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# FALLS NOTES



AAUW-River Falls, WI

## Branch Newsletter

[aauwrf@gmail.com](mailto:aauwrf@gmail.com)

September 2019

**Next regular meeting will be October 8 in the River Falls Public Library, lower level. Business meeting at 6:30 and film starts at 7 p.m.**

### Film Showing: *Iron-Jawed Angels*

The movie is a fresh and contemporary look at a pivotal event in American history, telling the true story of how a pair of defiant and brilliant young activists took the women's suffrage movement by storm, putting their lives at risk to help American women win the right to vote.

It is co-sponsored by River Falls AAUW in celebration of 100 years since the passing of the 19th Amendment.

**Free popcorn!**  
**PLEASE BRING A FRIEND**

## PRESIDENT' S COLUMN

Suzanne Hagen, Branch President

We had an inspiring start to our 2019-20 program year at our Sept. 10 meeting. UWRF student Faith Velez, whom we sponsored to attend AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), spoke about her conference experiences. She described leadership insights gained and goals she now has for serving and empowering UWRF women as well as underrepresented students. Listening to her, I think we all felt very optimistic about the positive change committed leaders can make – for individuals and institutions! Faith's NCCWSL experience should energize us as we prepare for our biggest yearly fund raiser, the fall **Book Sale** (details given later in newsletter). All Book Sale proceeds support our scholarships: funding the costs for a UWRF student to attend NCCWSL's annual Washington, D.C. conference and providing a \$500 scholarship annually to a woman student at Chippewa Valley Technical College here in River Falls. Please donate books, spread the word, and volunteer for a variety of sale tasks. (A work sign-up sheet will be circulated again at our Oct. 8 meeting.) Many thanks to Lorraine Davis, Jane Matthews, Eliz-

abeth Williams and Jeanne Zirbel for their work as sale coordinators this year!

Finally, put the October 8 meeting on your calendar (6:30 p.m. business meeting; 7:00 p.m. program at the RF Library). Bring some friends (and potential new members ☺) to our showing of the film ***Iron Jawed Angels***. This is an excellent and inspiring retelling of American women's struggle to gain the vote 100 years ago.

With appreciation for your commitment to AAUW—

**NEW FACEBOOK PAGE** - Kendra Morgan is the administrator for our AAUW branch Facebook Page. Our new page has the URL: <https://www.facebook.com/AAUW.RiverFalls> . Please **"like it."** by clicking at the top left side under the title. Also, if you have any events or information which are relevant, please send your postings to [moke1202@outlook.com](mailto:moke1202@outlook.com). Thank you, Kendra, for assuming this responsibility.

**Also**, we continue to work on making our Facebook page effective and for that we need everyone's support. If you have things to share, contact Kendra Morgan [moke1202@outlook.com](mailto:moke1202@outlook.com)

## **RIVER FALLS BRANCH MEETING MINUTES**

Gretchen Toman, Secretary

AAUW MEETING MINUTES - September 10, 2019

6:40 p.m. Suzanne Hagen welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order

The approval of the secretary's report from the May 2019 meeting will wait until October.

Treasurer's report will wait until later as well; Suzanne had asked Tina to update the figures and to break them up into "encumbered" or "travel".

### **President's Issue Highlights**

The Wisconsin State Convention last April – we had our tri-fold poster displayed there.

The next one is April 17-18, 2020 in LaCrosse; District planning will take place Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, Suzanne will attend.

Badger Briefs are now online with photos and updates of activities.

The State AAUW President, Lynn Hildebrand is putting forth a strategic plan that strengthens our core values with "Economic Security for Women" via the Work Smart Initiative, an online program to help women become better negotiators. This is thanks to a generous grant from the Coca-Cola Foundation, who hope to see 100,000 women take the free course.

Suzanne will demonstrate how to enroll at our next meeting.

We continue our communication and outreach work with UWRF and some Rotary contacts.

Please take a look at last year's directory to see if any changes are necessary to your contact information. Send corrections to Suzanne Hagen.

