



AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.



'Tis the Season Branch Program

Thursday, December 7, 1 - 3 pm ~ [Chippewa Nature Center](#), 400 S. Badour Rd.

This year Branch programs are focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) education. For children to succeed in today's workplace these are critical skills. Midland's Chippewa Nature Center, CNC, provides basic skills for young children entering school and reinforces these skills for youth in elementary grades. Their outstanding preschool nature program was featured on PBS. This program inspired the general meetings team to select CNC as our featured community program for December. You can watch the short PBS special at <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/b-bug-preschoolers-make-nature-classroom>.

CNC programs provide children with the opportunity to experience rich, nature-based programs under the guidance of caring, well-trained professionals who provide developmentally appropriate play-based learning in a safe environment. Many of the programs at CNC are provided free of charge thanks to the generosity of members and local foundations. However, some of the most powerful programs – Nature Preschool and Nature Day Camp – are necessarily fee-based. It is CNC's goal to make these programs accessible to children regardless of their family's economic status.



CNC provides scholarships for Nature Preschool and Nature Day Camp through donated funds. For preschool, these funds are distributed to families for whom state-funded scholarships are not available. For camp, scholarships are distributed through schools based on criteria set by the school and through CNC based on financial need. The support of garden, civic, service, and education groups as well as interested individuals is critical for CNC to be able to offer scholarships for these programs to children in need.



In Nature Preschool, a child will have the opportunity to gain the skills needed to support success in kindergarten. In Nature Day Camp, campers engage in learning opportunities. Both programs provide critical opportunities for the child to develop a healthy relationship with the natural world.

By holding this meeting at Chippewa Nature Center, our members can experience nature all around them as they learn about what's available for local youth. CNC's Director of Programs Jenn Kirts will present an overview of the numerous opportunities our youth can experience in nature that support STEM education. You may also explore the nature trails after the program.

Holiday treats will be served with time to mingle. Bring your spouse or a guest. There is no charge for this program, but we do need you to RSVP so we can make preparations. Contact aauwmidland@gmail.com by **Monday, December 4.**

Members who are inspired by CNC's youth programs will have an opportunity to support scholarships.

President's Message

Kim Steinke

The recent surge in victims of sexual assault and harassment willing to go public with their experiences is an encouraging sign of change in public support moving away from perpetrators to supporting the victims. This change may provide an opportunity to engage in constructive national dialog fostering greater awareness of the pervasiveness of the problem, its root causes, and the changes that need to be made in the workplace, in our schools and in our legislative bodies.



By supporting AAUW, you are helping to fight sexual assault and harassment. AAUW has been addressing the problem for a long time by using lobbying and grassroots efforts to push forward policies. You can find a great deal of information on AAUW's website. Here are a few examples:

- Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The web page lists 8 topics of basic information about sexual harassment and guidelines for steps to take if a person experiences an assault. See [Know Your Rights: Workplace Sexual Harassment](#) or visit <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/>.
- In 2011 AAUW researched and published [Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School](#). The report reveals sobering statistics about the prevalence of sexual harassment in schools. For example - the chance of a woman being sexually assaulted during college is about the same as her catching the flu during an average year. AAUW lists 10 ways to fight sexual assault.
- The [Legal Advocacy Fund](#) works to challenge sex discrimination including sexual harassment and sexual assault. LAF was established in 1981 and since then has provided millions of dollars to balance the scales of justice for people working through the legal system.

As we approach the end of a year in which major disasters impacted our country and there is so much social and political discord, there is also much for which we give thanks. I wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Membership News ~ Judy Donahue, 2nd VP Membership

We welcome two new members to Midland AAUW, Judith Cox and Sylvia Patchin!

Judith Cox is a graduate of Mid-Michigan Community College, ADN, Nursing major, and Walden University/MSN, Nurse Education.

Sylvia Patchin is a retired teacher who taught in the Midland School System at Windover, Chippewassee, Mills, Carpenter and Plymouth.

Consider AAUW Funds When Making End of the Year Contributions

Jane Wirth, AAUW Funds, Midland Branch

This is the season for giving and thanking. First, let me thank those members who gave to AAUW above and beyond your membership over the past year. Your generosity is appreciated.

