

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

Pandemic and Flood Disrupted the Activities of our Branch

Our hearts go out to all of our members who suffered severe damage to their homes. It was a hard blow to take on top of the stress caused by social distancing and cancellation of events and services. Our community, Midland area and especially Sanford, is stepping up to the challenge of healing and renewal. Our Branch will also see changes. We welcome ideas and opinions from our members. How can we use this challenge to create an even stronger organization. Please contact your Branch leadership and take part in rejuvenating our great organization.

Jane Wirth & Pauline Pittsley, Co-Presidents, and incoming President Lu DeLine.

- **General Meeting Update ~ Chris Ferrando, 1st VP Program**

The AAUW Spring Luncheon for Thursday, June 4, has been canceled due to the virus. The Program Committee would like to thank all the members who attended programs this year. We hope to see you all in September for brunch and stimulating conversation at the Midland Country Club. The Committee welcomes program suggestions from our membership. Just contact one of the committee members by August 15. Wishing all of you a very healthy summer. We will see you in September.

Program Committee: Chris Ferrando, Barb Galloway, Liz Kapla, Deb Kaiser and Sandy Collinson.

- **Election of Officers Will be Conducted at a Special Annual Meeting held via Zoom**

The slate of nominees is: Lu Ellen DeLine - President (2020-21); Judi Cox - Membership Vice President (2020-22); Liz Kapla - Finance Vice President (2020-22); Barb Galloway - Nominations Officer (2020-21); Marie Johansen - Delegate-at-Large (2020-21). Details soon.

- **Midland Branch Awards 5 Scholarships to Area Students**

Presentation of the students' names will be published later due to the unfortunate disruption caused by the flood.

AAUW Town Hall with Kim Churches, CEO ~ A Summary, Jane Wirth, Co-President

Our national office personnel are continuing to experience the need to stay home as Washington, D.C. is just beginning to feel the intense effects of Covid-19. The 50 staff members are working at home.

Highlights from this Town Hall include:

- ❖ Women are being disproportionately affected by Covid-19. More women have been laid off and fewer have paid leave.
- ❖ AAUW leaders are looking at this crisis as an opportunity for change and new innovations.
- ❖ AAUW continues to work on its own toward our mission goals, but is also working in more coalitions to exert more clout.
- ❖ Get out the vote activity will begin to increase as we near the November general election.
- ❖ Title IX will be administered under new rules beginning August 15. However, many of them are contrary to AAUW goals. This will be an opportunity to work with partners.
- ❖ AAUW leadership plans a review of affiliates (branches) in the near future to better serve members.
- ❖ The revamped AAUW website is ADA compliant, has many fewer files and its building continues.
- ❖ In the past, if you have taken advantage of "Give a Grad a Gift" (which was seldom renewed), consider giving membership (\$50) in the AAUW Equity Network which deals with current issues for new graduates.

- ❖ AAUW's corporate sponsors are reducing/withdrawing support due to the current economic situation.
- ❖ AAUW is working on a survey for college/university partners.
- ❖ StartSmart/WorkSmart continue to provide inspiration/support for new college graduates and women seeking more equitable pay in current employment.
- ❖ After its June Board meeting, national officers may be part of a webinar.

The 5-Star program is being given more flexibility; branches can be alert for changes in the near future. AAUW appreciates your contributions. Due to AAUW staff working at home these days, it is taking longer for checks to reach AAUW and therefore use of credit cards would get funds to AAUW more quickly.

AAUW Midland Public Policy ~ Judy Donahue, Public Policy Chair

After a vacancy of over 2 years, the position of Public Policy Director for AAUWMI has been filled by Karen Zyczynski from the Northville-Novis Branch. Advocacy is part of Karen's family DNA. Her family members were active in MI labor unions and she was a President of her local MEA from 1996 to 2004.

Karen's goals as AAUWMI Public Policy Director are threefold. She intends to get to know AAUWMI Branch Public Policy chairs; keep things simple; and promote the 2-Minute Activist.

AAUWMI's Virtual Lobby Corps (VLC) has been led for the past 2 years by AAUWMI's lobbyist, Mary Pollock. Karen now chairs this group, working with Mary Pollock. She will lead the Lobby Corps as it continues to monitor many legislative areas. The following topics are currently being discussed:

- Right to Life of Michigan's petition banning most second-term abortions. Enough signatures have been collected to proceed to the sample petition vetting process by the Secretary of State Election Bureau. Planned Parenthood of MI is also vetting the same petition samples to determine if a challenge is warranted. Ultimately, if the legislation is passed by the Legislature, it will be approved without the Governor's approval or veto.
- The federal candidate questionnaire to be circulated to Michigan's U.S. Senate and U.S. Congressional candidates, authorized by the AAUWMI Executive Board, will be promoted by the VLC. The results will be given to AAUWMI members in mid-June or so.
- The prediction of a state revenue shortfall affecting the budget in areas that are especially important to women, such as education, is being carefully monitored by the Virtual Lobby Corps.
- Fair & Equal Michigan Petition Drive which ended May 27, 2020. This voter-initiated law adds sexual orientation and gender identity to Michigan's Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Bill.

Membership Update! Lu DeLine, Membership VP

Renewal invoices are in your email. Thank you for continuing your membership in Midland Branch. In case you missed it, please let me know and I will send you another one. It is quite easy to renew using the link in the email invoice. There are many messages from AAUW, so please check for your invoice.

Member recruitment is really an ongoing effort. If there are any potential members you would like to suggest, please pass on the contact information to me. It has been an incredibly good year for Midland Branch. With everyone's help, we added 12 new members. Congratulations!

Mark Your Calendar

Co-Presidents: Jane Wirth & Pauline Pittsley ~ 1st VP Program: Chris Ferrando
2nd VP Membership: Lu Ellen DeLine ~ The Twig Editor: Pauline Pittsley

Web sites: <https://midland-mi.aaup.net> <https://aaupmi.org/> **E-mail:** aaupmidland@gmail.com

Tuesday, **August 4**, Primary Election (to narrow the fields of candidates for local/state offices)

Tuesday, **November 3**, General Election