

Advocate

Together Making a Difference...

SEPTEMBER 2026

In This Issue:

Welcome Back Dinner	2
October Program	3
President's Message	4
New Members	5
Membership	5
Public Policy – Before You Vote	6-7
Public Policy – How to be a Courageous Voter	7
Reflections from NCCWSL 2026	8-9
Book Sale	10
Special Interest Groups	11
Dates to Remember	12

OCTOBER ADVOCATE

The deadline for each issue of the Advocate is the 5th of the previous month. Please submit articles to the editor via email by September 5, 2026 to:

newsletter@AAUWBuffalo.org



WELCOME BACK DINNER

Please join us on Tuesday, September 22, 2026 at

Chef's Restaurant

291 Seneca Street, Buffalo, NY 14204

Please join us for our annual fall dinner where we will welcome new members, greet old friends & celebrate our **136th year!**

- 5:00 pm Registration & Mixer Activities that you won't want to miss!
There will be a "Welcome Back" gift for members in attendance & Prizes for the Mixer Activity!
- 5:45 pm Dinner - includes choice of Entree, Soup, Bread, Coffee/Tea, & a Cannoli
- 6:30 pm Speaker: Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz

How FDR's "Four Freedoms Principles"
Still Apply in our Country & World Today



Please register on or before Sunday, September 13

Registration: [Click Here](#) to register online and pay \$30 per person via Credit Card or mail the completed form below, along with a check for \$30 per person to:
AAUW Buffalo, PO Box 894, Buffalo, NY 14225

Name: _____ Allergy: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email: _____

Select one of the following entrees for each person attending:

- ☐ Meat & Cheese Lasagna
- ☐ Roasted Chicken with Italian spices, roasted potatoes & green beans
- ☐ Eggplant Parm with Spaghetti & without meat sauce

If interested in carpooling, please indicate your area (O.P., Williamsville, Amherst, etc.)

OCTOBER'S PROGRAM

Please join us on
Tuesday, October 20, 2026

at

Julia Boyer Reinstein Library
1030 Losson Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14227

**SILENCED
TURKEY**

AAUW Buffalo Branch

In Collaboration with

Advocates of Silenced Turkey

Will Present a FREE Viewing of the
Award Winning Documentary

"METAMORPHOSIS"

Women's Resilience
to Oppression in Turkey

6:00 pm Registration & Light Snacks

6:15 pm Documentary

7:25 pm Q&A Following Documentary



Seating is limited!

Please register on or before Friday, October 16

Registration: [Click Here](#) to register online or mail the completed form below to:
AAUW Buffalo, PO Box 894, Buffalo, NY 14225

Name: _____

Phone No.: _____ Email: _____

If interested in carpooling, please indicate your area (O.P., Williamsville, Amherst, etc.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Pat Miceli

"The magic in new beginnings is truly the most powerful of them all."

- Josiyah Martin

Welcome back! There is always something magical about starting a new year, and this will be the **136th year of AAUW Buffalo Branch**. To begin the magic, Sandy Camillo, AAUW NYS President requested that I submit an article for a state September publication on our 70th Scholarship Book Sale. After reading the article and reviewing the pictures, Sandy remarked,

" I am speechless at the number of books you have amassed (and as everyone knows I am never speechless) - This is such an amazing event. You should be so proud of it."

And proud we are! What could be more magical than having **9 New Members** join our Branch at the July 13th Membership Social at the Nickel Plate. Thanks to **Andy Smith, Membership Chair**, this first-time event was a wonderful opportunity to learn about our Branch, meet new people, and make new friends. Never allowing grass to grow under our feet, the Book Sale committee under the leadership of Nancy DiStasio begins book collection on September 22 from 9am -1pm at the **New Collection Site on 3774 Harlem Road**. Volunteers are needed, as are book donations. Another piece of magic was the first informal **Coffee Gathering** at Wegmans on August 9 at 1:00pm. About 10 people, new members and veteran members, joined for an hour of sharing. Thanks to Karen May for the idea. The plan is to continue this gathering on a regular basis.

The **Program Committee**, under the leadership of **Lilyen Mascellino**, is planning the **Welcome Back Dinner** on September 22 at Chef's Restaurant. **Mark Polencarz, Erie County Executive**, will speak on "How FDR's Four Freedoms Still Apply in Our Country and World Today". Please plan to attend. Of course there are our 2026 Scholarship Winners. Under the direction of Melissa White, scholarship winners have been recognized at the June 16 - Celebrate Learning Event. Indeed, that is magical. However, the Public Relations Committee needs a bit of magic. **A New Co-Chair** has been found to assist Casey Shultz. However, in continuing the important work the PR committee has done to support membership, scholarships, the Book Sale, and our Branch in general, please consider joining. They could use a few new members!

