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FALLS NOTES



AAUW-River Falls, WI

Branch Newsletter

October 2015

NEXT MEETING

November 10, 2015 – Veterans Day Theme – The program will be Sisterhood of War with Author Kim Heikkela and Mary Beth Crowley. The program is Co-sponsored by the River Falls Public Library. Business meeting starts at 6:30 and the program starts at 7:30.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Jane Matthews, Branch President

These are exciting times at The River Falls Branch, AAUW. You will hear more about these items from other writers in this newsletter, but they are worth mentioning here. We just completed another successful book sale, thanks to the efforts and hard work of numerous people. We can be proud that our efforts resulted in increased revenue for this event. Another fundraiser, the Moose Club Brunch, is coming up on Sunday, November 1, and I believe this will also be a success for us.

Our TechSavvy proposal was not chosen as a site for a STEM event, but that only means that we will be developing a STEM event of our own for April 9, 2016. This is an endeavor that will require lots of talent and lots of work, but we have plenty of that. The STEM Committee will be meeting in November and December to start making our initial nebulous plan more concrete. Stay tuned.

I attended my first Legislative Day on October 15. Meeting with the legislative staff to express our views was interesting, but the real highlight for me was to attend the prep sessions planned by AAUW, Wisconsin. There was so much talent, enthusiasm and information in the room that I found my head swimming. We heard from Ingrid E. Rothe of the League of Women Voters. She updated us on the critical bills currently under consideration by the Legislature and provided background and insight about these bills. She minced no words, characterizing the Electronic Voter Registration bill as an assault on the weak and poor. The proposal to disband the Government Accountability Board and replace it was, in her opinion, a recipe for deadlock and dysfunction. And, of course, the Campaign Finance Bill would allow special interest groups to coordinate with candidates, rendering contribution limits meaningless.

Sara Finger founded the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health and is a tireless advocate. She utilizes Facebook and other media as Advocates in Action.

Mary Bottari of the Center for Media and Democracy has worked on numerous causes that promote democracy.

I am listing the websites for all of these organizations as a reference for future use.

Media and Democracy

ALECexposed.org PRwatch.org Sourcewatch.org whorepresentsme.info

Voter id law

<http://bringit.wisconsin.gov>

Government Accountability law

<http://www.gab.wi.gov>

This should keep us busy.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Ann Gustafson and Jennifer Willis-Rivera,
Co-Chairs

This month we welcome two new membership to our branch, Nancy Stowall and Elizabeth Williams.

Nancy Stowall was born in Birmingham, Alabama, but grew up in Boulder, Colorado. She attended college in Colorado ultimately earning a Master of Social Work degree from Denver University. Her career was in social work in Adams County where she worked with out-of-home adolescents. She supervised social workers who were providing treatment and also supervised the foster homes and foster parents where the adolescents had been placed.

Nancy moved to River Falls nine years ago to be near her daughter who lives in River Falls. She also has a daughter who lives in Chicago and a son who lives in Highlands Ranch near Denver. She has three granddaughters and one grandson.

Elizabeth Williams is originally from Thorp, WI. She received her bachelor's degree from UW-Eau Claire with a major in Spanish. After teaching for two years, she went on to earn a Master of Science degree in Guidance from UW-Stout. After completing that degree she worked in WI Public Schools at junior and senior high school levels as a guidance counselor and classroom teacher. Between 1990 and 2006 she coordinated a mentorship program for highly motivated high school students in Dakota County, MN. This position included providing instructional resources for six to eight staff members in the high schools throughout the county.

In addition to her work in WI and MN, Elizabeth has held interim positions in Cleveland, OH through Ohio State University and at the School of Engineering at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

After retiring in 2006, Elizabeth moved to River Falls to be near family. Alongside career endeavors, she acquired a private pilot license and has assisted with curriculum development, program planning and public speaking activities through her religious community affiliation. She now enjoys the talented children and grandchildren of her siblings.

We are delighted to welcome Nancy and Elizabeth to AAUW-River Falls. Their stories remind us there are other individuals who would welcome the opportunity to be a part of our branch. All members are invited to

bring a guest or two (or more) to the November meeting on November 10 where the program will be *Sisterhood of War* with author Kim Heikkela and Mary Beth Crowley. The program is open to the public. This will be a *Shape the Future* event where individuals who join at this meeting will be able to join at half-cost dues.

PROGRAM NOTES

Barbara Peterson and Elaine Baumann, Co-Chairs

The next meeting is **November 10, 201** – Veterans Day Theme – Sisterhood of War with Author Kim Heikkela and Mary Beth Crowley Co-sponsored by the River Falls Public Library

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Yolanda Dewar, Chair

The International Federation of University Women (IFUW) has changed its name to Graduate Women International (GWI). It's 32nd Triennial Conference will be August 24-26, 2016 in Cape Town, South Africa.