Kendra will continue to take AAUW t-shirt orders. They are navy blue with the AAUW logo on the front. Cost is \$10.00; specify your size preference.

If you have not paid your dues, please do so soon. \$83.00 online or to Tina Howe.

On-going initiatives:

If you have anything to share on our Facebook page, let Kendra know.

The book sale finally has a home at 222 N. Main Street (the old food pantry), but we have to wait until they move out, Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>. Hang on to your books until we find an easy transfer method, so we don't have to move them all twice. If you have suggestions as to where to store them until the sale, let Lorraine or Jane know. Information on the sale will be in the Star Observer (former RF Journal) and posters are available for you to display in public places.

Dates are Thurs – Sat. Oct. 24-26 and Oct 31 – Nov. 2. We need volunteers to help sort before the sale and to work 3 hour shifts during the sale, starting at 10:00 a.m. each day.

As usual, NO textbooks, encyclopedias or Reader's Digest Condensed books.

Programming – the film "Iron Jawed Women" will be shown at the RF Public Library on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m., following our regular meeting at 6:30.

AAUW Public Policy Day is Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> in Madison (9:00-3:00 at the Tech College). An application form was in the last newsletter if you are interested in attending. Barb Peterson is driving there.

The Ethel Johnson Memorial Literacy Award application period is still open until Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>. The award is not just for children, but to promote literacy in all ages in Pierce & St. Croix counties. The maximum award is \$400.

Moose Brunch is Sunday Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. Kay Montgomery still needs a few volunteers to help. The shifts are two hours, 9:00-11:00 a.m. or 11:00 -1:00 p.m.

Hudson's The Phipps Center is hosting a free event, Civil Discourse, Tuesday Sept 24<sup>th</sup> 7:00-8:30 p.m. A panel of knowledgeable speakers will discuss how to approach difficult topics in conversation.

UWRF has set the date for Girls In Science: Sat. April 18<sup>th</sup>. Yes, it's also the State Convention.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15, to turn it over to Faith Velez, our NCCWSL scholarship recipient for 2019, for her presentation.

**May 14, 2019 River Falls Branch of AAUW Minutes - submitted respectfully by co-secretary Maureen Olle-LaJoie.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:19pm.

Lorraine Davis thanked Suzanne and Waldo Hagen for hosting the meeting. Waldo also conducted an excellent wine tasting prior to the meeting.

Guests Faith Velery, the 2019 NCWSSL Scholarship recipient; Julie Huebel, Pierce County Historical Association; Danielle Roberts, certified life coach; and Charlotte snow, Joanne's mother-in-law were introduced.

The April minutes were approved as published in the newsletter.

The finance report was approved as published in the newsletter.

Suzanne Hagen and Ann Gustafson attended the state convention. There was a worthwhile array of speakers. They shared a new AAUW publication on student debt. District Representative Deb Thiel has several thoughts on initiatives in our district. The next state convention will be the third weekend in April in La Crosse. They are getting together a convention planning committee.

Lorraine discussed the WORK SMART initiative and AAUW's reorganization. AAUW has a balanced budget for the first time. 18 personnel were dropped but the national office still won't have a lot of money. They will still address social issues and legal advocacy but will need our support.

Jeanne Johnson shared a letter from Pauline Staberg in response to an article in the River Falls Journal about the Ethel Johnson Memorial Fund. Pauline shared the impact that Ethel had in her life and her support for the fund. This letter will be put in the newsletter and submitted to the archives. It was suggested that we keep track of donations to the fund in the newsletter.

Treasurer Tina Kelly reminded us renew our membership dues. Tina presented a proposed budget for next year. Elaine Baumann moved to adopt the budget and Kay Montgomery seconded. The proposed budget passed.

Suzie Danielson moved and Elaine Baumann seconded to approve \$100 to be used for the community celebration of the 100 year anniversary of Wisconsin's ratification of the suffrage amendment. The motion was approved.

Lorraine has been working with the Julie from the Pierce County Historical Association, UWRF Library and Archives, the Tuesday Club, and the River Falls Public Library. On June 19<sup>th</sup> Betty Bergland, emeritus History Professor from UWRF, will be speaking at River Falls Public Library. There will be a display at Freeman Drugs. Heather Williams at Fox Den will also do a display. It was suggested that we contact Michelle Maher at the River Falls Theater about a showing of Iron Angels.

