



## 2017 AAUW MN State Convention Highlights

**Four members represented the Ely Branch at the State Convention in Willmar – Caroline Owens, Barb Wonson-Luikkonen, Jeanne Tomlinson, and Teresa Sagen. With only four members**

## NORTHWOODS NEWS: May, 2017

*For a .pdf or paper copy of this newsletter, please contact [tkswagen@gmail.com](mailto:tkswagen@gmail.com).*

### Message from Branch President, Pam Brunfelt

As most of you know by now, Program Vice President Barb Soderberg was given the 2017 Distinguished Alumni award by the Vermilion Community College Foundation Board of Directors. Her professional accomplishments were on full display during the scholarship banquet. The college's acknowledgement of her role in opening doors for VCC women in fields such as forestry, natural resource management, and parks and wilderness management is most appropriate. Barb's recognition follows Annette Horvat's award as a Distinguished Alumnus in 2016. AAUW was wonderfully represented by these two amazing women.

Our fundraiser this year was very successful because of the efforts of Marge Forsberg who shepherds us through the process each year. Besides Marge's superb leadership, branch members Jean Green, Lucy Diesslin, Judy Klun, Ruth Leoni, Cecilia Mahl, Pat Merfeld, Betsy Flaten, Laura Moberly, Phyllis Olson, Caroline Owens, Jeanne Tomlinson, Teresa Sagen, and Mary Setterholm volunteered to sell booklets at Herbergers during the fall and spring sales. But as Marge reminded us at the board meeting in April, what really counts is the number of booklets we sell before the actual sales. So thank you to everyone who helped make our fundraising effort in 2016-2017 as success. The scholarships we provide make a real difference in the lives of those we support.

Have a great summer. In spite of the recent weather, we know it is coming. Enjoy the sun, the lakes, and friends and family. We will gather together again in August.

representing the branch, all had an opportunity to accept an award and/or recognition on behalf of the branch:

- Recognition for sponsoring a student to NCCWSL and acceptance of a check for \$555 to offset our expenses
- Awards for Membership (increase of five or more members and an increase of 10% or more in membership )
- AAUW Funds Recognition:
  - 1) Recognition as one of the top ten branches in the state for contributions to AAUW Funds (\$3508.32), and 2) Recognition as 5<sup>th</sup> in the state based on per capita contributions (based on membership ). Total contribution to AAUW

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## Upcoming Events

**Ely Branch May Dinner  
Monday, May 8, 5:30 pm Social, 6:00 pm Studio  
North Dancers, 6:30 pm Dinner \$20 tip included  
Grand Ely Lodge  
Bring your 2017-18 program ideas or send to  
Darlene, Barb, or Pat.**

Planning Committee: Darlene Nemanich, Virgie Ivancich, Kelly Klun

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### 2017-2018 Membership Dues (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018)

As this AAUW year is drawing to a close, it's a good time to reflect on all the ways AAUW has made a difference in the lives of women and girls, both nationally and locally. It's also the time to renew our memberships.

There are three ways to renew:

- 1) Bring your check (payable to **AAUW-Ely**) to the dinner on May 8th at the Grand Ely Lodge, and give to Jeanne Tomlinson.
- 2) Send your check (payable to **AAUW-Ely**) to Jeanne Tomlinson, Treasurer, at 549 Loop Rd, Ely MN 55731.
- 3) Renew online with a credit card by clicking on the link in the AAUW renewal notice you should have received via email or sign into <http://www.aauw.org>.  
(Contact Jeanne if you have questions 235-8470 or [tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com](mailto:tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com).)

Membership dues are \$65.00. (National \$49, State \$9, Branch \$7), (Honorary Life Time members pay \$7, and Paid Life Time members pay \$16.)

Tax information: \$46 of the national dues is tax deductible as a charitable contribution. The remaining \$3 is not because it supports the AAUW Action Fund.

