



IOWA INITIATIVE

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AAUW Iowa Spring Conference April 12-13

Hilton Garden Inn
4640 North River Road NE, Cedar Rapids
AAUW Conference rate—\$119 plus tax per room
Call 319-378-7404 for reservations



Conference registration at
<https://aauw-ia.aauw.net>

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Co-President's Letter—Working Together for AAUW

Karen Agee, AAUW Iowa Co-President

These are busy times for members of AAUW of Iowa. During this legislative session, the number of bills that offend our public policy priorities is astounding. This legislature is hostile to our values related to public education, reproductive freedom, and gender equity, to name only a few. Please take time every week to write to your senator and representative to share your ideas and assert your values. We can thank some and reprove others. Contact, too, the chairs and members of committees working on abhorrent legislation to affirm the principles you want them to consider. Let's collaborate with our legislators when we are working toward the same goals.



Karen Agee

Our collaboration with ACLU of Iowa has been very positive. Becca Eastwood has been notifying legislators of the names of constituents who have signed the Reproductive Majority Project petition, and ACLU staff lobby legislators every other week at the Capitol on issues of importance to both ACLU and AAUW. Thanks to you,

hundreds of signatures have been sent to Becca for this Project, and we can keep gathering signatures and sending them to her.

We have been collaborating within AAUW, too. At our meeting on January 21, the state board of directors approved matching-funds grants to two branches. The eNetwork's request for \$250 to print more human trafficking brochures was granted, as was the Loess Hills Branch's request for \$500 for its Girl Power on Display Forum to celebrate and empower middle-school girls in their area. Congratulations to the members and leaders of these branches!

Let's see if we can work together, too, to get out the vote for the bylaws election this spring. As a state organization, we are almost as old as women's suffrage in the US, yet only a fraction of us voted in the last bylaws election. Each branch can choose how best to facilitate voting by their members between April 3 and May 15. (Note that voting ends at 11:00 AM Central Time on May 15, and AAUW will announce the results of the bylaws vote later that day.) Read on in this newsletter for more information about the bylaws election and so much more!

Food for Iowa's Kids

Katherine Farris, AAUW Iowa Co-President

The USDA will launch a Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children (Summer EBT) in 2024, offering federal funds to low-income families with school-aged children when schools are closed for the summer, about \$40 per month for kids who qualify. Gov. Kim Reynolds has refused to accept Summer EBT funds for Iowans, even though these funds are earmarked for children who receive free and reduced-price lunches at school, and around 40% of Iowa children qualify for these meals.

We urge Iowa legislators to support SF 2039, a bill that would require Iowa to participate in the Summer EBT program to support Iowa's kids.

This program is clearly needed in Iowa:

1. Providing families with summer grocery benefits reduces child hunger and supports healthier diets (US Department of Agriculture).
2. Poverty rates are disproportional among most non-White populations (American Psychological Association).

3. Families headed by a woman are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than families headed by a man (United States Census Bureau).
4. School-age children who experience severe hunger are at increased risk for poor mental health and lower academic achievement (National Institutes of Health).
5. During the Covid public health emergency, a project similar to Summer EBT lifted 2.4-million to 3.9-million children out of hunger. Children in the study ate more fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy. Sugar-sweetened beverage consumption went down (USDA).

The reason Governor Reynolds gave for refusing to accept EBT funds was that Iowa has too many fat children; however, a major cause of childhood obesity is poverty. The most nutritious food is simply more expensive.

Iowa claims to feed the world. Its leaders should insist that our own children benefit from this USDA program.

There is no time to delay. Children cannot skip having nutritious food for a season. **Support SF 2039.**

Join Us in Cedar Rapids for the AAUW Iowa Spring Conference

Rebecca Swainey, Program Co-Vice President

The AAUW Iowa State Conference for 2024 is rapidly approaching--April 12-13. This is a very special year marking 100 years since the Iowa State Division of the American Association of University Women was officially born--March 8, 1924. Come celebrate this historic event with us!

Find conference registration information at <https://aauiowa.aauw.net/>

Rooms are available at the Hilton Garden Inn, 4640 North River Road NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52411 for \$119.00 plus tax for the night of April 12th. You can contact the hotel at 319-378-7404 and request the AAUW of Iowa rate, or you can make a reservation on HiltonLink if you are a Hilton Honors member. The deadline for hotel reservations at the group rate is March 22nd.