At the City Council on Tuesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, Mayor Dan Toland will present a proclamation honoring the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wisconsin ratifying the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the United States Constitution, granting national suffrage to women. All members are encouraged to attend this 6:30pm meeting.

Sheets were circulation with opportunities for members to note what they are interested in doing for AAUW next year. Suzanne will expand on areas for involvement in the summer newsletter.

Please send ideas for program theme and speakers to Suzie Danielson.

Kendra Morgan is taking AAUW t-shirt orders.

Kaye Montgomery informed the membership that Ann Anderson died on May 13<sup>th</sup>. The funeral will be on May 17<sup>th</sup> at Hope Lutheran Church. Details will be sent out via e-mail to the membership.

Wanda Brown and Phyllis Goldin announced an art sale at their house June 2 from noon to 4pm. Flyers were distributed.

Lorraine thanked members for their contributions to our branch and AAUW this past year. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm and followed by the installation of officers: President-Suzanne Hagen, Vice President of Programming-Suzie Danielson, Vice President of Membership-Kendra Morgan, Treasurer-Tina Kelly, and Secretary-Gretchen Toman.

## **MEMBERSHIP NOTES – Kendra Morgan, Vice-President Membership**

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2019-20**

Thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership for the coming year. If you have not renewed as yet, we hope you will continue to support our work on behalf of women and girls. Our 2019-20 program plans in this newsletter show the relevance, value, energy, and creativity of our work together!

Please renew your membership at or before our September 10 meeting to keep our branch strong and vibrant.

Membership dues are:

\$59.00 – national dues (\$56 of which are tax deductible)

\$13.00 – state dues

\$11.00 – branch dues

**\$83.00 - Total**

If you are a renewing Life Member and as such do not pay national dues, your dues total is \$24.00.

You may renew on line at [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) or by check, payable to AAUW-RF and mailed to:

Tina Kelly  
W9908 State Rd 35  
Hager City, WI 54014-8343

## FINANCE REPORT

Tina Kelly, Finance Chair

### AAUW-River Falls Finance Report - August 27, 2019 – September 20, 2019

Checking balance 8/27/19	\$ 5723.54
Receipts August Dues Branch Dues from AAUW (From online renewals)	\$83 44
<i>Total receipts ( 8/27/19 – 9/20/19)</i>	\$127
Disbursements AAUW Renewal Fees	\$144
<i>Total disbursements ( 8/27/2019 – 9/20/19)</i>	\$144

#### Balances 9/20/2019

Checking: \$5706.54  
Savings: 3885.08  
Total \$9591.62

Notes:

Savings total includes \$ 2225 for Ethel Johnson Memorial Fund

## BOOK SALE INFORMATION

Lorraine Davis

MEMBERS: Remind friends and family that we will be having our annual book sale on **October 24 from 10 to 8, October 25 from 10 to 7, October 26 from 10 to 4, October 31 from 10 to 7, November 1 from 10 to 7 and November 2 from 10 to 4** at the former community food pantry, 222 North Main Street next to Bo Jons.

Donation containers have been placed at Dick's Market, Family Fresh Market in River Falls and County Market in Hudson. We will be needing people to pick up the books at these sites in October.

Nothing is easy!!! The sale has been pushed back several weeks from previous years because the site probably will not be available until October 19<sup>th</sup>. This means we will need a lot of help getting the site ready in a short period of time. We have to be flexible!

Sign-up sheets will be distributed on line or available at the October meeting. Think about when you can donate some time for the book sort and actual sale. Also, we will need tables for the books so if you have some or have connections, let the committee members know. Likewise, if you know of anyone who has a collection, we will arrange to pick it up. Encourage your "Little Library" friends to stock up.

Posters were sent to you....use them to promote our effort.

The success of the book sale and thus our scholarship initiative is dependent on you. As in past years, the support of the members will make it happen.

