



OUR MISSION: ADVANCING EQUITY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND RESEARCH.



Anne Stansbury Johnson, AAUW Iowa 2018-20 Iowa President

IOWA INITIATIVE

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From the President

I hope this finds you all safe and healthy! Our branch had its first Zoom meeting last month. We’ll be having another next week. What was great about it was that two members who now live far away were able to attend. We presented one middle school history month program, then couldn’t do the second the next week. That’s pretty much 2020 in a nutshell!

Most of you know by now that the planned 2020 Regional Conference in the Quad Cities has been postponed to 2021 – a year to refine and perfect! But even the Olympics and RAGBRAI have been postponed or cancelled. Shelter in place and stay safe.

We do have alternatives, though, opportunities to be creative. Our Web Director, Lois Enger, has put out the offer to host any of your branch meetings by Zoom. You can contact her at engerl@mchsi.com or 712-852-3271. She even does tutorials and has a hand-out to help. We’ve been doing most of our state board meetings that way for years now, and it’s easy!

The cancellation of the Regional Conference also affects the Iowa Annual Meeting. On the one hand, we still need to elect officers; on the other, there’s no reason not to take advantage of trying something new, an online meeting!

The AAUW Iowa Annual meeting will take place on Saturday, May 16, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. on Zoom.

In addition to the meeting we’re planning some entertainment. As with our Palo Alto Zoom meeting, this is a great opportunity to include members who might not be able to attend an in-person meeting. You’ll find registration information in this copy of *The Initiative*.

As I approach the end of my presidency, I want to thank each of you for the opportunity to serve you. While this experience hasn’t been exactly what I expected (what is?), it’s been a wonderful board to work with.

- Ann Gale and Maureen White developed and trained a Capital Corps to lobby for AAUW issues at the legislature.
- Maureen once again hosted a very useful and educational Lobby Day and kept us up to date on all the pending legislation.
- Ann expanded *The Initiative* to more issues and worked hard to make sure it was getting to every member.
- Ann Henninger Trax, Carletta Knox-Seymour, Elaine Kresse, Janie Montang and I were very actively involved in the planning of the (2021) Regional Conference.
- Elaine Kresse was tireless in her efforts to grow our membership.
- Lois Enger has been a great teacher for Zoom, for web options, and has done a great job of adding to our website (Send her announcements and pictures and it will get even better!)

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Mark Your Calendar for the AAUW Iowa Annual Meeting

If you are a member of AAUW in Iowa, you are invited to participate in our annual meeting on **May 16th at 10:00 a.m.** This year, in order to protect the health and safety of our members, the annual meeting will be held online using Zoom. There will not be a paper registration form this year.

Here is a link for you to register for that meeting:
<https://www.cognitoforms.com/Engerlmchsicom1/aauwiowaannualmeetingregistrationform>

Registration is free, and members who register will also get a chance to get free tickets to “The Suffragist,” a musical about pioneers in the fight for women’s suffrage by Nancy Hill Cobb and Cavan Hallman. “The Suffragist” will be July 17-19 in Cedar Falls.

At this meeting, we will elect officers for 2020-21. Look at our slate of candidates on the next page in this newsletter. During the annual meeting, Nancy Hill Cobb will also give us a sneak peek at “The Suffragist.”

