

The American Association of University Women promotes education and equity for all women and girls, life-long education and positive societal change.

***Alice Dahle's Passion for International Affairs Began in Childhood***  
**Education, jobs, marriage, retirement as she continues her quest for human rights for all women**

(Compiled from notes shared by Alice Dahle on her life by Editor Joan Thompson)

When she was only in first grade, Alice Dahle remembers the teacher sending home a flyer asking for second-hand clothing to send to children who needed them around the world. The names of the countries where the clothes would be sent were scattered in the margins of the page, and she went home and asked her mother where Vietnam was. She says her first big purchase with her own money was a metal trash can with a world map on it. It is still under the desk in her office.

In fourth grade, she started corresponding with a pen pal in Morocco, who wrote her in French, and Alice replied in English. She had a teacher in sixth grade who taught Ancient History and Latin who encouraged her interest in international affairs. By the time she graduated from high school, her best friends were foreign exchange students. The summer after her senior year, Alice painted all the buildings on her dad's farm to earn enough money to go home with the exchange student from Uruguay who had stayed with them during the year. It was her first trip overseas.

In college at the University of Northern Iowa, she majored in Spanish and minored in Russian. "I spent the summer after my sophomore year on a study tour in the Soviet Union, where we traveled around the country with a Russian teacher from Intourist, the official Soviet agency that dealt with foreign visitors." She then finished a B.A. in Secondary Teaching and stayed at University of Northern Iowa to complete an M.A. in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

***Alice meets someone 'on-the-job'***

After teaching high school Spanish and 8th grade Reading for a year at HLV Community in Victor, Alice began working for Pioneer Hy-Bred, Inc. in Des Moines. She was Secretary to the head of the International Seed Division, who was from India. Part of the job was handling the correspondence with Pioneer's offices around the world and hosting foreign visitors when they came to the headquarters in Des Moines. One of these visitors was a new trainee from South Africa, who was hired to set up a new research station, either in France or Brazil. After Alice settled him in at the company trainee house in Dallas Center, he invited her to a concert at Drake University. Five months later, when he was sent to Brazil, "I married him, and we spent our first two years together in Santa Cruz do Sul in the far south of the country."

"Because of a very high inflation rate, the great expense involved in obtaining exit visas to visit our families in the U.S. and South Africa, discriminatory laws regarding freedom to travel abroad for women and children, and the lack of opportunity for me to have a career, we decided we could not stay in Brazil permanently. Since apartheid was still in South Africa, we returned to the US, and I started teaching English to international students at the University of Iowa and Kirkwood Community College. Since my jobs were part-time, I also worked for the International Writers' Program as an English teacher for guest writers and as secretary and editor to Hwa-Ling Nieh, who was then the Director of the program. While I was at the University, I completed an M.A. in Speech-Language Pathology."

After Alice finished her degree, the family moved to Cedar Rapids, and she began to work for the Grant Wood AEA as a Speech-Language Pathologist. The couple has one son, who is now finishing his last semester at Iowa State University. Eventually Dahle became the Speech Pathologist for the Child Evaluation Clinic, a member of Autism Resource Team with a special interest in Asperger's Syndrome, Coordinator of the Brain Injury Resource Team and ESL Consultant for the Agency. After 24 years at Grantwood, Alice Dahle took early retirement in 2004.

***Amnesty International and CEDAW***

Alice said after living in Brazil during the last years of the military dictatorship and worrying the whole time she was there about who might discover and report her Russian literature, hidden in their bookshelves behind books in English and Portuguese, she came back to the U.S. with a new appreciation for civil and human rights. "I decided that since I could speak up without fear of arrest and harassment, I had a moral obligation to do so. My husband and I joined Amnesty International in 1981 and have been active members ever since. In 1994, I became the Midwest regional representative to Amnesty International's National Committee on the Human Rights of Women. The following year, I traveled with the Amnesty delegation to the United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, I



Alice Dahle

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met women from all over the world who represented non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working to improve the lives of women, including AAUW. It was during the preparatory work leading up to this conference that I discovered a wonderful document called the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** which spells out basic, universal standards for human rights of women everywhere. I was stunned to discover that the US was one of a dwindling number of countries which had not yet ratified this treaty, and it has been one of the goals of my life to rectify this.”

