Thumb Sketch

Prescott, AZ

Newsletter May-June 2025, Vol. 74 No. 3

President's Message

Miriam Hoelzeb
President

This is the Thun Thumb Sketch of this fiscal year and of my presidency. I want you all to know how much I appreciate the time and encouragement that has been given to me to make this year very special.

As President Elect you are taught the ropes and the basic job of what you will need to know for your next job. President. You are not alone. At that point you really don't know what you don't know. Therefore, as I sit here, I want to share with you what I have learned in my year as President-Elect. It was a mentor to the President-Elect. I had a mentor when was P-E and she helped me to see what needed to be done and helped me along the way. However, there also were many people helping prepare me for my next adventure. President.

This year, I set up a goal for us to be members know how much I appreciated them for being there. Thank you to all of you, members, Board members, committee chairs and special project coordinators. You have been so much. Thank you all for coming to our meetings, for sharing your precious Saturday mornings and helping to keep us focused on our mission.

You all helped make Zoom for the Opportunity Awards a success. Thank you to those who helped prepare the Zoom, those who joined, even to read the tweets, and those and ready to share. Thank you to chair my selection for me, even to share in the May General Meeting. Book Sale to end our Opportunity Awards funds.

I didn't plan on sitting the light on anyone, person or committee, but I must thank the Communications Team for their patience, understanding and help. Jennifer Hendell, I am pretty lame in the technology area. Angelina I conversed for help, someone on the Comm Team sent me my minutes. I kept sheep thinking about having to create a PowerPoint presentation for each meeting. The Comm Team gave me the tools to do my simple basic slides.

In closing, I know this is a lot to read but I want you to know this has been a very wonderful year as your Branch President.
Miriam

Upcoming Programs

General Meeting: May 10th Program

Our May speaker is **Tricia Michelsen** from the Hospice Foundation. Tricia is a debtor/creditor attorney, certified as a Master Gardener, and a Master Hospice Volunteer. Attorneying that gardening is a continual experiment. Tricia takes on new gardening challenges every year. Her latest challenge is growing hops. Hops are used to create beer and are also used in medicine. Tricia will share the joy of gardening through public speaking engagements throughout the country. Tricia is a graduate of Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University campuses. Before moving to the Prescott area, she displayed computer systems worldwide to Honeywell and was based out of the Phoenix metro area. She will be speaking about:

- Alternative Water Sources – making best use of a precious resource
- Tonaqua Country Water – where does it come from and how is it used
- Weather patterns and their effect on our landscapes
- Landscape design and plant considerations
- Property hydrology and landscape
- Watering annuals – flowers and vegetables

General Meeting: June 14th Social

This year's June meeting will be a social event with a chance to meet the members that live in your area. We used to have neighborhood meetings in different areas, but house space and parking space was a problem. So, during the meeting we will be assigned to a neighborhood based on the town in which we live. In the past we have found more than one member who discovered a close neighbor was a member as well.

This year, to add a little fun to it, there will be some questions to answer with mini-prizes for the winners. We will ask whether anyone one in your group attended the same school or had the same major and a few other things. We look forward to this opportunity to get to know one another better and just have fun together, so please join us. Additional details regarding the meeting will be forthcoming.

AAUW-Prescott News

2025-2026 Elected and Appointed Officers

The slate of officers is nearly complete for the upcoming 2025-2026 year. Still not filled are the positions of President-Elect and Archivist. If you are interested in either of these positions, please contact Jan Stetson or Miriam Hoelzeb.

Elected Officers	
President	Jan Stetson
President-Elect	Vacant
Program Co-VPs	Kimberly Richards/Breanyne Hinkel
Membership Co-VPs	Mari Rimple/Leslie Gelleman
Recording Secretary	Cathy Cunningham
Corresponding Secretary	Stephanie Voss
Treasurer	Elaine Poole
Appointed Officers	
Advocacy Coordinator	Penny Briner Ewell
Archivist	Vacant (Liz Bailey will assist new appointee)
Communications Co-Chairs	Lenore Hemphill/Janet Orr
Flying Health Council of Greater Prescott Representative	Julie Gaylor
Directory/Address Book	Lenore Hemphill/Kelli Kisterman
Hospitality Co-Chairs	Barb McIlvenna/Ellen Momeyer
Publicity Co-Chairs	Ed Tucker/Pat Kelly
Publications Editor	Vacant
Scholarship Co-Chairs	Kelli Kisterman/Sonya Tonsing

Membership

Membership Update: Welcome New Members / Time to Renew!
We're excited to share that our branch is growing! Over the past month, we've welcomed three new members: **Jane Lehman**, **Candace Buzzard**, and **Belinda Sandoval**. Be sure to say hello and introduce yourself when you see them at interest group meetings!