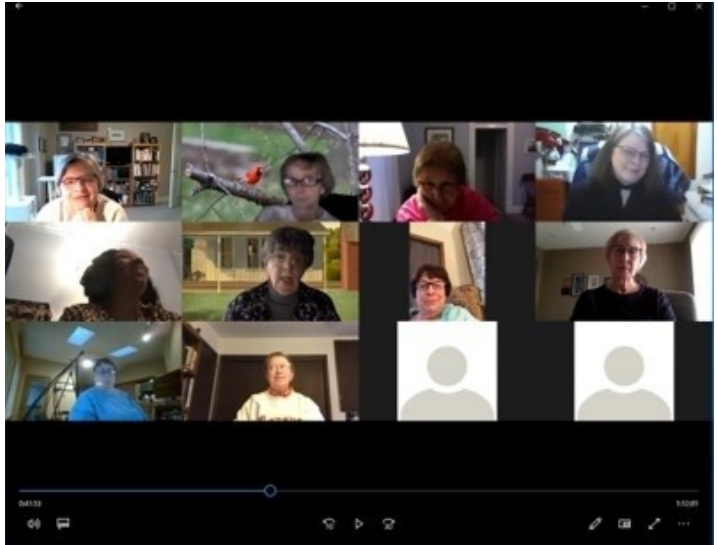
Most members find Zoom to be reasonably user-friendly. The nice thing about Zoom is that you can use it without leaving your home. If you have access to the internet, you may participate from a desktop computer, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. Your device will need to have a microphone and speakers (built in for most laptops and tablets, but added on to a desktop computer). You may

also call in from a standard phone. That will allow you to hear others and be heard, but you will not be able to see others, so it will be like a conference call. If you would like others to see you, you will need a webcam (also built in for most laptops and tablets but added on to desktops).

Here is the ZOOM link to join the Annual Meeting.

<https://zoom.us/j/2017201809?pwd=WXcyREhjcjI0ZlNQMUMmZjIjCU0RQQT09>

Contact AAUW Iowa web technician Lois Enger with technical questions at engerl@mchsi.com.



AAUW board members at a meeting using Zoom on April 19th.



New Look for the AAUW Website

The AAUW website looks new, modern, and is designed to help you find what you are looking for faster. Check it out at <https://www.aauw.org/>.

News From Keokuk

Catherine Worden, President Keokuk Affiliate

In celebration of Women’s History Month, Keokuk AAUW members viewed *Iron Jawed Angels*, an award-winning movie about the American women’s suffrage movement in the 1910s. Many characters of the movement were unknown to our members and reminded us of how many women it takes to make change as well as the dedication required. We remain in disbelief that we still do not have pay equity in our country, nor equal rights for all women in all states.

Our guest, a student from SECC, won the cookbook, *Rage Baking: The Transformative Power of Flour, Fury and Women’s Voices* in our drawing for the evening.

At the time of our meeting we did not realize many of us would be directly involved in fighting Covid-19. A few of our members are experienced seamstresses and have been making hundreds of masks for local doctors, nurses and other health care workers. Others have been aiding in providing food for our students since school is no longer in session.

Our members are planning to meet via Zoom in May if we are unable to meet in person.



Cassidy, SECC student, won the door prize.

Nominations for 2020-2022

The Nominating Committee is made up of Janie Montang (Algona), Jane Goldsmith (Loess Hills), Jo Richey (Indianola), Linda Morgan (Cedar Falls), Kathie Farris, Chair (Indianola), and Ann Gale, past president (Des Moines and eNetwork). Here is the slate of elected state officers for 2020-22. These are two-year terms.

Carletta Knox-Seymour (Cedar Rapids), President

Carletta earned a BA in Communication/Print Journalism with a minor in African American Studies. She is founder and owner of D.I.G.N.I.T.Y. Life Skills, LLC, which trains disenfranchised African-American women soft skills for gainful employment. Carletta has also worked as a communications manager and fund developer for different organizations. She has served two terms as AAUW branch president for Cedar Rapids and one term as state diversity director. Carletta has been involved in her community, serving as a city planning commissioner for Cedar Rapids, state president for Iowans for Gun Safety, and a myriad of boards which serve people in need. She also has been a guest columnist for the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* and a guest panelist on the *River to River* radio program. She loves to travel, mentor, and is active in her church. Currently she is caring for her invalid mother. Divorced, she has four adult children and five grandchildren.



