



NetWorks

Newsletter of the Northern Monmouth County (NJ) Branch, American Association of University Women
Volume 70, Number 4

December 2025/January 2026

Branch Meeting

December 1 ~ 7 p.m.

Shrewsbury Historical Society

419 Sycamore Avenue, Shrewsbury, NJ

The Shrewsbury Historical Society is currently hosting "Quilts Tell A Story: Vintage Quilts Exhibit." This exhibit showcases over 75 vintage quilts. The show exemplifies the creativity and determination of women who left their "mark" with a needle.

We'll gather at 7 p.m. to peruse the quilt show.

The branch meeting will be called to order at 7:15 p.m.

At 7:30 p.m., we will follow in the footsteps of our historical guides as we design and stitch a unique sachet or pincushion. Please bring scissors.

No meeting in January

Set aside some time to read about a famous woman or not-so-famous woman.

Let her surprise and inspire you.

Presidents' Message

Dear members and friends,

The quote "A jack of all trades is a master of none" dates to the 18th century; but a second part was added much later, making the quote more positive. The modern addition is "A jack of all trades is a master of none, but oftentimes better than a master of one." This quote makes us think of the new year and how so many of us make New Year's Resolutions. Most resolutions go by the wayside within a few months. The exercise stops, the diet is forgotten, the papers start piling up on your desk. You know what we're talking about! This quote inspires us to learn and expand our horizons. Rather than feel like you are not qualified because you have many different interests--learn something new or pick up an interest you have dabbled in before. The advantage to being a "Jack of all trades?" People who are multi-passioned are adaptable and learn new skills easier.

In 2026, instead of making a resolution that you will undoubtedly break, why not use this quote to inspire you. Have you tried to crochet or knit but have only learned the easy pattern? Taken up skiing but haven't gotten off the bunny hill? Started painting but are still painting-by-numbers? Pick one of these projects, set your mind to it and master it! Or learn a new hobby or subject. Give yourself the year, don't limit your time to a few months.

This quote can also be applied to your AAUW experience. For example, in 2026, sign up to help with the book sale. Do it once and learn the process. Sign up again and it will be easier.

Master the process!

Volunteer for the luncheon committee or come to a board meeting.

Have a little knowledge of Spanish or French and want to perfect it? Join the Spanish or French conversation group and master it!

Is there a story writer in you? Join the writer's group and master it!

Instead of being a "master of one" become a "master of some."

We wish everyone happy holidays and a cozy winter with friends and family!

See you in 2026,
Heather and Peggy, Co-Presidents



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership Is Everyone's Responsibility

A yearbook will be published soon but, in the meantime, a membership directory will be emailed to all members.

At the December 1 meeting, there will be a *Shape the Future membership campaign*. This is for **new** members only or those whose membership has lapsed 2 years. New members can join AAUW for \$63.00 instead of the regular membership rate of \$100.00. This membership will extend to June 30, 2026. Bring a friend(s) and encourage them to join and share in this great savings. Cash or check, or pay online for a small additional fee.

Hopefully you have saved the date for our Meet and Mingle for New Members, Friends of AAUW, and Board Members
Sunday January 11, 2026 3 p.m.
Shrewsbury Historical Society
(in the Shrewsbury Municipal Complex)

New Member:

Our New C/U Representative from Monmouth U. is:
Amy Gratch Hoyle

U. Michigan, UNC Chapel Hill Dean

Women's leadership in higher education & advocacy & social justice for education

Co-Membership Directors:
Judy Kramer

PUBLIC POLICY NEWS AND RESOURCES

AAUW Press Release, November 20, 2025:

AAUW: Gutting the Department of Education Betrays Students' Civil Rights
"The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is deeply alarmed by the Trump administration's escalating efforts to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education. These efforts include mass staff cuts and the recent announcement of six 'partnerships' that shift the day-to-day work of major K-12 and higher education programs to other federal agencies.

"These moves raise serious questions about how the Department can carry out the statutory responsibilities Congress assigned it in 1979. These were enforcing civil-rights laws in education, administering federal aid fairly and effectively, and ensuring equal educational opportunity for all students."

[Statement of Gloria Blackwell, AAUW CEO, on November 20](#)

Giving Tuesday goal: Raise \$25,000 by Giving Tuesday, December 2:

Message from AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell: “We’ve seen unprecedented attacks on higher education this year: civil rights dismissed, funding threatened, and lawsuits used to force policy changes. Targets to diversity, equity, and inclusion, even campus leadership and curricula, have created a chilling effect for academic freedom, narrowing access and opportunity, especially for women and students of color. It’s a devastating betrayal of our students and their futures.

“That’s why we’re launching our Giving Tuesday campaign early this year – because the need has never been greater.

“According to the Women’s Philanthropy Institute, only 2% of charitable giving goes to women’s and girls’ organizations in the United States. . . . AAUW is the only national organization combining funding, advocacy, and grassroots member mobilization to advance women’s equity through higher education and beyond. . .

