

# South Haven, Michigan AAUW

## Newsletter: March 2023

### **Hello from Linda**

The schools are closed today – good reason for me to wimp out on the gym because the roads are “bad.” In case you didn’t know, we are in the Michigan season of Third Winter – soon to be followed by Mud Season. I looked out the window last week to see about 6 bluebirds in the crabapple tree, followed the next day by a flock of 20+ robins. For those of you who choose to leave the area in the winter, you don’t know what you’re missing (or maybe you do).

The winter weather does not mean that our AAUWSH group goes into hibernation. The Lunch Bunch gathered for food, fun and fellowship at Clementines in January, and spent February Galentine’s Day at Black River Tavern.



We do appreciate the local restaurants welcoming our group in this off season. We look forward next to meeting at Phoenix Street on Broadway and help break in their new location on March 8.

Committees and Interest Groups are also continuing their activities. Public Policy is busy discussing the next policy issues to support and already planning the next Candidates Forum. The Scholarship Committee has helped the school develop a single scholarship application for the students and has also helped mentor the students in interviewing skills. Fundraising is working to develop more ways to support our scholarship

recipients. Diversity/Equity members just finished reading “Gender Queer” by Maia Kobabe – a controversial modern coming of age graphic memoir written by a nonbinary, queer author and illustrator. We are looking forward to a discussion of the book facilitated by Heather Gradewine from the OutCenter of Southwest Michigan on March 7, 5PM at the Church of the Epiphany in South Haven. A Zoom connection will be available. Even the Book Sale Committee has started screening some newly available sources for books.

The nominating committee has been busy and has developed an outstanding slate of candidates for the upcoming positions of President Elect, Treasurer and Secretary. More about that slate after everything is confirmed. I am also happy to say that **Mary Ellen Doty** has agreed to assume the newly created position of Dues Treasurer. Her role will be much welcomed as an assistant to both the VP of Membership and to the Treasurer.

Speaking of Committees and Interest Groups, any leaders or chairpersons are asked to review the description of their groups so that we have all updated information for our annual meeting on May 11, 5PM at LMC. Also at that meeting, you will be asked to vote on Bylaw revisions recommended by AAUWMI Chair Jan Van Gasse to clarify our language and put us in compliance with state bylaws. A copy of these changes will be provided at least 30 days before the meeting for you to review with an explanatory guide.

Let me close with this quote from Malala Yousafzai:

*“I raise my voice – not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. Those who have fought for their rights: Their rights to live in peace. Their right to be treated with dignity.”*

Let us continue to raise our voices to be heard.  
~Linda

## Lunch Bunch

Wednesday, March 8th, at Noon

Phoenix Street on Broadway

Hosted by

**Margaret Sleeper and Kelly Cedarquist**

Enjoy visiting, great food, and the new location!

Order off the Menu

RSVP to **Kelly Cedarquist** by March 6th

cedarq@shvn.net



## Book Groups

Monday Afternoon Group:

Mar 27 *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig

Hostess: **Ann Habicht**

Apr 24 *The Lincoln Highway* by Amor Towles

Hostess: **Mary Pietenpol**

Wednesday Night Book Group

Mar 8 *Oh William!* by Elizabeth Strout

Hostess: **Julie Molnar**

Apr 12 *Scarlet in Blue* by Jennifer Murphy

Hostess: **Nancy Hendrickson**

Thursday Night Book Club

Mar 16 *Firekeepers Daughter* by Angeline Boulley

Hostess: **Marge Lampe**

Apr 20 *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver.

Hostess: **Mary Tobin**

## Women's History

In observance of March as Women's History Month, the Silver Bag Ladies will present "*Law Makers. Law Breakers: Women Who Disturbed the Peace,*" on Wednesday, March 22, at 4:00 at the



South Haven Memorial Library. If you missed seeing this when it was presented at the Spring Tea - or would like to see a new version

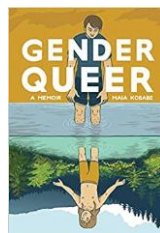
with a new cast, please consider coming.

Since it will be performed in the library, the new cast includes members of the Library Board who have not previously had a chance to perform as Silver Bag Ladies. Come cheer on these new actresses.

## DEI Update

### DEI Committee Sponsoring Book Discussion

The DEI Committee invites all our members to a book discussion of *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe on **Tuesday, March 7, 5-6:30 pm at the Church of the Epiphany, 410 Erie St., South Haven**. The discussion will be facilitated by Heather Gardewine, Program Facilitator and Community Educator of the OutCenter of Southwest Michigan. The discussion will also be available on Zoom.



*Gender Queer* is one of the most banned books in the U.S., particularly targeted by school boards and parent groups. It is a memoir in Graphic Novel format and is a very quick read.

Please reply by March 1st to marlazwolan@gmail.com if you

plan on attending and please specify in person or on Zoom. Thanks!

**Kerry Hagy and Marla Zwolan**

Co-chairs of DEI Committee

## LMC

LMC surveyed students right after being closed for Covid to check with them about which needs the school could help with. Students were asked to rank a variety of areas from most important to least. These included food, transportation, child care, financial literacy, college book financing, tutoring, and a variety of other needs. After seeing the survey results, the Student Financial Stability Committee chose food insecurity as an area to target. They spent time visiting and learning from colleges and universities who already have established student pantries. LMC is partnering with Feeding America to develop a large food pantry at the Benton Harbor campus. This proposal includes an online ordering system that students from Niles and South Haven can use to receive access to refrigerated or perishable goods. **The committee also proposed several smaller snack stations like the one at South Haven campus (that is sponsored by AAUW).** (Thank you, **Peggy Murnighan**). The Niles and Benton Harbor versions are on track to be open in the next month.