Much of Saturday will follow the usual schedule, but regular conference attendees will quickly note some changes. When the committee began laying out the day, they responded to a frequent concern from past conferences: breakout sessions force us to choose from too many good options, and we wish we could attend them all. This year all the presentations will be made to the group as a whole. All of us can experience every

presentation.

Here is another change for this special conference. In place of the usual silent auction to gather donations for AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund--to fund our organization's research, activism, and scholarships for women and girls--this year we will celebrate AAUW of Iowa's 100th anniversary with a different way to contribute to the cause. It will be grand! So this year branches will not bring baskets to auction off. We still want you to bring your checkbooks and cash, though. In the next newsletter we will let you know what we have cooked up.

With no breakout sessions and no silent auction there will be more room for branch displays. We encourage you to create a display honoring the history of your branch, celebrating a noteworthy member, or sharing something that makes your branch particularly proud. Let us know if your branch will participate so we can have a table and space ready. You will have plenty of room.

One final thing we've tried to build into this conference is more time for breaks for people to view displays, meet presenters, or simply chat with old friends.

So make plans now to join us in Cedar Rapids April 12-13. We hope to see you there!

Conference Preview: Lettie Prell, Bringing Economic Justice to the Justice System

Lettie Prell is the former research director of the Iowa Department of Corrections, a position from which she retired in 2017. She also served as research staff with the Iowa Board of Parole, and the Iowa Division of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning. Among the many issues and activities she was involved in during her 36-year career were studies of racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system, sentencing alternatives, and prison population forecasting. She has presented at national conferences on various topics including how to reduce mass incarceration. She developed the Iowa Violence and Victimization Instrument, a risk assessment that continues to be used today by the parole board, prisons, and community corrections. She is a past recipient of the Peter P. Lejins research award from the American Correctional Association.

She joined the Iowa League of Women Voters last fall, and became involved in their



study, *Bringing Economic Justice to the Justice System*. This study's position statements have recently been adopted by the state League. She continues to be involved as a member of the Iowa League's Criminal and Juvenile Justice Committee.

Describing her presentation, Lettie says: "Our democracy cannot flourish when our poorest citizens are plunged further into poverty by decisions within the justice system.

Beginning in 2002, the Iowa League of Women Voters (LWV) established a committee to study the economic inequities in the Iowa justice system. The committee's report, issued in 2003, contained proposed position statements that were adopted by the State LWV earlier this year. The League's position on this issue is a call to action to change state law, and state and local practices. Because joining together makes us stronger, this talk will conclude with some thoughts on how the LWV and AAUW might work together to achieve common goals."



Conference Preview: Family Planning Council of Iowa

Dr. Tara Shochet is the Director of Programs and Grants at the Family Planning Council of Iowa (FPCI). She holds a PhD in Health Behavior and Health Education from the University of Michigan and an Master of Public Health in Population and Family Health from Columbia University. Dr. Shochet has over 20 years of experience in reproductive and maternal health, with a focus on clinical research and program development, management, and evaluation. She has co-authored over 40 peer-reviewed journal articles.

Allison Smith is the Executive Director of the Family Planning Council of Iowa (FPCI). She earned both her BS in Biomedical Engineering and an MBA from the University of Iowa. Allison has over ten years of experience in healthcare strategy, analytics, and leadership, with a focus on social determinants of health, value-based care, and long-term planning. As a consultant, she has advised academic medical centers, community health systems,

children's hospitals, and nonprofit and government payors across the country. Allison is also an adjunct lecturer for the masters-level healthcare analytics course at the University of Iowa's Tippie College of Business.



Dr. Tara Shochet



Allison Smith

Conference Preview: Amy Sue Bix

AMY SUE BIX is Professor of History at Iowa State University. Her 2013 book *Girls Coming to Tech!': A History of American Engineering Education for Women* (MIT Press) has won three major awards, including the 2015 Margaret Rossiter Prize from the History of Science Society. Her research connects the history of technology, science, and medicine with studies of women and gender, the history of education, and twentieth-century social, cultural, and intellectual history, including *Inventing Ourselves Out of Jobs?: America's Debate over Technological Unemployment, 1929-1981*. Her book in progress is *Recruiting Engineer Jane and Astrophysicist Amy: American STEM Advocacy for Girls, 1965-2015*. In this book, she argues that one of the



most distinctive changes in modern science and technology is not any specific discovery or technique, but a powerful cultural shift, the commitment to diversify STEM.

