

February/March 2025

Celebrating 100 Years of AAUW in Monmouth!

Presidents' Report

Carolyn Weber

Dear Friends,
January and February have been busy months for me this year.

Many details and plans were carried out for our January 25th monthly meeting featuring Leader Dog owner Carey Jones and her Leader Dog Winston. Last December I invited the Warren County Public Library (WCPL) to cosponsor this event with the Monmouth Area AAUW Branch in our 100th Year of Empowering Women and Girls. Youth Librarian Mindy and Adult Librarian Megan created colorful posters and postcards for area schools and a number of area venues to invite the public. In early January I brought Carey and Winston to the library to walk through all the main floor areas and locate the area most comfortable for Carey and Winston to present their program. Carey chose the magazine reading area for its open space, lack of direct glare and location away from the busy library areas.

I met with each of Carey's classes at the YMCA where she's an exercise instructor, to personally invite class members to hear Carey's life story of struggle and setbacks as her rare eye disease – retinitis pigmentosa – caused the cells in her retina to break down causing permanent vision loss. Qualifying for the Leader Dog Program took several months as she was asked to describe her home environment, neighborhood, job, routes to work, abilities and a number of other details. Carey's friend Wendy created a number of videos for the Leader Dog Program of Carey in action. She's also been a key encourager among many others on this "long and winding road."

Grateful thanks to AAUW members Anne Mamary, Marilyn Van Ausdall, Sharon Gilbert, Joanie Larsen, and Carol Bowman who helped out with several items mainly geared for children. We were also delighted to see Lila Blum and Sharon's sister Annie Maier in our audience. As it turned out, there

were two children, four men, and thirty-three women of all ages PLUS Winston who heard Carey tell her life-changing, transformational story of Winston's vital role in bringing hope to Carey when she thought all hope was gone. As the African proverb says, "It takes a village to raise a child." See photo on p.4

Plan to bring a friend to our special **Women's History Month branch meeting Tuesday, March 25, from 5:00-6:00 pm at the Monmouth College Weeks House** featuring the characterization of **Frances Perkins by Initiative Editor Sharon Gilbert**. After that, we will have an update on Cabinet appointments and important Illinois and federal measures we are following through our Public Policy updates.

Carolyn Weber



For more information, visit
LeaderDog.org or call 888-777-5332

Congratulations You're a Star!

Despite all the difficulties our Branch had July 2023-June 2024, we received one star! This year we're doing more to earn more: Sign up online to be a

Two-Minute Activist!

- Make a donation of any size online for the **Greatest Needs Fund!**
- Encourage someone you know to **join AAUW**

MONMOUTH VOTERS: VOTE ON APRIL 1 FOR MAYORAL CANDIDATES

**MONMOUTH COLLEGE CHORALE
SPAGHETTI DINNER FRIDAY 5-7 pm
FEBRUARY 28 at FAITH UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**



**News from AAUW-IL
2025 AAUW-IL Convention
April 25-26, 2025**

at Springfield NORTHFIELD INN, Suites & Conf. Center at 3280 Northfield Dr, Springfield IL 62702

Note: Register before March 10 – Save \$5
March 20th is final deadline to register for Convention and rooms at Northfield Inn and Ramada Inn for \$129 (plus 14% tax) .

NOTE: Check the Feb 17, 2025 email sent at 5:35 PM from AAUW-IL, Inc. titled AAUW-IL Connection Special Convention Issue for more details and program registration by EventBrite. First time convention attendees may request a waiver for Saturday's registration fee. First time attendees attending both days will still need to pay for Friday.



March Program

Frances Perkins



Perkins Center

Frances

Frances Perkins, who served as US Secretary of Labor during the Great Depression, was the chief architect behind Social Security, unemployment insurance, the 40-hour work week and the minimum wage. (Frances Perkins Center)

Sometimes great ideas are born in moments of crisis.

Such was the case for one Great Depression heroine, whose life's work is still benefiting [millions of jobless Americans](#) during the coronavirus pandemic.

Meet Frances Perkins: the first female member of a presidential cabinet, and the chief architect behind many New Deal programs that live on 85 years later.

A trained social worker, master negotiator and advocate of workers' rights, she witnessed hardships faced by workers both before and during the Great Depression — and as secretary of labor, she crafted policies hoping to alleviate societal ills like unemployment and poverty.

Perkins' legacy includes Social Security to support workers with disabilities and in old age, the 40-hour work week, the minimum wage and the end of child labor. And if that wasn't enough, she also built the nation's unemployment benefits system.

"She was a moving force. Without her, Social Security doesn't exist, and without her, the nationwide unemployment insurance program doesn't exist," said Kirstin Downey, who spent a decade studying Perkins' life.



Treasurer's Report –

We have \$267.33 in our AAUW branch account at F&M Bank. Last August we paid \$293 to Stanton Insurance for our liability policy...