In closing, during our 136th year consider becoming involved. Join a committee, help at the Book Sale Sorting Site, attend our well-planned monthly meetings.

BE PART OF THE AAUW BUFFALO BRANCH MAGIC!

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.

June Vol. CXXXV, No. 1
Circulation 180

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

For prospective or new member questions, please contact:

Membership VP: Andy Smith
Membership@aauwbuffalo.org

Send address changes to:

Mary Crocker
375 Parkhurst Blvd.
Buffalo, NY 1422
mlcrock@msn.com

NEW MEMBERS

-Andy Smith

A warm and friendly welcome to all our new members since April!

Sophie Bautista-Sales

Carol Cunningham

Nancy Deganis

Julie Deuble

Laura Dierken

Karen Dressler

Latasha Elder

Amanda Ersing

Adrienne Grace

William Hayden, Jr.

Anne Hunziker

Sirat Kaur

Danielle Lazure

Carolina Miller

Maria Pacheco

Susanne Schinaman

Kate Wagner

Erin Wattengel

Rhonda Wieder

Miggie Wong

Jo Yudess

Maggie Zaifert

We are still in need of members to join the newly formed membership committee. Details are on page 7 of the [May 2026 Advocate](#).

MEMBERSHIP

- Andy Smith

We had a successful membership social in July. Thanks to all who attended and joined AAUW. I put together some presentations for the event. Current members, you might enjoy the presentations I made and may even learn something new.

- a. <https://aauwbuffalo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/Membership-Social-Presentation-July-2026.pdf> is linked to the "about us" page
- b. <https://aauwbuffalo.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/08/History-and-Photo-Show-Membership-Social-July-2026.pdf> is linked to the "history" page.

Thank you for the summer renewals. Just a reminder renewals will come via email from aasmith12@yahoo.com. If you want to receive in the mail the old-fashioned way, please reach out to me. If you are not sure of your renewal, reach out to me as well.

I am looking forward to membership events and seeing you.

Andy Smith
aasmith12@yahoo.com
716-228-9540

Public Policy

Dr. Marian Deutschman, Public Policy Chair

“BEFORE YOU VOTE”

The National Literacy Institute (NLI) proposes that “literacy is key to solving everything.” They add that 64 percent of our country’s fourth graders do not read proficiently. The claim is that this multigenerational challenge is linked to a range of today’s most pressing problems from economic growth and public health to community safety and civic engagement. If this deficiency sounds unbelievable to you, check these data from the National Center for Education Statistics.* How could this be true and how could this happen in our country? But more importantly, the question to ask is what needs to be done to correct what appears to be a broken system of education? You might be speculating that the alarming increase in social media has resulted in the decline in reading and math.

However, this problem also involves the lack of qualified teachers as well as the quality of our education. The teachers who have left the profession say classroom management is the primary concern. In the NLI survey, support from administrators and pay were listed as the least likely reasons for leaving. They said that support from parents and the community is essential for teachers to deal with a classroom of disinterested students who have a diverse array of special needs that the teacher is not equipped to address. Student behavior challenges and absenteeism contribute to the problem of literacy.

Literacy is defined by the capacity to read and write. The August edition of *The Atlantic* included an article “*The Age of Reading is Over*” by staff writer Rose Horowitch. She asks if we are living in a post- literate world. She says that “The advent of reading and writing transformed society. It altered people’s consciousness and politics, along with the intellectual feats they were capable of.” She warns that the “decline of reading will bring about changes of the same magnitude.” We may already have some proof that Americans are reading less, despite the many book review groups. Note the decline of local newspapers. According to the National Endowment for the Arts, which conducts one of the most comprehensive surveys of the nation’s reading habits, fewer than half of all adults reported having read a book of any kind in 2022. Only 38 percent read a novel or short story. The decline in reading crosses age groups, gender, and education levels. Note that we are consuming more text than ever in emails, text messages, X posts, Reddit threads and Instagram captions but Horowitch wonders if we’re losing our higher-order abilities for comprehension and synthesis. Do we have what we need for critical thinking and for problem solving? The article said that gambling has become a more common leisure activity than reading a book.