### *Life after early retirement*

“Since my retirement, I have reveled in the opportunity to spend time on activities that are interesting, important and enjoyable to me. My husband and I continue to travel, often to visit his family in South Africa with stops in other countries along the way. I serve on two Linn County Foster Care Review Boards. I hand out voter registration forms to new citizens who are naturalized at the courthouse in Cedar Rapids for the League of Women Voters. I am active in the local Amnesty International adoption group and serve as Amnesty International’s Stop Violence Against Women Campaign Coordinator for Iowa. I am currently President of the Linn County Chapter of the conferences, visited the UN agencies housed in Paris and Geneva, and attended the 50th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations. In addition to serving as International Relations Director on the AAUW - Iowa Board, I very much enjoy being a member of the Cedar Rapids AAUW branch’s afternoon book club.

Dahle comments “Over the years, I have watched the world become more and more “flat”: events anywhere affect the lives of people everywhere. I believe development is our best strategy for building and maintaining peace, security and human rights. I also believe that education of and investment in women and girls is the most basic and efficient way to support development. Since AAUW is committed to this very purpose, I believe our organization has a vital part to play in making the world a better place for all of us. I am grateful for AAUW’s early (1981) endorsement of US ratification of CEDAW, and I am delighted that AAUW is one of five partner organizations sponsoring the One Shared World program, which promotes understanding of and connections among women around the world. It is always a pleasure to discover others who share my passion for the international human rights of women. Please let me know if I can help you find information, set up a program or come speak to your branch.” You can reach Alice Dahle at [adahle@fastermac.net](mailto:adahle@fastermac.net) or 319-364-4999.

## Profile of a New Member in AAUW Mexico to California to Iowa



*Gladis Gonzalez*

One of the new faces of AAUW, Gladis Gonzalez, is actively involved in the Latinas al Éxito project in Marshalltown.

Born in Mexico, her early years involved family and the beginnings of a love for learning. Her family moved to California, and she began to learn English with vocabulary flash-cards at about age 10 in a school district challenged with new immigrants. After learning about opportunities for work in Marshalltown, Gladis’ family moved to Iowa, and Gladis, by then fluent in English, entered Marshalltown High School and often was the only Latino student in her classes.

After graduation from MHS, Gladis began to work but learned of TEAM scholarships available to Latinos who aspired to be teachers. She applied and was accepted for two years at Marshalltown Community College and two years at the University of Northern Iowa. She was hired to teach in the Marshalltown Schools and helped develop a bilingual program for Woodbury Elementary. This year, when the bilingual program was expanded to Lenihan Intermediate School (for 5th-6th graders), Gladis moved to teach at that level.

Gladis was part of the Latinas al Éxito planning cadre which developed a vision of working with 8th-grade Hispanic girls to help them consider college education in their futures. Gladis says that “Latinas al Éxito has opened doors for 8th-grade girls and let them know that they have our support. We are there for them at any time they need us.”

Gladis also serves on the Raíces Board a project working at the grass-roots to build economic capacity within Latino populations in four states, including Iowa. She became a United States citizen in June 2007. A week later, she traveled to make presentations about Latinas al Éxito at the AAUW Convention in Phoenix.

Interviewed by Jan Mitchell

## *Public Relations Director Appointed*



*Elaine Bruns*

Elaine Bruns, of the Waterloo branch accepted the one year appointment for the year 2007-08 as Public Relations Director for AAUW Iowa.

Elaine is a graduate of St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Her undergraduate degree was in home economics and, following a fifth year of study, in which she specialized in food service management, she became the Food Service Director at Waldorf College, located in Forest City, Iowa. Following her marriage she moved to Mason City, Iowa where she served as Food Service Director at NIACC. Later Bruns was invited to teach in the Waterloo Public Schools. For twenty years she was a teacher in seventh and eighth grade classrooms. After her husband’s death she became the manager and head of their business, a Harley Davidson Motorcycle agency. Her experience in the business world extends over sixteen years and includes experience with advertising.

A long time AAUW member, Elaine has been branch president in Waterloo and has also served on the state membership committee for the past three years. Last year she was responsible for publishing a newsprint flyer for branches in her area of the state; she has been a long time advocate for securing additional news coverage both in print as well as other media. In this first year of the work of the Public Relations committee, Elaine will be developing a plan for how to both locate news stories throughout the state as well as informing the state wide community about coming AAUW events such as the annual conference.

Please welcome her to her new responsibilities. She will be joined by Janet Fife-LaFrenz of the Keokuk branch who will serve on the PR committee along with Carolyn Schmidt of the Cedar Rapids branch.