Time to Renew Your Membership
It's that time of year again—most membership renewals are due by **June 30th**. Please renew and pay your dues online through the **national AAUW website**: http://www.aauw.org

- Click "Login"
- Use a credit card to pay your dues directly
- Be sure to select our local branch: **Prescott (A2000)** when filling out the form

Membership Dues Update
You may remember that AAUW National had proposed a $15 dues increase. Thanks to feedback from branches like yours, that increase was adjusted. Instead:

- Dues are increasing by **$2 this year**
  Transition **$5 increase** all 2026 next year – 2026-2027
  This now, the total annual dues is **$1827**:
  - $1000 National
  - $15 State
  - $24 to our Prescott Branch

A lot of history: several years ago, our branch actually reduced local dues from $27 to $24. Prior to that, dues were as low as $15 back in 2020–2021, which were 2012 levels. Most of those much we accomplish as a modest budget!

Your continued support means a lot. **Your dues help fund important national initiatives—like advocacy for gender equality and research—as well as the engaging local programs we all enjoy.**

Thank you for renewing your membership and being part of our vibrant community!

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair. ...Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities, 1859.

AAUW-Prescott Branch has a wonderful history, as does our state, our country, our civilization through some "not so best of times" also. The credit goes to all the strong, dedicated and hard-working women who built the foundations of the AAUW Branch in Prescott. Last year, we had a few "not so best of times" and we survived every, it was brought to the Board's attention that information about many of our members was not easily obtained. A short-term project was begun to rectify this situation and the biographies of these **"Leading Ladies"**. The photo slides ran "Leading Ladies" (Past Presidents) gathered on January 12, 2024, for AAUW-Prescott Branch's 70th Anniversary.

Which Put it was to communicate with and research these women. The committee is now compiling a complete list of these biographies with pictures, including almost all past presidents since 1980. Many of these women are still members of our AAUW Branch, and some serve on committees describing why they joined and what was accomplished during their period of leadership.

Isn't there someone in this membership that would like to help keep the branch story going? It is nominal job, "just keeping record" While these officers – vibrant, excited and dedicated women – served their terms, they did not do it alone. Behind each officer, there was a "Longtime Friendship" and like to work behind the scenes, this is a perfect fit for you. The present committee would like to proceed to help get the next Archivist oriented and serve as a resource of support for this one-year appointment beginning in July 2025. Contact Jan Stetson for more information.

Member Highlights

Fifty years and counting!

Julia Appleton was honored by National AAUW as an Honorary Life Member. She joins the other four Life Members in our branch. Quite the achievement.

May 12, 2025, Field Trip to Western Heritage Center on Whiskey Row

Meet at 9 am at 166 South Montezuma, on Whiskey Row. A formal program and refreshments will be offered. Check out their website: https://www.prescott.org/ Starting from the Center gave a great presentation at the April AAUW-Prescott meeting and were a wide variety. They appreciated our generous donations.

Days Past

Welcome back, **Lenore Hemphill** who will also write the articles for the Prescott Daily Courier. Here is her story:

Why I contribute to "Days Past" Mesquite y Sonia

Moving to Prescott in 2004, I discovered and enjoyed reading "Days Past."
The local history feature published each Sunday in the Prescott Daily
Courier. I'd read the articles – moved from reader to contributor, and with 2020, I submitted articles
every month.

Why bother? Two factors gave impetus to my increased contributions. First, as I read more and more "Days Past" articles, it became increasingly apparent to me that women and minorities were not mentioned in our local history as much as men and white people. Second, I became a CASA volunteer and I spent many times to spend doing research and writing. So I began submitting articles primarily about women in the Sharlot Hall Museum's Days Past Contest, and in May, my fifteenth article, including 20 about women and minorities will be published. One of my favorites is "Fred and Hence Jones; Father-Daughter Inks." They were local painters African-American Fred Jones and his daughter Hence, who was a talented artist. Fred was known for the segregation and lack of freedom they encountered in their home town in Georgia. https://archive.dailycourier.com/search/results/page-and-title/?1=Fred+Jones+Father-Daughter+Inks

Two recent articles talked about women who were members of the Prescott AAUW Branch. Sisy Ellwin Siding mom was where our branch was organized in
https://archive.dailycourier.com/search/results/page-and-title/?1=Sisy+Ellwin+Siding+Mom+Where+Our+Branch+Was+Formed
Ruth Ellen Kocher Schultz was AAUW-Prescott president from 1981 to
1984. https://archive.dailycourier.com/search/results/page-and-title/?1=Ruth+Ellen+Schultz+Kocher+Prescott+Area+Women+Leader

In 2023, I was inducted into the Prescott American Philosophic Society Western Lore Hall of Fame for contributions to philosophic research, collecting and proud historical preservation. My first article about American female philosophic writers was published in 1975, and, fifty years later, I have written more than 800 articles and have been published in the philosophic and general press.

AAUW Arizona

Legislative Day, 2025

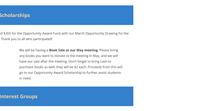
Members from the AAUW-Prescott Branch enjoyed their time at Legislative Day, 2025. Opening remarks were given by Becky Gunn, President of AAUW Arizona and Prescott Past President.