“Together we can track every move at the Department of Education, respond swiftly with evidence-based advocacy, and mobilize thousands of members through briefings, action alerts, and tools to protect equity in every community.”

[Give now to defend higher education, demand inclusion, and empower women nationwide.](#)

Invest in a More Equitable Future:

AAUW’s mission to advance gender equity through education and advocacy is more urgent now than ever, and your support can make a powerful impact. By donating to the Greatest Needs Fund, the Defend Higher Education Fund, and the Public Policy Fund, you help ensure AAUW can respond to emerging challenges, drive policy change, and empower women in higher education and the workforce. [Donate here.](#)

Launch of Level Up: Salary Negotiation Program:

This equity-centered initiative empowers

women to achieve fair compensation and career advancement. Running from October 2025 through June 2026, the nine-month program engages a cohort of 20 early- to mid-career women through AAUW’s Work Smart salary negotiation training, Money Smart financial literacy training, other career development trainings, personalized coaching, and peer networking. Supported by a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation, the program underscores AAUW’s commitment to advancing gender and racial pay equity through measurable, community-driven impact.

Virtual Economic Empowerment Trainings in December:

AAUW’s virtual webinar series for all members offers expert-led training in salary negotiation, financial literacy, and career development to help women advance professionally and economically. [Explore our upcoming webinars today!](#)

Building Global Impact through Education and Community Leadership:

This webinar on December 11, from 2-3 p.m., will showcase the critical work being done by AAUW International Fellowship and International Project Grant alumnae. Registration info will follow via email, or look for it on the AAUW website www.aauw.org.

It’s My Vote!:

Off-year elections across the country showed what we know to be true: when women vote, we can change the conversation.

This year, AAUW is leveling up our [It’s My Vote!](#) campaign as a Power Partner with the League of Women Voters on Unite & Rise 8.5, alongside the National Council of Jewish Women.

Unite & Rise 8.5 is a national, nonpartisan effort to engage 8.5 million people in democracy through civic education, coalition building, and visible, community-led action – aligning with our shared goal of helping people participate confidently and safely in elections.

Through It's My Vote!, AAUW will collaborate with local partners to host nonpartisan events, share clear voter information, and connect policy to real life. Watch for it through 2026.

We wish you and your families Happy Holidays and will look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

Nancy Butler, Public Policy Director

Study Group News

Dear Friends,
Interested in joining an established Study Group? Check with the Chairs in the groups listed below. Those attending are required to be members in good standing. Guests may attend three meetings before being required to join AAUW. Here are your current possibilities.

Susan Gelber, Study Group Director

Art History

Several members had a special experience visiting the NEW Princeton University Art Museum on the eighth day of its opening. Check it out: <https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/>



December

We encourage you to support local artists by shopping at local church bazaars, art organizations, and these unique venues.

Asbury Park Holiday Bazaar

Grand Arcade of Convention Hall
Weekends: (November 28 through December 21)
12 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Shop for handcrafted goods and unique holiday gifts by local and regional makers and small businesses.

Holiday Made in Monmouth

Brookdale Community College, Lincroft (Robert J. Collins Arena)
Saturday, December 13, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Over 200 local Monmouth County businesses will be selling their made-in-Monmouth goods — think handmade crafts, art, food items, and more.

Bell Works Fresh Holiday Market

101 Crawfords Corner Rd, Holmdel, NJ
Saturday, December 13, 2025,
12 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Indoor market, lots of local makers, very curated

January 23, 2026

Video on art theme TBD. (Suggestions welcome)
Host: The Atrium (Barbara Withers)

February 20, 2026

Book Discussion:
All the Beauty in the World: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Me
by Patrick Bringley
Host: Susan Gelber

If you have any questions, contact the co-chairs:
Joan Fructer

Barbara Withers

French Conversation

Our group enables women with a good knowledge of the French language to maintain their fluency through some language structure reviews and conversations with other members on different topics. Upon the recommendation of our members, we have now added a literary component to some of our meetings.

To keep up with the needs of our members, we will be meeting once a month (the second Thursday at 7:30 p.m.) through Zoom.

Members are encouraged to participate (orally or written) at the monthly meetings.

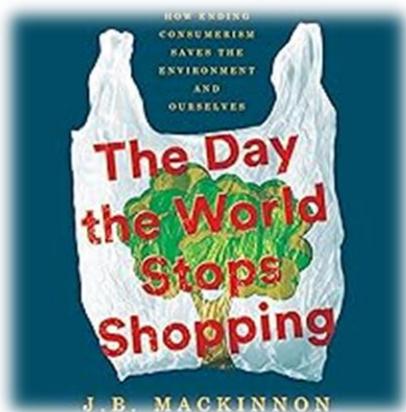
If anyone is interested in joining the group, please contact the chair for further information. Newcomers are always welcome.

