

September 2024

Celebrating 99 Years of AAUW in Monmouth!

Presidents' Report

Carolyn Weber

Welcome back after a very busy late spring till now, the beginning of autumn! As Acting President Katelyn Audette expressed, *Thank you all so much for a beautiful 100th anniversary celebration! I appreciate everyone who attended and thank you from the bottom of my heart to all who had a hand in planning and preparing for the June 1st luncheon at Patton Block Grill & Brew Pub on the square.*

IL 2022-2024 State AAUW President Donna Jean Simon brought greetings from the State which is also celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2024. All in attendance spoke about the influence AAUW has had in their lives and surrounding communities.

Our own *Initiative* Editor Sharon Gilbert presented a very well-researched character narrative about one of the brilliant original founders of the national American Association of University Women preceding the official 1881 founding. (See p. 2) for a condensed version of Ellen Swallow Richards' life. Sharon appeared in the couture of Richards' day.

Centennial Celebration booklets about the Monmouth Area (IL) Branch were given to all present. Jan DeYoung combed through years of archived Branch minutes, newsletters, membership booklets, news clippings and treasury reports. These were further condensed by Carolyn Weber. The booklet's "centerfold" lists all who served our Branch as presidents. If you would like a copy, please email: Carolyn Weber, joyfl66.weber@gmail.com. Please include the mailing address where the booklet may be sent.



Program

Monday September 30, 2024,
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Meet & Greet

Warren County Public Library
Board Room.

Appetizers, dessert, and drinks will be served. Bring friends and students. Come and get acquainted with our newest members and hear program plans for the year. All new members and previous members who have lapsed more than two years may join at this event and save \$36 off their dues.

Student memberships: Both undergraduates and students pursuing a graduate degree are eligible to join for \$18.81.

- **TUESDAY NOVEMBER 5 VOTE!**
- **Voter registration in person at County Clerk's office in Warren County Courthouse until October 4.**



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¡Adelante! Book Group

Marilyn Van Ausdall

Starting at 10 am on Thursday, October 17, we'll be discussing the book Wild Girls: How the Outdoors Shaped the Women Who Challenged a Nation by Tiya Miles. Zoom links will be sent to everyone a couple of days ahead. Hoping that many of you will be able to join in!

P.S. Planning ahead - November's book discussion will be about our own Stacy Cordery's newest book Becoming Elizabeth Arden: The Woman Behind the Global Beauty Empire. Date will be determined during October's book discussion.



AAUW Founder Ellen Sparrow Richards

Sharon Gilbert

Three hundred years ago, the Charles River helped open America for settlement and commerce. Barely a hundred yards from the river inside MIT's old chemical building hangs a plaque of a human face, black except for a shiny nose, rubbed by students. That plaque marked the first female MIT student, graduate and faculty member, Ellen Swallow Richards.

Ellen was born in December 1842 near Dunstable, Massachusetts to sixth generation Americans. She was home-schooled because the local school was so poor and then entered Westford Academy where she was taught by Harvard graduates.

She taught for two years and then matriculated at Vassar at age 26. Poughkeepsians were still doubtful of educating young women, as they were too frail and delicate and shouldn't be educated beyond their needs. While there she was drawn to chemistry connecting earth's infinite elements. She was recognized for her

genius by her professors and at graduation they prophetically called her Professor Swallow.

Ellen applied to drug stores and chemical companies with no success. Finally, in 1870 she was accepted as a "special" student in chemistry at MIT. She had no money, so took lodgings at a place where she was hired to manage it.

Until the summer hiatus at MIT, Ellen supported herself, executed her father's estate, took care of her mother by commuting daily from Boston to Worcester and completed her first year at MIT.

In her second year she made actual tests of Massachusetts sewage, streams, and water supplies. Her studies were the groundwork for the first water purity tables. While still a student, she identified additional elements within samarskite. Her professors were astounded.

By 1873, her undergraduate years at MIT ended and Ellen was now Ellen Swallow, A.B. Vassar 1870, and S.B. MIT 1873. There was no degree for a woman from MIT, but Vassar granted her an MA. There were still few opportunities for women grads, but she came up with the idea of preparing women to teach science in high school. In 1873, sixteen women began a class in advanced science taught by Ellen and Bea Capon. By 1873, 23 women were training for careers in science at MIT.

The Association of Collegiate Alumnae, now the American Association of University Women had its genesis in numerous Ellen Swallow projects. In 1876, she organized the Boston Chapter of Vassar Alumnae. Under her direction. It was an organization in which educated women could meet each other and a means of encouraging bright young women to attend her alma mater. If deserving candidates could not afford the luxury of education, she helped to raise funds.

Just like in modern times, the organization did studies. The first was to survey graduates across the country about their health to refute the notion that education damaged women. The second was to study industrial training of women to equip them for changing environment. The third was hygiene, physical, social,

and mental health and was included in every function of the organization.

A first, a major program was started in some Boston high schools in 1894 to provide nutritional meals at low prices to children who would not normally have them. Due in large part to Ellen Richards and [Edward Atkinson](#), the New England Kitchen ran the program as a 'private enterprise' that paid for itself many times over. Because the program provided nutritious meals children would otherwise not have, it became the main justification for similar lunch programs in other cities."

