

2015-16 Branch Officers

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FALLS NOTES



AAUW-River Falls, WI

Branch Newsletter

SUMMER 2015



80th Anniversary Celebration and Installation of Officers

The **"TEA AND MEMORIES"** party was held Tuesday, May 12 to celebrate the 80th year anniversary of the River Falls Branch of AAUW at the River Falls Public Library. Members wore a vintage hat in honor of those who came before us.

See more pictures at the River Falls AAUW website:
<http://riverfalls-wi.aauw.net/>

PRESIDENT' S COLUMN

Jane Matthews, Branch President

Summer is passing much too fast, leading us to autumn and another year of AAUW activities and challenges. While there is much to be done, much has already been achieved. Elaine Baumann and Barbara Peterson have already developed program offerings for the first half of our year, and the membership committee has begun discussing possible fall membership events.

Our mission statement is very simple. "AAUW advances equality for women and girls through advocacy, education and research." While the goal is singular, many paths and many tools are necessary to pursue it. We need many skills, and many people with often divergent skills in order to move in the right direction. That is why we have so many areas

of focus. When one looks at all the programs defined by national AAUW it can almost become dizzying. But, they are all necessary. Equality cannot be achieved without a solid research foundation; campus leadership must be deliberately nurtured. It just doesn't fall out of the sky. Member leadership must also be given opportunities to develop. STEM Education is vital at this critical time in female history. More and more jobs require a solid science background, which opens doors to increased employment and academic opportunities. There are, unfortunately, many elements that work against women taking their places within the scientific community. While we are a non-partisan group, we must also remain aware of the various political and governmental developments that help or hinder our goals. Our support for those fighting for equality through the justice system is also vital. By combining our voices with others we increase our impact. Education is at the heart of our efforts, so this is another focus that we must support, and the world wide need for equality is advanced through our involvement with other women throughout the world.

I find all of these categories exciting and hope you will find an area that speaks to you and says, "Join in the effort." We always need good ideas about raising money, communicating our message, increasing our visibility, expanding our ranks, supporting voter participation, and disseminating our message.

As our plans for the coming year become more fixed, I hope you will take advantage of the opportunities that are offered to become involved in some of the many areas of expertise that will contribute to your own sense of achievement and also make our branch stronger and more able to advance our mission.

TIME TO START THINKING ABOUT THE BOOK SALE

We have already collected some books at various garages. Now we need a place to hold the book sale. The good news for River Falls is that there are very few empty spots on Main Street, the bad news is that we need a rent free spot to hold the sale. Any ideas? Jeanne and Suzie are continuing to hunt, but we might need to be creative this year. Things to think about:

1. Place to have sale
2. Volunteers to pick up books from grocery stores beginning in September
3. Help to sort and sell

NATIONAL AAUW CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

-From Ann Gustafson

Attending the national convention of AAUW is always a special and unique experience – this year's convention was no exception. The convention was held June 18-21 in San Diego, California with 1000 attendees present. It was the perfect setting for programs that included plenary sessions, workshops and daily dialogues which provided information on a wide variety of issues and opportunities to expand our skills and knowledge related to specific topics that are part of AAUW's programming.

Each day was filled with opportunities and sessions. To list them all would take a volume or two so I will describe some of the highlights:

- The opening session was speaker Catherine Lhamon, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the US Department of Education talking about Title IX enforcement
- Three workshops – Financial Fitness and You: Estate Planning 101; Programs, Passion, People: The Prescription for Recruitment Success; and Interest, Connection, and Sharing: The Recipe for Engagement. The second and third workshops focused on Branch Membership
- The panel (four women and one man) on What Does It Take To Make A Woman Leader, a discussion on women's paths to leadership and how they are treated once they become leaders

- The Legacy Circle and Pacesetters Luncheon with speakers that included three dynamic and impressive women who had received grants from AAUW that benefitted them in their work
- The closing session with Juanita Johnson-Bailey, the 2015 Eleanor Roosevelt Awardee who began her speech with a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt, “No one can make you feel inferior without your permission.” She was a truly dynamic speaker who told us we are all in a position to make change; start by asking questions; look beyond what exists
- Meeting new people plus having an opportunity to re-connect with friends made at prior conventions

The election concluded during the convention with Patricia Fae Ho re-elected as President and Alicia Hetman elected as Vice President. Ten members were elected as Directors including Wisconsin’s Pam Thiel and Rebecca Norlander who had been a speaker at the WI State AAUW Convention. The by-law proposal that would have dropped the degree requirement for membership was defeated.