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### AAUW Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup on Tuesday, May 9, 2017

We are trying a new day of the week this year for our Spring roadside litter pickup. We'll meet on Tuesday, May 9 at 8:30 am at the Insula Restaurant for breakfast and then head out to do our two-mile stretch of Highway 169 west of Ely. We'll get organized after we're done eating, hand out vests & maps and then head out. We have always completed our clean-up by noon, sometimes by 11 if we have enough people.

If you've never come before, we hope you'll give it a try this time. It doesn't take that long and we have a good time chatting as we work. Even if you can't do the trash pick-up - plan to join us for

Funds for the state of Minnesota for 2016 was \$117,880.54 .

- The Branch was recognized for their two named grants honoring Branch members, Caroline Owens and Teresa Sagen for their service as Co-Presidents of AAUW Minnesota.

**A highlight of the convention was the keynote speaker, Kabo Yang, Executive Director of the Minnesota Women's Consortium (MWC). AAUW MN was a founding member of MWC. Kabo spoke about her family who emigrated to the U.S. in the 1970's from Laos as political refugees as a result of working with the U.S. during the Vietnam War. Of particular interest was Ms. Yang's story of finding her voice, especially as**

breakfast and cheer us on.

For those who will head out to the highway: remember to wear gloves and sturdy leather shoes or work boots with good ankle support. Even though you'll be wearing a bright yellow safety vest, plan to also wear light- and/or bright-colored clothing so that motorists can see you easily. For your skin protection, wear a hat and long sleeves, and apply sunscreen prior to arriving. And in case the bugs are starting to come out, be sure to bring along a bug repellent.

If you have any questions, call Jeanne Tomlinson at 235-8470 or email her at [tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com](mailto:tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com).

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## Public Policy



Adapted from <http://aauw.org> and submitted by Mary Setterholm

Having just celebrated Equal Pay Day to a rousing success in Ely, what can AAUW Ely do to continue our work to support women and girls in our community? AAUW's campaign to #stand up to sexism can be a good fit for our ongoing individual efforts. If you read your outlook magazine that just arrived, you see some of the continued efforts by AAUW to combat gender bias through research and education. A new video from AAUW drives home the effect on young women of 'sexist micro-aggressions', making women doubt themselves, from second-guessing a great idea, feeling self-conscious about our bodies, or receiving less pay or less respect. Gender stereotypes keep many women from excelling in their careers and realizing their leadership potential. Watch and share the latest video from AAUW: <https://youtube/pITvjVaUvWA>

As the research report *Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership* (<http://www.aauw.org/resource/barriers-and-bias/>) explains, seemingly small acts of sexism (like implicit bias, workplace inflexibility, and prejudiced hiring practices) contribute to the gender leadership gap, and that gap creates a culture where women's work is devalued. It's only a small step from there to devaluing ourselves.

**she balanced her western upbringing in the Hmong community in St. Paul. She continues to be involved in gender equity and racial activism and is pursuing a Ph.D. in Human and Organizational Systems. This year's Legal Advocacy Speaker/Plaintiff, Paul Thein, was outstanding! I heard several members ask "why is a man our LAF speaker"? After hearing Paul story, their question was surely answered. There were tears from many of us hearing about his many losses in his endless fight for the rights of women students and faculty on campus for Title IX violations and sexual harassment incidences at Feather River College. Paul was abruptly placed on leave and his contract was not renewed. He and two other employees filed a suit against Feather**

But just as small acts of sexism can harm us, small acts of protest can empower us — and help build the change society needs. So what can you do?

Here are a couple of ways you can #StandUptoSexism:

1. Challenge Your Own Unconscious Biases

The truth is that even the most dedicated of activists can harbor unconscious biases around issues like gender and race. Fortunately, we can all take action to combat our preconceived ideas. Change begins within each of us, and identifying our own biases paves the way for dismantling bias when we see it happen externally. Take the test here:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/Study?tid=-1>

2. Be an **Active** Bystander

When it comes to sexism, stand up! Don't stand by. The small actions we take on a daily basis are the changes society needs. Speak out if you hear a sexist joke or comment, write a letter to the editor when you read a biased article, and (safely) intervene when you witness an unjust situation.