A message from GWI President Catherine A. Bell:

"Graduate Women International (GWI) exists: to advocate for quality education to empower girls and women up to the highest levels, to build projects with our grass roots partners, to broker information and to serve our wide membership base, spread across the globe.

Under the collective banner of education, gender and human rights, this Conference aims to provide a diverse program where each person can find subjects of interest. Beyond the formal program, it is also an opportunity to network and build relationships, to strengthen the movement in favor of girls' and women's education. The more voices and activities mobilizing for the cause, the stronger we all become."

PUBLIC POLICY

Submitted by Barb Peterson

Many of you know Mike McCabe, recent founder of Blue Jean Nation and author of *Blue Jeans in High Places*. Mike will speak to our branch on February 9th, 2016. The meeting will be open to the public. This weekend Mike posted this article online. He is asking us to contact Senator Sheila Harsdorf this week. Contact information follows the article.



That which Abraham Lincoln insisted "shall not perish from the Earth" is being suffocated in Wisconsin. The politicians who are calling the shots in the State Capitol already have put in place close to a dozen measures making it harder for people to vote. They have abused the redistricting process to draw voting jurisdictions that make it infinitely more difficult to pry political power from their hands and have made Wisconsin the most gerrymandered state in America.

Now these rulers who are neither civil nor servants are pushing to end Wisconsin's century-old civil service system protecting against cronyism and political patronage. They are pushing to double the size of political donations they can legally accept, conceal from public view which companies are behind those campaign contributions, muzzle the watchdogs, and take away a tool criminal prosecutors use to launch corruption investigations. Action on this foul agenda is on a fast track, with votes being scheduled first in the state Assembly where Republicans control a large majority of the seats. At the same time, they refuse to hold so much as a public hearing on proposed legislation to rein in abuse of redistricting.

If suffocation of democracy in Wisconsin is to be prevented, it probably comes down to about a half dozen state senators such as Robert Cowles of Green Bay, Luther Olsen of Ripon, Sheila Harsdorf of River Falls, Terry Moulton of Chippewa Falls, Fond du Lac's Rich Gudex and Jerry Petrowski of Marathon. Any three of them could block these assaults on clean, open and honest government.

Contact these legislators. Make your voice heard.

But we can't stop there. In the end, democracy shall not perish only if legislators are changed, parties are changed, and the broken political system is changed.

If you haven't contacted Sen. Harsdorf, please call her office staff at [608-266-7745](tel:608-266-7745) or [800-862-1092](tel:800-862-1092). If you have already called (thank you), please write to the Senator at sen.harsdorf@legis.wi.gov to ask her to vote against:

SB294 - dismantles the Gov't Accountability Board eliminating non-partisan judges and installing equal numbers of Republican and Democratic legislators which would mean no decisions could be made and credibility would cease

SB292 - increases campaign finance funding from the current limit of \$10,000 per voter to \$20,000 and eliminates the ability to track campaign contributors to PACs.

SB285 - will change civil service employment rules - persons can be hired by resumes rather than by testing for knowledge (reintroduces potential cronyism)

FINANCE REPORT

Suzanne Hagen, Finance Chair

AAUW-River Falls Finance Report – Corrected as of 10/21/15
September 20, 2015

Checking balance 8/31/2015	\$ 656.29
Receipts:	
Membership dues (Frank,Quist)	109.50
Membership dues (Loudon, Perkins, Halvorson)	182.50
9/8/15 Meal donation	55.00
<i>Total receipts (9/1—9/20)</i>	<i>347.00</i>
Disbursements:	
Change for Booksale	50.00
<i>Total disbursements (8/31-9/20)</i>	<i>50.00</i>

Balances 9/20/2015

Checking: 953.29
 Savings: 1656.31
 \$2609.60

Encumbered funds:

UWRF Scholarship = \$00.00
 High School Scholarship = \$00.00
 AAUW Funds (formerly EF) = \$231.03*
 NCSWL = \$77.50
 LAF = \$12.00
 Travel
 National = \$6.78

*As of Jan. 31, 2015, \$1231.03 was encumbered for AAUW Funds/scholarships, \$1000 of which designated locally for NCCWSL support. \$922.50 has been paid to date for NCCSWL, leaving \$77.50 remaining encumbered for that program and \$231.03 in the Funds/Scholarships “pot.”