## Changes: Opens New Possibilities for AAUW

Myrna Sandvik  
Upper Midwest Regional Director

I am happy to say that the deliberations at the Association Convention in Phoenix have paved the way for a more effective organization that can focus more closely on the most important goals of AAUW. I know we had to sacrifice some of our cherished, but “back burner,” goals for the sake of fiscal responsibility. However, I feel very good about the new possibilities these changes open up for state organizations and branches to search for most effective utilization of their own resources to accomplish the true mission of AAUW.

Unfortunately, one of the items found to be expendable was the **beloved regional convention**. For this reason, we must strengthen the state conferences/annual meetings to include the caliber of leadership training and personal renewal we looked forward to at the regional level. I have great confidence that the wonderful officers and board here in Iowa have the creativity and experience to provide excellent experiences in these vital areas. It is just a new way of doing things that ideally will make leadership opportunities available to more people with much less travel (and additional registration fees) involved. So make plans now to attend the Iowa Annual Conference at Simpson College on April 11 and 12.

During this time of great organizational change, it is necessary for branches to step up to the plate as well. Now is the time to recruit new members and become visibly active in your own communities. It is the time to focus more narrowly on equity for women and girls. We all know the truth of the statement that “Equity is still an issue!” and with a narrower mission, we can focus clearly on ways to change this. Much of this work must be done through grass roots initiative to assess the need for changes. We need strong branches for this and leaders who are willing to look objectively at the entire community setting and think of creative ways to address the issues found there.

There are many ways to do this. Please select one or two projects that inspire enthusiasm in your own branch. It can be as ambitious as you like, such as, holding a local candidate forum on issues that matter to women and girls. Or it can be a small, simple thing like, writing letters to your legislators. It can be anything in between, as well. Try to match up local need with available resources.

One often-overlooked resource is that of collaboration with other local organizations which have like-minded goals for community action projects. This is one way to gain visibility in the community and open up avenues of membership recruitment of people with similar interests. A successful project is a “win-win” for both groups. As you assess your own state and communities for needs, the new mission statement can be your guide to selection of your project(s) and action partners. “The American Association of University Women advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.”

Do plan a state project and/or a branch project right away as a way to get community visibility, possible recruitment of new members, and a way to continue training present members in community leadership. And do plan to sharpen up your leadership skills by bringing a large delegation of present and future leaders (this could be the entire branch) to take advantage of the excellent training that will be available to you. Nothing sharpens leadership skills like leading, and nothing retains membership like action projects in which everyone is proud to participate.



Myrna Sandvik

## A Message from the President... “Vital Signs”

Generally the first thing that the physician does when you go to doctor’s office for a check up is take your “vital signs”, temperature, heart rate. Even weight and height are checked!

Organizations have “vital signs” too! In an era that is often attuned to quantitative measurements, it is deceptively easy to measure the vitality of an organization by the number of people that are involved in it. I suggest that there are other equally important measurement for organizational vitality and good health besides “how many”. I suggest that there are three equally important dimensions to “good health” for an organization.

The first of these is member involvement. Myrna Sandvik, our Regional Director for the Upper Midwest, puts it simply “do something”! Involvement means that in a small branch we give personal attention to both the well being as well as the interests of each person. (In an era in which we often are serviced by an anonymous telephone message system for everything from ordering on line to buying an airline ticket to ordering a prescription at the pharmacy, how beautiful it is to actually “talk “to a human being on the phone!”) More importantly involvement means that we don’t just talk, but that we get engaged with doing the things that need to be done locally. As we take our organizational “temperatures” a critical first question is “what are we doing?”

The second of these measures of organizational health is that of stimulation. I like to think of this as “feeding the hungry mind”. AAUW has a long tradition of addressing issues which are emerging in our times. It has a long and distinguished tradition of paying attention to intellectual integrity in discussing such current issues. What better place to identify these issues than by examining those topics and issues about which you really “want to know” something more. The AAUW Web site is full of related resources which can be referenced by accessing a web site. (I forward to branch presidents such references which seem to have the broadest appeal across the state; ask your branch president to forward these calls to action on to you!) A critical second question may be phrased as “what are you learning that you didn’t know before?”