Brenda Steinke (Cedar Rapids), Secretary

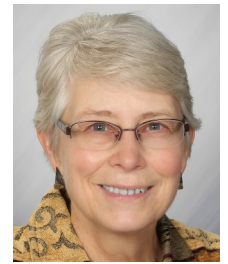
Brenda earned an Associate Degree, then a BA in Human Resources with a minor in Business, followed by an MS in Education with an emphasis on Higher Education Administration. She currently works at Kirkwood Community College as a Department Coordinator for the Business and Information Technology Department. In the community she volunteers at the Indian Creek Nature Center, serves on a church outreach program, and is a volunteer judge for FIRST Tech Challenge. She and her husband Jim have three children. Brenda loves to travel, reading, long bike rides, hiking and hanging out with friends.



Pat Higby (Cedar Falls), Treasurer

Pat worked as Energy Educator at the UNI Center for Energy and Environmental Education for 15 years before retiring in 2016. She recently moved to Tiffin but continues as an active member of the Cedar Falls-Waterloo branch where she was a past president. She is a

Master Gardener and serves on the boards of the Cedar Valley Arboretum and Sierra Club. Her interests include playing Settlers of Catan, weaving, reading, biking, and gardening. Her passion is to make the world a better place for her children and grandchildren.



Ann Henninger-Trax (Waverly), Program Co-VP

Ann was a college faculty member and administrator for 43 years before retiring from Wartburg College in 2016 as Professor Emerita of Biology. She is currently an elected board member of the Waverly Health Center and president of the Waverly Garden Club. Ann has been an AAUW member since 1983 and has held various leadership roles in the Waverly branch: college representative, treasurer, and president. At the AAUW Iowa level, she has served as LAF coordinator (1992-96) and Program VP (2018-2020).



Katherine Farris (Indianola), Program Co-VP

Kathie earned a BA in History at Illinois with a minor in English and a MS degree at Drake in Special Education. Retired, her last job was teaching assorted literature classes, art history, and TAG at Chariton High School. She is active in church mission, delivers meals, and is active in green teams at all levels. She has served in several positions in the Indianola branch and has been treasurer, nominations chair, and co-chair for AAUW Funds. She and her husband Al have three daughters and five grandchildren. Hobbies include travel, reading, bridge, and working on her various prairies.



Janie Montang (Algona), Membership VP and Nominating Committee

Janie has a BS in Education from Peru State College and an MS in Education from Iowa State University. Over twenty years of Janie's career were spent at the high school and/or middle school levels as a school counselor. She has served as secretary and is current president of her branch. In her community, she is a Court-Appointed Special Advocate and a member of the Foster Care Review Board plus several other groups. Her family consists of her husband Rod and two daughters plus six grandchildren and four step-grandchildren.



Palo Alto County Branch Delivers Suffrage Presentation to Middle School

Six members of the Palo Alto County Branch visited the Emmetsburg Catholic School on March 11th to deliver a presentation on women’s suffrage. The presentation covered the struggle for women’s rights from the Seneca Falls Convention to the passing of the 19th Amendment. A member narrated the PowerPoint presentation which featured video clips from School House Rock and the History Channel. Between clips, other members wearing “Votes for Women” sashes gave brief biographies of some of the women who were instrumental in the movement, some of whom had connections in Iowa. One lady, Lilla Cordelia Ormsby Bliven, was from Emmetsburg! Other women highlighted were Amelia Bloomer, Mary Church Terrell, Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Chapman Catt, Julia Ward Howard, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Prior to the presentation, teachers had been given a list of vocabulary words to pre-teach the students in order to introduce the topic. To reinforce the vocabulary, each student was

given a word search puzzle containing key vocabulary and names from the presentation at the end of the presentation. They were scheduled to present to Emmetsburg Middle School, but the school closure made that impossible. They will consider doing that presentation in the fall.



Palo Alto County branch President Anne Johnson talks about women leaders.