Book Group

Marilyn Van Ausdall

Book Group will be discussing Becoming Madam Secretary by Stephanie Dray.

From goodreads.com:

“Raised on tales of her revolutionary ancestors, Frances Perkins arrives in New York City at the turn of the century, armed with her trusty parasol and an unyielding determination to make a difference.

Frances is destined to rise in a political world dominated by men, facing down the Great Depression as FDR’s most trusted lieutenant—even as she struggles to balance the demands of a public career with marriage and motherhood. And when vicious political attacks mount and personal tragedies threaten to derail her ambitions, she must decide what she’s willing to do—and what she’s willing to sacrifice—to save a nation.”



Letter to nephew of Shirley Daddona

Dear Scott,

I have been a member of AAUW for over 40 years. One of the best things about the organization is having the opportunity to meet many wonderful women. I feel very fortunate to have gotten to know a very special woman, your Aunt Shirley, through AAUW membership in our Monmouth, Illinois, branch.

I was privileged to spend some quality car time with Shirley on several occasions as we traveled to AAUW-IL fall conferences and state conventions. We also served on the AAUW-IL state board together for a few years, and I enjoyed traveling with her to meetings in that capacity. We even drove to St. Louis together one year for a regional convention.

We were so lucky to have had Shirley take on the role of branch treasurer for many years. I no longer live in the Galesburg/Monmouth area, but I have retained my membership in the Monmouth Area branch from afar and I currently serve as treasurer. My job is so much easier than Shirley’s was. These days, I do all financial transactions between bank, branch, and the national office in D.C. digitally. Shirley, on the other hand, faithfully filled out mountains of paperwork, made countless trips to the bank, and took care of lots of mailings of dues and other branch donations to national.

As you know, Shirley was involved in many other activities besides AAUW, but her service to this organization through the years, and her ultimate EXTREME generosity, (for which we are SO THANKFUL) shows how firmly she believed in AAUW’s mission of working to advance equity for women and girls. The fight for equity has become more difficult for many groups in the last few years, but with the help of people like Shirley, we have hopes that there will eventually be equality for all.

Marilyn Van Ausdall
Proud AAUW Member

Public Policy Updates Letter from Richard Durbin

February 27, 2025
Carolyn B. Weber
714 North E Street
Monmouth, IL 61462-1149

Dear Ms. Weber:

Thank you for contacting me about the nomination of Linda McMahon to be Secretary of Education. I appreciate hearing from you.

The Department of Education plays a vital role in overseeing federal policies that impact our nation's schools and students. It administers Pell Grants, student loan protections, Title I funding for low-income schools, and enforces civil rights laws in education. The Secretary of Education sets the department's priorities, advises the president, and ensures federal education laws are implemented effectively. Given these responsibilities, the qualifications and policy positions of any nominee warrant serious examination.

On November 19, 2024, President Trump nominated Linda McMahon for this role. Ms. McMahon, co-founder of World Wrestling Entertainment, previously served as Administrator of the Small Business Administration from 2017 to 2019. While she has business experience, her background in education policy is limited. In 2009, she briefly served on Connecticut's State Board of Education.

On February 13, 2025, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions held a hearing on Ms. McMahon's nomination. Ms. McMahon outlined plans to dismantle the Department of Education, proposing to transfer key programs to other agencies. For example, she suggested moving enforcement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office for Civil Rights to the Justice Department. She stated that eliminating the department would require congressional approval and claimed the goal is efficiency, not defunding programs like Pell Grants and Title I funding.

On February 20, 2025, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions advanced Ms. McMahon's nomination by a party line vote of 12-11. I will be sure to keep

your views in mind should her nomination come before the full Senate for a vote.

Thank you again for contacting me. Please feel free to keep in touch.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator
RJD/bc



From Feb. 26 Zoom DISCUSSION ABOUT PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY:

• DON'T USE DEI ACRONYM

INSTEAD use other words and personal stories to talk about issues affecting you and folks you know.

- Encourage your Representative and Senators to vote for Title IX provision to protect pregnant and parenting students
 - Re: Agriculture Bill: protect nutrition programs for adults and children and SNAP
 - OPPOSE SR 10 which condemns conversion therapy
 - SUPPORT HB 1424 which requires film credit for women in STEM films and videos
 - SUPPORT SB2705: Equality for Every Family Act
- #### Communicating with our Legislators:
- In person best-in local offices
 - Either legislator or key staff people good
 - In person townhalls are good, also Zoom
 - Phone calls are good
 - Letters are useful; personal are best
 - Electronically-generated are good because they count how many are received

CAREY'S STORY OF EMPOWERMENT January 24 2025
Leader Dog Owner Carey Jones and Leader Dog Winston

**Co-Sponsored by Monmouth-Area IL AAUW
in Centennial Year of Empowering
Women & Girls
with Warren County Public Library**



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/>

AAUW Initiative Editor: Sharon Gilbert, sharon711gilbert@comcast.net