**Book Sale Committee:** Jane Matthews, Jeanne Zirbel, Elizabeth Williamson and Lorraine Davis

## PROGRAMS

Sue Danielson, VP Program Chair

Many of our Branch members contribute a great deal to our community. If you know of any members who have been recognized for their achievements, let [Gretchen Toman](mailto:gretchentoman@gmail.com) (gretchentoman@gmail.com), our secretary, know and she will send a letter of congratulations on behalf of AAUW. Let's celebrate one another.

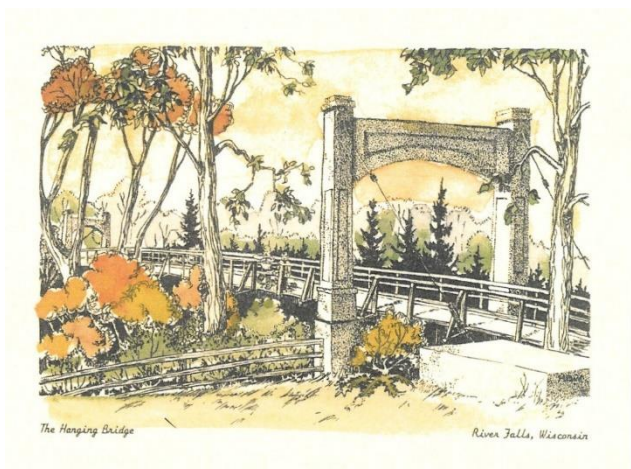
## CARDS FOR SALE

We have reissued notecards recreating the pen and ink drawings of past member, Helen B. Wyman.

The cards show four views of River Falls' bridges and are packaged in groups of eight.

**They are available from Suzanne Hagen for \$10.00.**

**A great gift!!!! A great support for AAUW efforts!!!!**





## **ETHEL JOHNSON MEMORIAL**

Submitted by Jean Johnson, Committee Chair of **The Ethel Johnson Memorial Fund**

The Ethel Johnson Memorial honors a woman dedicated to learning. AAUW wishes to remember Ethel for her many roles of service to our organization and the community. Her life is an example of what education and a spirit of giving can inspire in all of us. The fund will be used for grants that promote literacy, such as books for the food shelf or the public school back pack program. By sustaining this memorial, AAUW continues the values by which Ethel lived as a teacher, mentor, traveler, and friend.

Please send your monetary support to Tina Kelly, W9908 State Rd 35. Hager City WI 54014 or donate at our monthly AAUW meetings.

In Falcon daily today, there was a mention about a blog that Bill Rubin had written -- about Ethel Johnson. Thought you might be interested.

<https://stcroixedc.com/r-e-a-d-ethel-johnsons-legacy/>



## Ethel Johnson Memorial Grant

Over the summer, the process and procedure for the Ethel Johnson Literacy Grant has been developed. It will be publicized in the media and with interested groups. Please read through it and then share it with those you know who might want to apply.



### Ethel Johnson Literacy Grant Funding for projects that enhance reading

AAUW member Ethel Johnson was raised in rural Wisconsin and was committed to education throughout her life. She began college in the depression years and dedicated her life to the teaching profession, retiring from Hudson Schools at the age of 70. The lives she touched during this time are a testament to her values, foremost a love of reading backed by patience and skill.

She volunteered whenever she could and a favorite was AAUW, an organization whose goals of equity Ethel embodied. The River Falls AAUW branch and friends of Ethel have established this fund to honor her memory.

Thank you to all the individual donors who make this grant possible and **thank you, in advance, for submitting the application to support reading.**

#### APPLICATION GUIDE

1. The grant's purpose is to enhance reading skills of residents of Pierce and St. Croix Counties. The recipient must be able to impact on individuals who reside in one of those counties.
2. Applications will be accepted September 15 through October 25 and will be awarded by November 10. Applications will be accepted in paper or electronic form (available at <https://riverfalls-wi.aauw.net>). Applications will be reviewed by a panel of AAUW members and awarded on merit of objectives and population served.
3. Grant recipient will also receive an evaluation form to be completed and returned within 20 days of completing the project.
4. Maximum grant amount is \$400.00 per application.