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the convention. The next convention will be held in 2017 in Washington, DC—start planning now to attend.

-From Ruth Lee

What’s not to love about an opportunity to travel to San Diego, CA then meet National officers of AAUW, hear outstanding speakers and spend hours talking about our mission and issues with likeminded people! Being surrounded by Women as Leaders who walk the talk is empowering.

Catherine Lhamon Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, nominated by President Obama and was unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate. She is known as “Title IX Sheriff” and has a staff of over 600 around the country. There are new guidelines for Title IX available for Title IX coordinators in every public school K-12 including higher education. When the OCR work on a case, they stay and monitor until they are satisfied the issue has reached conclusion.

SOLVING THE EQUATION: The Variables for Women’s Success in Engineering and Computing. What can branches do to increase the number of women in these high-demand fields? AAUW supports women in areas of STEM, for suggestions on how each of us can do this, request a copy of the Executive Summary for *“SOLVING THE EQUATION”*. (Copies of the summary were available at the May meeting and will be available at the September meeting.)

Spending 90 minutes with Lisa Maatz, AAUW Vice President of Government Relations can be very stimulating and exhausting! One must expect great things when a third grade student circulates a petition requesting “doors be put up in the girl’s bathroom”, circulates it throughout the school and presents the signed document to her school principal. Budget appeared to be the problem, however a solution was found and the desired result was achieved. This was just the beginning of her advocacy work. Plan on Washington D.C. Convention in 2017 as she looks forward to AAUW members going to the Capitol. In smaller group conversations AAUW members of Wisconsin were praised for the vigilance that we carry on in Wisconsin.

“What Does It Take To Make A Woman Leader” was moderated by Marianne Schnall (author whose latest book is *“What Will It Take To Make A Woman President?”* conversations with twenty-nine women leaders). Participants in this discussion included Noorjahan Akbar, Kate Farrar, Lilly Ledbetter and Don McPherson (advocate and former NFL Player). Noorjahan Akbar is currently studying journalism and public affairs at American University in Washington, D.C. After graduating she hopes to return to Afghanistan to continue making

progress for women. As a leader in Afghanistan she has steered several human rights campaigns, provided activism literature and co-founded **Young Women for Change**, which focuses on gender equality and rights for women living in Afghanistan. Akbar was very involved in the dialogue commenting on advocating in the war zones of Afghanistan compared with other locations.

Did you participate in the “One Member One Vote”? The report during the business meeting indicated that over 12% of the membership voted. (This was up significantly from 2013.) The only proposed By Law change that didn’t pass was opening membership to anyone who supports our mission.

State Board Meeting

Sue Danielson, District 4 Coordinator

The State AAUW Board met on July 25th. The following are some of the important issues that were discussed and that I thought the branches would like to know about.

- *Branch officers need to be entered into the National Membership data base. (Or they can also be sent to connect@aauw.org.)
- *12% of the membership voted in national AAUW election (up from 5% last year).
- *The membership change proposed (to remove the educational requirement for membership) was defeated.
- *Next year’s state convention will be held in Madison on April 22 and 23. It is very important for each branch to be represented at the convention. Each nonprofit organization is required in Wisconsin to hold an annual meeting with representation of its membership.
- *Branches are encouraged to think about and propose resolutions.
- *Legislative Day will be held on October 15th in Madison. This will include morning sessions with time in the afternoon to lobby at the capital.
- *Check the state website and send any updates to Kate Hinnant at kate.hinnant@gmail.com.
- *Redistricting is still being discussed and worked on by Joyce Gregg, Leadership VP. She is talking to branches to see what works best for them. District meetings will be held this fall.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Chair Ann Gustafson

Summer seems to be going by all too quickly but the Membership Committee has begun planning for the 2015-16 year. The really good news is that there is a Membership Committee comprised of Lorraine Davis, Ruth Lee, and Valerie Malzacher and Ann Gustafson as Chair.