## Open Door

In January, AAUW-SH volunteers served pizza, salad and a chocolate éclair dessert at Open Door. Serving Volunteers (who also make salads and clean up): **Annie Brown, Rosemary Fitzer, Edna Kent, Elaine Kitchen, Julie Molnar, Janna Newell, Sandy Olsen, Liz Smith.**



**Margaret Sleeper and Kathy Dascenzo** were the working the kitchen.

Open Door offers a free community dinner every Tuesday at 6 pm downstairs in the Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church. This provides a hot meal, builds community, and is an opportunity for churches and service organizations to take turns working together preparing, serving, and cleaning up after this dinner. Our next opportunity to assist at Open Door will be May 30, 2023.

## Blessings in a Backpack



We have had 6 to 8 volunteers every third Thursday packing food for weekend backpacks at North Shore Elementary School. The packing for all of the South Haven

Schools take place at this location now. AAUW is represented by many dedicated volunteers: **Carol Rice, Bernie Lopata, Mary Lou Callan, Jean Bevevino, Debbie Mellein, Mary Hosley and Sandy Olsen.**

As they say: Many hands make light work.

~**Sue Cunningham**

## AmazonSmile

### ... And Now It's Gone

Last fall, we encouraged you to support AAUWSH by using *AmazonSmile* every time you shopped on the site. When you did, we received a donation of 0.5% of your eligible purchases and you helped support our mission to educate and empower women. Thank you for taking advantage of this opportunity.

Recently, Amazon announced its decision to end this decade-long charitable giving program by February 20, 2023. The company stated that the program had not “grown enough to create the impact we had originally hoped. ... With so many eligible organizations – more than a million globally – our ability to have an impact was often spread too thin.” Still, Amazon pledges to maintain its long-term commitment and investment in the communities it serves. This decision comes as the company is laying off workers and eliminating different areas of its business in an effort to trim costs.

As Amazon wraps up this initiative, participating charities will receive a one-time donation equivalent to three months of what they earned in 2022 through the program. We appreciate all of you who took advantage of this opportunity over the past several months.

~**Bernie Lopata**

## Rapid Responders:

### A Call to Action for Gun Safety



Current gun reform bills in the Michigan Legislature include:  
Universal background checks  
Red flag laws  
Safe storage requirements

Call or email your legislators

#### CONTACT INFO

Senate Republican Leader Aric Nesbitt  
P.O. Box 30036 Lansing, MI 48909-7536  
By Phone: (517) 373-0793  
Toll Free: (855) 347-8020  
By Fax: (517) 373-5607



## Women in History



HENRIETTA SWAN LEAVITT  
At about 30 years of age.

Henrietta Swan Leavitt was an American astronomer. A graduate of Radcliffe College, she worked at the Harvard College Observatory as a "computer", tasked with examining photographic plates in order to measure and catalog the brightness of stars. This work led her to discover the relation between the luminosity and the period of Cepheid variables. Leavitt's discovery provided astronomers with the first "standard candle" with which to measure the distance to faraway galaxies.

Before Leavitt discovered the period-luminosity relationship for Cepheid variables, the only techniques available to astronomers for measuring the distance to a star were based on parallax and triangulation. Such techniques can only be used for measuring distances up to hundreds of light years. Leavitt's work allowed astronomers to measure distances up to about 20 million light years. As a result of this, it is now known that our own galaxy, the Milky Way, has a diameter of about 100,000 light years. After Leavitt's death, Edwin Hubble used Leavitt's period-luminosity relation, to establish that the universe is expanding. Hubble often said that Leavitt deserved the Nobel Prize for her work. Leavitt was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the **American Association of University Women**, the American Astronomical and Astrophysical Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and an honorary member of the American Association of Variable Star Observers.

## For Michigan AAUW



AAUW-Michigan will highlight the contributions of women in social media posts during March, Women's History Month. You may nominate historical and contemporary women who have made a positive impact, whether they be from your community, your branch, or elsewhere. Submit a posting, story, article, or paragraph, about a woman in your town, community, branch, or from U.S. or world history that you feel had, or is currently having, a positive effect on women. Suggestions may be sent to State Services Manager, Leah Monger at [stateservices@aauwmi.org](mailto:stateservices@aauwmi.org).

## Membership

Please welcome:

Rhonda C Messinger  
777 North Shore Drive #14  
South Haven, MI 49090  
rhondamess@gmail.com

## On Your Calendar?

- \_\_\_ March 6 RSVP Lunch Bunch
- \_\_\_ March 7 DEI Book Discussion
- \_\_\_ March 8 Lunch Bunch
- \_\_\_ March 8 Wed. Book Group
- \_\_\_ March 15 Board of Education meeting
- \_\_\_ March 16 Blessings in a Backpack
- \_\_\_ March 16 Thurs. Book Group
- \_\_\_ March 22 Silver Bag Ladies at the Library
- \_\_\_ March 27 Afternoon Book Group
- \_\_\_ April 12 Wednesday Book Group
- \_\_\_ April 20 Blessings in a Backpack
- \_\_\_ April 20 Thursday Book Group
- \_\_\_ April 24 Afternoon Book Group

## To Do List ✓

- \_\_\_ Read with a book group.
- \_\_\_ RSVP for Lunch Bunch – Invite a guest.
- \_\_\_ Volunteer for Open Door
- \_\_\_ Visit our website.
- \_\_\_ Nominate a woman of note.
- \_\_\_ Write a legislator.
- \_\_\_ Start and Interest Group.
- \_\_\_ Look for SHAAUW on Facebook. Like!