



AAUW Colorado Springs Branch

June 2025 Newsletter

Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

What's Inside

Our New President's Message

State Summary

National Summary

Authors Day Recap

Save the Date!

Saturday, September 13

Welcome Coffee

9:30 AM to noon

First United Methodist Church,

420 N Nevada Ave.

Friday, October 10, 2025

Public Policy

11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Silver Key

1625 South Murray Blvd

Friday, November 7, 2025

STEM DAY

7:30 AM to 2:00 PM

Hillside Community Center

925 S. Institute

Friday, December 5, 2025

Holiday Party

11 AM -1:00 PM

Margarita at Pinecreek

7350 Pine Creek Rd 80919

President's Message



Thank you for the privilege of serving as your president this next fiscal year. I am inspired by the mission and work of AAUW, and I hope that through our Branch programming and work, we can continue to advance the call of gender equity through education, advocacy and research. It is only through our collective power that we can continue to improve and make changes.

To introduce myself, I have been a member of AAUW since 2017 when I was invited to a Welcome Coffee. I was immediately impressed with its missions as I have long supported Women's Rights. In fact, it was early in my career that I became involved with and benefitted from the Affirmative Action program. After 10 years of working full time and attending college part-time, I graduated with a Business Administration degree from the University of Memphis. My professional experience included a variety of business positions including accounting, sales, market research and management. I have always believed in volunteering and have been involved with many organizations in various roles throughout most of my career. My partner through life is my husband, Daryl. We have one son, Darren who lives with his wife in Silver Spring, MD and two incredible grandchildren.

I am eager to work with all of you and invite you to offer suggestions and ideas of what we can do better. Let's continue together to make our Branch thrive and carry on the mission of AAUW.

Joan Skoog, President



A BIG thank you to **Crystal Stebbins** for her leadership this past year. Our organization cannot exist without members willing to step up and serve. Although working full-time in a demanding management position.

Crystal was willing to take on the challenge. We are so appreciative that she has agreed to continue on the Board as our Community Outreach VP. We also thank our Outgoing Board Members for their conscientious service: **Cindy Keffe**, Secretary, **Suzanne Baldwin Krause**, VP Membership and **Schon Beechler**, Co-VP Programs.

Joan Skoog

Branch Meetings next Fall



AAUW -COS Welcome Coffee

September 13, 2025

First United Methodist Church

420 N Nevada Ave.

Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Doors Open 9:00 AM

Program from 9:30 AM - Noon



AAUW Branch meeting on Public Policy addressing the current changes in Education will be on **Friday, October 10, 2025, from 11:00 to 2:00 pm. It will be a Lunch and Learn hybrid meeting in-person and Zoom at Silver Key 1625 South Murray Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO.** Lunch will be available for a small fee. A representative from AAUW National will be a panelist via Zoom. Stay tuned for more details to follow in the August newsletter.

STEM Day

The fourth annual STEM Day will be held **Friday, November 7 at Hillside Community Center from 7:30 to 2:00.** This year our guest experiment Bungee Dolls will be presented by UCCS' **Lynanne George**. We'll need the usual 50 to 60 volunteers, so mark your calendars now. For those unable to attend on November 7th, there is still plenty to do beforehand.

Holiday Party

Our Holiday Party will be held on **Friday, December 5, 2025, from 11am -1:00 at the Margarita at Pinecreek. 7350 Pine Creek Rd 80919.** It will be a festive occasion filled with the holiday spirit to start the season. More details in the August newsletter.

Marian Phelps, Program VP

Membership Matters

Upcoming Membership Dues

For most of our members, dues are due June 30th. The fee will be \$109.00. You can go to AAUW.org and sign in with your email address. Be sure you check that you are paying National, State and Local dues. If you do not pay all three you will not be able to participate in our branch activities. If you prefer, you can send a check payable to AAUW and mail the check to **Robin Depies**, 1580 Old North Gate Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80921. If you have any membership questions or concerns, please contact me.

Please welcome **Sadie Wager** as a new member. She attended Author's Day and asked for an application at the event. Sadie was very excited to join. We hope to see you at another event soon.

My term is over June 30th and **Elizabeth Leslie** will be the new Membership VP. Elizabeth and her committee will bring new energy and ideas to the position. I would like to thank those who have helped me, especially **Robin Depies, Mo Sigler, Lynn Whitacre** and **Sue Neufeld**. In addition, I would like to thank the board for all their support.

