



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

Website: <http://marquette-mi.aauw.net> Facebook: [AAUW Marquette Branch](#)



## *from the President*

*by Carol Steinhaus*

Our AAUW branch meeting in September got us off to a great start!! It was refreshing to hear from the students who received our scholarships. Our committee of Ruth Ziel, Meg Goodrich, Kay Payant and Andrea Ingmire did an outstanding job of soliciting, reviewing, and helping us award financial help to deserving women. We hope that we can build the fund even larger for next year! Ruth Ziel presented a wonderful synopsis of the “Democracy in Action” project which you can read about elsewhere in this newsletter. We had to switch our October and November meeting topics from what is printed in your Blue Books, but the Next Meeting in the next column of this newsletter is accurate. It describes what looks to be a very educational and interesting topic with special international guests.

We have noticed that some of our members haven’t been joining us for meetings, which may be because we’re not all back into the habit of coming to actual in-person meetings on the right nights! Several of us may be calling you before our October 12 meeting at the Clubhouse. We hope to see you so we can all get “caught up” on what is going on for everyone!

Speaking of recovering from what Covid did to our culture, I’ll follow Judy Puncochar’s lead and share some recent Covid-related information. I appreciated how she kept us up to date with recommendations, locations for shot clinics, etc. Many of us are in the age group for which flu shots, RSV shots, and the latest Covid booster are recommended. I tried to call the health department,

with no success due to their lengthy phone tree answering message. I found that Walgreen’s has all three but booking an appointment is only online. I called Meijer pharmacy, got a human, and was able to book an appointment for the weekend of Oct. 14, the earliest available. I had already gotten a flu shot but at least the RSV and the Covid booster can be done at the same time. So, we know that these are at least now available in Marquette. You may want to call whichever pharmacy you have used in the past; I quit calling once I had an appointment.

It was so much fun to see everyone and chat at our last meeting. We hope to see more of you in October. Please consider bringing someone you know who might be interested in joining our group and/or interested in the topic of international culture.

*Carol Steinhaus,  
Marquette Branch President*



## **NEXT MEETING, Thursday, October 12, 7 pm**

Women's Federated Clubhouse  
104 W Ridge St, Marquette

*by Ellen Koski*

We are thrilled to extend a warm invitation to you to join us for our October meeting, an event that promises to be enlightening and truly global in scope. On Thursday, October 12, at 7:00 pm, we have the privilege of hosting a panel discussion featuring three exceptional Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (“Global UGRAD”) students living in Marquette this semester, and moderated by the dedicated staff of NMU’s Office of International Programs. (Learn more about Global UGRAD at <https://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/global-undergraduate-exchange-program-global-ugrad>.) Prepare to be inspired as Sanur Jujuyeva from Azerbaijan, Nataly Zuniga Sosa from Honduras, and Thippaphone “Noina” Phommavong from Laos

share their unique perspectives, experiences, and stories from their diverse backgrounds. They represent a wealth of cultures, traditions, and knowledge that will surely expand our horizons. We'll have the opportunity to learn about their home countries, their academic pursuits, and the valuable insights they've gained during their time here in Marquette.

This meeting is a fantastic chance to connect with the global community right here in our own backyard. So, mark your calendars and come ready to embark on a journey of understanding and cultural exchange. We look forward to seeing you there!

*Ellen Koski*  
2023-2024 AAUW Program Chair



## Tadych's MarketPlace

(Econo) Receipts

### Please Remember:

Receipts must be turned in within 2

years of the purchase date. You can bring eligible receipts to any in-person meeting you attend, or mail or drop them off to me at 617 W Hampton St, Marquette 49855.

**In the past, these brought in hundreds of dollars for us. However, since the pandemic, we, like many individuals and businesses, are finding our funds down, even as needs are increasing.**

*Meredith Kulisheck*

## Public Policy News

### Some Good News

*by Karlyn Rapport*

**The End Child Marriage bills passed.** AAUW Michigan has been working on this since 2018. Now in the state of Michigan you must be 18 to marry. Governor Whitmer signed the final bill in the package. Michigan is the 10th state in the country to ban child marriage. In this century 5,400 children were married in Michigan, some as young as 14. Most were married to adult men who were on average 4.3 years older. Girls

were 86% of the minor children married in the U.S. These laws give girls educational and economic opportunities.