Fourteen books in eleven years, dozens of scientific papers, magazine articles and hundreds of speeches and lectures; back and forth across the continent to speak, meet and recruit, living out of hotel rooms, guest houses and dormitories, visiting schools, dedicating buildings, starting new curricula, organizing and teaching, experimenting and proving, proposing and predicting, Ellen Swallow conducted her life in a titanic wave of creative labor.



Susan Van Kirk's Latest Book

Death in a Ghostly Hue is the third and final Art Center Mystery just out from Susan Van Kirk. Here's a bit of synopsis.

Jill Madison and her brothers have never forgiven Quinn Parsons for driving drunk and killing their parents. How could they? When Parsons returns to Apple Grove from his six years in prison, he's looking for redemption. But his thoughtless actions, so long ago, hurt more residents than the Madisons, and murderous motives abound when it comes to Quinn Parsons. His lifeless body is soon found at the bottom of a staircase.

nd who threatened him in front of a large cross-section of the town? Jill's brother, Andy Madison. When Andy is arrested and charged with murder, Jill and her bestie, Angie Emerson, seek to prove his innocence without forgetting that if Andy is not the killer, someone else is—someone dangerous who may be watching.

Meanwhile, the Old Friends senior group at Jill's art center is rehearsing a radio-play of Oscar Wilde's "The Canterville Ghost," a ghostly story of forgiveness. Strange happenings convince Jill there's a real ghost at the art center. To prove to herself she's not going crazy, she begins to investigate the center's dark history. She discovers the past is never far away.

All three books in the trilogy are available on Amazon, Bookshop.org, or BarnesandNoble.com. They're available locally at libraries, Wordsmith Bookshoppe, OSF Gift Shop at Holy Family, and Buchanan Center for the Arts.



From Anne Mamary

Dr. Camilla Townsend, History Professor at Rutgers University, will give a lecture at Monmouth next Thursday at 7:00. The presentation will be livestreamed and will also be available on the College's YouTube channel after. The link: youtube.com/monmouthcollege

Cami's lecture: "Water snakes, bears, and wild pecans: How the Delaware Indians packed their stories and took them with them every time they moved."



AAUW-IL Fall Conference 2024

Join AAUW colleagues from around the state at the virtual AAUW-IL Fall Conference on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024, from 9 - 11 AM. Learn about AI in politics and get important updates from our state president and public policy leaders. We also have breakout sessions on topics of interest.

**All branch and national AAUW members are welcome!
Special Session**

Manipulated Realities: Fake News, AI, and the Future of Electoral Politics

In this engaging discussion, media scholar Nolan Higdon will explore the critical intersections of fake news, disinformation, artificial intelligence (AI), and electoral politics. Drawing on his extensive research in media literacy and political communication, Higdon will examine how disinformation campaigns, fueled by AI technologies, are shaping contemporary political landscapes, and influencing voter perceptions. He will explain strategies used to disseminate misleading information, the role of tech platforms in amplifying it, and the impact on democratic processes. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the challenges posed by this evolving media environment and learn tools to critically engage with the information they encounter in electoral contexts.



Membership News

AAUW Shape the Future Campaign

Branches can offer 50% off national dues when prospective members join AAUW at an event or meeting. Branches also earn one free national membership for every two new members they recruit, with a maximum of three free memberships annually. To accomplish this: 1. Hold an event or meeting and offer the discounted membership rate to attendees. (People say the top reason they join AAUW is our mission!) Have a presence at local events that attract large audiences that would find AAUW appealing. Co-sponsor with local community colleges or colleges and universities, and community organizations such as the Girl Scouts or the YWCA. Spotlight local issues that will allow you to collaborate with other groups, including those with different membership bases. 2. Have the participant complete the membership form and pay the discounted national dues (\$36), plus state (\$10) and branch (\$9) dues in total to the branch finance officer. The finance officer should process the membership and payment within 10 days of the event. Who Is Eligible for Membership? AAUW membership is open to anyone with an associate (or equivalent, e.g., RN) degree or higher from an accredited educational institution. A “new member” is someone entirely new to AAUW or an individual who rejoins after two or more years of lapsed membership. A national member who joins a branch is not a new member. “New members” are the only members eligible for the membership discount through this campaign. How Do We Redeem Our Free Memberships? Check the Status Report to see how many free memberships your branch has earned. Use the Redemption Form to submit your free national memberships via email. Memberships are processed weekly.



Warren County Prime Beef Festival Parade

September 4 Sharon Gilbert and Carolyn Weber, dressed in period clothing, rode in a car announcing: *Monmouth Area AAUW Branch Celebrates 100 years of Empowering Women.* Large golden mylar balloons spelling 1 0 0 bobbed in the afternoon's sunny breezes.

Photos of June 1 Centennial Celebration and Prime Beef Parade may be seen on the Monmouth Area AAUW-IL **Facebook** page

Mission Statement: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.
Vision Statement: AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.
Value Promise: By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

Association Web site: www.aauw.org

AAUW-Illinois Web site:

<http://aauw-il.aauw.net/>

Monmouth Branch Web site:

<http://monmoutharea-il.aauw.net/>

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Open to apply for membership



AAUW Membership
Application Form.pc