You may be inclined to support AAUW in a special way before the end of the year. AAUW conducts significant research (Eleanor Roosevelt Fund); it supports women who have been discriminated against on the job (Legal Advocacy Fund); it provides leadership training for college students (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders--NCCWSL) and for women who are contemplating running for office (Elect Her); and several more worthwhile activities.

By supporting AAUW you stand with a community across the country demanding that women's priorities be American's priorities. We will work together to close the gender gap, for all women to have access to health care, stop violence against women and break the glass ceilings in workplace and in government.

Contributions to AAUW Funds at the national level are fully tax-deductible and can be restricted to a particular fund by writing the fund or program name or number on your check. Go to [contribute to AAUW](#) for additional information or to give online.

At the local level, our Branch funds four scholarships for local women to attend college; we also underwrite attendance by school-age girls to attend STEM camps, and more. Contributions to these efforts can be directed to the Midland Area Community Foundation specifying the AAUW Scholarship Fund—either the endowment fund or the spendable fund; they are tax-deductible.

Public Policy ~ June Turley, Public Policy Chair

2017 Elections See Wins for Diverse Representation and Health Care

“State and local elections took place on November 7, with voters weighing in on everything from gubernatorial races to ballot initiatives to school board races. This year's elections saw a number of landmark achievements. Maine voters passed the Medicaid Expansion Initiative; backed by AAUW of Maine, this initiative will increase the number of Mainers covered by the state's Medicaid program under the Affordable Care Act. New Jersey's newly elected lieutenant governor, Sheila Oliver (D), is the first black woman to win statewide office in the state. Hoboken, New Jersey, also elected the first Sikh mayor in the state. Many cities also elected woman mayors and openly transgender candidates won several races. Virginia also boasted two firsts in the House of Delegates, electing their first Asian-American woman delegate and their first Latina women delegates.”

From AAUW's [Washington Update E-Bulletin](#), November 10, 2017 (www.aauw.org)



In Memory of Audrey Harding

Cathy Heng

Audrey E. Harding came to Midland and shared her world-wide talents helping others. A native of New York, she earned a bachelor's degree from Barnard College, a part of Columbia University. She was the only woman in the 1951 University of Michigan class earning a PhD degree. She was an officer in the Navy WAVES. Her officer experience, psychology background and clinic experience served her as she worked with Midland-Gladwin Community Health, Northwood University, Delta College and SVSU.



Audrey was a long-time member of the Midland Branch and an AAUW Named Gift Honoree in 1981. She enjoyed her book group, Used Book Sales, and general meetings. She shared her humor with many Midland groups. Friends especially enjoyed her memorable birthday parties.

Book Recommendation ~ Pauline Pittsley

Daring to Drive: A Saudi Woman's Awakening

Daring to Drive: A Saudi Woman's Awakening by Manal al-Sharif is my passing book for Reading For Fun. Manal al-Sharif grew up in Mecca. Her memoir is an eye-opening account of her activism for a woman's right to drive. She recounts her life as a young girl who during her adolescence became a religious radical. Because of her mother's determination that her children would be educated, Manal became a computer security engineer.

Reading about her life in Saudi Arabia, you begin to understand the thinking of the people in the Saudi kingdom. Manal eventually sees another way to live as she becomes acquainted with Western life. Many Arabian women sought the right to drive; it was Manal who was imprisoned for "driving while a woman" that won women the right to drive.

Mark Your Calendar

Dec. 7, 1:00 pm	Chippewa Nature Center
Jan. 18, 10:00 am	Global Compassion Inc. President Indira Oskvarek
Feb. 15, 1:30 pm	Women's Health Issues
Mar. 15, 6:00 pm	Annual Meeting
April 27-29	Used Book Sale
May 17	Lunch at the Country Club

President: Kim Steinke, President-Elect: Carol Arnosky, 1st VP Programs: Mary Crane-Franek
2nd VP Membership: Judith Donahue, The Twig Editor: Pauline Pittsley

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