Her other articles, essays, book chapters, and books cover wide-ranging topics in the history of technology, medicine, and science, including the history of eugenics; the body in Islamic culture; Islamic inventions; post-WWII physics and engineering; steampunk culture; gender and alternative medicine; breast cancer and AIDS research funding; consumerism and home repair; technological unemployment fears; and the work of female aviators, physicians, and home economists.



Coming Attraction!

Mary Ann Ahrens, Human Trafficking Prevention Outreach Chair

A night at the movies! Yes, join us on Friday evening April 12 before our Saturday AAUW Iowa State Conference at the Hilton Garden Inn, 4640 North River Blvd. NE in Cedar Rapids. The documentary *Gridshock*, by filmmaker and Iowa State University graduate Vanessa McNeal, will be shown. *Gridshock* exposes the hidden and disturbing reality behind sex trafficking in Iowa and the often-overlooked reality about why the industry thrives - because there is a demand for it.



McNeal's film features survivors of sex trafficking, local and federal law enforcement, advocates, politicians, and a recovering sex addict. It is suggested for adults only and is one hour long. Together we can increase our knowledge and network together. Time to be announced.

Melody Stone, MA, LMHC, of Clear Lake, Iowa, will serve as the facilitator. She is a licensed trauma trained therapist. Since 2005 she has worked in private practice with survivors of human trafficking on their difficult journey toward healing and restoration.

As a semi-retired therapist, she provides no-cost professional training covering best practice protocols for law enforcement, EMTs, HCPs, educators, businesses, and others. She also provides prevention education and online

safety for students, parents and community groups and is an Ambassador with Shared Hope.

In 2021 Melody founded the North Iowa Coalition Against Human Trafficking, starting with 6 counties. It has now expanded to 20 counties to become The North Central Iowa Coalition Against Human Trafficking. This is a working coalition holding monthly Zoom meetings that often include top trainers from across the U.S. *Melody Stone*



Melody also serves on the Iowa Human Trafficking Legislative Committee and is actively involved in legislative advocacy to strengthen human trafficking laws, support best practices, and promote survivor-centered services across Iowa.

Melody has eight grown children including six adopted daughters, two biological sons and ten grandchildren. In her free time, she enjoys swimming, baking, sewing, painting, and other activities with her grandkids.

She will have a resource table for those interested. AAUW Iowa's Human Trafficking display and project information will be there, and Spanish and English brochures will be available in quantity to take home.

Open Up AAUW: What You Need to Know About the Bylaws Vote

Maxine Lampe, eNetwork Branch President

The AAUW Board of Directors and Governance Committee recommend approval of the bylaw amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for membership in AAUW. This change will align our membership practices with our purpose of advancing equity for women and girls and enable us to include members with the diverse backgrounds and perspectives needed to achieve our purpose in today's world.

We remain committed to higher education as a pathway to eliminate barriers that hold women back and to enhance their leadership opportunities at all levels. We admire the effort of the inspiring women who have led the way in earning their degrees. We recognize, however, that in today's world higher education degrees are one of several paths needed to advance equity for women and girls. Professional certifications, on the job training, career technical experience and life experience all are alternative paths to obtaining education and the skills needed to become leaders and advocates for ending discrimination against women.

When AAUW began its work, higher education and professional careers were denied to most women. That is no longer the case. More than 50% of college degrees are currently being awarded to women, and women are now attaining powerful positions in business and government. Yet discrimination against women continues. Eliminating the degree requirement enables us to expand our voice and our reach, our ability to fulfill our purpose, and will open more opportunities to address the needs of all women.

All voting will take place online starting April 3. AAUW is utilizing an independent, third-party voting system for this

year's vote. Most members will receive emails from vote@simplyvoting.com with their unique Elector ID and Password to vote.

All members without an email address on file or who have unsubscribed from AAUW national emails will receive a paper ballot by mail. No additional paper ballots will be sent during the voting period.

Voting will close on Wednesday, May 15 at 12:00 pm ET.



Des Moines Branch Invites You to a Zoom Presentation on the Bylaws Vote



Open Membership Task Force Co-chair Nancy Shoemaker will provide a presentation about the bylaws vote to open membership on April 2 at 7:00 pm using Zoom. The Des Moines branch invites members from all over Iowa to join in for this program. Members who would like to learn more ahead of the presentation are encouraged to find half-page and full-page handouts [at this site](#).

