

Advocate

Together Making a Difference...

FEBRUARY 2026

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MARCH ADVOCATE

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

February 5, 2026 to:

newsletter@AAUWBuffalo.org





Join us on Saturday,
February 28, 2026
at 11:30 am for a tour of:



THE NIAGARA FALLS UNDERGROUND RAILROAD HERITAGE CENTER

825 Depot Avenue West
Niagara Falls, New York 14305

Cost:
\$10 per Adult
\$6 per Youth

RSVP: by Saturday, February 14, 2026

Register by [Clicking Here](#) for Online Registration or
If you wish to pay **by mail**, please complete the form below
and mail it along with a check for \$10/adult and \$6/youth, made out to
"AAUW Buffalo" to: AAUW Buffalo, PO Box 894, Buffalo, NY 14225-0894

AAUW BUFFALO FEBRUARY PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Name(s) of those attending: _____
Email of Registrant: _____
Phone No.: _____

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Pat Miceli

"You Must Do The Things You Think You Cannot Do"

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Please volunteer!

From the January 7, 2026, Buffalo Branch Board Meeting there are some issues to bring to the membership. To date a candidate has been found for all Board Positions, except Secretary. We still need someone to agree to run for the position of Secretary/Parliamentarian. The position is for 2 years beginning July 2026. The responsibility is to attend 10 board meetings/year and to record the minutes. The meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month from September to June. Meeting time starts at 6:30 PM. Consider joining the team. Be part of the decision making for the Branch. Make new friends. Please call Pat Miceli if you are willing to run for this office.

Pat's contact information: Home No. 716-626-0234 Cell No. 716-880-0042

Remember the words of Eleanor Roosevelt. *"You must do the things you think you cannot do."*

The AAUW NYS Annual meeting will be this April on Zoom. All members can attend. Everyone has a vote; there are no delegates. Please keep this in mind and look for further information.

Remember to attend the monthly programs planned by Lilyen Mascellino and the Program Committee. The Program Committee has done an excellent job planning new and diverse program opportunities.

Susan McClary is looking for people to join the Inclusion & Equity Committee. If you are interested, please contact Susan McClary 716-636-2854.

In conclusion, but of **great importance**, is the Book Sale. Sorting is taking place at 37 Anderson Road, Cheektowaga on Tuesday and Wednesday 9-1 and the first Saturday of the month 10-noon. The Book Sale Committee does an **outstanding job** and can use **your help** with sorting and donating. As always, more detailed information about our activities is available on the website <https://aauwbuffalo.org>

Thank you for your continued support of AAUW Buffalo Branch.

THE BUFFALO BRANCH

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.

February Vol. CXXXIV, No. 6
Circulation 150

President: Pat Miceli
Publisher/Editor: Karen May
Assistant Editors: Betty Preble
Judy Weidemann

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

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

- Pat Miceli

We need YOU, Yes YOU, to Run for an Office!

The following positions will be opened on the AAUW Buffalo Branch Board beginning July 1, 2026.

1. Secretary/Parliamentarian
2. ~~Chief Financial Officer~~
3. ~~Funding Raising and Scholarship Treasurer~~
4. ~~Scholarship Director~~

Please Note:

- Each position is a 2-year position beginning on July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028.
- Board Meetings are generally on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm
- There are no scheduled meetings in July or August

UPDATE: We have filled all but one of the open Positions!

If you would like to run for the position of Secretary/Parliamentarian or nominate someone for a position, please contact Pat Miceli

Contact information: pwmiceli@gmail.com, 716-626-0234 (home) 716-880-0042 (cell).

Voting will be in April 2026. More information is forthcoming. Please consider volunteering to run or to nominate a member.

WE NEED YOU!

PRESIDENT

Pat Miceli

VP PROGRAM

Lilyen Mascellino

VP MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Diane O'Brien

VP MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

Alexandra Smith

OPERATIONS TREASURER

Mary Crocker

SECRETARY/PARLIAMENTARIAN

Judy Huber

CHAMBERLIN/FUNDS FOR EDUCATION TREASURER

Kathleen Collins

EAP TREASURER

Ruby Williams

FUNDRAISING TREASURER

Jennifer Hoffman

SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR

Melissa White

CFO

Shirley Joy

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



DINNER BY THE BOOK

When: Wed., February 18, at 5:30 pm
Where: Family Tree Restaurant
4346 Bailey Avenue, Amherst
Book: *Becoming Madame Secretary*,
by Stephanie Dray
Facilitator: Mary Crocker
Discussion Leader: Mary Georger
RSVP: Judy Malamas 716-632-0461
Email: tsagewood@aol.com

LET'S TALK PUBLIC POLICY!