Members Angie Beem, Jamie Christensen, and Jane Hoyman

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Nominations continued from p. 3

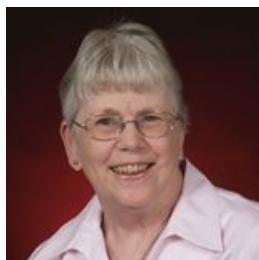
Linda Morgan (Cedar Falls), Nominating Committee

Linda is a retired music teacher and past director of Iowa Heartland Habitat for Humanity. She has been in AAUW for 10+ years serving as branch co-president, vice-president of membership, program, fundraising, and nominating teams.



Jo Richey (Indianola), Nominating Committee

Jo got her Elementary Teaching degree from South State College in South Dakota and a master’s degree in Effective Teaching from Drake. Before retirement, she was a reading specialist for the Des Moines Public Schools. Jo has been a volunteer for many activities in Indianola especially with her church. She enjoys quilting, crossword puzzles, and her grandchildren. She has three adult children and five grandchildren.



National AAUW Office Has Asked Us Not to Hold In-Person Meetings

AAUW has strongly advised that states/branches **must not hold any in-person meetings or events** for the foreseeable future, in compliance with local/state guidance/orders. We have been encouraged to hold only virtual gatherings, including annual meetings. States and branches throughout the country are holding successful meetings, annual elections/votes, and mission programs. We are advised that no branches should consider holding any in-person gatherings at all through at least June.

Work Smart—Online Salary Negotiation

Negotiating increases your ability to earn more. Tell your friends and relatives to take a look at AAUW’s online Work Smart. 70% of Work Smart participants say that the workshop had a positive impact on their ability to negotiate for a fair salary. Take the online workshop here:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/salary/>

Membership Needs You

Janie Montang, AAUW Iowa Membership Vice President

In looking over the 2020 membership data for AAUW Iowa, several thoughts come to mind. First, and foremost, we have lost more than one-fifth of our Iowa membership in the past three years! As you look around your Branch's members, that would mean, every fifth woman would no longer be present. This is such a tragic situation for the future of AAUW Iowa.

With the recent pandemic of Coronavirus, COVID-19, and the self-distancing that has accompanied it, I believe it is more apparent than ever, that we need physical contact; that we need human interaction; that we need stimulating conversations; that we need to continue to grow and to learn; that we need organizations like AAUW!

Since the time the data was collected in February, Iowa has lost yet another Branch. The Oskaloosa Branch has disbanded. Another 10 members deleted for the State of Iowa. I am much saddened whenever I learn of a disbanding. My original Branch in Maquoketa is one of the Branches no longer viable. When I first learned this news, I was devastated. Those women were so important to me when I lived there. They were a very diverse group in terms of occupations, ages, and experiences; although not diverse relating to race or ethnicity. I learned from them and from our excellent programs and speakers. I loved the interaction, the book discussions, the socialization. They

welcomed me into their fold and made me feel a part of them. To me, that is the significance of AAUW. It is a warm, welcoming place where women can come together to feel loved and appreciated. That is a hallmark of AAUW. It is, indeed, a home for growth and learning. A place to feel connected, not only locally, but also to the important issues AAUW supports at both state and national levels.

As we emerge from our self-quarantining, our self-distancing, and reenter the world-at-large, let us do some hard thinking, some intense focusing, on the efforts (the actions) we can take to increase, rather than decrease, our membership numbers in AAUW. Let us brainstorm and share ideas with our own Branch, with other Branches, with our State Officers. This is a perfect time for us to initiate a growth plan and implement it all over the State. Perhaps this will include the formation of "renewed" Branches, where they formerly existed. Everything is open to possibility!

Elaine and I welcome any and all ideas and look forward to hearing/reading about them. Please email us:

Janie Montang, janiem@netamumail.com
515 450-2992 H 395-2992.

Elaine Kresse, elainekresse2@gmail.com
563-391-3455

President's Letter continued from p. 1

- Kathie Farris with her nominations committee of Jane Goldsmith, Jo Ritchey, Janie Montang and Linda Morgan have given us a fantastic slate for the election and for Carletta to appoint directors.
- Alka Khanolkar has expanded our international outreach and can hand off some great ideas to our new co-directors.
- Pat Higby has taken on the treasurer's post and greatly improved its efficiency and transparency.
- Kat Beane Hanson has done a great job getting the word out on social media.
- Dev Kiedaisch (Gender Equity) and Carletta Knox-

Seymour(Diversity) presented an excellent program promoting conversations between black and white women.