A third measure of organizational health is that of inclusiveness. In an era in which we favor categorization of so much, it is well for us to remember that educated women come in all kinds of “categories”, these “packages” can be chronological as well as ethnic and those of experience. It is so easy in an organization to “look for people just like us” because we are more comfortable with those who are like us. We share a common base of experience, perhaps of knowledge, or work experiences, or even of socio economic status or sometimes of age. AAUW has been the vital organization that it is for 125 years because it recognized that education “levels” these differences and gives a common ground of understanding. Just as in the past, a measure of organizational health is to reach out to the newly educated, the nontraditional woman just getting her associate degree, and the very young recent graduate, not to mention the just retired senior citizen. Education is changing rapidly in this country. A third critical question is “Have we asked everyone to come in?”

Such “vital signs” are showing up in branches across the state, perhaps in your own branch. Branches are “doing things” locally. In some communities Iowa AAUW members are working with local schools to present conference and workshops encouraging girls and women to enter non traditional careers. In other communities active work is underway to recruit college undergraduates to form affiliate chapters of AAUW student members. Another branch has teamed up with the local library to present monthly book reviews of books written by international authors. I have heard of at least one branch that has seized the opportunity to co sponsor a caucus training session.

There are vital signs showing in your state board of directors. These women have seized opportunities and dared to carry them out! The twenty women who serve on the board do so without compensation; their energy and interest and conviction leads them to give hours and sometimes days of their time to help AAUW Iowa grow! At the fall board meeting they were willing participants in a web training session so that they could become more proficient at using Association web site and more knowledgeable to help branch members. In addition they participated in an afternoon long training session so that they might be more able facilitators for the coming focus groups to be held this year.

Our “vital signs” are improving organizationally! Our health is improving and soon we will be “Fired Up and Ready to GO...where the needs are greatest and the challenges the most exciting!



Janet Heinicke

Cordially,  
Janet Heinicke  
Iowa initiative -- 3

## Mini-Grants Available for Latinas Project

Iowa AAUW branches are invited to apply for \$2500 mini-grants to develop networks between adult and middle school Hispanic females with the goal of helping the young girls to value academic achievement and to consider college in their futures.

A group of college-experienced Latinas and Iowa AAUW leaders designed a plan to work within the Latino culture to take steps to change family perceptions about Latinas and education. Local foundations provided funds to pilot the project during 2006-2007 in Marshalltown, Iowa.

AAUW Iowa has recently received an AAUW 2-year Community Action Grant to extend the Marshalltown project and replicate it in three Iowa communities by 2009. The timeline for mini-grants is as follows:

- October 15, 2007 - Information and application forms sent to Iowa branches
- December 15, 2007 - Postmark deadline for submitting applications
- April 1, 2008 - Announcement of Mini-Grant Recipients
- April 11-12, 2008 - Work Session for branch project directors at AAUW Iowa Annual Mtg.
- July, 2008 - Mini-grant monies sent: Project implementation July 2008 – June 2009

## Latinas al Exito [Latinas Toward Success] Mini-Grant Application

Email to request this application form formatted for you to word process.  
Mail completed form to: Jan Mitchell, 1500 Lincoln Towers Circle, Marshalltown, IA 50158  
Submission deadline: December 15, 2007

AAUW Branch Name \_\_\_\_\_

Local School District \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage of Latino students in your school district K-12 \_\_\_\_\_

What motivates your AAUW branch to apply for a Latinas al Exito mini-grant?

Explain how you propose to implement Latinas al Exito in your community specific to the items below: *[suggested word limit of no more than 100 words each numbered item]*

1. Identification and recruitment of college-experienced Latinas in your community.
2. Capacity for personnel within your branch to lead the project.
3. Potential for a working relationship with the school district and connections with other organizations in your community currently working with the Latino population. Include signature of support from the school district and letter(s) of support from the organization(s).
4. Financial action plan: Who will be fiscal agent? How will you use the \$2500 mini-grant? What additional funding resources exist in your community?
5. Ability to oversee the project and submit reports (mid-year and end-of-year) to assess effectiveness.

AAUW's mission: AAUW promotes equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research. How will Latinas al Exito help your branch accomplish the mission relevant to your community's needs?

Information about the branch member who will serve as contact person for the project:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phones (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Signature** - AAUW Branch President \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following information about the President:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/St/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phones (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

### School District Support

If the Latinas al Exito Mini-Grant is awarded, the \_\_\_\_\_ School District agrees to

1. provide access to administrators and counselors who work with middle school/junior high students and facilities use, if needed.
2. serve as fiscal agent administering the Latinas al Exito Mini-Grant of \$2,500 for the grant period of July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009.
3. issue purchase orders and pay invoices in a timely manner as requested by the project director.
4. levy no administrative charges against grant funds for serving as fiscal agent
5. provide financial reports to the project director.
6. return all unspent funds by June 30, 2009.

