



# News By Degrees

MAY TO JUNE 2025

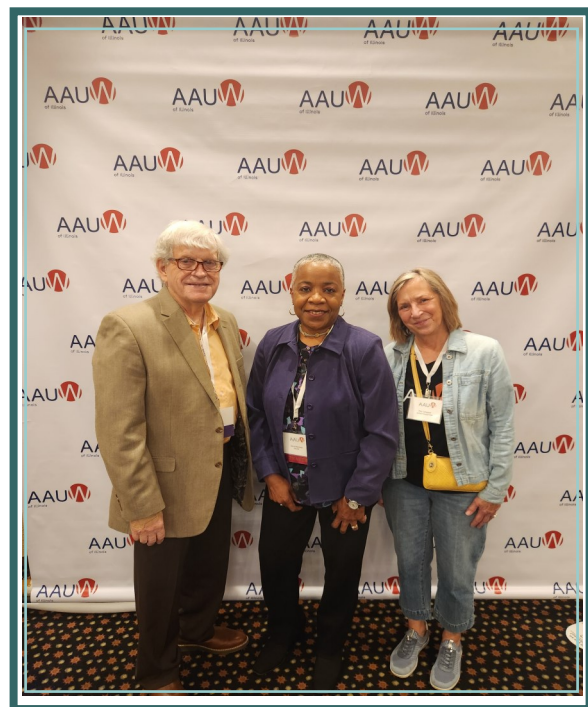
## President's Message

*Genevieve: "happy to see our newsletter start off with a picture of our branch being represented at AAUW-IL with AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell." Articles to follow.*



### Upcoming Events

- Jewel Card Order, May 15
- Flower pick up, May 16; help with truck 7am or so and/or pick up flowers 1-7pm
- Novel Approach, May 19 at 1pm
- End of Year Dinner, May 28 at 6pm, Chandlers
- Novel Approach planning meeting, June 9 at 1pm



### End of Year Dinner



### Happy May AAUW Friends! It is time to party!

We will be celebrating another successful year as a branch on May 28 at Chandlers on Roselle in Schaumburg. Join your friends at 6:00 for a wonderful dinner. We will install our new leaders and lavishly thank our outgoing ones. So put on your party clothes and chum together with your AAUW friends. See you there!

Mary and Lynn

## AAUW renewal time, Barb Garvin

It's that time of year again to renew your dues to AAUW National, State and Branch. Many have been members for so many years that there is no question in your minds that you would not rejoin. Our branch is small but we have so much to offer our members. We are lucky to have a public policy chair that keeps us in the know and encourages us to get involved in local, state and national issues. We've been introduced to many programs involving women, one of which was a recipient of an AAUW scholarship, which we help to fund. Our Novel Approach group encourages us to expand our knowledge with historical, current and controversial books. Celebrating Women always brings intellectual and cerebral topics about women or issues for us to learn about and discuss. How can you not rejoin....The dues, which did go up \$2.00 are now \$93.00. (74.00 National/10.00 State/9.00 Branch). AAUW has made it so very easy if you want to join online:

- Go to AAUW.org
- Login (This should have your Member ID and your login should be populated)
- Go to Renew
- Verify your name/address/information - NEXT
- Choose National - NEXT
- Branch or State - NEXT
- Choose IL 4080 - NEXT
- Can Make a donation (yes or no) - NEXT
- Select Primary Branch (IL4080) - NEXT
- Final Page - Cost should be \$93.00 (\$74.00 National/\$10.00 State/\$9.00 Branch)
- RENEW

If you are uncomfortable with joining online, I would be glad to do the online enrollment for you. Just make out a check to Schaumburg AAUW or send through Zelle for \$93.00. Barb

## Novel Approach

### Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See

This is the perfect book for escaping our modern times and traveling to 15<sup>th</sup> century China during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Even though the book is historical fiction, it is a true story about a female physician, Tan Yunxian, who lived during this dynasty. It is a story of tradition, oppression, friendship, class systems, and perseverance.