#### Grant Application

Person or Group Applying:

Contact Information:

Address  
Phone  
Email

Amount Requested:

Use of grant money and description of project (objective and process):  
Location of the project:  
Date for use (start and finish):  
Number and age of readers:

Send to:

Jean Johnson ([jeanaajohnson@gmail.com](mailto:jeanaajohnson@gmail.com))  
N8048 1094th St  
River Falls, WI 54022



**Attention AAUW Members:** There is still time to place your order for the navy blue AAUW t-shirts. They are regular cotton t-shirts with the white AAUW logo printed on the front (see photo). The shirt is optional but will be used to increase awareness at our tableing and volunteer events. The cost per shirt is \$10 which can be paid by cash/check to Kendra before or at pick-up.

Please contact Kendra Morgan at 715-450-6870 or [moke1202@outlook.com](mailto:moke1202@outlook.com) with your size by **Thursday, August 15th**. The shirts will be available for pick-up at our September meeting.

## POLITICAL POLICY

Barb Peterson, Chair  
Public Policy

Representations of girls in the media continue to be a problem. Check out this interesting [article](#) on a teen magazine cover. It points out the challenges we still face in media messages to young women.

Here's a video about a female trailblazer, Cokie Roberts, that many members will enjoy:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/linda-wertheimer-and-nina-totenberg-on-friend-and-colleague-cokie-roberts?fbclid=IwAR1NspmNigU0dvy7wugJaewn15McIT7usXhRY43FvtRCS4j9RjMyYuKmxGY>

and as a spokesperson for working women she wrote several books

- *Capital Dames: The Civil War and the Women of Washington, 1848-1868*. HarperCollins. April 14, 2015. [ISBN 978-0-06-200276-1](#).. Stories about the formidable women of Washington, DC during the Civil War.
- *We Are Our Mothers' Daughters: Revised and Expanded Edition*. HarperCollins. 1998. [ISBN 978-0-06-187235-8](#)., essays
- *Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation*. HarperCollins. April 13, 2004. [ISBN 978-0-06-009025-8](#). (2004). The book explores the lives of the women behind the men that wrote the [Constitution of the United States](#) and the [Declaration of Independence](#).
- *Ladies of Liberty*. HarperCollins. October 13, 2009. [ISBN 978-0-06-173721-3](#). continues the story of early America's influential women who shaped the US during its early stages, chronicling their public roles and private responsibilities.<sup>[33]</sup>
- *Cokie Roberts; Steven V. Roberts (April 7, 2009). From This Day Forward*. HarperCollins. [ISBN 978-0-06-186752-1](#).
- *Cokie Roberts; Steven V. Roberts (March 8, 2011). Our Haggadah: Uniting Traditions for Interfaith Families*. HarperCollins. [ISBN 978-0-06-207465-2](#).

## INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Yolanda Dewar, Chair

### — Graduate Women International News —

#### **100 years of International Federation of University Women and Graduate Women International 1919-2019**

In 1918, during the visit of a British universities mission to the United States, Dean Virginia Gildersleeve of Barnard College, USA, met Professor Caroline Spurgeon of the University of London, and Rose Sidgwick of the University of Birmingham, England. They discussed the need for a worldwide organization uniting university women as one way of preventing another catastrophe such as WW1. United globally, graduate women could work for understanding, friendship and foster peace.

This link below will guide you through the first 100 years of Inspiring a Vision for the International Federation of University Women, now Graduate Women International.

<https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019-IFUW-Pioneers-19.08.2019.pdf>

We encourage you to take a thorough look at this fascinating Cavalcade of Women.

<https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019-IFUW-Pioneers-19.08.2019.pdf>

#### **GWI addresses inequality in trade opportunities for women through its written statement to the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (HRC42)**

On the occasion of the HRC42, GWI is raising awareness through its written statement about the importance of women participating in trade as a means to improve their financial situation. In doing so, GWI voices support of the World Trade Organization Declaration on Gender and Trade on Women's Economic Empowerment, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Trade and Gender Toolbox and the International Trade Centre (ICT) SheTrades programme. GWI affiliates in 54 countries stand ready to work with these initiatives and organisations to advance the status of women through trade and to demonstrate how women positively complement trade agreements, regionally and internationally.