To join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2017201809?pwd=WXcyREhjc1lOZlNQMUtmZjlCU0RQQT09&omn=85221230271>

AAUW Iowa Equal Pay Day Event

March 18 , 2024 12:00 - 3:00 pm

Mary Ann Ahrens, 2024 Chair

Join us at the Capitol Rotunda in Des Moines on Monday, March 18, for AAUW Iowa's Equal Pay Day Event. March is Women's History Month. What better time to have our annual Equal Pay Day Event at the Capitol? This has been a priority issue within AAUW for decades. It is important to be present and make our voices heard in support of equal pay. Pay inequality is not just a women's issue but also a family and national economic issue.

Despite civil rights laws and advancement in women's economic status, discrimination still persists in every state and virtually every occupation. Pay discrimination has long-lasting consequences on women's economic security.

Women's lifespans surpass men's by approximately 10 years. The pay gap limits women's total lifetime earnings and thereby reduces their retirement savings and benefits—women have only 70% of the overall retirement income that men do. Recent research has found that 64% of mothers are the primary, sole, or co-breadwinners of their families—meaning families are increasingly relying on women's wages to make ends meet. Equal pay is essential to ensuring women and families long-term economic security.

If you can help, please join us. If possible, contact Mary Ann Ahrens 319-240-5904 maahrens@mchsi.com. It would be great to have a representative from each branch. Bring colleagues, friends, and relatives along. We are

counting on you because women are counting on us. We will have display tables, share information, and pass out Pay Day candy bars to legislators, staff, and visitors to remind people of the importance of equal pay.

Nationally, Equal Pay Day is March 12. Consider planning on promoting Equal Pay Day in some way in your area. How about an article in the newspaper, a display in public places, or a Proclamation from the mayor? AAUW's national website (<https://aauw.org>) has an Equal Pay Day Kit for your use.

Wear RED on Equal Pay Day to symbolize how far women and minorities are "in the red" with their pay!



Faculty Excellence Award

Elaine Kresse, College/University Director

We need your submissions for the Distinguished Faculty Award. The application forms are on our website. Being chosen as the Distinguished Faculty from the many worthy professors or teachers at universities in Iowa is huge. It is always such an important part of our state conference. Applications are due by March 1, 2024.

There are about 70 colleges and universities that could be AAUW members. Current college/university memberships are \$250, and students attending member schools have free memberships. If you are working with local school and hoping they will join, you might let them know that membership rates are going up in March.

Would you like to honor a member of the faculty at a college or university and recognize her contributions toward creating a climate of gender equity in education in the state of Iowa? The nomination form is on the AAUW Iowa website. [Find it here](#). The winner will be invited to join us for lunch at the conference, and will be awarded a certificate of recognition.

A Busy Lobby Day

Diane Kearns, AAUW Iowa Public Policy Director

It was a busy day at the Capitol on Wednesday, February 7. We held our Lobby Day with fifteen members present. Discussion centered around legislation which has been brought forward of concern to the membership. Invitations were sent out to the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Ranking Members of the Education, Health and Human Services, Judiciary and Labor and Workforce Committees. We wish to thank Representative Bob Kressig and Representative Timi Brown-Powers from Black Hawk County and Representative Art Staed from Linn County who joined us and listened to our concerns regarding the Governor's proposed changes to the AEA's and the EBT food program for children during the summer months. I spoke with Senator Nate Boulton from Polk County the evening before and indicated our focus areas for Lobby Day. He made an announcement in the Senate that we were there. Thanks to him as well. There was also discussion about the proposed legislation that would provide unlicensed and unregulated chaplains in the schools.

Becca Eastwood from ACLU of Iowa spoke regarding the recent campaign getting signatures for the Reproductive Freedom Majority campaign. She thanked those that had gotten signatures on the petitions.

Maggie Tinsman is the Chair of the Network Against Human Trafficking. She spoke regarding their efforts with the legislature to allocate \$5 million dollars in state funding to provide rehabilitative services and support victims of human trafficking. Thank you, Maggie, for your passion regarding this issue.

Another group which we support was holding their Lobby Day as well, Everytown for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action. They were recognizable by their red shirts. I sent out this morning to all the Senators and Representatives, the packet of information which I shared with the group yesterday. Senator Eric Giddens from Blackhawk County acknowledged my email this morning and in his comments he stated: "Sorry I missed you all while you were here yesterday. My meetings got backed up and I just wasn't able to connect." He stated he appreciated the important work we do.