Horowitch also examines the effects of Artificial Intelligence on our relationship to reading and writing. She argues that “what’s at risk is nothing less than the ability to think for oneself. If people become over-reliant on AI to write for them, they could lose the capacity to interrogate or even develop their own views

Continued on next page...

Public Policy

Dr. Marian Deutschman, Public Policy Chair

“BEFORE YOU VOTE” -CONTINUED

If literacy is essential to citizenship, what does being a good citizen require? Bestselling author and U.S. Diplomat Richard Haass provides a list of how to be a good citizen: Here are 10 essential habits or obligations of citizens that can help to heal a divided country and preserve American democracy. These 10 habits are not just about voting. Haass gives his 10 quick “Haass Takes” here, based on responsibilities outlined in his book, “The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens,” which serves as a guide for all American citizens who want to be more deeply engaged in creating a healthy and thriving democracy. As he argues in his book, “We get the government and the country we deserve. Getting the one we need, however, is up to us.” Do you have what it takes to be a good citizen? The ten obligations are: Be Informed. Get Involved. Stay Open to Compromise. Remain Civil. Reject Violence. Value Norms. Promote the Common Good. Respect Government Service. Teach Civics. Put Country First.

**Fifty-four percent of U.S. adults (about 130 million people aged 16 to 74) read below the equivalent of a sixth-grade level, according to data analyzed from the U.S. Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Twenty-one percent of adults in the U.S. were illiterate in 2024. Thirty-four percent of adults lacking literacy proficiency were born outside the U.S. Massachusetts was the state with the highest rate of child literacy. New Mexico was the state with the lowest child literacy rate. New Hampshire was the state with the highest percentage of adults considered literate. The state with the lowest adult literacy rate was California.*

“HOW TO BE A COURAGEOUS VOTER”

Dr. Marian Deutschman, our public policy leader and a member of the League of Women Voters, has helped create a presentation, “How To Be A Courageous Voter”. The presentation is planned for October by the League and will discuss the “Save Act” and other important topics you should know before the November Elections. The League is encouraging AAUW Members to attend and support their mission: “Our activities are focused on helping to ensure, inform and enable the people in our counties...” Look for more information in the fall issues of our newsletter, the *Advocate*.



Reflections from NCCWSL 2026: Leadership, Evidence, and Campus Reform

By Joyce Jekayinoluwa

Thanks to the generous support of the AAUW Buffalo Branch, I spent three days this summer in a room full of women who lead, student leaders, scholars, practitioners, at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), and I came home with more than I expected to.

The conference opened with a keynote from Elise Newkirk-Kotfila, who reframed leadership in a way I have not stopped thinking about. She said leadership does not just ask you to do things, it asks you to grow toward empathy, toward better communication, toward a kind of honesty about your own limits. She admitted, in front of a room of aspiring leaders, that leadership can be lonely and that leaders make mistakes, and it was a strange relief to hear that named so plainly. Her advice grew out of that same honesty: find the people who came before you and ask them how they built their lives, not just their careers, and remember that the world's problems were never meant to be carried alone.

Dana Cox picked up that same thread in her session, where she reframed leadership as a practice of intention instead of perfection. She does this through a framework she called “Boundaries, Brand, and Boldness.” To her, Boundaries are what you protect: your peace, your time, your family, your mental health, the ability to simply say no. Brand is what you allow yourself to reveal, the difference between hiding your work and quietly hoping no one notices, and deciding, on purpose, how you want to be seen. And Boldness is what you claim out loud: the raise you negotiate, the accomplishment you name, the thing you finally ask for. Three disciplines, she said, but really one framework for a sustainable life in leadership.

Later, in a session grounded in *The Little Book of Race and Restorative Justice*, we sat in an actual restorative justice circle, practicing accountability instead of just reading about it. It felt like the right room to be in before I co-facilitated my own workshop, “The Fraction Who Lead: Women, Evidence, and Real Campus Reform,” alongside two brilliant co-presenters, Joy Jekayinoluwa of Wayne State University and Abigail Obafemi of Georgetown University. We opened with a number that tends to stop a room: women make up roughly six in ten college students nationally but hold fewer than three in ten senior campus leadership roles. Research is clear that this gap is not a confidence problem. It is structural, and closing it takes specific, learnable strategies, which is what the rest of the workshop was built to teach.

