



IOWA INITIATIVE

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Co-President’s Letter

Karen Agee, AAUW Iowa Co-President

The AAUW of Iowa Executive Committee recently approved a project proposed by President-Elect Pat Higby. Through the month of January, we will collaborate with ACLU of Iowa to gather signatures of Iowa residents who support reproductive freedom. State legislators will be notified by ACLU of Iowa of their constituents who have signed their support for reproductive rights. We’d like to show legislators that we are in the majority!

Branch presidents meet with us (Kathie and Karen) in monthly virtual town hall Zooms. At our recent town hall, branch leaders affirmed their eagerness to participate in this project so closely aligned with AAUW’s public policy work. They also said they would like to have a pdf of the signature sheet that members could access and print off. Website manager Lois Enger quickly posted the signature sheet on the splash page at aauw-ia.aauw.net/ so that all can easily find it.



Disclaimer language on the petition sheet makes it clear that signatures are being collected in collaboration between ACLU and AAUW but that signers' information will be used only for purposes of the ACLU's reproductive freedom action team.

In every appropriate venue, let’s gather signatures of as many Iowa residents as we can! Branch leaders will soon receive information about how to transmit signatures to ACLU’s reproductive freedom action team. In the meantime, we can all print off more sheets and continue gathering signatures.

Weather may prevent our going door to door to seek support, but we all have friends and friends of friends who can expand this effort far and wide. Together, let’s fill hundreds of sheets with signatures of Iowans who want reproductive freedom!

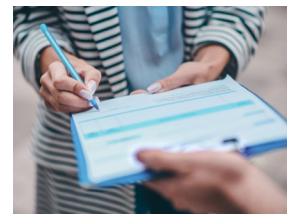
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Let’s Take Action to Protect Reproductive Freedom

If your New Year’s resolution is to support the rights of women to control their own bodies, then grab your coat and a copy of the ACLU/AAUW Reproductive Freedom petition and ask people to sign it.

You can download the [petition from the Iowa AAUW website](#) and print as many copies as you need. When you have a filled form, please take a photo of it and text it to 563-419-1718 or email it to outreach@aclu-ia.org with a subject line that includes your branch name followed by “statement signatures collected by AAUW.” For example, if you belong to the Ames branch the subject line would be “Ames statement signatures collected by AAUW.” Save your paper copies to bring to the capitol for our Lobby Day on February 7. If you have questions, contact Pat Higby at 319-266-4934 (text or phone) or patricia.a.higby@gmail.com.



There will be a training session for requesting signatures on the ACLU/AAUW Reproductive Freedom Petition at 6:30 on Wednesday, January 10. The link to join is: <https://aclu.zoom.us/j/5403389691>.

Come to Lobby Day!

AAUW Iowa Lobby Day Schedule, Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Schedule:

Meet at 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in Room 305 in the Capitol. (Note: Room 305 has been reserved for us to meet with legislators, however, should a committee meeting be called, we may have to adjust our meeting place.)

Participants will each receive an AAUW name badge or bring yours if you already have one.

We'll review tips for communicating with legislators, House and Senate procedures for contacting legislators, information about issues, and dismiss to talk with legislators.

Selected legislators may meet with us if their schedules allow.

If possible, prior to Lobby Day, schedule a time to meet with legislators you want to meet with.

Lunch is on your own. (There is a cafeteria in the Capitol.) This may be a good time to meet with legislators .

We'll reconvene in Room 305 at 1:00 for a brief wrap-up before you head home.

Parking:

Visitor parking lots (#'s 2,6, 7, 9, 11, 15, 26, 28) are shown in green or black (3, 4, 5, 16) on the [Iowa Capitol Complex map](#).

Ground Floor Public Restroom:

Come to the south entrance and go through security. Go straight ahead looking for the Capitol Tours counter. Turn left.

You will see another security station ahead. Stay on the right side, and you will see a restroom on your right almost at the end of the hall.

Meeting Room:

To get to Room 305:

After a stop at the restroom, go back to Capitol Tours, take a left and walk to the end of the hall.

On your right is an opening. Go into it and you will see the elevator that will take you to the hallway on the side of the third floor where Room 305 is located.



Iowa 90th General Assembly, January 8, 2024

The second half of the 90th Iowa General Assembly will convene on January 8, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in both the House and Senate. The Democratic and Republican Caucuses have met prior to the session to outline their priorities.

