

SCOPE



MONONA/MADISON (WI) BRANCH

**Monona/Madison Branch
MAY 2025 Newsletter**

Tuesday, May 27

6:30 pm, Social Time

7:00 pm, Program: „Adolescent Support Services in Madison“ presented by Jill W. Pfeiffer, Executive Director of Briarpatch Youth Services. Jill W. Pfeiffer has been in the role for two and a half years. She has nearly 30 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, which began by running after-school programming at the Wexford Ridge Neighborhood Center (on Madison's west side) in the mid-90s. While living for a decade in San Francisco, Jill co-founded and co-directed (with colleague, Ly Nguyen) Oasis for Girls, a 25-year-old organization which serves young women in San Francisco to cultivate the skills, knowledge, and confidence to discover their dreams and build strong futures. Jill has worked in leadership roles at many local nonprofits, including the Lussier Community Education Center (LCEC), Overture Center for the Arts, Operation Fresh Start (OFS), and YWCA Madison.



Installation of officers **Hosts: Gail Stirr, Robby Sonzogni, Liz Senseman, Brenda Smyth**

Location: Odyssey Center, 2238 South Park St, room 22, in the UW South Madison Partnership Building behind the Goodman Library.

PRESIDENTS' CORNER, Pat Ruppert & Debbie Mahaffey

The ramp up to summer brings with it a basket full of activities. Our state convention in Onalaska was a great success; speakers, venue and connections with other branches were all even better than expected. In April, some of our members attended the Returning Adult Student Awards reception at Memorial Union and heard the most wonderful stories of perseverance and academic success. Planning for fall begins soon for our interest groups.

At our May 27 meeting, we will install the slate of officers for the 2025-2026 year. Many thanks to those who have stepped up to serve as officers, board members, and committee chairs. Your work is vital to our branch.

Don't forget to sign up for the summer picnic on June 7th! We look forward to seeing you there.

FINANCIAL REPORT, Gail Stirr

April 30, 2025

Beginning Balance 3/31/25: \$11,182.83

• Spring Salad Supper	\$140.00
• Membership renewals	\$436.00
• Madison College lunch 4/8/25 (scholarship fundraising)	\$60.00
• June Picnic	\$322.00
Total Income thru 4/30/25:	\$958.00

• National & State Membership dues	\$348.00
• AAUW Monona/Madison Fund for Excellence	\$2,000.00
• Friends of Odyssey Family Fund	\$2,300.00
Total Expenses:	<u>\$4,648.00</u>

Current Balance 4/30/25: \$7,492.83

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATES, Liz Senseman

The U.W. Continuing Education Department held their awards ceremony on April 24th. Our branch was represented by Pat Ruppert and Debbie Mahaffey, along with myself. We met 3 of our 4 scholarship/award winners. There was a profile of all 4 in the last edition of *Scope*, and now here are their photos! It was a really inspiring evening, these returning adult students have overcome innumerable hardships in their pursuit of a degree. Several of the recipients were actually now in grad school having successfully completed their undergrad degrees. Our **Single Parent Undergraduate** recipients were Amanda Saudi and Heather Stoll. Heather was unable to attend, but Amanda came with her 2 children.



Our two **Outstanding Undergraduate**
Returning Adult
Student awards



went to Ivanna Ceballos and Chikara Crooks. Chikara is in the photo with her two extremely proud sons. These awards are made possible by you, our members. Each year we raise funds to support these scholarships through the book sale, the luncheons, the trips, **thank you all!!** Next up - our high school awards which will be in May.



May: 2 Tiffany Butzbaugh, 8 Val Murphy, 8 Gloria Simley, 18 Sharon Knoop

June: 2, 4 Sue Richter, 6 Susan Slattery, 19 Georgia Stilp, 26 Donna Anderson

July: 3 Jan Robertson, 7 Marilyn Dam-Rabolt, 14 Reta Haring, 17 Wanda Nelson, 27 Betty Schmidt, 30 Linda Bergren

August: 3, Franciska Coleman, 7 Helen Dyer, 19 Paula O'Neal, 27 Robby Sonzogni, 30 Misao Kusuda

MEMBERSHIP, Kleo Baruth Kritz & Jennifer Ondrejka

Our Membership Renewal Deadline Is Fast Approaching

The deadline for renewal is June 15. The easiest way to renew is online. If you prefer, you can also renew by check. To renew online, go to <https://www.aauw.org/membership/> Scroll down to “Learn More about AAUW Membership” and click. If you don’t have an account, set one up there—it only takes a few minutes. Once you have an account, the site will automatically log you in. On the “Learn More about AAUW Membership” page, scroll down to “ExploreMembership Options” and click on National Member. The system will walk you through the steps needed to renew your memberships for National, Wisconsin, and the Monona-Madison branch.