**Any funds left in State travel after the State convention are added to the National travel fund.

AAUW-River Falls Finance Report October 21, 2015

Checking balance 9/20/2015	\$ 953.29
Receipts:	
Membership dues (Williams)	36.50
Book Sale receipts	2620.50
<i>Total receipts (9/21—10/21)</i>	<i>2657.00</i>

Disbursements:	
AAUW National dues (Peterson, Okorn-Owen, Frank, Quist, Loudon, Perkins, Halvorson, Williams, Stowall)	294.00
AAUW State dues (same as above)	117.00
<i>Total disbursements (9/21-10/21)</i>	411.00

Balances 10/21/2015

Checking: 3199.29
 Savings: 1656.52
 \$4855.81

Encumbered funds:

UWRF Scholarship = \$00.00
 High School Scholarship = \$00.00
 AAUW Funds (formerly EF) = \$231.03*
 NCSWL = \$77.50
 LAF = \$12.00
 Travel
 National = \$6.78

*As of Jan. 31, 2015, \$1231.03 was encumbered for AAUW Funds/scholarships, \$1000 of which designated locally for NCCWSL support. \$922.50 has been paid to date for NCCSWL, leaving \$77.50 remaining encumbered for that program and \$231.03 in the Funds/Scholarships "pot."

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BRANCH MEETING MINUTES

Co-secretaries - Magdalena Pala and Maureen Olle-LaJoie

October 13, 2015 at Congregational United Church of Christ

Meeting called to order at 6:42 p.m.

The meeting minutes from September 25, 2015 as published in the newsletter were approved.

The finance report as published in the newsletter was approved.

Moose Brunch on November 1, 2015. We need to sell tickets; they come in packs of 12. Price is \$9 for anyone 6 years and up. Children 5 and under are free. Make checks payable to Moose Lodge. Get money and checks to Suzanne Hagen by October 31st. Profits are split between Moose Lodge and AAUW, even with tickets purchased at the door. Clearing tables, bussing tables, and refilling coffee pots are other jobs. People are signed up from 9-11 and then 11-1. We need one or two people who can cover 10:30 and 11:30.

So far \$1765 was raised by the AAUW Book Sale. Jeanne Zirbel thanked people who helped sorted and worked Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

There will be an opera, Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte by the Floating Opera Company at First Congregational Church. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students. November 8th at 4 p.m.

Membership report: we have 8 new members this year so far. There will be another Shape the Future event in November.

Program Notes by Barb Peterson and Elaine Baumann: next month's program on November 10th is a joint program with River Falls Public Library. It includes a half hour screening of a documentary based on the book Sisterhood of War. Mary Beth Crawley has been an AAUW member for 35 years and was featured in the book. She will speak about her experiences and findings.

Public Policy: There was an Elections and Campaign Committee meeting to discuss the dissolving of the Government Accountability Board. Instead of appointing retired judges, the governor wants to appoint three Democrats and three Republicans. Raising individual contributions from \$10,000 to \$20,000 with no accountability. Voter registration lists, they want to cull these lists. Between 3pm and 4pm on 10/14/2015, 4-5 people are heading down to Madison for Legislative Day.

There is a bill to allow concealed carry weapons on UW campuses and technical colleges.

Jamie Benson will be speaking tonight. We need to discuss this session with our friends and neighbors.

Ann Gustafson urged people to sign up for Action Network e-mails. This is national level.

Lorraine Davis passed a letter around from our scholarship recipient, Christine Marriott.

AAUW Funds Report by Sue Halseth: this will be discussed at the next board meeting.

STEM Update: There is an email from Anna that talks about past STEM initiatives and efforts. Jane will forward this email as requested.

Historian: not present; no report.

International Relations: not present, no report.

Membership Directory will be available for pick up at November meeting. Those directories not picked up will be mailed. The directory will include future meeting dates.

Hostesses and co-hostesses needed for February, March, and April.

Meeting adjourned 7:10 p.m.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 1, 2015 Moose Lodge Breakfast fund raiser – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. tickets are \$9, children 5 and under are free

November 10, 2015 – Veterans Day Theme – Sisterhood of War with Author Kim Heikkela and Mary Beth Crowley Co-sponsored by the River Falls Public Library

December 8, 2015 – Holiday Gathering

January 9, 2016 (Saturday) – STEM Luncheon and Essay Awards

February 9, 2016 – **Mike McCabe** – author of *Blue Jeans in High Places – the Coming Makeover of American Politics*

March 9, 2016 – Human Trafficking – It is a Local Problem - Katie Ryan – Turning Point

April 12, 2016 – **Annual Meeting (Election and Budget)** Business Meeting 6:30 Program 7:30
Title IX – After 40 Years – How Are We Doing?

April 22 - 23, 2016 - **Wisconsin State AAUW Convention** in Madison, Wisconsin

May 10, 2016 – Officer Induction and Pot Luck – Location TBA



AAUW's MISSION STATEMENT

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

AAUW's VALUE PROMISE

By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance. AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

VISION STATEMENT

AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.