls Blvd,
Amherst 14228

The 2026 Book Sale ...

If it's September it must be time to start working again on the BOOKSALE!!!

Our new "WE WANT BOOKS" bookmarks are hot off the presses and ready for distribution to the WNY community. Our sorting site is open for donation drop offs, and the sorting and boxing of books for our 70th Annual Book Sale beginning on September 23. Many of you rolled up your sleeves last year to raise the dollars at our 2025 Book Sale to fund all our scholarships—we thank you all! Of course, we are asking for your help once again. Looking for a flexible activity that will bring a sense of productivity and collective good along with an occasional chuckle? Are you interested in gathering with people who are also interested in preserving good books, promoting literacy, and being part of the Village for our young scholarship recipients? Read on!



Join us to sort and pack donations: Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 9 am - 1 pm plus 10 am-noon the FIRST Saturday of each month. You can come at any time and stay for any amount of time. Supervisors will be present to help train you, answer questions, and listen to suggestions for improvements! Please note: We will be closed Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks and any days that the Cheektowaga schools are closed due to the weather.

We are once again working at 37 Anderson Road, Cheektowaga, 14225. A detailed map is included on the Book Sale page of our website, aauwbuffalo.org. There will be signs on the east side of the street by our parking lot and near the building. Look for the school buses – we share the lot with First Student! There will be a ramp at the front of the brick building and a large sign in the window. Ample parking!

Why not stop by and check it out and pick up some bookmarks to distribute? These are an important part of our publicity campaign as they also have a Save-the-Date reminder on them for our Sale. We are once again responsible for our own recycling so please spread the word to donors about our motto: If you wouldn't buy it, we can't sell it!" Please no professional journals, magazines, Reader's Digest Condensed Books, Time/Life, computer books, encyclopedias, cassettes or VHS. We are again accepting LP's and any book-themed gift items such as clothing, jewelry and pins—if it is in good condition and a book lover would enjoy it, we want it.



Erie Canal Cruise

Erie Canal Side Banquets – Home of the Lockport Locks & Erie County Canal Cruises

An Erie Canal Cruise has a scheduled cruise that departs at 3:00pm, October 11, 2025, following "The Bicentennial of the Erie Canal" Buffet Lunch with guest speaker Cheryl McDonald.

Please Note: This is not part of our AAUW Program but could be an interesting follow-up for those who have the time. If you would like to attend, tickets can be purchased through the contact information below.

Location: Erie Canal Side Banquets – Same as Luncheon location – 210 Market Street, Lockport, NY 14094

Website: www.lockportlocks.com

Contact: 716-433-6155 or 800-378-0352 or info@lockportlocks.com



Summary of July 24, 2025 Public Policy Discussion

9 participants:

We will proceed to prepare a presentation on “Why We Should Vote” to use before the midterm elections. Marian asked for volunteers to begin work on this project. Janet Lenichek and Marian will meet to discuss the content and next steps.

In view of recent actions by President Trump demonstrating his belief that he can do whatever he wants to do as President, we agreed that our democracy may be hanging by a thread. This is also suggested in the articles we reviewed for today’s discussion. The President has quoted Putin about the dangers of mail-in voting. He also said that some people might like a dictator. Some MAGA supporters have suggested competitive authoritarianism. We were not sure about the meaning or the definition of the term. Competitive authoritarianism is a form of hybrid regime, existing in the gray area between full democracy and total authoritarianism. The definition is listed below, thanks to artificial Intelligence.* This discussion group fears the normalization of Trump’s anti-democratic values.

We reviewed six articles beginning with one about a survey of five hundred 8-12 year old children. Cell phones are addictive but they said they would spend less time online if they could play with friends. Protective parents control their children’s activities. Children have lost one-on-one creative play because they are not allowed to play unsupervised, as we once were.

Tom Friedman believes the America we knew is slipping away when people in private businesses went along with firing the Senate confirmed head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Trust is in jeopardy. Where is integrity if information is tailored to fit Trump’s needs? We agree with Friedman when he says that if the administration’s behavior for the first six months continues for four years, America will be gone.