GWI appreciates the complexity of addressing women's inequality in value chain and trade opportunities yet underscores that trade and gender are two cornerstones for job creation and economic growth. Additionally, the organisation recognises that improving the economic empowerment of women through trade depends on extensive strategic partner networks. To this end, GWI urges Member States and United Nations (UN) agencies to collaborate with international non-government organisations. These organisations offer access to vast globalized networks and local partners who understand regional nuances and who can tailor gender responsive trade partnership strategies from community to community. Thereby, increasing women's confidence to enter the trade markets and probabilities for future success. **The full GWI HRC42**

written statement can be read below:

<https://graduatewomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Graduate-Women-International-HRC42-Women-and-Trade.pdf>

### **Plan International USA “I am a Girl Movement”**

When given the chance, girls can change the world.

We know that when a girl realizes her rights, she can be an agent of change, both for herself and for her community and country.

In 2012, Plan launched its *Because I am a Girl* campaign with the aim of reaching 4 million girls over four years. *Because I am a Girl* is a broad community-based strategy aimed at ensuring that marginalized girls have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Their multi-sectorial programs enabled marginalized girls in Burkina Faso, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sierra Leone, and Vietnam to realize their own power as they transitioned to adulthood. Programs were designed in partnership with the girls, as well as the families, communities, and institutions around them, to address critical gaps in meeting needs and fulfilling rights. This report outlines the progress that has been made with your support to create a cycle of opportunity for millions of girls—and lays the foundation for the ongoing work of Because I am a Girl.

Because I am a Girl is a movement driven by Plan International to transform power relations so girls everywhere can **learn, lead, decide, and thrive**.

Our extensive research shows that girls continue to be the single most excluded group in the world. They face discrimination and abuse simply for being young and female.

Girls are often denied their right to equal opportunity and engagement in society. Many are unable to attend school or make important decisions about their own futures and bodies, and they are far too often the victims of gender-based violence.

We believe that gender equality is central to achieving long-term change. We have a vision of a world that values girls, promotes their rights, and ends injustice.

### **OUR PRIORITIES:**

#### **LEARN**

All girls have the right to quality, safe education and access to lifelong learning. An educated girl is more likely to marry later and have fewer, healthier children. She has a better chance of staying healthy herself.

#### **LEAD**

All girls and young women have the right to take part fully in the political life of their community and country. We'll support and empower young female leaders to drive social, economic, and political change.

#### **DECIDE**

All girls have a right to decide if and when to marry or start a family. Ensuring girls are able to make decisions about their futures is fundamental to achieving gender equality.

#### **THRIVE**

Girls have a right to reach their full potential and achieve their personal ambitions. To do this, they must be able to live free from violence and discrimination and have equal economic opportunities.

## **Current Projects**

### **BURKINA FASO: PROMOTING EQUALITY AND SAFETY IN SCHOOLS**

By supporting Plan International USA's Promoting Equality and Safety in School project in Burkina Faso, you will help us work at the individual, school, and community levels to address deeply-ingrained beliefs and practices that determine how girls can and should be treated.

### **EL SALVADOR: CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE**

Champions of Change, supported by Plan International USA, aims to alleviate gender inequality and violence in El Salvador by helping boys and men examine and change sexist behaviors in their families and communities to support girls and champion their rights.

### **INDONESIA: BETTER LIFE OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

BLOOM, a successful 20-year-old program model supported by Plan International, aims to provide life skills, health services, and social networks to young women in Indonesia.

### **NEPAL: ACTION AGAINST CHILD TRAFFICKING**

Plan International USA's Action against Child Trafficking project targets high-risk, heavy-transit areas between Nepal and India, aiming to create and strengthen community protection groups, as well as promote government leadership and accountability.