**HB 4985 and HB 4986 are bills which prevent someone convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving domestic violence charges from possessing or purchasing a firearm.** Legislators are negotiating how long this ban will be. Representative Jenn Hill, a co-sponsor of this legislation said an 8-year ban is likely to pass. I spoke with Representative Hill requesting a strict relinquishment process for weapons owned prior to domestic violence conviction be laid out in the legislation. In states where these types of bills have been enacted, there was a significant reduction in murders involving a history of domestic violence. These bills will save lives. Please call State Rep. Jenn Hill 517-373 -0498 and State Senator Ed Mc Broom 517-373-7840 and ask them to support these measures.

### Other News:

**The Reproductive Health Act is in trouble.** Michigan voters overwhelmingly voted for Proposal 3. What was thought to be quick committee passage of an 11-bill package called the Reproductive Health Act which would have legislatively enacted Proposal 3 was foiled by one vote from Karen Whitsett (D) Detroit. Voters in her district supported Proposal 3. Representative Karen Whitsett says she supports abortion access but believes public funds should not be used to pay for them. Did she consider the maternal health status of black women in her district? Whitsett also supports a 24-hour waiting period before getting this procedure. She is Vice Chair of the Health Policy committee. This bill package would repeal manslaughter penalties associated with abortion. It would repeal structural requirements for abortion facilities that have nothing to do with protecting patient safety. Under this legislation, Universities would be allowed to refer students to an abortion provider. There is only a two-seat majority in Michigan's House and Senate. Most Republicans are opposed to the Reproductive Health Act.

### Sad news:

**Senator Diane Feinstein died at age 90.** Her legacy includes a ban on assault weapons which has unfortunately sunsetted. She held the CIA accountable

for torture following 911 attacks. She mentored women running for public office. Diane Feinstein was the first woman Mayor of San Francisco. She became mayor when both Mayor Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk were shot and died. Feinstein served for 9 years. She was inspired to run for Senate when she viewed the Anita Hill hearings. Senator Feinstein could reach across the aisle and obtain bipartisan support. She opened doors for women in politics. Diane Feinstein was the longest serving female Senator in U.S. history. Her election in 1992 made California the first state with two female Senators. I worried that her legacy would be tarnished in recent days by her missing more than 100 votes following her painful bout of Shingles. Let's hope she will be remembered kindly.

*Public Policy Representative  
Karlyn Rapport*



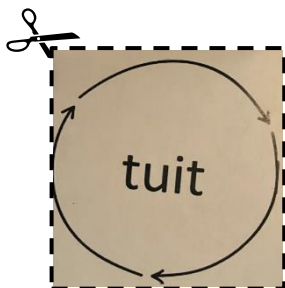
## Attention all bookworms!!

*by Karen Rudisill*

The AAUW Book Group will meet on Thursday, October 5th to discuss John Smolens' book, **Day of Days**, about the 1927 Bath, Michigan schoolhouse bombing. John Smolens will join us for the discussion! Our selection for the November 2nd discussion is **The 7 1/2 Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle** by Stuart Turton, a unique and fun murder mystery.

Both meetings begin at 12:30 p.m. (location varies), and we always have a Zoom option. Contact Karen Rudisill for details/locations if interested. Please join us! We'd love to see a few new faces!

[karen.rudisill@gmail.com](mailto:karen.rudisill@gmail.com)



## Our NMU Scholarship Campaign

*by Les Bek*

When I was a young girl, I remember my dad opening a gift envelope. He chuckled as he handled the thin cardboard disk. I was intrigued and asked

what it was. He said it was a gift from his sister making a joke to him. At last, he was given "a round to it". From that day forward there would be no saying that things would have to wait until he got "a round to it".

I thought it was funny then and appropriate now for an encouraging message about our Scholarship Campaign. We received our Scholarship letter and return donation envelope tucked in the cover pocket of our bluebook. I am glad I was able to share the "round to it" gift today. I feel compelled to put my Scholarship intentions in the mail. Maybe I could start making some disks that read "did it" on the flip side?