Tan Yunxian was born into an elite family and raised by her grandparents. Her grandmother was one of only a handful of female doctors in China and taught Yunxian the pillars of Chinese medicine. Yunxian was later sent into an arranged marriage, and her mother-in-law insisted that she must act like a proper wife. She couldn't see her forever friend or help the women and girls in the household. She had to embroider, pluck instruments, give birth to sons, and stay within the family compound.

How might a woman like Yunxian break free of these traditions? **Lady Tan's Circle of Women** is a captivating story of women helping other women. It is also a triumphant reimagining of the life of a woman who was remarkable in the Ming Dynasty and would still be remarkable today.

I hope that you will join us for a zoom discussion of Lisa's book on Monday, May 19.



## Novel Approach Planning Meeting via Zoom

Please start making a list of books you want to read and discuss for next year. We will be having the planning meeting on **Monday, June 9, on zoom at 1pm**. You are all invited to attend. We will need to pick out eight books for next year and would like to see some different people discussing the books.

Please send your suggestions for the 2025-26 Novel Approach discussion with a short summary to Carol Ginsburg. She will compile the suggested books in advance of the planning meeting.

Fran

## Jewel Gift Card Fundraiser

Our next Jewel gift card fundraiser will be placed on Thursday, May 15

If you would like to be included in this order, please let me know the denominations (\$5 to \$250 per card) that you would like to purchase. Please send your payment to Barb by May 15, too. This is our sixth and last Jewel card fundraiser for the branch year (July 2024-June 25).

Thank you for your continued support of this fundraiser. We will be back in mid-August to start our Jewel fundraiser for the new branch year.

Have a safe and a very enjoyable summer. Thank you!

Sue

## Flower Sale, Judy S.

Schaumburg AAUW Spring Plant Sale News



Congratulations to everyone by helping us have another wonderful plant sale! We sold \$3,086.50 worth of beautiful annual plants from Grassland Greenhouse in Michigan. This doesn't count the extra plants left over from the flats and cases that we will be offering on May 16th at Genevieve's house.

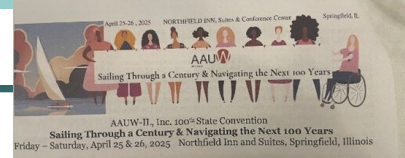
The address for pick-up of your order and possibly buy additional plants is 208 Beech Drive in Schaumburg on May 16th., from 1 to 7. I have attached a list of the extra available plants that even include four huge baskets.

We would certainly appreciate anyone who can come to help unload the truck when it arrives that Friday. Sometimes the driver comes at 7:00 a.m. and other times at a later time. Because of that possibility, I will try to be there at 7:00 a.m. with all the paper plate name identifiers so we can set them out and then unload the truck. That way we can organize the plants as quickly as we can and helpers can pick out their plants plus organize the extra ones.

Thank you for your generous support.

Judy Stewart

## AAUW-IL Convention Summary, Peg and Ken



Ken and I attended the AAUW-IL annual state convention in Springfield. You might remember that last year the convention also celebrated 100 years. Last year, celebrated 100 years of AAUW-IL, this year the recognition was for the 100th IL convention. The speakers were interesting, the conversations with like-minded women/men enriching, and the commitment of AAUW national and state for the work ahead was clear. As always, I came away energized! I will share some highlights below; let me know if you want more details. I will leave details on the strong focus on public policy for Ken to share.