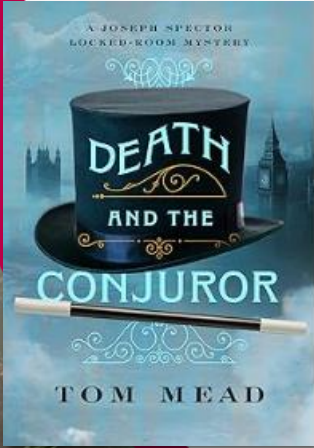
When: Thursday, Feb. 26th - 2:00 pm.
Where: Dash's, 1770 Hertel Ave - 2nd floor
Discussion: Current Public Policy
R.S.V.P. Marian Deutschman 716-634-
2412 or mardeu15@verizon.net
Please call or email Marian to let
her know you will
be attending.

Scrabble Club

When: Thurs., February 26, at 5:30 pm
Where: Still to be determined

We would love to have more players!

RSVP: Lisa Casey 716-957-2136
Email: lisamcfail@gmail.com



CLUELESS MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

When: Wed., February 25, at 12:00 pm

Where: Family Tree Restaurant
4346 Bailey Avenue, Amherst

Book: *Death and the Conjuror*, by Tom Mead

Discussion Leader: Barbara Libby

RSVP: Barbara Libby at

716-836-8303

or bplibby1@verizon.net

MASTERING THE LIBRARY

Paula Salamone, a retired librarian will help one or two people at a time learn how to take advantage of all these “perks” at the library using your own mobile phone, tablet or laptop. We can meet by Zoom initially or in person

RSVP: Paula Salamone – Please call or text –
716-479-1088

THE HAPPY WANDERERS

We will take advantage of the Program Committee’s planned visits to:

- The Underground Railroad in Niagara Falls in February as part of Black History Month
See p.2 for Details

- WWII Rosie the Riveter Program at the Niagara Falls Aerospace Museum in April

Contact Judy Huber
716-529-9881 or
judyhuber62@yahoo.com

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

The 2026 Book Sale ...

BOOKSALE TIME! Our 70th big sale will be Wednesday-Sunday, May 27-31!!!

WHERE will we sell??? WHERE will we sort next year? Can YOU help?

Every year is a new challenge. Do YOU know of a prospective sale location? The requirements – at LEAST 15,000-20,000 sq ft at ground level, ample parking, working restrooms, adequate lighting, heating and A/C. We need it from mid-March through mid-June. If you know of a possibility, please send an email to booksale@aauwbuffalo.org with the location and contact information.

We have been collecting and sorting at 37 Anderson Road for the past three years, but it is really too small for us – AND the rent is going up. We need a new, larger location – at least 2,000 sq ft. – with restroom access, lighting and climate control. This would require a year-round lease. Again, contact booksale@aauwbuffalo.org.

THE TIME IS NOW by Diane O'Brien

In early January I went to our book sorting site on Anderson Road, depositing eight bags of books on the sorting table, they were immediately tackled by the volunteers. The table was empty in 15 minutes.

This sorting group had hit a lull with the holidays just ending and wintry weather. Few books were delivered. With nothing to do, Jean Stewart did a delightful poetry reading. Marianne Crapol reportedly made puzzles – and they were not really checking to see if all the pieces were there!

The time is **now** to get your donated books to the site. Recheck your bookshelves, distribute those bookmarks to all you know. As of this newsletter, donations are needed.

With only a 3 months left for sorting, your help will make this book sale outstanding. The time is now



Please Note:

1. Although we're in tight quarters, we can always use more workers! Just stop by (37 Anderson Rd) Tuesdays or Wednesdays 9-1 or 10-noon the first Saturday of each month and join in the fun.
2. If you can't contribute hours, perhaps you could help us with our expenses? Any amount is appreciated, but we have recognition categories for those \$25 and above, listed on the website. Just send a check made out to "AAUW Buffalo Book Sale" to "AAUW Buffalo, PO Box 894, Buffalo, NY 14225".