Four speakers presented on very diverse topics. Ellie Pintsa, Political Director at Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, spoke about the Violence Against Women Act and shared information on legislation that could potentially affect women and girls. From the Children's Action Alliance, Jennifer Burns outlined the impact the Medicaid Cuts would have on state budgets and public health. Nancy Pitcel, Senior Reporter for the Arizona Mirror, spoke about how journalism impacts public opinion and policy. The morning concluded with lunch and a question and answer session with a panel of Arizona Representatives and Senators.

AAUW members were recognized in both the House and Senate Chambers at the conclusion of the day.

Spring Forum Highlights

Two members of AAUW-Prescott, Sonya Tonsing and Lenore Hemphill, represented our Branch at the AAUW AZ Spring Forum held at the Scottsdale Community College Indigenous Cultural Center.


2025 New Arizona AAUW Board Members installed. Karen Ramos is in green.

The theme of the Forums, *Opportunities for Action*, featured presenters Melissa McNair (yet and Cathy Sigmon. They spoke to "Identifying Your Why" and Getting from Why to Action." They encouraged participants to follow the legislative sessions and projects that for have to engage in things that they could affect. They also reminded Forum attendees that the legislative sessions are available both live and recorded.

After lunch, Meghan Wood, Senior Director, Policy and Member Advocacy National AAUW, provided updates from the National Office. She mentioned that AAUW is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. Currently, Meghan also walked the members through a guided exercise as to how to identify a policy they could support and design an action plan. It was great to hear most other Branch members and have to be an effective advocates. **Lenore**

Sonya adds:
I'm so glad I decided to attend the Spring Forum. It was truly invigorating to sit side-by-side with engaged members from AAUW branches across the State and talk with them about why they're passionate about advocacy for women. There was a real sense of hope and energy in the air – it was incredibly inspiring.

I filled two pages with notes full of ideas I want to explore further so I can become a more effective advocate for women's issues. One message that really stuck with me was this: the more we talk about our work, the more we can do our work. Sharing our stories, ideas, and the mind-bending hopeful and empowerment–fostering that I can truly make a difference that matters.

Advocacy Activities

Advocacy News

Over the next two months our AAUW year will wrap up. I've spent some time reflecting on what advocacy has accomplished over the course of the year and where it might go next year.

Remember, this is our first year of having an advocacy coordinator and an advocacy committee. There is still work to do, but what have we accomplished in the fall, our AAUW-Prescott advocacy leaders created a Prescott College and Yavapai College register to vote. We also distributed information on AAUW and our Opportunity Award during these times. Our Opportunity Award recipients were honored at the April AAUW-Prescott meeting and presented to the Early College Academy students and they'll be in back next year.

In the last issue of the Thumb Sketch, legislative affecting women and girls was highlighted, and three members attended Legislative Day in Phoenix. Members also attended the Spring Forum in Scottsdale and shared information on legislation that affects women and girls at the Women's Branch No equity, and we provided an informational table there as well. Even though it snows it felt as though we were outstanding, it turns out we were making small strides.

Going forward there are opportunities for members to engage more with advocacy. First, please sign up, consider joining and be still looking for a few members who would like to participate in brainstorming ways our branch can put our mission into action.

Second, there will now be an advocacy email list. This will be used to share information and timely information out to those members who choose to be included. Information in these emails might include volunteer opportunity, time sensitive action on legislation, a letter to write, or a petition to sign. **If you want to sign up at the May and June AAUW-Prescott meetings or send me an email, and I will add you to the list.**

Onward
Penny Briner Ewell
Advocacy Coordinator

Scholarships

We want SOSU Fun the Opportunity Award Fund with our Branch Opportunity Drawing for the student Thank you to all who participated.

We will be having a **Book Sale at our May meeting**. Please bring any gently used books you have read and have run after the meeting. Don't forget to bring cash to purchase books as well. Stay with us for SQ Lunch. Proceeds from this will go to our Opportunity Award Scholarship to further assist students in need.

Interest Groups

Book Groups

The Friday Morning Book Group – Prescott Valley meets on the 3rd Friday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the cozy monthly used the top-but monitor of Prescott Valley Library. Members read a book of their choice and share it with, although we're open to other locations. In the great weather, we have enjoyed Tom Park, Kit welcome, so if you'd like to join us, let me know so I can confirm the location. You would just need to send me your email address.
Contact Susan Gier- address in the directory – for more information.
Some of the recent interesting books from a variety of genres. See the lovely creative meeting be be met at https://www.aauwprescott.org/interest-groups/book-groups/3rd-Friday-morning-book-group/

Mah Jongg Group

Part of the Mah Jongg group

The group plays Mah Jongg each Tuesday at the mall. We will be happy to teach any NEW member interested in learning to play. We also welcome experienced players to join us. To find out more about the group, contact us at our email addresses in the Membership Directory.
—Lucy Dwyrea and Ed Taylor-Richards