Authorized school district representative's signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional pages: Include signed support letters from any organization(s) which might have connections with the project.**

# Spotlighting Iowa Branches...

## Membership--Tackling the Problem

by Mary Elizabeth Sievert, President-Elect  
Davenport-Bettendorf Branch

As one who loves football, I will approach this vital area of membership from football's offensive and defensive perspectives. As any coach, player and fan will say, "to be successful you must establish a game plan with goals, objectives, operating strategies, constant evaluation and necessary revisions. Optimism must rule in order to be effective!"

In March, 2007 at the annual "Appraisal Fair" fundraiser for our Charitable Trust Scholarship Fund, a reporter from the Quad-City Times came out to do a story about AAUW and asked two questions: "How many members do you have now?; and, How many do you plan to have next year?" The answer to these questions set in play our membership strategy for 2007-2008.

Elaine Kresse, membership vice-president, already had begun to establish new avenues for solicitation. In 2006-2007, the branch was 56 members strong; but with deaths, members moving away or not renewing, our effective membership was 50 with an average age of 60 to 65. Our membership goal for 2007-2008 became 100--a doubling with emphasis on the under 60 population--to be attained by December 31, 2007. Here in October 2007 we now have 96 members with 46 new members being over 70% under the age of 60!

### How did we accomplish this?

1. Our 2007-2008 membership drive began in March 2007.
2. The May meeting became our Heritage Day Celebration to that end, we welcomed our scholarship/fellowship recipients--all of whom received either a student or Give A Gift one year membership, b. recognized all other new members, c. used sign-up sheets for the 2007-2008 existing or new study groups, and d. had a very stream-lined, time-centered business meeting, program and installation of new officers along with a brunch which ran 1 1/4 hours.
3. During the summer and at our September Chocolate Fountain Tea (which was also a membership special event allowing a reduced rate for becoming a full, active member) we campaigned for new members. All guests who attended the tea, including our speaker, Cathie Rochau, the Quad-City International Airport's marketing representative--became members that day.
4. We are constantly asking members to recommend new members, working with the area colleges to establish student campus groups and student members, highlighting issues regarding business, networking and leadership thus appealing to our younger members, and revising as well as enlarging our newsletter "The Tatler" through the efforts of editor Linda Greenlee.

As our branch president, Rosanne Krubsack, leads the way, we now face the defensive position and its necessary goals. Some of these are: retaining all members, setting a new membership goal, encouraging more membership participation in both general meetings and study groups, and developing an on-going mission resulting in operational strategies involving all members as well as projecting our branch as a vital, contributing organization of our community.

Some of the methods to be used include 1. holding our own "Trivia Contest Day" and for publicity fielding our own Trivia teams to other community Trivia contests, 2. continuing our open the public "Appraisal Fair" fundraiser, 3. planning programs June to June with summer included by announcing all 2007-2008 programs at the May 2008 Heritage Day meeting, 4. start the membership drive March 2008, and 5. deciding by March 2008 on an implementable vision for community service for our branch which will also include development of new study groups appealing to all.

Will we be successful in both our offensive and defensive game plan? We will if we remain positive, use goal setting, and revise and revamp our strategies to meet new challenges.

In conclusion, in this vital area of membership, hopefully, you and your branch can use some of our plans by remembering to really look at the membership categories of student, associate, and fulltime members and positively, assertively, and aggressively pursue those in your community just waiting for a personal invitation to come to a meeting and to join AAUW!

## Cedar Falls branch

- \* Lists ten Community Action Projects
- \* Claim to be largest branch in Iowa (with about 100 members)
- \* Members are involved in six interest groups
- \* Three members serve on Iowa AAUW board
- \* Published 'Spice of Life' cookbook
- \* Regional Director, Myrna Sandvik, is from this branch
- \* Theme for the year is 'One Shared World'
- \* Programs focus on women's needs around the world and progress to meet those needs.

## Cedar Rapids branch

This branch advocates for the passage of The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by urging all members to e-mail their Senators in May, 2007, when this picture was taken.



*Cedar Rapids branch, May 10, 2007*

## Oskaloosa branch

The Oskaloosa branch holds 42nd Book Sale. Selling books for this experienced branch is a three-day event, but one they plan for all year!