As you know, National AAUW has increased dues by \$2/year, from \$72 to \$74. With State dues of \$13 and local branch dues of \$15, your total dues are \$102/year. This is the first increase in many years and is needed to cover rising costs.

If you need assistance using the website, there is a 3-minute video, “How to Self-Renew for Existing Members” that will walk you through the process.

<https://www.aauw.org/membership/new-systems-update/>

If you prefer to renew by check, give your renewal form and a check for \$102 to Gail Stirr at the May meeting.

FROM EMILY AUERBACH, ODYSSEY

Dear AAUW/Monona Madison Branch and Gail,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$2300 to the award-winning UW Odyssey Project in April. We appreciate the multiple purposes of the gift, including for our Odyssey Family Fund, for the use of UWSMP space, and for selecting two scholarship winners for 2025 - we can't wait to select recipients! **Your donation will help us continue to empower adults facing adversity to achieve their dreams!**

The photo attached shows four of our 30 students in the Class of 2025 holding their new Langston Hughes books. Ladella notes, “I am WAY MORE confident than I was when I first started Odyssey. It is making me get over my fear of public speaking, reading aloud, and asking questions.” Tiana adds, “This program has built up my courage to be in a bigger school setting. I’m happy to continue.” All four women in this photo have children who attend Odyssey Junior while they are in class. “I like going to Mommy’s school,” said one.

Odyssey students have faced huge obstacles ranging from homelessness to domestic abuse, car accidents to hospitalizations. Gifts like yours support our students and their families as they earn college credits and a new sense of purpose. Donations to our **Odyssey Project Fund** cover tuition, textbooks, Odyssey Junior instruction, and other educational costs, while our **Odyssey Family Fund** covers wrap-around support such as groceries, gas, medications, and rent. (As Langston Hughes observed in a 7-word poem, *"I wish the rent / was heaven sent."*) Donations to our **Future Fund** build an endowment to guarantee we survive uncertain times.

The [Class of 2025 will graduate](#) with six UW-Madison credits in English literature **this Wednesday, the 7th**, in a ceremony held in person at the Memorial Union and streamed via Zoom. Will you help us celebrate them? We now have 600+ alumni--some in graduate school, dental school, law school, and applying to medical school!

Facing centuries of injustice, our Odyssey families are in greater need right now than any other time in our 22-year history. **We are so grateful for your financial support: it truly transforms lives.** As one student put it, "Odyssey helped me unwrap my gifts and rewrite the story of my life."

Our [website](#) has programmatic updates, videos, [student newsletters](#), [upcoming events](#), and information about various ways to help us. Thank you again for your generous donation, helping to empower adults facing adversity to rewrite their life stories.

Sincerely, Emily

SPRING PICNIC: Saturday, June 7th, 2025 – 11:30am – 2:00pm

Elver Park "Open" Shelter, 1260 McKenna Blvd, Madison 53719

Join fellow members & guests as we gather to welcome summer! Elver Park Open Shelter has picnic table seating, in-shelter restrooms, and nearby parking. We encourage you to invite guests! Thank you!! Picnic Committee: Donna Anderson, Linda Bergren, Debbie Mahaffey, Wanda Nelson, Pat Ruppert, Gail Stirr

Arrive between 11:30am and Noon. Welcome & introductions at Noon; picnic and chat until 2pm – we have the shelter reserved for a leisurely gathering.

****Please select one of these boxed lunches from Chez Vous Catering. All include beverages (iced tea, lemonade, bottled water) and a Turtle Bar (chocolate, caramel, pecans) for dessert.**

1. Curried Chicken Salad Sandwich—Roasted chicken, curry mayonnaise, slivered almonds, golden raisins, and red leaf lettuce on croissant. Includes side fruit salad.