This is not only about college campuses. The same pattern shows up on nonprofit boards, in workplace committees, and in community organizations, including ones many of you already lead. Having a seat is not the same as having power and closing that gap takes the same tools everywhere: evidence, relationships, and time. That is exactly the work AAUW has been doing for generations, and it is the work this next generation is now being trained to do.

Reflections from NCCWSL 2026: Leadership, Evidence, and Campus Reform

By Joyce Jekayinoluwa

Continued...

We organized our workshop's strategies around four real case studies, each illustrating one pillar of a leadership framework we call The Fraction Who Lead. One leader gathered her own research before pushing for change at her university. Her case taught a simple lesson that solid evidence is harder to argue with than a strong opinion. Another built relationships with key people long before she needed their support. Her case showed that political skill like this can be built over time. It is not a fixed trait some people have and others don't. A third rose from an entry-level academic role to university president over more than a decade. Her case made it clear that lasting influence is built slowly, through years of proven work, not a single big moment. The fourth case was a composite built from the student leaders in the room. In it, a student comes to a meeting with real standing and a real need, states it clearly, and is met with polite silence instead of any real support. It was the clearest version of the problem the whole workshop was named for: being present is not the same as being heard.

By the end, every participant wrote down one specific change they wanted to make, one concrete action they would take in the next thirty days, and the name of a person who would hold them accountable to it. That same exercise works outside a college campus. Anyone reading this could do it this week: name the change you want in your own organization, name the one thing you will actually do about it, and tell someone who will ask you whether you did it.

I came home from NCCWSL with a clearer sense of what leadership costs, a framework I can use to protect my own energy while doing this work, and a room full of proof that the questions I study and now teach, about women, evidence, and institutional accountability, are questions this next generation is already living out and organizing around. I am grateful to AAUW Buffalo for making it possible for me to be in that room, and for the long tradition of investment in women's leadership that made it happen.

Joyce Jekayinoluwa
Ph.D. Candidate, University at Buffalo (SUNY)

BOOK SALE

“Our 70th Book Sale - How did we do?
In a word, we did GREAT”

Thanks to our MANY wonderful volunteers, the 2026 sale was again a record-breaker, both in attendance and in dollars! Our prices (both admissions and book prices) remained the same this year, so those results were due to great PR AND the great customer service at the sale! Of course, there are always growing expenses – costs rarely go down – but the committee has been and continues to be diligent in minimizing those.

We’re getting set up to start on the 2027 sale – our 71st!!! Save the dates - it will be held June 2-6, 2027, but of course won’t know the location until spring.

We’ll be collecting and sorting at a new location – 3774 Harlem Rd in Cheektowaga, between Cleveland and Wehrle/Kensington. There’s a map on our website for those of you who aren’t familiar with the area. The collection hours will be increased slightly – Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9-1 plus 10am-1pm every Saturday STARTING TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22!

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Presale - Reg	3,453	2,197	1,748	1,154	1,357	2,175	1,547	1,259	2,623	3,918	3,453
Presale - Coll			322	383	749	1,197	1,726	970	2,074	2,396	1,627
Wednesday											
Admissions	5,963	5,546	5,839	6,298	6,245	6,559	6,785	7,927	10,666	10,625	14,200
Sales	16,259	14,450	14,975	17,754	16,473	18,537	13,448	19,391	38,529	36,503	41,945
Collectibles	10,628	10,394	13,850	10,006	11,686	9,196	9,756	11,382	12,157	15,936	19,131
Misc		5	8	21					1,050		338
Daily Total	32,850	30,395	34,672	34,079	34,403	34,292	29,989	38,699	62,402	63,064	75,614
Cum Total	36,303	32,592	36,742	35,616	36,509	37,663	33,262	40,928	67,098	69,378	80,694
Thursday											
Admissions	1,584	1,084	1,067	1,180	1,281	992	1,142	1,158	1,374	1,411	1,854
Sales	7,976	7,255	9,540	10,981	10,932	12,469	10,146	11,267	24,049	23,350	30,886
Collectibles	6,295	5,273	4,442	3,537	5,261	3,399	5,542	4,920	5,914	7,234	7,082
Misc							20				200
Daily Total	15,855	13,612	15,049	15,698	17,473	16,861	16,850	17,345	31,337	31,995	40,022
Cum Total	52,158	46,204	51,791	51,314	53,982	54,542	50,112	58,273	98,435	101,373	120,716
Friday											
Admissions	823	740	755	653	827	800	612	649	739	931	1,089
Sales	6,358	5,129	5,720	5,126	7,066	6,634	5,032	5,415	10,047	14,192	15,745
Collectibles	2,801	2,792	3,139	1,964	2,569	2,491	2,263	2,306	3,139	4,214	3,847
Misc	65						200		100		32
Daily Total	10,047	8,661	9,614	7,743	10,462	9,925	8,106	8,370	14,025	19,337	20,713
Cum Total	62,205	54,865	61,405	59,057	64,445	64,449	58,218	66,643	112,461	120,710	141,429
Saturday											
Admissions	705	611	684	745	827	781	621	607	753	1,168	1,210
Sales	3,062	3,125	3,222	3,514	4,144	3,312	3,132	2,640	7,097	8,969	8,897
Collectibles	2,484	1,733	1,656	2,914	3,246	3,303	2,177	1,564	3,420	3,023	3,297
Misc	142						21		100		20
Daily Total	6,393	5,469	5,562	7,173	8,216	7,396	5,951	4,811	11,370	13,160	13,424
Cum Total	68,598	60,334	66,967	66,230	72,661	71,845	64,169	71,454	123,830	133,870	154,853
Sunday											
Sales	2,767	3,730	4,859	5,731	4,905	5,473	4,365	4,575	6,610	7,688	10,166
Collectibles	1,119	2,091	2,344	2,194	1,994	1,361	1,396	1,142	1,565	1,732	1,681
Misc				13			23				
Daily Total	3,886	5,821	7,203	7,938	6,900	6,835	5,784	5,717	8,175	9,420	11,847
GRAND TOTAL	72,484	66,155	74,170	74,168	79,561	78,680	69,952	77,171	132,005	143,290	166,700