They sell thousands of donated books, tapes, puzzles, magazines, children's books, and games. On the second day of the sale, a bag of books sells for \$3. After 5 p.m. the second day until 3 p.m. on the third day, books are left at the mall and are free for the taking. Oskaloosa made \$4,000 on this year's sale which will be donated to EF and to scholarships to non-traditional students at William Penn College.

*Editor's Note: Davenport/Bettendorf branch also sent a copy of a simple yearbook which was on one page (8 1/2 x 11) folded in thirds and printed on both sides in a teal blue. It included all programs for the year, study groups with contact information, officers, mission statement and membership information with more contact information!*

## Getting to Know You Focus Group Planning

In a bold move the AAUW Iowa Board committed itself to visiting every branch in Iowa during the year 2007-08, (primarily in the months between November and April.) "Getting to know you!" might be it's name! But actually it is called "Focus Group Planning".

The plan is to conduct a "focus group" meeting in each of the 31 communities where AAUW is located. With two members of the board working together during the visit as facilitators, the members of the board hope to establish a stronger connection between the work currently done by the state board on behalf of members, and the work being done by the members in their individual branches. During the hour and half long session it is hoped that local issues and concerns will be identified, and that the development of strategies for addressing these local issues and needs will evolve from the conversations being conducted in the informal meetings. The significant thing is that **all members of the Board of Directors have committed themselves to assisting in the program.**

Ten years have passed since Iowa AAUW and branches have linked like this. In the 90's Iowa AAUW had a program which intentionally linked the work of every branch with the work of the state "arm" of AAUW. (Our more experienced members may remember the days of branch "consultants", branch "travel program", and branch "mentors".) The consequence has been a real lack of knowledge about each aspect. In the meantime, some of our branches have begun to experience serious member loss and many articulate concerns about a lack of contact with the Association and/or the "State". There is concern about branches which might be regarded as "fragile". A frequent lament that "we're exhausted with using the same leaders over and over and we are tired of doing the same thing over and over". Clarity about program goals and public policy issues is missed...AND not every local member can attend the annual conference where some of the pieces of information are communicated. So AAUW is coming to YOU in your own town!

Announcement about the Focus Group Meetings was both mailed by regular postal service and sent electronically at the beginning of October to all branch presidents. Plans are underway and two focus group meetings have already been held. You want to be sure that your branch doesn't miss out on this free opportunity to focus on the future in a guided discussion with knowledgeable AAUW branch members from another branch in your state. Talk to your branch president today and ask when your focus group is meeting and come to that meeting when it occurs. You'll be glad you did!

## Your Leadership is Important to Us All

AAUW members throughout Iowa represent many personal, educational, career, and volunteer backgrounds. They have special skills to share and new opportunities to explore as we capitalize on our diversity. A great example of those skills at work is reflected by the direction our current leadership is providing which includes: focus group visits by board members to each branch, a new public relations director/ committee, an expanded Latinas al Exito project, public policy advocacy workshops, completion of board committees, and plans for an exciting April 11-12, 2008 Annual Meeting.

The AAUW Iowa Nominating Committee Members have been contacting each branch to help identify a pool of candidates for elective/appointive office and committees. We are recruiting for the 2008-2010 administration under the leadership of Diane Patton, Rockwell City, who is currently president-elect. The new administration begins July 1, 2008. We want to build on our fine board and committee leadership to continue making a difference in Iowa.

We will be recruiting candidates for the following offices/positions who will be elected at our April Annual Meeting: program vice-president, membership vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and nominating committee members representing each area of the state (NE, NW, SE, SW). Appointments, which are made by the President, will include the following Directors: Public Policy, Educational Foundation, Legal Advocacy Fund, Public Relations, Communications, Diversity-Gender Equity, Bylaws, and College University. Appointments also include members to most of the above committees.

Most board and committee work is done via phone, mail or e-mail which is realistic for busy members who are family, work, and time conscious. There are four board meetings per year. Most of them are face-to-face. One meeting is associated with the Annual Meeting and one is normally through the ICN Network.

If you are interested in serving in a capacity that fits your lifestyle or would like more information, please contact Mary Ann Ahrens, Nominating Committee Chair from November 1 - January 15. State level leadership is a great addition to your resume or vita and your personal fulfillment. Serving on the Iowa board/committees is an exciting growth opportunity. You are able to connect with other informed and educated women, use your skills, and build new ones as we continue to move the equity agenda forward in Iowa....Because equity is still an issue!

We are counting on your participation to build our team...because your leadership is important to us!