The committee met in June and began planning an event to be held in August. The focus of this event will be AAUW: its programming and activities. The goal will be to introduce AAUW to as many people as possible and to help them explore where they would fit as members. The criteria for membership continues to be for members to have an associate degree or higher.

In order for this event to be successful, the committee needs the help of *all* branch members. The primary way that each member can help is to provide the committee with names and contact information (e-mail and phone number) of individuals who might want to learn more about AAUW. The committee will then contact those individuals and invite them to the event.

Think of *at least two people* you know that you would like to introduce to AAUW. Send those names to any of the committee members:

Lorraine Davis – ldavis4762@aol.com

Ruth Lee - ruth.a.lee@icloud.com

Valerie Malzacher – valerie.i.malzacher@uwrf.edu

Ann Gustafson – agus_mbrshp@yahoo.com (the space between s and m is actually an underscore)

Any questions, contact Ann Gustafson at 715-425-2516.

Thanks for your help in building our branch and AAUW. It's going to be a good year.

PROGRAM NOTES

Barbara Peterson and Elaine Baumann, Co-Chairs

The schedule of meetings and programs can be found in the Calendar of Events at the end of this newsletter. The first half of the year has been confirmed. The last half of the year is still tentative.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Yolanda Dewar, Chair

On June 11, 2015 at 13:44 UTC, a Soyuz capsule containing astronauts Terry Virts and Samantha Cristoforetti, and cosmonaut Anton Shkaplerov, touched down in Kazakhstan, bringing them back to Earth from the International Space Station.

Cristoforetti seized the chance of being in space to do a lot of public outreach, including being in a Smarter Every Day video, giving a great tour of the space station's toilet, and capitalizing on her Italian nationality to tout the first espresso maker in space.

Problems with the Russian Soyuz rocket and capsules caused her return to Earth to be delayed; Because of that delay, she wound up being in space for 200 consecutive days.

That broke a couple of interesting records. For one, that's the longest uninterrupted spaceflight for a European Space Agency astronaut. Many different space agencies have been sending astronauts into space, and a duration record is a technological achievement to be proud of.

The other record she broke is for longest single spaceflight by a woman. She just edged out Sunita Williams, who was on ISS for 195 days.

No men allowed: publisher accepts novelist's 'year of women' challenge

Author Kamila Shamsie published "a provocation" in The Guardian this month: Let 2018, the centennial anniversary of women's suffrage in the UK, be a Year of *Publishing Women*.

Small press And Other Stories has answered author Kamila Shamsie's provocative call by revealing that just under 40% of books submitted to the Booker prize over the past five years were by women. They also pointed out that far more prize-winning novels have male than female protagonists, to the statistics showing that male authors and reviewers command more space than female.

Entrepreneurship Helps Delay Child Marriage in India, Empower Young Women

Impoverished girls in India who are at high risk of child marriage are gaining independence and generating income with the help of a Seattle-based nonprofit.

Landesa Rural Development Institute teaches girls in West Bengal about their land rights through the Security for Girls through Land Project. The initiative, launched in partnership with the state government's Department of Women and Child Development in 2010, also teaches girls how to use land to create their own assets by growing produce on micro-plots that the group secures for them. The produce the girls grow can then either be eaten by their own families or sold for money.

Furthermore, the girls learn practical, land-based livelihood skills and become aware of government resources that can help them become more independent and improve their long-term economic and social statuses. Already more than 40,000 girls in about 1,000 villages have taken part in the **Landesa program**,

Featured in a 2014 Sundance Film Festival short documentary titled "After My Garden Grows," the initiative's participants are not only more likely to delay marriage, but are also more likely to continue their studies, inherit land from their families or to have an asset, such as a savings account or recurring deposit, in their name, according to an evaluation report.