Suzanne Baldwin Kraus, Membership, Membership VP

Sbaldwin101@yahoo.com 719-235-7481

AAUW Colorado Annual Meeting Recap Apr 26, 2025

The last Saturday in April, AAUW Colorado held its Annual Meeting via Zoom. Members were treated to two timely keynote presentations:

1. **Abigail Hassan**, MA, LPC, LAC, Director of the Empowerment Center for Adolescence for the Community Reach Center in North Denver who spoke on how AAUW members and the community can best support the current generation of adolescent girls with their unique academic, personal, and mental health pressures and challenges.

Connect to video of this presentation at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27bl8OiBQEU>

2. **Cheryl Sorokin**, AAUW National Board Chair (through May 2025), spoke on the unprecedented challenges we're facing to higher education, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and a preview of the new AAUW Strategic Plan that focuses on higher education as the driver of equity, opportunity, and economic stability.

Connect to video of this presentation at
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQ0aq9ml434>

Local AAUW members were also prominently featured during the 2025 business meeting portion of the Annual Meeting. Congratulations to **Crystal Stebbins**, our current branch president (through the end of June), who received the 2025 Judith C. Sanderson Young Leader Award for outstanding leadership in AAUW, professional development, and community service! (**Judith Sanderson**, for whom the award is named, was herself, President of the Colorado Springs Branch from 1971-1973 and a former AAUW Colorado President.) And the very first recipient of the award in 1974, when it was known as the Young Leaders Award, was **Brenda Wolfe**, two-time President of the Colorado Springs branch.

The Colorado Springs Branch is also well-represented on the state Executive Board. **Crystal Stebbins** was elected to serve as President-elect for AAUW Colorado 2025-2026. **Cindi Zenkert-Strange** (Colorado Springs Branch President, 2022-2023), was elected to serve as Program Vice-President, 2025-2027. **Brenda Wolfe** is currently appointed as the state Communication Chair. Colorado Springs branch member, **Sally Mathewson**, who served as Secretary for the 2024-2025 Board, was thanked for her service as she stepped down from the State Board. **Audrey McGuire**, a former co-President of the Colorado Springs Branch, was recognized for her service on the 2025 State Nominating Committee. Thank you all, for your contributions to the branch and state AAUW!

by **Cindi Zenkert-Strange**

News from National



AAUW Launches New Strategic Plan

AAUW National is excited to announce the launch of AAUW's new strategic plan, reaffirming our commitment to advancing equity for women and girls through education. AAUW was founded more than 140 years ago with this mission, and with the unprecedented attacks we're seeing on higher education, we believe it is more important than ever to focus our efforts in this area.

AAUW's strength lies in our collective power—our states, branches, and members are the heart of our grassroots movement. States and branches provide meaningful support for women and girls, and for the policies that matter to their communities. AAUW provides a framework for branches to align with AAUW's strategic priorities, reinforcing a cohesive and collective approach to advocacy, community engagement, and financial sustainability. When AAUW National and our branches work in alignment, we maximize our collective resources, influence and success to break down barriers for women in education and beyond.

Submitted by **Joan Skoog**



Do You Like to Read?

Readers Needed

We need YOU to help select the book and author for next years' Authors Day. It's as easy as reading a book and giving your recommendation on whether it is the type of book and author you would invite to introduce to the rest of the members. There would be 3-4 meetings during the year. If interested, contact **Joan Skoog** at joanskoog1@gmail.com.

Submitted by **Joan Skoog**



AAUW at the Broadmoor Community Church

Photo by **Joan Skoog**

Annual Authors Day A Big Success

A perfect spring day, accomplished authors, an engaging Silent Auction, delicious food and an electric atmosphere all combined for a very successful Authors Day on May 3.

Almost \$10,000 was raised to provide scholarships to deserving women in the Pikes Peak region.



Guest author **Buzzy Jackson** gave a compelling talk on the research that went into her novel "To Die Beautiful", a novel based on a real-life story of Hannie Shaft, a female resistance fighter during WWII in the Netherlands.

Photo by **Kate Meyer Olson**

Guest Author **Michelle Theall** shared her emotional story of the challenges of adopting a child as an LGBTQ+ couple which she shares in detail in her memoir, "Teaching the Cat to Sit". Her debut novel, "The Wind Will Catch You" is the story of two foster children based on her experiences.