- LGBTQ+ Presentation Dre Duvendack, MA & Emerson Krasnican BSW. These specialists from the University of Illinois Springfield provided us insight on our language skills for our interactions with LGBTQ+ identified people. We practiced using “they” in the singular; this is not so easy. This 14 minute TED talk was shared: Language around gender and identity evolves (and always has) | Archie Crowley <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XguYZXUChhY>
- National Address, Gloria Blackwell, AAUW National CEO was our Saturday keynote. She was with us in Peoria 2 years ago and seemed glad to be back in IL. Some of my takeaways:
  - ⇒ Education is under threat. AAUW has signed on with other like minded groups who oppose executive orders being issued (you can see these on the AAUW site).
  - ⇒ AAUW national will offer two new funds: Public Policy fund and Higher Education fund. These targeted efforts will support AAUW related initiatives. The Greatest Needs fund will still exist, however, these new funds are thought to better meet current moment needs
  - ⇒ Civil Rights are under threat; the CHI office was one of the federal offices of civil rights that was closed.
  - ⇒ AAUW fellows. 5.3 million \$ was awarded this year to current recipients. Unfortunately, some of their research work is impacted with the federal cuts to research.
  - ⇒ AAUW Strategic Plan will launch on May 15. AAUW will focus on its mission with these 3 priorities: support critical funding for women, remove system barriers in education and workplaces, and reinforce national branch alignment. We will know more on the strategic plan and goals very soon.
  - ⇒ Although AAUW is nonpartisan, our values matter and are unwavering.
- Higher Education, Charlotte J. Warren, PhD, Lincoln Land Community College. The # of HS graduates in IL is decreasing; IL needs to meet the education needs of adults. Since we live in a world of change, adult education must be recognized as ongoing. She also spoke to the funding issues we are seeing with PELL, MAP, etc (grants and loans critical to students in need) under stress at the federal level.
- Recognizing Real vs AI Images-Harnessing Technology Kathy Battee-Freeman. Kathy (AAUW Springfield) shared images for us to determine whether the image was AI or an actual photo. This is very tricky as AI is good, but incongruities can be found with a critical eye.
- Dignity Index – Community Outreach Donna Jean Simon and Sarah Allen presented an interactive workshop on the Dignity index, a tool to help show ways to communicate through our political and other differences. They explained the index and then participants practiced using the index with sample statements. They are available to do local workshops.
- Karen Hoffman of the Rockford Area Branch was honored as the 2025 AAUW IL Agent of Change. Her leadership, mentoring of women running for public office, growing community and AAUW partnerships, and advocacy for minority and low-income families.
- Public Education, Al Llorens, President, Illinois Education Association. Al praised the work of the teachers in IL and advocated for our continued support of public education.
- Based on member feedback the national dues increase will be \$2 per year for the next two years (not \$5 as initially proposed).



**AAUW-IL Convention continued:**

That is what we can share at this point. Next year the convention moves to the north but we were not told where. It was nice to be an attendee after two years of being in charge! Oh, also, I won the raffle for the quilt made by Nann Hilyard to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> AAUW Convention; beautiful work that I will share when I can.

Peg



**Ken's Public Policy Display at AAUW IL Convention**

## Public Policy Update—Ken Olson

We continue to have plenty of action on the policy front, I'll try to summarize a few of the things, but if you have questions please contact me.

Starting at the local level I want to thank everyone for the Equal Pay Day information sharing. It is a great effort that supports a policy priority of AAUW and it's fun too. I also appreciate your time in filing Witness slips. Our most recent request was in support of the Equal Pay Day resolution authored by AAUW. Illinois ranks 31<sup>st</sup> among the states in the pay difference, so we still have work to do. There will be requests on different issues, so please take a couple of minutes to do them. If you have any questions about filling them out please let me know. We also had requests from National to join in signing letters. Please do them and feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Thanks also for completing the brief survey on our political action. It will help us have accurate information to submit for our five-star recognition.

At the state level, our recent convention had a strong focus on policy. Our public policy display had good traffic. There is substantial concern over administration actions attacking women's health care, reproduction rights, voting rights, education and more. As part of the display and a "Thank You" for the LEG grant I had pictures and information from our Equal Pay Day activities along with some Pay Day candy bars to share that were popular. During the Convention Gloria Blackwell, AAUW CEO, covered a variety of topics including coalition letter and Press Releases from National opposing actions. In the week after the convention Karen Kortsch and I, co-Directors of Public Policy for AAUW IL, joined Planned Parenthood Lobby Day in Springfield to advocate for bills and action in support of Women's health care and reproductive rights. Karen was to testify in support of the AAUW Resolution recognizing Equal Pay Day. Unfortunately the hearing was canceled, but the lobby day was good.