The key to the project's impact, according to a 2013 article on **Oprah.com**, is that it helps families see their daughters as contributors to their overall stability rather than burdens that need to be married off.

10,000 TOILETS TO INDIA -Huffington Post, July 20, 2015

For many women in poor, rural parts of the world, a lack of access to a private toilet is not just a matter of inconvenience; it also puts her at risk of diseases, sexual assault and ridicule. But in the poverty-stricken Bihar region of India, a unique partnership between non-governmental organizations and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has resulted in the construction of 10,000 new toilets allowing women to relieve themselves in a more secure and healthy way.

The Next UN Secretary-General: An Experienced Woman to Foster Global Food Security?

Food security and related humanitarian needs present the great unacknowledged challenges of the 21st century.

While the United States has historically been the largest contributor of food assistance in humanitarian disasters, no country, however powerful, can solve this problem on its own. The future of this initiative, and of humanitarian responses to food-related crises generally, should be on world leaders' minds in choosing a new UN Secretary-General to replace Ban Ki-moon when he steps down at the end of next year.

It would also be a big step forward if they chose a woman. The UN has never had a female Secretary-General. As the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food has said, gender equality "is the single most important determinant of food security." Appointing a woman would show that the UN means what it says about the importance of gender equality as an instrument of wider change. The role that women and girls play in alleviating poverty and building a safe and productive society cannot be understated.

Thankfully there are several qualified women candidates. One is Helen Clark, former Prime Minister of New-Zealand, now running the United Nations Development Program. She has worked closely with the World Food Program in making the eradication of hunger the top priority. She has also distinguished herself in her work at UNDP, leading swift responses to humanitarian crises and planning major long-term initiatives. Another serious candidate is Irina Bokova, former Bulgarian Foreign Minister and current head of UNESCO. She has been very active in using the organization's mandate to address issues of extreme poverty and food, water and energy security. And although she's an American, Catherine Bertini, who served as Under-Secretary-General for Management at the UN and as Executive Director of the World Food Program, would also be an excellent candidate.

These three women have great diplomatic and UN experience, have won the respect of U.S. policy makers for their work and would make excellent appointees. There may be other qualified candidates as well, but the time is ripe for a woman possessing the credentials, leadership and management skills to head the United Nations and ensure that food security remains a top priority for the UN and the international community.

Nobel Winner Malala Opens School for Syrian Refugee Girls

Reuters Posted: 07/12/2015 By Sylvia Westall

BEKAA VALLEY, Lebanon, July 12 (Reuters) - Malala Yousafzai, the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, celebrated her 18th birthday in Lebanon on Sunday by opening a school for Syrian refugee girls and called on world leaders to invest in "books not bullets."

The Malala Fund, a non-profit organization that supports local education projects, paid for the school in the Bekaa Valley, close to the Syrian border. It can welcome up to 200 girls aged 14 to 18.

"Today on my first day as an adult, on behalf of the world's children, I demand of leaders we must invest in books instead of bullets," Malala said in a speech.

FINANCE REPORT

Suzanne Hagen, Finance Chair

AAUW-River Falls Finance Report

July 20, 2015

Checking balance 6/20/2015	\$ 1524.79
Receipts:	
Membership dues	73.00
<i>Total receipts (6/20-7/20)</i>	73.00
Disbursements:	
AAUW National dues	49.00
AAUW State dues	13.00
National Travel – A. Gustafson	475.00
National Travel – R. Lee	475.00

Total disbursements (6/20-7/20)	1012.00
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Balances 7/20/2015

Checking: 585.79
 Savings: 1656.31
 \$ 2242.10

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 NCCSWL 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.

BRANCH MEETING MINUTES

AAUW Board Meeting - July 24, 2015 - River Falls Public Library

Meeting was called to order 1:05 p.m.

The board discussed a request for time at the September meeting from a group who is promoting a rail service between the Twin Cities and Milwaukee. The board decided to announce the group's September 23rd meeting and provide handouts rather than have an official presentation from the group.

Sue Halseth is continuing on the Funds Committee. Elise Nooney is currently the chair of Public Policy and there is no co-chair. Jane will call Elisa to see if she needs help and wants a co-chair. Barb is now serving on the Program Committee.