Democratic Priorities:

- Defending and protecting public education.
- Defending reproductive freedom.
- Legalizing marijuana for adult use.
- Lowering costs for Iowa families.

Republican Priorities:

- Improving education outcomes.
- Maintaining a safe and secure Iowa.
- Ensuring Iowa's strong economy.
- Keeping government transparent and efficient.

Speaker Grassley stated that feedback from their priority caucus gives reason to focus on standards and curriculum in education, especially in history and civics instruction.

Minority Leader in the House Konfrst stated they were looking at lowering costs for Iowa families to address housing, childcare and other costs facing families. Representative Konfrst also stated regarding abortion, the House Democrats have legislation filed and ready to go. Representative Grassley stated they would be taking a different approach. They will wait and see how the issue plays out in the court before they make a decision to do anything.

HOPE TO SEE AS MANY OF YOU AS POSSIBLE FOR OUR LOBBY DAY, FEBRUARY 7!

Spring Conference to Honor Pioneers Maggie Tinsman and Jean Lloyd-Jones

One of the highlights of the spring conference will be an opportunity to honor two of our pioneers. Democrat Jean Lloyd-Jones and Republican Maggie Tinsman served together in the Iowa legislature, even driving together at times. They left the legislature, but they never retired from their issues. In 2009 they brought women together to form the organization, 50/50 in 2020, with the goals of having 50 women in the Iowa house of representatives and 25 in the senate by 2020, and one woman in the US Senate and a woman governor. This year Iowa women made up 29% of the legislature. Women are 49.8% of the voters. Democrats have achieved equity in two past sessions. Their House leadership is 100% women. Republicans have taken the honors for US Senate and Governorship.

Maggie formed a consultant business, "Maggie Tinsman, LLC," and specializes in fighting Human Trafficking and as chair of the Davenport-Bettendorf AAUW Branch chairs the public policy team and specializes in getting candidates of both parties together for forums each year.

Jean worked hard to pass the ERA and served as State President of League of Women Voters and in 1986 conceived the Women's Peace Institute to "promote non-violent resolution of conflict through conflict management, global education, international

development, and world trade." She counted her ERA effort in the 100th anniversary of the passage on the 19th amendment.

You can meet these remarkable women by attending our state conference April 13th, 2024, as we celebrate their work with 50/50 in 2020.

A highlight of the conference will be a showing of a video about Maggie and Jean made by videographer Susan Wakefield, featuring the work they did for 50-50 in 2020.



Maggie Tinsman

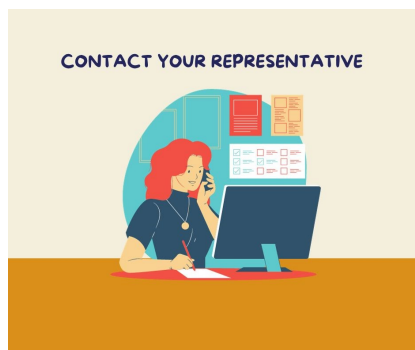


Jean Lloyd-Jones

Advocate for Victims of Human Trafficking

Elaine Kresse, Davenport-Bettendorf Branch President

As the legislature returns, now is the time to talk to them about priorities in the Justice System Budget. For the past 3 years the Iowa Network Against Human Trafficking and Slavery (NAHT) has been advocating for the legislature to allocate \$5 million in state funding to provide rehabilitative services and supports for trafficking victims. Currently Iowa does not allocate any funds to the victims of human trafficking. The 26 Iowa programs providing services operate on shoestring budgets. The AAUW Davenport-Bettendorf Branch public policy team Maggie Tinsman, Kay Pence, Marielle



Sweborg, Suzanne Hawkinson, and Doris Mack appeal to all of us to pester our legislators to support a justice system budget investing \$5 million in state funds for crime victim services to support victims of violent crime, including survivors of domestic and sexual violence, homicide, and human trafficking.

Please remember to call or write to your Iowa legislator. If you have any questions about this, contact Maggie Tinsman maggie.tinsman@mchsi.com.

Mobilize: Please call or email your local Senator and Representative. To find your legislators go to <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>.

Our promise to trafficking victims must be clear: when you come forward for help and support, it will be available. Not doing so has a ripple effect negatively impacting the entire community.