As noted, National has been active in opposing administration attacks on many AAUW priorities and core values. There have been so many Executive Order that they are hard to keep up with, but here is a link to a fact sheet, developed by National that summarizes the Executive Orders, their potential impact and actions that have been taken. ([Fact Sheet](#)) National has also put out a release on the first 100 Days of the Trump Administration: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/media/press-releases/100-days-of-the-trump-administration-a-relentless-assault-on-higher-education/>. I encourage you to visit the AAUW [Press release page](#) and the [Policy Update page](#) as new information will be posted there.

Policy action will continue as next week's action alert and Capitol Hill Lobby Day will focus on urging representatives to oppose the harmful cuts to higher education in the reconciliation bill advanced by the House Education & Workforce Committee this week.

You will find AAUW talking points on House Ed & Workforce budget reconciliation bill (uploaded to SPPC Shared Drive):  [Talking Points - Budget Reconciliation.docx](#)

(NOTE: A copy of the talking point document is attached. Copy the link above to "the first hundred days" on AAUW.org to review that important document.

## Pay Equity 2025

Pictures from the SCH train station and the Jewel on Wise road. This important message was also shared at the SCH library. Good work SCH AAUW!!







Since we have to order flats or cases for some flowers, we have leftover flowers that can be purchased. They are located in the **Leftover Plant Sale Section**. They are the same price as listed on the order sheet. Just choose the plants you want and find someone to help you.

**Bedding Plants**

Alyssum White	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Begonia Green Leaf Mix	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Begonia Green Leaf Red Flower	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Begonia Green Leaf White	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Coleus Wizard Mix	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Lobelia Blue	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Impatiens Mixed Colors	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Marigold Dwarf Yellow	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Pansy Mixed	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Petunia White	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Petunia Purple/Blue	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Petunia Mixed Colors	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____
Snapdragons Rocket Mixed	1/2 flat is 24 for \$10.00 _____

**Premium Annual (\$5.00 each)**

Gerbera Daisy	7 left _____
Non- Stop Begonias	5 left _____
Pennisetum Rubrum (grass)	5 left _____
Dragon Wing Begonias-Pink	9 left _____
Sweet Potato Vine – Lime Gn.	7 left _____
Lantana – Yellow	3 left _____
Lantana – Red Shades	3 left _____
Lantana- Pink Shades	3 left _____
Wave Petunias – Blue (Dk. P.)	6 left _____
Wave Petunias – Pink	6 left _____
Wave Petunias – Purple (Mag)	8 left _____

**Accent Plants 3” (\$4 each)**

Spikes	14 left _____
Sprengeri	17 left _____
Vinca Vine	left _____

**Hanging Baskets 10” (\$18.50)**

Ivy Geranium (Red)	2 left _____
Combination of Flowers-Part Sun	2 left _____

**Zonal Geraniums 4.5” (\$5.00 each)**

Pink	4 left _____
White	7 left _____
Red	5 left _____
Violet	4 left _____

## **AAUW Talking Points on the Reconciliation Bill** ([Coalition talking points](#))

### **Punishes Student-Parents—Especially Black & Latina Mothers**

Raising the Pell “full-time” bar to 15 credits per term cuts grants for the very learners who rely on them most; 74% of student-parents are women and 55% are people of color.

### **Ends Subsidized Loans, Making College More Expensive for Women**

Eliminating subsidized Stafford loans means interest accrues while women are still in school, adding thousands to a balance they already struggle to repay because of the gender pay gap.