Chair: Jeannine Maloney

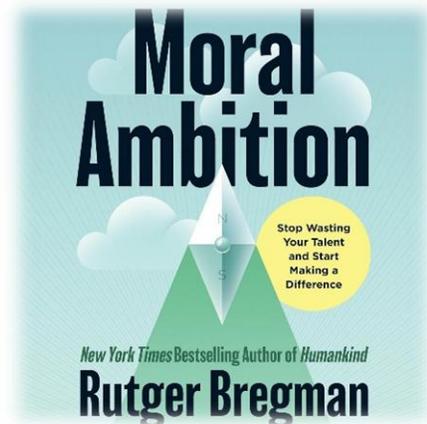
Insights Into Our Times

Insights, our non-fiction book group meets for discussion on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June.

We will meet on Tuesday, December 9, at 11 a.m., at the home of Pat Baroska to discuss *The Day the World Stops Shopping: How Ending Consumerism Saves the Environment and Ourselves* by J. B. MacKinnon. If you wish to join the carpool, contact MaryLea Burden.



Our January 13 meeting at 2 p.m. will be hosted by Ruth Hodum. We will discuss Rutger Bregman's book, *Moral Ambition: Stop Wasting Your Talent and Start Making a Difference*.



Note that we meet on the first Tuesday of each month and vary our starting times to accommodate members' schedules. We welcome new members.

Contact chair, Kathy Olsen for more information.

Russian Short Stories

We have scheduled future Zoom meetings for the third Thursdays of the month at 1 p.m.

Contact Study Group Chair:
Stephanie Rose

Writing Study Group

The Writing group is interested in a restart. We need a few more members in order to begin. Are you a writer . . . or want to be? Writing fiction, memoir, history, poetry? Need a sounding board?

We'd love to get together. Please contact Karen Topham if you'd like to join us.

Do you play bridge?
The AAUW bridge group is looking for players in their bridge group. If you have a partner and want to play or if you need a partner, please let us know. This group supports our Branch scholarships each year as well as awarding prizes to winners.

Call/text Linda Plamondon for more information.

Book Sale Book Sale Book Sale

Old First Church
69 Kings Highway, Middletown
Lower Level, outside stairs
732-275-2237

Open: Saturdays: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Thursdays: 10 a.m. - Noon
(except for holiday weekends)
Donate: Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Thursdays: 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Thursdays

We have an amazing group of volunteers who are keeping us going. We do need more customers, so continue to pass the word. Consider doing some of your holiday shopping at our Used Book Sale.

Closed on holiday weekends. You'll find an amazing selection of books for all ages, many like new! Also CDs, DVs, puzzles, games and cards. Remember that the Annual Scholarship Luncheon and the book sale are our main source of scholarship funds. If you'd like to have some fun on a Thursday, contact Ruth Hodum or Kathy Olsen about helping with sorting and shelving.

BUT!!! SURPRISE!!! On Saturday, November 29, we will be open from 10 til 2 to attract all holiday shoppers with a 10% discount on everything but recent releases. Our inventory features gifts for all ages: books, CDs, DVDs, vinyl records, puzzles, games, cards for all ages. Stop in our holiday room for special items. All proceeds benefit scholarships.

Visit our website for donation policies
www.aauw-nj-nmcb.org. Happy shopping.

NetWorks is published by the Northern Monmouth County Branch of AAUW. Upcoming due dates for copy: Monday, January 26 for February issue; Thursday, February 26 for March issue; Thursday, March 26 for April issue; Monday, April 27 for May issue; Wednesday, May 27 for June issue. Please submit copy to Karen Topham, Editor, kptopham@gmail.com.

Send address changes, names of prospective members, membership applications and checks, and questions about non-receipt of the newsletter to:

Judy Kramer and Mary Lea Burden, Membership, Co-directors
P.O. Box 398, Red Bank, NJ 07701 aauw.nmcb@gmail.com

Our electronic mailing list enables us to inform you about opportunities for AAUW members that arise too late for publication in *NetWorks*. You can be sure that we carefully evaluate each notice before we send it out.

Please note that the use of the branch email list is for branch activities only. Members wishing to share other information with branch members are invited to submit a notice to the "Networking" column in *NetWorks*.

Something to share? Please send the information to Barbara Withers for the next *NetWorks*.

Happy Holidays!

This page is for your notes.



American Association of University Women
Northern Monmouth County Branch
P.O. Box 398
Red Bank, NJ 07701

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class. Membership is open to any graduate holding an associate degree or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university. AAUW-NMCB is designated as a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations to the branch, as well as to the national organization, are fully tax-deductible. AAUW is a highly rated charity.

AAUW Used Book Sale



The store is located at:
Old First Church
69 Kings Highway
Middletown

Open: Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
through June.

Thursdays from 10 a.m. to Noon through
June.

Donations: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

(The sale is closed on holiday weekends.)

Have you been missing
AAUW's *Outlook* magazine that used to
arrive in the mail?

Go to www.aauw.org. At the bottom of
the home page, sign up for news and
updates with your email address and zip
code.

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AAUW Action Network www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/



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