The First Funnel of legislation will be coming out February 16. I will continue to monitor legislation on a daily basis. Information regarding a particular piece of legislation can be found on the legislative website at www.legis.iowa.gov. If you have any questions or concerns regarding particular legislation, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address is diane_kearns@hotmail.com.



Diane Kearns, Karen Agee, Becca Eastwood, Pat Higby, and Mary Ann Ahrens display reproductive rights petitions.



Representatives Bob Kressig, Timi Brown-Powers, and Art Staed discussed current legislation.



AAUW members from across the state met and discussed bills in the legislature.

AAUW Iowa Needs You

Janie Montang, Nominations Chair

Are you looking for a way to get to know more AAUW women around the state of Iowa? Consider serving on the AAUW of Iowa Board of Directors. This Board is composed of women who are passionate about achieving the mission of equity and a long list of goals related to our public policy priorities. Elected officers and president-appointed directors work together to move forward.

Officers are elected in accordance with the bylaws, and the Nominations Committee, chaired by the Nominations Director, is charged with finding and vetting candidates for office. Current members of the Committee are:

Anne Johnson, asjohns9424@gmail.com; Mary Ann Ahrens, maahrens@mchsi.com; Mary Helen Stefaniak, maryhelenstefaniak@gmail.com; Sue Jorgensen, ejorg04@gmail.com; and chair Janie Montang, janiem@netamumail.com.

This committee is seeking a candidate for Co-Vice President for Programs for election at the Spring Conference in April. The slate is nearly complete, with candidates already named for Co-President, VP for Membership, and Secretary. The Co-VP for Programs elected this spring will serve one year (2024-2025) with a current VP for Programs and then the following year (2025-2026) with the VP for Programs elected next spring. Those who have served in the office really like this collaboration in which one VP has a year's experience and the new VP benefits from that experience. What do vice presidents for programs do? Together they support branch programming and also research topics and make contacts for presenters for the AAUW Iowa Spring Conference.

The Nominations Committee is also seeking a new member to replace one who will be on the slate for office. Committee members meet primarily via email and are charged with finding viable candidates from across Iowa for any open positions on the Board. As a member of the Board of Directors, only the Chair is expected to attend Board meetings.

Please come forward to share your talents with the rest of AAUW Iowa. Contact committee members by email, or call or text the Chair, Janie Montang, at 515-450-2992. We look forward to hearing from you about serving as VP for Programs or working with us on the Nominations Committee.

Thoughts on Women's Reproductive Rights

Pat Higby, President-Elect

First, Iowa legislators proposed a bill requiring schools to use a video like "Meet Baby Olivia." The video was reviewed by Dr. Emily Boevers, physician and member of the Waverly branch. She found it full of misinformation, and sent a letter informing legislators of its inappropriateness. Personally, I find it to be a Disney-type cartoon of what pro-life groups want you to believe, not the truth. Search for the video online to watch it and decide for yourself whether it should be shown in our schools.

Second, an update on our collaboration with ACLU of Iowa. They have collected over 5,000 signatures for the Reproductive Freedom petition, and over 500 of them came from the efforts of our Iowa AAUW members!!!! Let's keep up the good work. We can continue collecting signatures until the end of June. Bring your petitions to the spring conference!

Third, I request that our members read the book "What Should I Do?" by Dr. Jeffrey Nelson. We will have a Zoom Book Review about it in late March for all AAUW branch members. I think you will find the book easy to read, and full of good, basic information.

Fourth, the Family Planning Council of Iowa is having a Zoom training on reproductive health care on March 19 at 10 am. The registration link is: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/ztwbynm>

Access to Reproductive Health Care Across Iowa:
Title X Clinics, Contraceptive Deserts, and Programs to Bridge the Gap

Where: Zoom
When: March 19, 2024
10:00-11:30AM

Objectives:
After completing the course, the participant will be able to:

- Describe the current availability of family planning services in Iowa
- Identify contraceptive deserts and understand the impact of CPCs
- Describe what over-the-counter and pharmacist provision of contraception could look like and its impact on access to care
- Describe FPCI's Reproductive Health Kit project, including statistics to date on distribution and kit requests

Presented by:
Tara Shochet, PhD MPH

1.5 CONTACT HOURS!

Cost: \$15 for Nursing CEUs, FREE for all other attendees

Iowa Board of Nursing Approved Provider #262

FAMILY PLANNING COUNCIL OF IOWA

Registration Link Below!