Mary Ann Ahrens, Chair  
AAUW Iowa Nominating Committee  
501 Grand Avenue, West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-664-8933 (h), 319-240-5904 (cell), maahrens@mchsi.com

## Iowa AAUW Advocacy Grant

It's primary presidential campaign season in Iowa. Do you hear the candidates discussing the Fair Pay or Healthy Families Acts? Because of other issues dominating the campaigns, it is important for us to bring AAUW issues to the attention of the candidates when they speak in your community.

Is your branch looking at a local, state, national, or international issue that could benefit from your action? What steps can your branch take to have a successful project?

Learn and practice advocacy skills by holding a Grassroots Advocacy Leadership workshop. It could be a special meeting for an interest group or held at your regular AAUW meeting. Iowa Public Policy Committee chair, Sarah Hanuske, and committee members are available to facilitate the session. Expenses are covered by the grant.

The workshop consists of four advocacy activities. Members work in groups on one of the techniques and then share their ideas and local supporting resources. Lots of good discussions have already occurred in both the Cedar Rapids and Indianola branch workshops. Every participant receives a Grassroots Advocacy Leadership packet along with a Pay Equity Resource kit. The materials are very practical and thorough. They are excellent AAUW resources to add to your library.

Contact Sarah Hanuske to schedule a workshop. 319-232-9959 - hanuske@yahoo.com

# There's another "Janet" behind the scenes!

*That "Jan" likes to make things! She likes to make something out of nothing! She likes to create new structures where there have been none; new objects when none have been, she entertains the idea about "what could be", and then tries to make them a reality. Her passion and her delight is "making things".*



Janet Heinicke

How did this happen? What makes a person find time throughout her life to create? Jan Heinicke attributes her interest in creativity to abundant childhood opportunities for reflection, for developing an imagination, for creative investigations. As an only child of older parents growing up on the "edge of town" Heinicke knew the interest and encouragement of both her parents. A powerful and enduring memory from childhood consists of her mother, directing her attention to the 'found beauty' in the natural world along the roadsides of eastern Indiana. (Heinicke's mother was a child welfare worker, a case worker for the Wayne County Indiana Department of Child Welfare; as a little girl she often "rode along" in the old Buick the family owned as her mother completed home visits. She learned that people were important, regardless of their economic status, and should be treated with respect!) The shapes of clouds, the textures of rocks, interesting stones and fossils were pointed out as objects which were also worthy of attention and admiration. Recording and responding to these objects was both expected and accepted. She drew on carefully hoarded scrap papers.

Heinicke says she "loved music", played the piano, organ and flute, was a member of high school and college bands and later part of a symphony orchestra. Heinicke followed quiet pursuits. She loved to read and write poetry and short stories as well as make things, sewing, drawing, painting. However when a choice was needed between those multiple interests in order to declare a major for college; when she was asked "what do you like to do best", her prompt reply was "I like to make things"!

An undergraduate education as a liberal arts college provided opportunities to discover that many things could be made in addition to drawings and paintings! The former book worm discovered that she could also "make things work" using organizational skills and that skill was valued by other people! By her senior year she was deeply involved in campus life, chairing a campus wide organization for re-structuring of student government, and acting as president of her social sorority and a host of other campus organizations. A pattern for creative involvement in and with her community began. It continues today.

## **First teaching jobs: then graduate school**

First teaching jobs including one as an itinerant art teacher in the schools of northern Indiana where she reports she rode a bike from school to school with art supplies in her bike basket and met 1,300 students each week! She organized a community wide children's art show. Summers of graduate work at UW-Madison leading to a master's degree refined artistic skills and provided a background in printmaking. It was in Madison that she met and married Ray Heinicke as he completed his doctoral degree in biochemistry. The young couple moved to the Chicago area and to Elgin, Illinois. There was a chance opportunity to teach in the local community college led to the discovery that college teaching was a "first love". The students with whom she worked, often mature students, often women returning to prepare themselves for a new career or a new means of earning a living were students with whom she could identify. Eventually a decision that it was "old girl you either go up or get out" led to additional graduate work and a Master of Fine Arts Degree and a doctorate earned concurrently from Northern Illinois University.

## **Move to Iowa's Simpson College**

In 1982 Heinicke came to Simpson College, accepting a position as chairman of the art department; hired specifically to develop a curriculum, market a program and recruit for it. Her work was recognized by her graduate college, Northern Illinois University, as being that of a "distinguished alumni" in 2004; and the year earlier as that of an outstanding alumni via a citation from her undergraduate college, Wittenberg University. She is named in Who's Who in American Art, Who's Who in International Woman. This year she received the first Governor Robert Ray award from Iowa Sister States for her contributions as a volunteer in that organization.