The item to discuss possible ways to incorporate AAUW research on a local level was tabled as Ann Gustafson was not present.

Ruth Lee presented membership ideas for the fall and kick off events at University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF). Ruth will be holding a meeting for prospective members at her house on August 13th from 5pm to 7pm. The target is younger members and recent retirees. She is also looking at virtual memberships.

AAUW will have a table at City Sampler on September 2nd and Just Local on September 3rd. Both of these events are held on UWRF's campus. This year UWRF will be focusing on Mexico for their Year of... program.

Free memberships were given to Rellen Hardtke and Gretta Stark.

It was suggested that there be a voter registration table and handouts at the book sale in October.

Suzie and Jeannie are working on finding a location for the book sale.

Elaine Baumann provided a draft program for 2015/2016 (see below). Ideas are needed for the February, March, and April meetings. The board discussed expanding the January activities beyond the STEM essay, luncheon, and meeting.

Suzanne Hagen reported that the treasury needs to be increased. Fund raising events planned for this coming year include the annual book sale in October, the Moose Lodge brunch in November, and the silent auction in December. So far there have been 33 memberships renewed this year.

Ruth Lee spoke about her experiences at the National AAUW Convention in San Diego. **The next national convention will be held in Washington DC from June 14-17, 2017.** The national public policy group is already planning on organizing trips to the Capitol for people to meet with their Representatives and Senators.

The meeting adjourned 2:18 p.m.

Date	Program 7:30 p.m.	Where	Notes
September	NCCWSL Potluck Supper	(Ezekial Lutheran Church?)	
October 13	Jamie Benson School Finance Update	Library	Possibly have this taped for Community TV
November 10	Women Veterans Documentary based on <i>Sisterhood of War</i> with Author Kim Heikkela and Mary Beth Crowley	River Falls Public Library (Co-sponsor)	RFPL will take care of publicity. Mary Beth Crowley was one featured in a book, <i>Sisterhood of War</i> , about nurses serving in Vietnam. The author, Kim Heikkela, lives in the Twin Cities and will come to speak as well.
December 8	Christmas Party Auction		
January 9 – Saturday To be determined	STEM		Women in Information Technology Speaker
February 9 <i>Black History Month</i> To be determined			Yolanda suggested owner of The Roost
March 8 <i>Women's History Month</i> To be determined			Potential Speaker – Mike McCabe, national political columnist and author of <i>Blue Jeans in High Places</i>
April 12 <i>Equal Pay Month</i> To be determined			
May 10 <i>Officer Induction</i>			

2015-16 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 8 – NCCWSL, Potluck Supper – Ezekiel Church, 202 S. 2nd Street, River Falls. Meetings starts at 6:30 p.m. and program starts at 7:30 p.m.

October 13 – Jamie Benson will talk about School Finance Update – River Falls Public Library. Business meeting at 6:30 p.m. and Program starts at 7:30 p.m.

November 10 – Women's Veterans Documentary based on Sisterhood of War with Author Kim Heikkela and Mary Beth Crowley – co-sponsored by the River Falls Public Library. Meeting at River Falls Public Library. Business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. Program starts at 7:30 p.m. Mary Beth Crowley was one featured in a book, sisterhood of War, about nurses serving in Veitnam. The author, Kim Heikkela, lives in the Twin Cities.

December 8 – Holiday Event and Auction at Suzanne Hagen's House (2464 Golf View Dr.) with assistance from Ann and Bob Gustofson.

January 9 (Saturday) – Women in Information Technology speak (STEM)

February 9 – Black History Month

March 8 – Women's History Month

April 12 – Equal Pay Month – Annual meeting and Election of Officers. Business meeting at 6:30 p.m. and Program at 7:30 p.m.

April ?? – Equal Pay Day

April 22-23 - **WISCONSIN STATE AAUW CONVENTION** in Madison.

May 10 – Officer Induction

JUNE 14-17, 2017 - **AAUW NATIONAL CONVENTION** in Washington D.C.

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.