**Thank you to all who have given and to all with good intentions.**

Mail check to: Ruth Ziel 734 Lakewood Lane,  
Marquette, MI 49855

**AAUW  
Marquette  
Partners with  
Voters Not  
Politicians**

*By Ruth Ziel*



Tuesday evening September 12, 2023

The Democracy Academy Project was held at the Peter White Public Library. Roughly 20 people attended. Our presenter was Valorie Troesch from Houghton MI. The program centered on the causes for the lack of participation in local elections by voters, especially those elections held in odd numbered years as well as strategies to help improve voter turnout.

### Poor turnout

Typically, less than 20% of registered voters vote in local elections in odd numbered years. In even numbered years, this improves to about 50% for local elections, however, more people vote for state and national candidates in these same election cycles. There are 8 states in the Union that have all-mail-in-voting with a participation rate in local elections of 37-45%. In Marquette, in odd year elections, 19% of the voting public makes the decisions we all must live by.

The reasons for this poor turnout are varied: lack of time, inertia, lack of transportation, failure to see the importance of local elections, not knowing the issues or the candidates. Demographics also play a role. Seventy percent of those with a college degree vote while 55% with a high school diploma vote. Those with high incomes have a greater tendency to vote than those with lower incomes.

## Strategies for improving voter turnout

### Long-term strategies

- **Ballot initiatives**  
Write initiative, get approval of the ballot language, collect signatures to place the issue on the ballot, hope voters approve the measure.  
In Marquette for example, this would require collecting 1750 signatures in the city of Marquette (10% of registered voters) with 1475 being valid.
- **Hold elections only in even years.**  
This would require a successful ballot initiative and voter approval. This may increase turnout, but also create unintended consequences such as the need for city agencies to restructure terms of office if there are any 3-year terms.

### Short-term strategies

- A campaign to **a)** encourage people to sign up for absentee ballots, **b)** vote those ballots and **c)** return those ballots. Passage of Promotethevote22 has made this process easier.
- **PSAs** reminding people to vote.
- **Refer people to [vote411.org](http://vote411.org)**, prepared by LWV in Marquette County, to view information on local candidates and issues. This assumes candidates have provided information to LWV.
- **Use the tripling effect:** think of 3 people you know who might not vote, engage with them to encourage them to vote and send them reminders.
- **Encourage those 3 people to think of 3 people** who might not vote and have them do the same.

Our [Facebook page](#) AAUW Marquette Branch has a link to the *Mining Journal* article about the Academy. Thanks to Leslie Warren for posting that.

*Ruth Ziel,  
Liaison between AAUW-MQT and VNP*



## Ranked Choice Voting

*By Ruth Ziel*

In September, AAUW-Birmingham MI Branch sent out a statewide invitation with the help of AAUW-MI, to other AAUW branches in Michigan regarding Rank MI Vote. Briefly, ranked choice voting is a process of voting that encourages more consensus among voters regarding our elected officials. We would not be limited to simply 2 candidates, one Democrat and one Republican. There could be more candidates for office from different parties or multiple candidates from the 2 major parties. To win, a candidate must receive over 50% of the vote.

Under our current system, multiple candidates have the effect of reducing the pool of votes available for the front runner in either party (spoiler effect), often resulting in a victory by someone who received only 30-40% of the vote. By ranking the candidates according to your preference: 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc. you always have a say in the outcome. If your first choice loses, then your vote moves to your second choice and on down the line until there is a winner who garners more than 50% of the vote.

Alaska uses Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) and did so in 2022. In that election, Lisa Murkowski defeated Sarah Palin. RCV has the benefit of moderating the extremes and giving voters more say in elections. If you would like to find out more about ranked choice voting and the non-partisan organization, Rank MI Vote, that is trying to bring this change to Michigan, please **use the link in the box below to watch** the presentation given to AAUW-Birmingham MI Branch.

[Ranked Choice Voting presentation](#)  
by  
[Ron Zimmerman of Rank MI Vote](#)  
[youtu.be](#)