2. Spicy Thai Noodle Salad with Grilled Chicken—Chinese noodles, scallions, edamame, carrots, cilantro, and roasted bell peppers with a Pad Thai ginger sesame oil dressing (peanuts, rice vinegar, lime juice, coconut milk, chilis and Thai fish sauce). Includes side fruit salad.

3. Roasted Vegetable Sandwich—Red and yellow bell peppers, eggplant, zucchini, and portobello mushrooms with balsamic dressing on focaccia. Includes side fruit salad.

****Cost for each boxed lunch is \$23.00 [includes tax and delivery fee; any funds remaining after catering payment will be allocated for scholarship support]**

Registration deadline is Saturday, May 24th.

****To register for the June 7th AAUW picnic: fill out the form below and send to Pat Ruppert, 2925 Maple Run Drive, Madison WI 53719 with check payable to AAUW Monona/Madison. Questions? Contact Pat Ruppert (608-698-1376) or Gail Stirr (608-239-3243).**

Member	Name_____	Lunch	Selection

Guest Name_____	Lunch
Selection_____	

Guest Name_____	Lunch
Selection_____	

“FORWARD WISCONSIN: BRIDGES TO THE FUTURE,” Kleo Baruth Kritz

Thirteen Monona/Madison members journeyed to La Crosse for AAUW Convention 2025 on April 25-26. They included Donna Anderson, Ellen Healey, Kleo Baruth Kritz, Consuelo Lopez, Debbie Mahaffey, Val Murphy, Jennifer Ondrejka, Shiela Reaves, Pat Ruppert, Lise Skofronick, Stephanie Sorensen, Georgia Stilp, and Gail Stirr.

Guest speakers included Meghan Kissell, National AAUW Senior Director of Policy & Membership Advocacy, discussing National AAUW Public Policy in this difficult political environment. In the lobby was a colorful Wall of Positive Thoughts on which attendees could write out thoughts on a sticky note and there was also a Box of Despair, which was black with a raven next to it, in which one could also put sticky notes.

Two resolutions were passed:

- Constitution Amendment to Eliminate Big Money in Politics
- AAUW Resolution on Upholding the Civil Rights of American Who Identify as LGBTQ+

We were fortunate to have a 4 minute video prepared for our convention by Rep Sarah McBride of Delaware, who is the first trans woman in the National House of Representatives. Do watch it: <https://app.frame.io/presentations/784f1b06-ce25-4c28-8149-3dc09d195237>

Here is a copy of the program booklet. https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1wO6umMUIHs2Wdj6FkZQ9pjsBC_mzGWUE. All of the past programs are listed so scroll down to “2025 AAUW-WI Convention” and you can see the keynote and breakout speakers who spoke.

And remember next year our district will be hosting the convention. If you are interested in being on the planning committee, do contact me, kbkritz@charter.net

COMING NEXT YEAR!!

The Event: AAUW WI STATE CONVENTION 2026

The Hosts: District 1 (Beaver Dam, Fort Atkinson, Janesville, and Monona/Madison)

**The Place: DoubleTree by Hilton Madison East
4402 East Washington (opposite East Towne)
(less than a mile west from I-90)**

The When: April 17-18, 2026

The Plan: Put on your calendar now!



At the top is the Wall of Positive Thoughts and Box of Despair, which I mention in my article. Then the Cake Pops with a lovely tribute of our logo



A photo of me and Meghan Kissell, our National speaker the Moose outside Stoney Creek and Donna/Georgia on the Chapel tour