Heinicke has had more than 85 one person exhibits of her paintings, drawings and prints; she continues to exhibit professionally. She exhibited November 3 and 4 at the Metro Arts Alliance Two Rivers Art Expo in Des Moines. A show in the spring in Ankeny and one at a Museum in Indiana are presently scheduled for 2008.

This spring she traveled to East African Tanzania for the fourth time in order to teach rural women in the mountainous region near Kilimanjaro the art of batik drawing in order to provide additional skills to create a "market niche" product. In addition she is on the Des Moines Metro Arts roster of artists as well as the roster for a program called "World of Difference".

## **Making a "Small Resolution" which changed her life**

Thanks to a trip to visit women's groups in Stavropol, Russia, organized by Iowa AAUW in the early nineties, Heinicke's worldview keeps expanding. Upon return from that trip Heinicke made what she calls a "small resolution" namely "Whatever I can do to help those women in other parts of the world who often are more like us than different, I will do". This new interest has led to various service and study trips to Japan, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, Singapore as well as to Ukraine, Russia, Italy, Germany, Great Britain, France. Wherever she goes, Heinicke can be found, sketchbook, camera, pencils in hand "making things". It's her passion, her love, and, she says "an essential part of her being, like eating and sleeping and breathing!"

### **Mission Statement-AAUW**

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

### **Membership**

Membership is open to all graduates who hold an associate, baccaluarate or higher degree from an accredited college or university.

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## **Tajikistan Women Visit Iowa**

Ten women from Tajikistan who were in Iowa under the auspices of International Recource for International Service (IRIS), received its funding from various U.S. Department funds. Interpreters in Russian and Tijkak helped facilitate the conversation with AAUW Iowa President Janet Heinicke; President-elect Diane Patton and board member Mary Ann Ahrens.

Kathleen (Wood) Laurila, former AAUW Iowa President, now living in Minneapolis, coordinated the women's three week program. To begin the conversation, Kathleen provided the historical facts on the founding of AAUW, including its history in working first to provide access to higher education for women and subsequently, women's equity.

Janet Heinicke shared about the types of issues AAUW currently advocates and how the Iowa division implements its programs, noting that programming differs from community to community as they address local issues. (for more on this meeting check the website: [www.aauwia.org](http://www.aauwia.org))

Submitted By Diane B. Patton

## **“R.F.D. Iowa, Collection of Poems” Recommended Reading**

by Joan Thompson, Editor

Myrna Sandvik, is an Iowa author, who has published her first book (2007), about growing up as a female in mid-America on a typical family farm of the past. Barbara Lounsberry, Professor of English, University of Northern Iowa, who reviewed the book noted, “She creates an autobiography in forty-six poems “snapshots of a life that stemmed from these rural beginnings,”

As I read her book, coming back from our last state AAUW board meeting at Clarion, Iowa, I was mesmerized by her stories within the poetry as I, too, grew up on a farm in Iowa and could picture many of the scenes her poetry painted.

This book is one which I would recommend for reading or as a gift. The price of the book is \$8.95 plus 7% sales tax, making the price \$9.58 plus shipping and handling. It can be ordered directly from the press: Ice Cube Press, 205 N. Front Street, North Liberty, IA 52317-9302 OR [steve@icecubepress.com](mailto:steve@icecubepress.com) • [www.icecubepress.com](http://www.icecubepress.com). It is also available on Amazon.com.

## **Suggestions for Building Your Branch Web Page Available on Website**

Please click on the website: [www.aauwia.org](http://www.aauwia.org) to read the article Neysa Picklium wrote for this initiative. Unfortunately, there is not room for the article. When you find the article--just print it off and use it to build a branch website. Neysa will help you, just ask!

## **Mid-Life and Older Adults Are the Answer to Iowa's Workforce Shortage**

Mary Ann Ahrens gives information about Experience Wave Iowa, a non-partisan coalition to provide opportunities for older people to continue working, enhance lifelong learning, open doors for older people to engage in meaningful volunteer work. (See [www.aauwia.org](http://www.aauwia.org) for the complete article written for the *initiative*, Volume 80 Fall 2007.)

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***Don't forget to mark  
your calendars for  
April 11 and 12!***