January Is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month

What's Happening in Iowa? What Can You Do? Wear Blue!

Mary Ann Ahrens, HT Prevention Outreach Chair

This observance is a presidentially designated holiday whose purpose is to educate the public about human trafficking and the role *we can continue to play* in prevention and response. The 2024 emphasis focuses *on activating partnerships* to prevent and respond to human trafficking as indicated by the graphics. The international and national Blue Campaign urges people to WEAR BLUE on January 11 National HT Awareness Day to symbolize awareness, sadness, and cold-hearted traffickers.

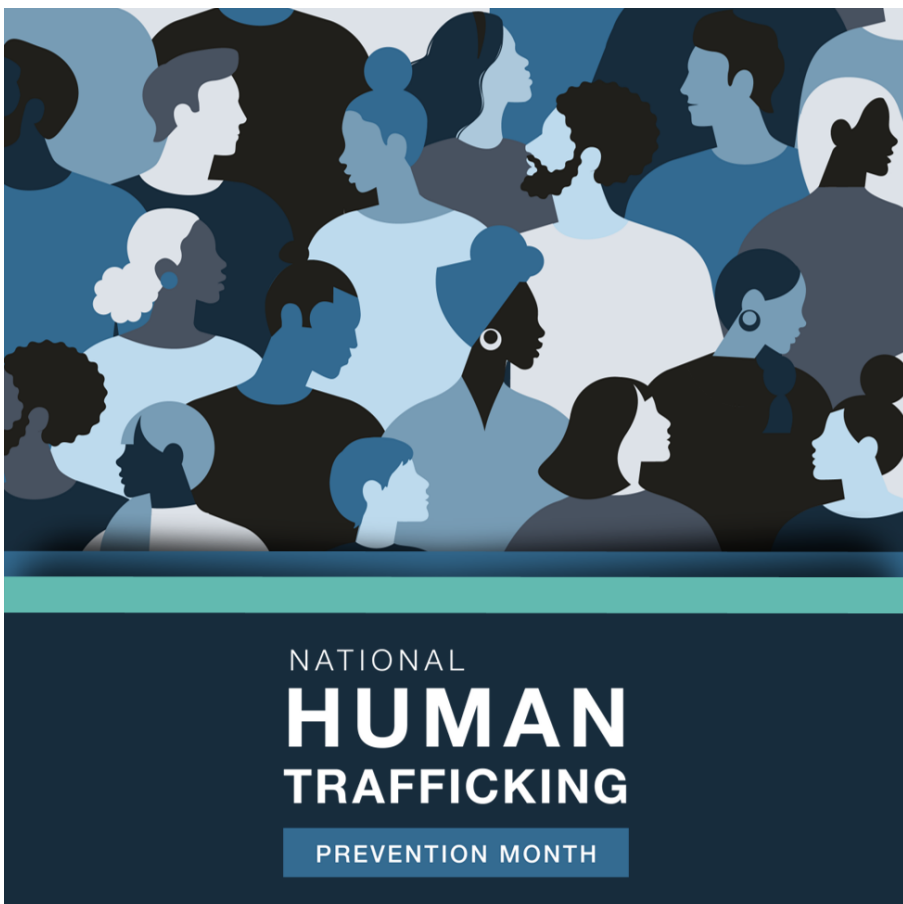
On Thursday, January 11 the Network Against Human Trafficking will host the public signing of a proclamation by Governor Kim Reynolds designating **January 2024 as Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month**. The proclamation signing will take place in Des Moines in the Rotunda of the State Capitol Building at 11:30 am. Maxine Lampe, eNetwork co-president, shared this information on January 8 during the Iowa Branch Presidents' Zoom Meeting.

All anti-trafficking advocates are invited to attend and wear the color blue. Y'all come in support of this issue and be present when five outstanding anti-trafficking service awards will be presented right after the proclamation signing. The recipients are Wings of Refuge, Sparker Solutions, Kim Smith, Bernadette Rixner, and Pieper Lewis's Legal Defense Team.