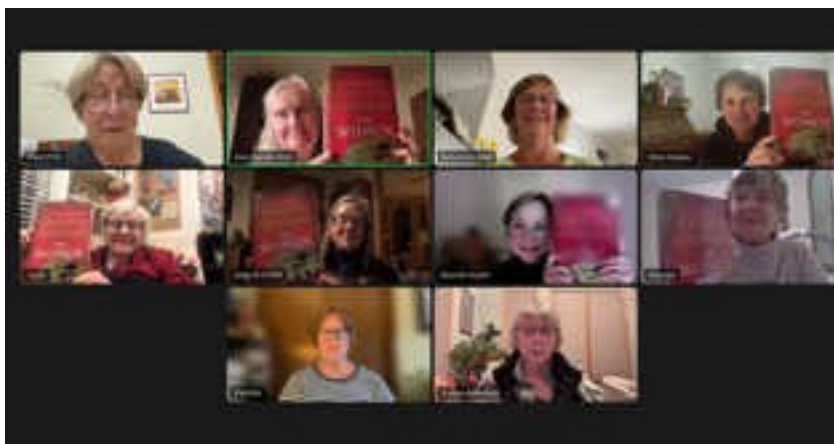


Finally our M/M trifold and our basket



Evening Book Group

Our evening book group meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm, September - April, and in late spring we have our planning meeting. We invite you all to come and try us out! Our next meeting is on June 4th at 7:00 pm at the Barnes & Noble Westside store. We will be selecting our books for next year and arranging for hosts for each meeting. If you are free that evening, think about joining us. We do occasionally have zoom meetings when the weather is awful. Here is our group from our March meeting. You too could be in our next zoom photo!



MILESTONES

Announcements from April 29, 2025 meeting, Stephanie Sorensen

- Kleo Baruth Kritz reminded everyone that they could still sign up to attend the State Convention this coming weekend and said 13 are registered from our branch. The convention will be in Madison next year and volunteers are needed.
- Val Murphy reported that suggestions she received for day trips included Mt. Horeb, New Glarus, Stoughton, Janesville for the gardens, and Epic. Another person is needed to help her plan for events.
- Liz Senseman reminded us that scholarships of \$1,000 each are given in May to one student at La Follette and one student at Monona High Schools. We also award funds to a single parent and a continuing ed student. The award ceremony for those scholarships is being held Thursday, April 24. Liz, Pat

Ruppert and Debbie Mahaffey are attending. Others are welcome to attend any of the ceremonies. She also mentioned that anyone is welcome to attend the evening book group discussions.

- Debbie Mahaffey reported that there is another opportunity to help with Girls on the Run on May 14 from 1:30 - 3:30 putting kits together for Race Day. There are also slots available on Race Day, May 31 starting at 8:00 am.
- Jennifer Ondrejka noted that she had sent out a survey to people she knew in the community, asking for feedback and ideas about how to better publicize our group and recruit new members. The main response was that we need a zippier, more energetic and engaging website. Georgia Stilp will be working with Maggie Winz to learn about managing a website. We need to focus on gaining some younger members.
- Sally Keyel stated that the newsletter deadline is May 7, 2025.4.30
- Consuelo Lopez reported on the issues discussed at the most recent District One meeting which included helping to get out the vote for recent elections; issues of finding appropriate meeting spaces; ideas around making ourselves more visible as community partners as well as more volunteer participation. She would like ideas for from our members by the end of the week. One thing we have done is participate as volunteers with Girls on the Run. Beaver Dam reported that their DEI efforts were bearing fruit, and that their “Artist is Residence” program has been quite challenging but bringing many community members together.

We are trying to determine “best practices” for branches to use to remain a vital organization. Thoughts from members included the question of is there a way to use and engage high school students who must complete a community service project? Could we work with the Wisconsin Women’s Network for some of the projects they do? For example, volunteer on WI Women’s Network on their behalf at the Brat Fest.

- A nominating committee member is needed for our branch as well as for District One. Each year each of the five Districts in the State provide one member to serve on the State Nominating committee to determine new officers

for the WI State Board. Our Monona/Madison branch will also need a member to serve on our three-person nominations committee.

- Sign- sheets for our Branch picnic June 7th were available. In Gail Stirr's absence payment and menu choice should be given to Pat Ruppert.

CALENDAR

- **May 13, Film Group:** TBA
- **May 17 at 6 pm: La Cuisine:** Fresh Market Wisconsin. Host: Lynn Christensen; Co-hosts: Robby Sonzogni & Liz Senseman
- **May 22 at 9:30 am: Morning Lit.** Monona Public Library; Discussion Leader: Marian Ehrenberg, *The Situation Room* by George Stephanopoulos
- **May 27 at 6 pm: General Meeting,** Odyssey Center, 2238 South Park St.
- **June 4 at 7 pm: Evening Lit:** Planning meeting, Barnes & Noble on the west side
- **June 7 at 11:30-2:** Spring Picnic
- **June 11 at 1 pm:** Board Meeting, Pat Ruppert's

Co-presidents: Pat Ruppert & Debbie Mahaffey; Membership: Kleo Baruth Kritz & Jennifer Ondrejka; Newsletter: Sally Keyel Website: www.monona-madison-wi.aauw.net Facebook Page: AAUW Monona/Madison

Pictures from our April Meeting