Photo by **Kate Meyer Olson**

The Silent Auction received plenty of action with a wide variety of gift cards, baskets and art. Members were quick to sign up for **Pip's** Paella and the Mother's Day Garden Party provided by Setsuko Dunphy. We are so thankful to our many donors from merchants to Interest Groups to individual donors.

Our many volunteers were instrumental in making this day a success. A BIG thank you to **Lorena Wilder** who chaired the auction committee and her team, to our Reading and Author Selection Team led by **Kathy Olson** and to **Robin Depies** who led a very efficient check-out system. The room was beautifully decorated with table centerpieces of books and flowers and thoughtful sayings scattered on the tables with handmade bookmarks as a gift from **Sherri Bristol**. Thanks to our Hospitality Committee led by **Kathy Gutnayer** for their decorations, providing the pre-brunch pastries, and arranging the delicious brunch provided by The Picnic Basket.

Thanks to all our many members who supported this day. It is more than a fund-raiser; it is a way that AAUW has been able to support our mission of equity through higher education for over 140 years. Most importantly, it allows us to bring hope, encouragement and empowerment to young women as they pursue their dreams of higher education.



Jeanne Koss looking over restaurant possibilities



Homemade pillow, backpack with goodies



Martini basket

Photos by **Kate Meyer Olson**



Be sure to thank our generous merchants who donated to our Silent Auction as you patronize their businesses:

The Olive Tap
Heartfelt Financial Solutions
Scheels
Hooked on Books
Fine Arts Center
Flying Horse Resort
Freddy's
Salsa Bravo
Marigolds
Garden of the Gods Club & Resort
Amanda's Fonda
Heart of Jerusalem

Nothing Bundt Cakes
Costco
Covered Treasurers
Adventures Outwest
Theatreworks
Crumb Cookies
Urban Egg
Panera's
Concept Restaurants
Chuy's
BJ's Restaurant & Brewery

Submitted by Joan Skoog



TRIPLE T PARTY!
11th Annual
Tiaras 'Tin'is Tampons

Community • Volunteering • Friendship
WCCS
est. 1902
The **WOMAN'S CLUB** of
COLORADO SPRINGS
General Federation of Women's Clubs



PARTY WITH A PURPOSE
FOOD | DRINKS | SHOPPING | GAMES
TIARA PARADE | DOOR PRIZES | FUN!
A feminine product drive benefitting local non-profits dedicated to those in need.

WED, JUNE 11TH, 2025 | 5 - 7:30 PM

The Warehouse Restaurant
25 W. Cimarron, CSC 80903

\$35 and a Box of Feminine Products

← **BUY TICKETS AT [GFWC-WCCS.COM](https://www.gfwc-wccs.com)**

For more information: WCCSVolunteere@gmail.com

Interest Groups

Walkie-Talkies



Front: **Susie Potterat, Marilyn Frydrych**
 Back: **Marilynn Hanlon, Connie Miles, Paula Miller, Char Gagne**
 Photo by **Jan Zellmer**

Walkie-Talkies Hike to Paint Mines near Calhoun

On May 22, the Walkie-Talkies enjoyed a beautiful Colorado blue-sky day at the Paint Mines Interpretive Park. It was just after one of our spring rains, so the wildflowers were at their peak. The vibrant colors of the rocks stood out. The park was at its best. We were blessed to have experienced such an awesome, inspiring day.

Listing of Interest Groups

Various Days in the week/month

BRIDGE LIGHT

Mondays

HARDY HIKERS, BOOKS TO FILMS

Tuesdays

DINNER BOOK CLUB, GREAT DECISIONS (Current World Events), MORNING GLORIES BOOK CLUB, READERS' POTPOURRI, TECHNOLOGY, VISUAL ARTS

Wednesdays

AFTERNOON READERS, CHOCOLATE LOVERS, ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION (EA), LUNCHEON NOVEL 1, LUNCHEON NOVEL TOO, SOUTHWEST STUDIES

Thursdays

CHAPTER & VERSE WRITING GROUP, TED TALKS, WALKIE-TALKIE HIKES, WOMEN WHO WRITE, MAHJONG

Fridays

EXPLORING LIVES AND CULTURES, LOCAL HISTORY

Fridays or Saturdays

FELLOWSHIP OF THE GRAPE (FOG)

For those who would like more information about interest groups click below:

**Click Here for More Information
on Interest Groups**

**American Association of
University Women**

4660 Adieu Cir, Colorado Springs
United States of America



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