An article by Ben Rhodes suggests that our short-term thinking is destroying America. Our society is unraveling and causing the rise of Trump due to unbridled capitalism and unregulated technology that is demolishing our attention span. We avoid consequences for our actions. We have trillions of dollars of debt. We have bullied so many countries. We have denied scientific realities of global warming. We have ignored math that doesn’t add up and wars that don’t end.

In a short video interview, California Governor Gavin Newsom warns other governors that Trump is going after any institution showing independent thought. He claims the next few months are crucial for governors to do something, stand for something, and for Democrats to stop being so weak.

In an interview, a horrified and troubled Mandy Patinkin expresses concern for Jews all over the world based on what Netanyahu is doing in Gaza to endanger all their lives. One of our members said she was moved to tears witnessing the Gaza genocide.

The last article by Robert Reich proposes nine critical steps for the disunited Democrats (and all of us, including the disgraced Republicans) to take while Trump is dismantling the FBI and filling the gaps with corrupt and unqualified loyalists. Check out the steps. You might also check out these books recommended by the discussion group: *Red Notice* by Bill Browder and *The Melting Point* by Rachel Cockerell.

**Competitive authoritarianism describes a hybrid political regime where formal democratic institutions, such as elections, courts, and a free press, exist but are systematically manipulated and undermined by the ruling party to ensure its continued power. Unlike outright dictatorships, these systems allow for real but unfair electoral competition, using legal and institutional tools to tilt the playing field in favor of incumbents rather than banning opposition outright.*

Public Policy

Dr. Marian Deutschman, Public Policy Chair



IS DEI DEAD?

A quick check with Artificial Intelligence tells me that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is not "dead." It may be forced to evolve or respond to challenges it is facing. People in some corporations and other organizations are scaling back or rebranding their DEI programs, while others are still dedicated to their earlier DEI commitments. DEI may be in the process of becoming more strategic, with a greater focus on measurable business outcomes and impact. Some DEI initiatives, particularly in federal departments and higher education, have been dismantled by executive orders and legislative action. The 2023 Supreme Court decision to end affirmative action in college admissions has created legal uncertainty for corporate DEI programs. The "anti-woke" movement has caused some companies to scale back publicly. Some companies are renaming their DEI departments and continue to work under a new name. Some may be increasing their investment but doing it more discreetly. AI reports that studies do correlate strong DEI practices with improved financial performance, innovation, and employee satisfaction. It's important to make all employees feel they belong in a welcoming workplace culture. When DEI is integrated into all daily operations it can become a shared responsibility to achieve company objectives. Currently, DEI may simply be going through a transformation to a long-term business asset that fosters diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces.

Why is preservation (or resurrection) of DEI important? We can make a strong case for diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace. Our **workplaces** should reflect diversity in order to bring out the best quality and productivity in employees, but we can't ignore the role of DEI in our diverse society.

Schools and communities can gain academic benefit from the presence of people from other countries. Diversity in schools can lead to higher test scores and overall academic achievement for all students. Historian, educator and author Diane Ravitch, and Michelle Rhee, *the "no excuses" superintendent of Washington, D.C.'s public schools*, happen to represent opposite ends of our polarized debates over education reform. Both have advocated new measures to promote school integration to raise the achievement of disadvantaged students. What can give integration real political momentum, however, is not the documented benefits to low-income students, but the emerging recognition that middle- and upper-class students benefit in diverse classrooms. That benefit may include increased academic performance, enhanced global awareness, and improved social-emotional skills.

International students and exchange programs can enrich the educational environment for everyone involved. The presence of diverse international students exposes all pupils to new ideas and perspectives. This creates a vibrant, dynamic, and enriched educational setting with higher-quality ideas and a more thorough analysis of topics. Diversity in schools can lead to higher test scores and overall academic achievement for all students. When foreign exchange students participate in language classes, native speakers can help by offering correct pronunciation and cultural context. This immersion provides invaluable, real-world exposure for language acquisition. Interaction with people

Continued on next page...