### **Slashes Federal Borrowing Power and Kills Grad PLUS**

New loan caps (\$50 k undergraduate, \$100K/ \$150K graduate & professional, \$200K lifetime) and the loss of Grad PLUS leave advanced degrees—especially in STEM, medicine, and law—financially out of reach for many women.

### **Cuts Off Parent PLUS—A Lifeline for Families of Color**

Restricting new Parent PLUS loans removes the only federal option many Black and low-wealth families have to close college-cost gaps, jeopardizing completion for women of color.

### **Locks Women into 30 Years of Debt**

The new “Repayment Assistance Plan” extends forgiveness to 360 monthly payments (30 years), deepening the debt drag on women who already take longer than men to repay and delaying wealth-building milestones.

## **How women are disproportionately impacted by the budget reconciliation bill**

### **New Pell Rules Pull the Rug from Student Moms—Especially Black and Latina Borrowers.**

The bill makes 15 credits per term (30 a year) the new Pell “full-time” standard—downgrading 12-14 credits to three-quarter time and ending aid for students who drop below half-time—thereby slashing grants for the very learners who depend on them most: student-parents, 74 percent of whom are women and 55 percent people of color. Nearly 60 percent of these parents already work full-time, and the [American Council on Education](#) estimates their total college costs (with childcare) run up to five times higher than those of peers without children, requiring an average 52-hour work week to cover. Faced with the choice of adding another class or losing roughly a quarter of their grant, many Black and Latina mothers—groups for whom Pell already funds two-thirds to four-fifths of undergraduates ([National Center for Education Statistics](#)),—will be forced to cut back on coursework, borrow more, or leave school altogether, jeopardizing degree completion and widening existing equity gaps.

### **Loss of subsidized interest = costlier degrees for women.**

The bill ends Federal Direct *subsidized* Stafford loans for undergraduates beginning July 1, 2026, so interest will start accruing immediately while students are still in school. Our research has shown that women carry more of the nation’s student-loan balance and, because women graduate into a pay gap, this change means thousands of dollars in extra interest and a longer path to financial security.

**Federal loan caps fall short for degrees, especially advanced degrees in STEM fields.**

New aggregate caps limit undergraduates to \$50,000 in *unsubsidized* federal loans and tie annual eligibility to the “median cost” of a program. For advanced degrees the new limits would be \$100K for graduate study, \$150K for professional programs, and a \$200K lifetime maximum. Tuition and living costs often exceed those limits, especially for advanced degrees in fields such as medicine, law, or many STEM doctorates. The impact would be more women would be forced to reduce enrollment or take on riskier, higher-interest private loans.

**Ending Grad PLUS blocks women’s path to advanced degrees.**

The bill would end graduate & professional students PLUS loans after July 1, 2026. Women hold 61% of grad-school seats and many rely on PLUS to cover costs that exceed Stafford limits; the typical PLUS borrower already exits with \$57K in PLUS debt alone. By scrapping Grad PLUS, squeezing unsubsidized limits, capping lifetime borrowing, and lengthening repayment to 30 years, the reconciliation bill erects new financial barriers for women seeking the advanced degrees that fuel leadership, research, and professional equity.

**Eliminating Parent PLUS loans strips away a critical financing tool for families of color.**

Beginning in 2026, the bill would bar new Parent PLUS borrowing. Because persistent racial wealth gaps leave Black families with fewer savings to cover college costs, more than one in five Black parents of college graduates have relied on this program to bridge the gap. Without it, many students—disproportionately women of color—will confront an affordability cliff that threatens both undergraduate and graduate completion and widens existing equity gaps.

**A 30-year “Repayment Assistance Plan” locks women into decades of debt.**

The new income-based plan requires up to 360 monthly payments (30 years) before any remaining balance is cancelled, replacing current plans that forgive many undergraduate debts after 20–25 years. AAUW’s research has shown that women already take longer than men to repay and are more likely to delay milestones like home-buying because of loans; stretching the forgiveness horizon another five-to-ten years will compound those inequities, especially for mothers who step out of the workforce for caregiving.