Come join us to help – we’ll show you the ropes (everyone gets trained) and you’ll meet new members and friends! Hope to see you in September!

Good News! This year we had a new company take away our left-overs – ZoomBooks. They will share a portion of their profits with us!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It won’t be a lot (around \$500) but that’s better than nothing, which is what we’ve gotten in the past.

DINNER BY THE BOOK

When: Wed., September 16th, at 5:00 pm

Where: --- **NEW LOCATION** ---

The Olympic Restaurant
1601 Military Rd, Buffalo, NY, 14217

Book: *The Correspondent*,
by Virginia Evans

Discussion Leader: Lynne Tauriello

Facilitator: Maryann Hope

Please RSVP each month!

RSVP: Judy Malamas 716-632-0461

Email: tsagewood@aol.com

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

LET'S TALK PUBLIC POLICY!

When: Thursday, August 27th - 1:30 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.

CLUELESS MYSTERY BOOK CLUB

When: Wed., September 23th, at 12:00 pm

Where: Family Tree Restaurant
4346 Bailey Avenue, Amherst

Book: *The Widow*, by John Grisham

Presenter: Pat Miceli

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

MASTERING LIBRARY ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

(Including Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy & Flipster)

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

In October, I want to do a daytrip
to Auburn, NY to see the home
and museum of Harriet
Tubman. It is also the home of
William Seward, Secretary of State
under Lincoln and namesake of
"Seward's Folly."

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

LUNCH BUNCH

When: Tues., Sept. 29th, at
1:00 pm

Where: Alton's Restaurant
2250 Walden Avenue,
Cheektowaga

RSVP: Andy Smith
716-228-9540
Email: aasmith12@yahoo.com

SCRABBLE CLUB

When: Thursday, October 1st,
at 5:30pm

Where: Home of Pat Miceli

Contact Lisa Casey below
for Pat's address for the next
gathering.

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



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

- 9/2 Board Meeting 6:30pm
Ebenezer United Church of Christ in West Seneca
630 Main Street, West Seneca, NY 14224
- 9/16 Dinner By the Book - 5:00pm
- 9/22 Book Sale Col/Sorting 9:00am-1:00pm
Welcome Back Banquet - 5:00pm
Chef's Restaurant
291 Seneca St, Buffalo, NY 14204
- 9/23 Book Sale Col/Sorting 9:00am-1:00pm
Clueless Mystery Book Club - 12:00pm
- 9/26 Book Sale Col/Sorting 10:00am-1:00pm
- 9/29 Book Sale Col/Sorting 9:00am-1:00pm
Lunch Bunch 1:00pm
Alton's Restaurant
2250 Walden Avenue, Cheektowaga, NY 14225
- 9/30 Book Sale Col/Sorting 9:00am-1:00pm

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.