### **EGYPT: SAFER CITIES FOR GIRLS**

The Safer Cities for Girls project, supported by Plan International USA and partners, has an overarching goal of building safe, accountable, and inclusive cities with and for adolescent girls.

### **THE BECAUSE I AM A GIRL FUND**

By investing in a girl and her future, we know for a fact that she can lift herself out of poverty, altering the economic condition of her family, her community, and ultimately her country. How do we know? Decades of experience and in-depth research have proven it. Yet even today, a girl in the developing world still faces overwhelming odds from the day she's born.

When you make a donation to one of Plan's many programs, you'll create real and lasting changes in the lives of children and communities in need.

*If you would prefer to send a check instead of using a credit card, please make payable to Plan International USA and mail to Donor Finance, 155 Plan Way, Warwick, RI 02886.*

### **Moving Beyond 20 Years of 'One in Three'**

**Mary Ellsberg, Contributor**, Founding Director, GW Global Women's Institute

You may have heard the World Health Organization's harrowing statistic: one in three women around the world will be beaten or raped during her lifetime, most often by someone she knows — either an intimate partner or family member. One might think it would be relatively easy to gather the data underlying this tragic statistic. In reality, it has taken almost 20 years since the landmark 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing to demonstrate the epidemic proportions of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and the challenges that remain to achieve gender equality worldwide.

Coming out of Beijing 20 years ago, it was clear that there was a desperate need for data that could shock the consciences of societies and move them to act. In this sense, Beijing was the root of the one-in-three statistic: It was the moment that galvanized committed researchers and activists — as well as thousands of courageous women — to take action. Yet it took years to collect the data, because we had to start conversations with women in communities where violence against them is too often the norm and shrouded in shame and secrecy.

I found this out firsthand when I began working with a team of dedicated researchers and activists in Nicaragua in the early 1990s to study the prevalence of violence against women and girls. In Nicaragua, as in many places in the world, most women who experienced domestic violence or rape didn't tell anyone. Domestic violence was seen as a private family matter, and violence was rarely reported to the police. The few women who did seek help were often treated with scorn. They were told to go home and learn how to be a good wife. As a result, most Nicaraguans assumed that rape and domestic violence were fairly rare in Nicaragua. Politicians told victims and advocates that without hard numbers showing that domestic violence was a real problem, no party would ever support better laws or programs.

We interviewed hundreds of women about their experiences with violence. For most of the women, it was the first time they had ever told anyone about the violence they had suffered and it was often a very emotional experience. In the end, we found that 52 percent of women surveyed had been beaten or raped by an intimate partner in their lives and one in four women had been beaten in the last year alone. This was vastly more cases than had been reported by the police or health services. Only 3,000 cases of domestic violence had been reported to the police the year before, whereas, according to our numbers, almost 250,000 women had actually experienced domestic violence.

The results caused a huge wave of indignation throughout the country. Our findings were reproduced in petitions in the newspapers and we collected more than 16,000 signatures to present to the National Assembly calling on them to pass a domestic violence bill. In October 1996, the domestic violence bill passed unanimously in Nicaragua.

At the same time, researchers and activists were collecting similar data in other countries. To date, more than 82 countries have carried out similar studies, and this is how we can now say — with scientific precision — that one in three women around the world have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes. We also know much more about the main causes of violence. Simply put, what drives these numbers is the widespread belief that women are inferior to men, and they deserve to be beaten when they “misbehave.”

As a direct result of these numbers and the hard work of the women's movement, 125 countries criminalize domestic violence today and a few countries have implemented programs that have reduced VAWG. For example, since the passage and implementation of the Violence against Women Act in 1994, the rate of

intimate partner violence in the United States has decreased by 53 percent and intimate partner homicides have decreased by 26 percent.

Although a number of countries have made progress toward criminalizing VAWG, many existing laws and programs are not effective. With the passage of the domestic violence bill in Nicaragua in 1996, our initial work demonstrated that the academic community can influence the passage of laws to protect women, but the statistics reveal that isn't always enough. Moving forward, our research focus needs to shift from studies of prevalence to understanding what works to prevent and respond to VAWG in order to reduce this public health crisis worldwide. We already know from emerging studies that changing social norms about gender and the acceptability of violence is a crucial part of the solution.