The Light Is On, But. . . .

Pat Higby, AAUW Iowa President-Elect

Illustration by Nancy Barsic

Rape is a four-letter word, a word we prefer to avoid thinking about if possible. But rape cannot be ignored, because it happens to both males and females. Parts of their bodies are used without their consent. Is rape ever justified? In Margaret Atwood's futuristic novel, *The Handmaid's Tale*, babies have become rare because of fertility issues. One would think fertile women would be powerful and treasured, but instead they are enslaved and ritually raped, and their babies are taken from them. These actions are justified by religious beliefs.

In our own time we see a similar situation. The use of a female's uterus without her consent is gestational rape. It is not only legal; in many states, it is mandatory. How can this be justified? Again, it is based on religious beliefs. A minority believes that personhood begins at conception. They claim that this belief is supported by physicians as well as theologians, but that is false. The development of a fertilized egg into an infant human goes through many stages. Personhood could be assigned at any of them. Dr. Scott Gilbert lists at least five: fertilization, implantation, gastrulation, cerebral cortex activity, and the perinatal period. He explains these stages in his lecture, *When Does Personhood Begin?*, given in 2010 to the American Reproductive Health Professional Society at Swarthmore College (transcript at <https://www.swarthmore.edu/news-events/when-does-personhood-begin>). I will not go into detail on all of Dr. Gilbert's observations here, but I do want to share why I believe personhood begins with the detection of a human-specific EEG pattern in the cerebral cortex. That is the evidence that the brain is active in a human way, distinguishable from other mammals or any other animal. That is the medical evidence that someone is alive.

Legislators in Iowa passed a fetal heartbeat bill. They claimed, falsely, that an embryo has a beating heart at six weeks' development and that the "heartbeat" indicates life (or personhood). This is false because anyone who has experience with strokes or traumatic head injuries knows that a body can be sustained artificially by machines. The body's heart will still beat because it is made to beat, and breathing occurs because air is pumped into the lungs. But if there is no brain activity detected by an electroencephalogram (EEG), the body is clinically and legally dead. If the body were compared to a house, we could say there was a

light on, but no one was home. The cerebral cortex of a developing fetus begins to function at 28 weeks of gestation. At that point the EEG pattern indicating human life can be detected. I think of it as the point in time when there is somebody home. It is also a time when, if the fetus were delivered, it could survive outside the womb.

For me brain activity is like bookends that bracket a person's beginning and end of life. It is simple and symmetric. Before there is brain activity, there is no separate person. There is a potential, but that potential is still a part of the female's body. It is her choice whether to endanger her health and possibly her family's well-being to transform a fertilized egg into an infant human being. Taking away that choice is forced use of her uterus without her consent. It is gestational rape. It makes her a handmaiden. Do we really want Iowans to live in the future described by Margaret Atwood?



So You Want to Be on the Ballot

Janie Montag, Algona Branch

So You Want to Be on the Ballot (How to Become a Candidate) —a panel discussion sponsored by the Algona Public Library and the Algona Branch of AAUW—occurred Feb. 8 at the library. The idea for this panel presentation was born when there were no contested races for the local elections last fall. In other words, a serious shortage of local candidates existed.

We hoped audience members would learn about the political process of becoming a candidate, that any concerns would be eased, and people would be encouraged to put their name on the ballot, or urge someone they know to become the candidate.

Panel members included: Tammy Eden, Mikki Erickson, Carter Nath, and Joe Tillman. All have been candidates for local or state offices. They are a bipartisan group: two Republicans and two Democrats; two of them women, two of them men. The moderator was Janie Montag, an Algona AAUW branch member.

The panelists did an excellent job of describing the entire process of running for office, including both the rewards and the frustrations which accompany a campaign. They talked about “after the election,” as well. In their advice to anyone running for office, they stressed reasons to run, plus reasons not to run.

The panelists’ ideas were well received, and questions from the audience were appropriately and expertly answered.

The moderator and the audience thanked the panelists for having the courage to “put their names on the ballot.” Voting is such an important right, one that we have because we are fortunate enough to live in a Democracy. Having strong candidates on the ballot is both essential and critical to the future of America’s Democracy.



**Happy 100th Birthday
To AAUW Iowa
Come celebrate with us
In Cedar Rapids
April 12-13**