HELP WANTED! NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!

-Mary Bashore

We have a very small public relations team. While several officers attend meetings regularly, they do so as representatives of their primary areas of responsibility, such as book sale, membership, newsletter, programs, public policy, and scholarships. All help, contributions and ideas are welcome, but we recognize that some people are not always available at a given time. More people, means we can break up tasks into smaller pieces.

Also, we have been told repeatedly by many knowledgeable people that using social media is key, but our current team members lack the knowledge to do this effectively across all platforms. We are on Facebook but not TikTok and other popular sites. Please think about who you know who could help with this aspect.

We appreciate your efforts to be ambassadors of this organization. Please take some of our nice-looking literature and post them or pass them out whenever you can.

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS...

- Mary Bashore

“Thank You New York State AAUW!”

Carol Griffith, AAUW-NYS Public Policy Vice President, notified us that NYS AAUW would provide matching funds of up to \$500 for scholarships, particularly scholarships for non-traditional students. She felt our new ALT scholarship would be favorably considered for these funds. Sure enough, we applied for and received the funds in short order. Thanks to NYS AAUW for supporting the Buffalo Branch and our scholarship program! And thanks to the board members who made this happen so quickly.

PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Beverly Slichta-Cusick

Phone: 716-243-1250 Email: baslichta@gmail.com

B.A. Sociology/Psychology 1966 D'Youville College

M.S. Psychology 1973 Oklahoma State

Retired Psychology professor, Academic Dean, Dean of Enrollment Mgt

Interests: Clueless Book Club, Happy Wanderer, Scholarships, Public Policy, Community Action, Cultural

Interests, Human/Civil Rights

Kathy Tepas

Phone: 716-949-7636 Email: kathy.tepas@yahoo.com

Master Elementary Education 1989 Buffalo State 1989

B.S. Elementary Education D'Youville College 1968

Direct Service Provider People Inc., Sewing Instructor Clarence Senior Center

Interests/Skills: Dinner by the Book, Book Sale Committee, Mailings logistics, Copy Editing, Diversity

Shenna Hannam

Phone: 716-628-9020 Email: Shennavhannam@gmail.com

Liberal Arts & Sciences: Humanities Niagara County Community College 2020

B.A. Psychology: counseling minor U.B. 2022

Area of interest: Community Action, Diversity, Human/Civil Rights

A background image of vibrant red flowers, possibly gerberas, with green leaves, set against a dark background. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some showing the intricate details of their petals.

Public Policy

Dr. Marian Deutschman, Public Policy Chair

DOES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PROMISE EXTRAORDINARY BENEFITS?

Artificial Intelligence has progressed faster than expected. It may promise extraordinary benefits but do the benefits outweigh the risks? President Donald Trump does not want regulations as long as there is money to be made with AI. He has specifically targeted **state-level AI regulations**, arguing they hinder innovation, create an unmanageable compliance burden for companies, and risk embedding ideological bias, according to an AI summary. Has Congress done anything to control AI?

Artificial Intelligence defines itself: *“In simple words, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is about making computers or machines smart enough to do tasks that usually need human thinking, like learning, solving problems, understanding language, recognizing things, and making decisions, by training them on huge amounts of data instead of programming every single rule. It lets machines learn from experience and improve, helping them to do things.”*

Some experts claim AI is the single most impactful change of our time, comparing it to the Industrial Revolution that reduced the need for human strength. AI may reduce the need for **brain strength**. By age 3, the brain reaches about 80 percent of adult volume; by age 5–6, it is approximately 90–95 percent. We build neuro-plasticity (connections) of the brain in a variety of ways by consistently adding new skills, maintaining healthy lifestyles, quality sleep, managing stress, fostering social connections, following a healthy diet, exercising, and controlling health markers like blood pressure. Water makes up about 75 percent of the brain, so even a small amount of dehydration can affect brain function.

Research shows that fewer people are needed for some jobs, and AI could replace as much as one-fifth of the United States workforce. Are the richest and most powerful people pushing this technology? Will humans be needed at all for some jobs? Will the workweek be reduced with the same pay? Will young people spend more time with AI than communicating person to person, even though we know that social connections are vital for brain strength? What is the effect on mental health? Will it change the way children grow up? Will they become more isolated in favor of machines?