- Nancy Henderson, for many years, managed the AAUW Fund in guiding and reporting fundraising.
- Finally, Angie Fay was the best secretary a president could have – she put up with my technical ignorance and managed to keep our record clear and transparent!

I have every faith that Carletta and the new board will move us forward with new ideas and the energy necessary to grow Iowa AAUW!

Branches Get Creative While Social Distancing

The AAUW Iowa board and the Iowa eNetwork have used Zoom for meetings for the past 3 years. Now, amid concerns about COVID-19, the AAUW Iowa Capitol Corps, and AAUW groups from Ames, Des Moines, Loess, Hills, Palo Alto County, and Waverly have all used Zoom, and more meetings are scheduled. We are thankful to web technician Lois Enger for helping us through all this. This year the AAUW Iowa annual meeting will be held using Zoom on May 16. See the article about that meeting for more information.

Indianola Wonder Women

Rebecca Swainey, AAUW Indianola President

The Indianola branch celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment and marked Women's History Month on March 3 by doing a Wonder Women program that was loosely based on that done at the 2018 AAUW spring conference.

The twelve member cast included seven AAUW members. The remaining members included a Simpson College student, and a mother and two daughters from the community at large. The two teenage girls were wonderful presenting Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg!

Approximately forty people attended the reader's theater style performance held in Lekberg Hall on Simpson's campus. Among those attending were other AAUW members, Simpson students and members of the community.

The show began with music playing as the audience took their seats. As each presenter spoke, an image of her subject was projected on a screen behind the presenters. The first part was about the fight to pass the 19th Amendment, and participants wore "votes for women" sashes. The rest of the program showed women moving on in history. Participants talked about the person, explained why they were important, and shared some quotes.

The original concept behind the Wonder Women Presentation came from President Rebecca Swainey. Rebecca coordinated the project, member Jackie Brittingham secured a location and handled the audio and video, and members Jovanka Westbrook and Lesley Leuwerke handled publicity.

The photos by Coby Berg, student photographer for the *Simpsonian*, are used by permission.



Blue Hat, yellow suit, Marilyn Lawson. Represented SB Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt. The women wore "Votes for Women" sashes for this part of the program. The remainder looked ahead to women later, and they removed their sashes for the rest.



Simpson College student Faithyna Leonard was Alice Paul, flanked by stemists wearing grey t-shirts to show their support for women in STEM fields.



Community member Kari Borlaug represented Iowa civil rights pioneer Edna Griffin.



Community member Rachel Henning represented Maya Angelou.

Algona Branch Celebrates 100 Years of 19th Amendment

Jane Nettleton, Algona Branch

Women wearing hats and gloves, a dessert from the 1920's, a Readers' Theater depicting women who fought for the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote, and plans for Equal Pay Day were all part of AAUW-Algona Branch's March meeting at the UCC Church Fellowship Hall on Thursday, March 12. The branch honored women who worked so hard for the right to vote and are still working to make the lives of women and girls better.

The Readers' Theater was performed by Polly McNeill as Ida Wells Barnett, Helen Scuffham as Carrie Chapman Catt, Kathie Gerber as Claiborne Catlin, Marie Wheaton as Cora

Smith Eaton, Jan Cook as Rose Schniederma, Sandy Harmes-Buchanan as Hazel Hunkins, Jane Nettleton describing cookbooks written by the suffragists of Washington, and Janie Montang as Maud Wood Park. The scripts were based on stories from *Why They Marched* by Susan Ware and could also be heard on KLGa during March, Women's History Month.

All the members were asked to wear hats and gloves to honor the suffragists of the 19th and 20th Centuries, and Sandy Harmes-Buchanan provided Upside-Down Cupcakes, a new twist on the cake popular in the 1920's.