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## AAUW Ely Scholarship Recipient



Congratulations to Kaitlin Knutson, the 2017 recipient of the AAUW Ely Branch Scholarship. Kaitlin is a student at Vermilion Community College in the Environmental Science Program. After finishing her Associate Degree at VCC, she plans to go to a four-year university to pursue her undergraduate degree. Kaitlin hopes to attend SUNY College of Environment Science and Forestry in New York where one of her favorite authors and ecologist, Robin Wall Kimmerer, is a professor. Best of luck to Kaitlin as she continues to work toward her educational and career goals!

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**River in August 2006. He spoke of how important the AAUW support was and that “It’s fuel to the mind that lets you know you’re not in this by yourself...and It’s therapy for me to be around people who support what’s right.” Last, but not least was the outstanding session presented by four women in the original “Willmar 8”.**



These four women were on the “front lines” and became known as heroes of the women’s movement and etched a spot in the state of Minnesota labor history. On December 16, 1977, eight female bank employees in Willmar, tired of being paid less than men for similar work and

## **Herbergers Fundraising**

A HUGE thank you to everyone who bought booklets and those who sold booklets for the Herberger’s fall and spring sales.

We raised \$2765.71! \$1125 was from members, \$735 was from presale and sale days door sales. \$905.71 was from the two checks we received for having top booklet sales.

Again a Big THANK YOU.

Our next sale is in November with booklet sales starting in September.

Submitted by Marge Forsberg

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## **Membership News**

### **Congratulations Barb Soderberg!**



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### **Thank You and Congratulations!**

Thanks to outgoing Branch Board members, Caroline Owens and Pam Fossum. We are forever grateful for your past and continued support of AAUW and our many branch activities.

Also, congratulations to new board members, Kay Vandervort as Secretary and Darlene Nemanich and Pat

other unfair labor practices, walked out on strike and picketed for nearly two years in the cold, snow, wind and rain before. The outcome was that the bank would have to put a notice on the wall stating they were an equal opportunity employer, and the women could have their jobs back only in the order of seniority as people within the bank left, with no back pay and no reinstatement.

**Don't miss next year's state convention in Faribault!**

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**AAUW Mission:**  
AAUW Advances

Merfeld as VPs Program. We appreciate your willingness to serve in these important roles in our branch.

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## **Have you voted in the 2017 AAUW National Elections?**

**If you want to vote online and have questions or want help, bring your member ID and Pin number to the May 8 dinner (Both can be found on your recent Outlook). Teresa and/or Mary will be there at 5:30 pm. Be sure to check the *Outlook* for candidates, bylaws changes, and proposed public policy program to decide how you want to vote.**



### **Key Dates for the National Election**

- April 3, 2017** Opening date to request paper ballot
- April 17, 2017** Voting begins online  
(NOTE: This is a change from the previously stated 4/14/17, to be in accordance with DC regulations.)
- May 4, 2017** Deadline for AAUW to receive request for paper ballot
- May 16, 2017** Deadline to join or renew membership for eligibility to vote; must be received by 9:00 p.m. EDT
- May 29, 2017** Deadline for mailing paper ballot; ballots must be postmarked by 11:59 p.m. to be counted
- June 15, 2017** Online voting ends at 9 p.m. EDT

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## **AAUW Dates to Remember**

**Monday, May 8, 2017**  
AAUW Ely Dinner  
Grand Ely Lodge

**June 15-18, 2017**  
AAUW Convention  
Washington D.C.

**August, 2017**  
AAUW Board Meeting

**September 12, 2017**  
AAUW Branch Meeting

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equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

**Value Promise:** By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers to that all women have a fair chance.



*Teresa K Sagen*

*AAUW Ely MN Branch Northwoods News Editor*

*13667 Deer Rd*

*Ely, MN 55731*

<http://aauw-mn.aauw.net/branches/ely/>

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