Public Policy

Dr. Marian Deutschman, Public Policy Chair



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from other countries helps students develop a greater appreciation for different customs, traditions, and values while helping to break down stereotypes. There are many more benefits for building student confidence, critical thinking, and global networks.

DEI helps to address inequities in healthcare and patient outcomes according to findings of Walden University School of Lifelong Learning. In fact, **DEI leads to improved patient care**. Studies showed that in general, patient outcomes improved when diverse teams provided care. Improved team communication, risk assessment, and innovation are additional benefits of diverse teams. Diverse organizations also performed better financially. DEI improves employee retention. The Cleveland Clinic Press Ganey survey revealed that employees are more likely to stay at an organization that values a diverse workforce. Successful healthcare organizations value diversity, equity, and inclusion. The results are healthier patients, happier healthcare providers, and profitable organizations. We could conclude that companies with higher diversity show better financial performance, innovation, and decision-making. That's what 28% of the expert DEI organizational practitioners claim.

However, Eric Sandosham, Ph.D.* states that DEI training simply does not work. Most DEI programs are failures. He adds that "the professional corporate domain has been burdened with a lack of clarity, a lack of budget, and a lack of talent. The domain today is puffed up with buzz words like 'authenticity' and 'collaboration', and 'safe space', etc. No one really understands what is being said, and no one really trusts what is being communicated." He adds "It's being increasingly perceived as 'reverse discrimination' or 'reverse racism'. How do you give everyone a 'fair chance'? How do you know what is a 'unique contribution'? How do you know 'they are valued for it'? These are questions asked by Dr. Sandosham. He concludes the following: "The whole DEI movement has been poorly conceived. It claims to be evidence-based, but it is anything but. The lack of data-anchored definitions leaves DEI officers grabbing at straws. The lack of data savviness prevents DEI officers from shifting the needle in the right direction. Instead, the DEI efforts results in distrust and dissent."

Do we have answers? Can we correct the negative imbalances by either neutralizing them, transforming or converting them to positive imbalances in our current polarized environment?

**Founder & Partner of Red & White Consulting Partners LLP. A passionate and seasoned veteran of business analytics. Former CAO of Citibank APAC.*

PRESIDENT

Pat Miceli

VP PROGRAM

Lilyen Mascellino

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Mary Crocker

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Ruby Williams

FUNDRAISING TREASURER

Jennifer Hoffman

CHAMBERLIN/FUNDS FOR

EDUCATION TREASURER

Kathleen Collins

SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

Melissa White

Welcome Back Dinner

Tuesday, September 16, 2025



Everyone had a fantastic time. Prizes were won! Gifts were given out! Jacquie Walker was a wonderful speaker as she shared with us the incredible experiences she encountered throughout her career. She shared the difficulties she had as a woman in a predominantly male-profession and gave encouraging advice for those women entering journalism.

Return Service Requested



Moving? Please contact Mary Crocker 716-838-2796

DATES TO REMEMBER

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday, Sept 23 – Book Sale Sorting Starts. See p.7

OCTOBER

Wednesday, Oct 1, 6:30 pm — Board Meeting at Christ United Methodist Church (350 Saratoga Rd, Amherst)

Saturday, Oct 11, 11:00 am - Branch Program. See p.2

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, Nov 5, 6:30 pm — Board Meeting at Ebenezer United Church of Christ (630 Main St, West Seneca)

May 27 – May 31, 2026 — 70th BOOK SALE Location TBD

Please note: All events are possibly subject to change or cancellation. Please check our website for last minute information.

AAUW

AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For over 140 years, we have worked together as a national grassroots organization to improve the lives of millions of women and their families.

Mission: *Gender Equity & Economic Security*
Vision: *Equity for all*
Values : *Intersectional. Inclusive. Intergenerational Empowering.*

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.