AI is projected to successfully transform knowledge-based and data-intensive sectors such as healthcare, finance, technology, marketing and manufacturing. It may also drive efficiency in areas such as drug discovery and fraud detection. High-impact areas involve research, engineering, data analysis, and applied platforms.

AI is reshaping the world according to TIME magazine, when it chose the architects of AI as “Person of the Year.” The magazine suggests that control of this reshaping is being carried out by multiple overlapping forces all at once. The United States and China lead the push, investing heavily in systems that may equal or surpass human cognition. The stakes are enormous, with the potential to influence the global balance of power. China believes that widespread adoption of AI will deliver the greatest gains, targeting 90 percent integration of key sectors by 2030, with a focus on manufacturing. Models that are inexpensive and adaptable are likely to spread more quickly around the world.

Continued on next page...

Public Policy

Dr. Marian Deutschman, Public Policy Chair

DOES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PROMISE EXTRAORDINARY BENEFITS?

Some sources say AI is evolving too rapidly, learning to deceive, and could surpass human intelligence in the near future. There are videos suggesting that AI can lie to preserve its values when faced with conflicting prompts. This can lead to misalignment with human values and potentially dangerous outcomes. AI systems trained to imitate humans may exhibit behaviors such as lying, cheating, or blackmailing, posing risks to society.

Should we have a slowdown in the process? Do we need a moratorium on the growing number of data centers required to support AI? Would such a moratorium stifle innovation? The European Union seeks to lead through governance rather than innovation. However, uneven enforcement and exceptions may be slowing transformation. "Developing and deploying dangerous AI systems remains less regulated than opening a new restaurant or building a house," says the founder and CEO of Control AI.

Does Artificial Intelligence recognize the difference between diagnosing people and competently caring for them?

WE'VE GOT TALENT

- Diane O'Brien

SAVE THE DATE: Thursday, March 19, 2026

MARCH PROGRAM... WE'VE GOT TALENT!

The Honorable Shirley Chisholm Library (formerly The Audubon Library),
350 James J Audubon Parkway, Amherst NY 14228

We are often amazed by our members' talents and the unique circumstances they have overcome! We are an accomplished, amazing group.

March is **International Women's Month**. Our Program Committee is putting together a program highlighting **our members'** accomplishments and talents.

For this, we need you! We are looking for five women who would like to share their **unique** accomplishments for our March program.

- ❖ Have you started a group or are you a performer?
- ❖ Have you overcome difficult circumstances?
- ❖ Has your college degree carried you to new heights?

The range of our members' talents and achievements is **limitless!** Share with us your unique accomplishments! Contact Diane O'Brien as soon as possible by email: obnfam@roadrunner.com. The Program Committee would like you to be part of March's Celebration!

The January Program

The Edible Pharmacy: Food As Medicine

What a fabulous presentation by Tricia Sauer of Buffalo Nutrition & Dietetics, PLLC

She had so much excellent information on healthy foods and what they do for our bodies. She also educated us on the power of foods on illnesses and diseases and how specific diets can eliminate and/or cure.

Powerful information – hope to see her again as a speaker!





American Association of
University Women Buffalo Branch Inc
PO BOX 894
Buffalo, NY 14225-0894

Return Service Requested

Moving? Please contact Mary Crocker 716-838-2796

DATES TO REMEMBER

JANUARY

Thurs. Jan. 22, 2:00pm – Let’s Talk Public Policy! See p.5

FEBRUARY

Wednesday, Feb. 4, 6:30 pm — Board Meeting at Christ United Methodist Church (350 Saratoga Rd, Amherst)

Wed. Feb. 18, 5:30 pm — Dinner by the Book. See p.5

Thurs. Feb. 26, 2:00pm – Let’s Talk Public Policy! See p.5

Wed. Feb. 25, 12:00 pm — Clueless Mystery Club. See p.5

Sat, Feb. 28, 11:30 am – Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center – See p. 2

MARCH

Wed, Mar. 4, 6:30 pm — Board Meeting at Ebenezer United Church of Christ (630 Main St, West Seneca)

March Branch Program — We’ve Got Talent. See p. 10

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.