Since the Iowa Legislature just convened, HT Awareness Day at the Capitol is a great time to find your legislators/or email them and share the 2024 NAHT priorities which were emailed to branch presidents by Diane Kearns, Iowa AAUW Public Policy Director January 4. An article on those priorities appears in this issue of the Iowa Initiative and is posted on our Iowa website. There are other HT awareness events (IowaNAHT.org) taking place throughout the state. One example includes the Siouxland Coalition Against Human Trafficking. They are sponsoring a January "light up in blue" event and are encouraging businesses, families, agencies and individuals to "light up in blue". Many blue-light storefronts are competing for the best display. Is there an event in your area? Are you taking part? Don't forget to WEAR BLUE and pass out our brochures!

Who might be likely partners in your community that you could *connect with* to share our information this month? Might they include the Iowa caucuses, businesses, educators, youth groups, houses of worship, support groups, youth camps, schools, colleges, health care providers, EMTs, law enforcement, social service agencies, service organizations or community clubs, daycare providers, foster kids, and parents. Some of these people or groups may be familiar with HT but know of others who may need or want the basic information for their benefit. How is your supply of brochures? For brochures in English and/or Spanish contact Mary Ann Ahrens maahrens@mchsi.com or Maxine Lampe lampe.maxine@gmail.com

WHY SHOULD WE CARE? Slavery and Human Trafficking is ruining the lives of our sisters (and brothers) globally. The 2023 Global Slavery Index reports that there has been a 10 million victim increase in modern slavery/human trafficking (MS/HT) over the last five years. Even losing one life is too many...but millions. It is unthinkable! Thank you AAUW members for caring and reaching out to Iowans in your area. **Make it a BLUE month!**



Save the Date! We Need You!

AAUW Iowa Equal Pay Day

Iowa State Capitol, First Floor, Rotunda, East
Monday, March 18, 2024, Noon—3:00 P.M.

We need your presence at the Capitol to advocate for much-needed Equal Pay for women. It is important to support this issue and visit with legislators, staff and visitors who stop by our display table. Bring friends or colleagues from other organizations of any age and gender. Help us pass out “Pay Day” candy bars and share information to remind people of the importance of this issue and the impact it has on family resources and survival!

If you can help or are interested in attending, please contact Mary Ann Ahrens maahrens@mchsi.com 319-240-5904 by Friday, February 23 if possible. It would be great to have a representative from each Branch attend. Plan for promoting Equal Pay Day officially on March 14 in your community.

We are counting on you because women are counting on us!



SAVE THE DATE

AAUW 2024 Spring Conference
April 12-13, 2024
Cedar Rapids Hilton Garden Inn

Make plans now to meet old friends and make new ones. Spend a day and a half with people who are passionate about your issues.



The Gift—A Story

Pat Higby, AAUW Iowa President Elect

Often a story will be more persuasive than facts and logic. Perhaps this one will help you better understand why pro-choice advocates are so passionate about women's rights to choose what happens to their own bodies.

The Gift

One evening, two figures arrive at an apartment, a police officer and a stork bearing a "gift." The officer rings the doorbell, and a man comes to the door. The stork presents the "gift" to the resident, explaining that he will be financially responsible for the "gift" because DNA identifies him as a parent. The man responds, "Hell, no! I don't want it," and slams the door. The stork turns to the officer for assistance, but the cop shrugs and says there is nothing he can do.

At another residence, the door is answered by a weary-looking woman. Children are heard playing in the room behind her. The stork informs her she must accept the "gift." She replies "No, thank you, I already have three children and almost bled to death delivering the last one." The stork insists that her health is really not a factor and that she must accept the "gift." When the woman tries to close the door, the policeman puts his foot in the entryway, and the stork forces the woman to take the gift.

The officer and stork (now with another "gift" and joined by a new companion) pass a "Welcome to Texas" sign on their way to the next residence. The woman at this apartment also refuses the "gift," saying that a pregnancy would impact her ability to do her job. When the stork insists, she counters by asking if the stork will pay her for the work to turn the "gift" into a baby. That job would require 24 hours a day for nine months, at perhaps \$5,000 per month, plus a \$5,000 bonus for the pain and suffering of the delivery. The stork replies that, no, she is expected to do the work with no compensation. The policeman informs her that she is required by law to accept this gift.

Their companion identifies himself as a bounty hunter. He will be watching her, to make sure a baby is delivered at the end of the nine months. If for any reason he suspects an abortion has taken place, he will sue and will profit from her situation. The woman is forced to accept the gift.