Despite the pernicious endurance of the one-in-three statistic, we know there are ways to prevent VAWG and we can see a path forward. I remain hopeful that, with the support of governments and communities worldwide, what began with Beijing can eventually lead to the end of violence against women everywhere.

*Mary Ellsberg is the director of the Global Women's Institute at the George Washington University.*

### **Deputy Secretary of State Sullivan Meeting with Argentine Foreign Minister Faurie**

On September 5, Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan met with Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Faurie in the province of Jujuy, Argentina. He was joined by Advisor to the President Ivanka Trump, USAID Administrator Mark Green, OPIC (**Overseas Private Investment Corporation**) Acting President David Bohigian, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Julie Chung, and United States Ambassador to Argentina Edward Prado. During the meeting, both the Deputy Secretary and Advisor Trump underscored our shared interest in support for women's empowerment and small business promotion, which are essential for sustainable growth, prosperity, and economic security in both the Americas and globally.

Foreign Minister Faurie welcomed the OPIC announcement that its Board of Directors has voted to approve \$400 million in financing to rehabilitate and expand the Corredor C Toll Road, an essential trade route for Argentina's economy.

The Deputy Secretary affirmed the United States' tangible commitments to the bilateral U.S.-Argentina relationship and recognized the Government of Argentina's efforts in strengthening that partnership. He also applauded the government's efforts in strengthening good government and market-oriented economic practices in Argentina. He thanked Argentina for taking a leadership role supporting the people of Venezuela.



## River Falls Branch: 2019-20 CALENDAR OF EVENTS – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Monthly meetings are usually the second Tuesday of each month September to May with business meetings at 6:30 and programs open to the public at 7:00 at the River Falls Public Library. Exceptions are noted.

**September 6** – City Sampler at UWRF campus, 11-1 p.m. AAUW table on mall will share information.

**September 10** - **Pot Luck Dinner** and business meeting **6:30, 7:00** program presentation National Conference for College Women Student Leaders speaker – UWRF student Faith Velez, COMMUNITY ROOM at the First National Bank, 104 E Locust Street

**Early September** – Book donation barrels placed in Family Fresh, Dick's Grocery store and County Market in Hudson.

**October 8** – Business meeting: 6:30, 7:00 - Iron Jawed Angels film co-sponsored w/library. River Falls Public Library

Book Sale dates – two successive weekends in October (possibly Oct. 11-13 and Oct. 17-19)

**November 10** – Sunday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. River Falls Moose Lodge Breakfast Fund raiser

**November 12** - Business meeting 6:30 p.m., Program at 7:00 p.m. - Civil Conversations – speakers Krista Cleary and Grace Coggio, First National Bank Community Room

**December 10** – Holiday gathering at 6:30 p.m. at Suzanne Hagen's House, 2464 Golf View Dr., Brief business meeting and auction (**Please bring auction item and appetizer or cookies to share.**)

**January 18, 2020** (Saturday ) – Business Meeting at 1:00 p.m. Program at 1:30 - Women in STEM – guest speaker (TBD), Presentation of Women in Science essay awards, River Falls Public Library

**February 11** - RF Food Shelf update and tour, Time and Location TBD

**March 10** – Business meeting at 6:30 p.m. Program at 7:00 p.m. – Student Debt: Update and Implications for Students, Parents and Grandparents – Panel discussion. Role Model for Equity Award presented River Falls Public Library

**March 31** - Equal Pay Day

**April 14** – Business (Annual) Meeting at 6:30 p.m. (Election of officers for 2020-2021) Program at 7:00 p.m. – Economic Security for Women – Speaker: Kendra Morgan, Financial Advisor, Edward Jones.  
River Falls Public Library

**April 18** - STEM Program: Girls in SCIENCE at UWRF

**April 17-18** - **State AAUW Convention in LaCrosse, Wisconsin**

**May 12** – Year-end business meeting and pot luck dinner, Installation of officers and Celebration, 6:30 p.m. at Lorraine Davis's House



### **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.