Front Row—Janie Montang, Jan Cook, Jane Nettleton; Back Row—Polly McNeill, Helen Scuffham, Kathie Gerber, Marie Wheaton, and Sandy Harmes-Buchanan



Jane Nettleton discusses cookbooks written by suffragists.

More Indianola Wonder Women Pictures



President Rebecca Swainey represented Mary McCleod Bethune.



Member Kris Nielsen did a piece representing Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

Children Who Were Separated from Immigrant Parents—eNetwork Branch Program

At the April 16th online meeting of the AAUW Iowa eNetwork, branch member Ann Gale and guest Sonia Reyes from the Iowa Commission of Latino Affairs in the Iowa Department of Human Rights presented “What About the Children?”—a program focused on the plight of immigrant children separated from their families at the U.S.-Mexican border. Families face often insurmountable obstacles—such as representing themselves in immigration court. With no system in place to keep children identified as members of their own families, even a judge’s order to reunite families may be impossible to accomplish. Children are kept in detention centers and sent to institutional settings around the country, where they suffer lasting psychological and developmental harm. Reyes, who is creating a network of volunteer family mentors, offered a number of ways to assist the Office of Human Rights in addressing the needs of immigrant children and their families. She invited audience members to contact her at Sonia.Reyes@iowa.gov in order to get involved.

At least a dozen guests joined eNetwork members for “What About the Children?” adding up to an audience of 30 participants for the April 16th program. The AAUW Iowa eNetwork branch invites guests to join members for meetings via Zoom at 7:30 p.m. the third Thursday of each month. To attend a meeting, contact Nancy Magnall for log-in information at nancymagnall@gmail.com. On May 21st eNetwork member Mary Jane Cobb will present “Educational Engagement.”



Sonia Reyes, Director, Iowa Office of Latino Affairs



Ann Gale, eNetwork and Des Moines branches

Update on Bylaws Action for 2020 Annual Meeting

Jo Treadwell, AAUW IA Bylaws Director
Cell: 319-480-1147 email: jotom.tdll@gmail.com

Election of State Officers: AAUW Iowa will hold a virtual annual business meeting for all AAUW Iowa membership in 2020 because of the cancellation of the Regional Conference. This meeting will allow for election of officers for the 2020-2022 biennium. In even numbered years, the following officers are elected: President [the President-elect advances to this position], Membership Vice President, Program Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Also elected is a Nominating Committee to find future officers. Plan to participate.

State Bylaws Action: At the April AAUW Iowa Board meeting, the Board approved a motion to postpone the voting on the two amendments to the state bylaws until the Annual Meeting in 2021. The two proposed amendments were explained on p.7 of the March *Initiative*: **1.** Add the word 'elected' in Article IX. Officers Section 3. a. Terms of Officers/Directors #1: by inserting the word '*elected*' before the word 'office.' **and 2.** Change the election of the Treasurer to odd numbered years along with the President-Elect. Discussion and voting on these amendments will take place in 2021.

State Policies: After action taken at AAUW Iowa's 2019 summer retreat, the state policy document was updated and sent to be placed on the AAUW Iowa website and to be shared with all AAUW Iowa Board members and branches in Iowa.

Status of Branch Bylaws: During 2019-2020, all AAUW Iowa branches were asked to review their branch bylaws. In November 2019, a copy of each branch's bylaws was sent to the branch president asking the branch to review their bylaws and report to the state Bylaws Director if the present bylaws were still functional or if changes are needed. In March 2020, all branches that had not replied were contacted again to remind them to notify the Bylaws Director of the status of their branch bylaws. By April 22, one branch has disbanded; 13 branches have sent notification/approval; 3 branches need to confirm the proposed changes to their branch bylaws before approval; and 7 branches have not responded. On April 22, all branches that had not responded to the request to review bylaws received a final reminder about the need to review their bylaws and report to the Bylaws Director by July 1, 2020.