What is the moral of this story? Some people believe that a fertilized egg, embryo, or fetus is a person with full legal rights. Others believe just as sincerely that the egg, embryo, or fetus does not become a baby until a mother makes the transformation using her own body as the required vessel. In other words, **there is only a baby if there is a mother.** In a country with freedom of religion and belief, isn't it unreasonable that a minority who believe that citizenship begins at conception should dictate that belief to everyone?

In a democracy we should have the right to refuse such a "gift." Women should have the right to control their own bodies. Coerced pregnancies are not acceptable in a country where freedom is valued.



Artwork by Nancy Barsic of Cedar Falls

Davenport-Bettendorf Branch Invites You to a Book Discussion

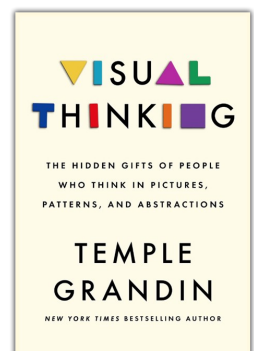
The Davenport-Bettendorf Branch will discuss Temple Grandin's book, *Visual Thinking: The hidden Gifts of People Who Think in Pictures, Patterns, and Abstractions* using zoom on January 17th at 6:30.

You are welcome to participate. This is a book discussion but it is not necessary to

have read the book. We will be watching a presentation by Temple Grandin and discussing her ideas.

To join the meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2017201809?pwd=WXcyREhjc1lOZlNQMUtmZj1CU0RQQT09&omn=88265746381>



Conference Preview—Dr. Emily Boevers

Dr. Emily Boevers, MD, FACOG, is one of the speakers at the spring conference. She will discuss "The Impact of Reproductive Freedom Policy on Women, Families, and Communities."

Dr. Boevers is a physician in Waverly, Iowa. Her role as an Obstetrician-Gynecologist unites her passion for serving the needs of rural communities and being an advocate on the local, state, and national levels for reproductive freedom.

Dr. Boevers graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with honors and continued graduate education at the University of Iowa. Postgraduate research in cervical cancer screening and prevention brought her to the University of Washington. She subsequently attended the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. Seeing a need for social determinants of health interventions in pregnancy, she founded the Upstream Clinic for Perinatal Health during this time as well as served in numerous

research and volunteer roles. She completed specialty training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Kansas in Kansas City.

She has been practicing at a Critical Access Hospital in Waverly, IA since August 2022. She was elected to the Iowa Medical Society Board of Directors. She is founding President of Iowans for Health Liberty and Iowa Physicians for Reproductive Freedom, organizations that support reproductive freedom.



Dr. Boevers resides in Waverly, Iowa with her three daughters and her husband, and over 200 stuffed animals. In her free time she makes and eats homemade pasta and pizza. She was the first person to check out Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone from the Readlynn Community Library in 1998 and remains an avid fan.

Palo Alto County Branch Decorates for the Holidays

The Emmetsburg Chamber of Commerce asked local organizations to decorate a downtown planter for the holidays. Our group chose a patriotic theme reminding people that every vote counts. There are also placards stating "Equity & Education for Women & Girls" and the AAUW acronym and definition.

One member donated the hydrangeas and another spray painted them. Greenery was donated and other members put the display together with ribbon and ornaments. Each planter was judged by the Chamber of Commerce.

Although our planter did not win the contest, it was a great way to put AAUW's message in the community.



NCCWSL—Forging Lifelong Connections And Remarkable Growth

May 31-June 1, 2024

Elaine Kresse, College/University Director

It is time apply for (NCCWSL) the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders scholarships. Applications can be made until February 2nd. Please let your college connections know.

Please go to [NCCWSL](https://www.nccwsl.org) to learn about registration and scholarships. Winners of full or 50% registrations will be notified in March. Applying for a scholarship is the first step. Registering can be done after the scholarship deadline and notification and still qualify for the early bird registration which will save \$100.

Past attendees have said NCCWSL has changed their lives. It would be helpful to me if you or your branch could supply me with the names and contact information for those that you know attended in the past. I've kept in touch with half a dozen of them, but would like to connect with others. They are our future. I want to hear where the future has taken them. We would like to see as many as possible at our 100th anniversary state conference on April 12-13, 2024. Contact me at elainekresse2@gmail.com.

