



Northwoods News - October 2022

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS ANDREA AND LINDA

It's hard to believe fall is here -- and it felt like summer was way too short (in our opinion). But we started our AAUW year with a fun branch meeting on September 13. The program was "Two Truths and a Lie" with members telling two true things about themselves and one lie with the group trying to guess which one was the lie!

As a community event, our AAUW branch hosted “Unhappy Hour” on September 20 at Northern Grounds. This year the focus was on the pay inequities of our BIPOC sisters. We had a fun crowd, sold more raffle tickets, and then (at long last) raffled off the beautiful Equality Quilt created by Autumn Cole. Branch member Di White was the lucky one who won the quilt. And three women decided to join our branch that night!

Our branch, together with the Ely Rotary, will be holding an Ely School Board Candidate Forum at 7 pm on October 11 at MN North College. The Q&A format for the eight participating candidates (one candidate is unable to attend) should provide good information for the public to use when voting for their three candidates. The forum will also have an option for later viewing for the community to watch. That information will be forthcoming.

Our Fall Adopt-a Highway trash pickup will occur on Thursday, October 13, at 10 am and Saturday, October 15, at 10 am. Contact Jeanne at tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com if you’d like to help. We’ll also have a sign-up sheet at the next branch meeting. It’s a fun event (really it is) and a way to get to know other members better.

We’ll be sending out a brief “interests/skills” survey to you to indicate if you’d like to help us with various branch work, projects, smaller tasks, etc. Our members have such great talents and may want to use those skills to contribute to our branch mission and activities!

Remember, the next branch meeting on Tuesday, October 11 will start at 5:00 pm, not the normal 5:30 pm, so we can finish the meeting before the start of the Candidate Forum at 7 pm. Come at 4:30 for a half hour of social time before the meeting. Hope to see you there!

Linda and Andrea

Calendar of meetings and events

Join us for the October program! Nancy Ensley, retired physician and area artist, will share her perspectives on Women and Art. The program begins promptly at 5 pm.

BRANCH MEETINGS for 2022-2023 are as follows:

October 11th – Women Artists

- Nancy Ensley (Zoom or in person TBD)

November 8th – Women and Music

- Marcia Homer, Jean Gendreau, Sally Koski

December 13th – Holiday Celebration

- Silent Auction, Dinner

January 10th – TBD

- Jan Guerin leading a book discussion OR Planned Parenthood speaker

February 14th – Keys to Happiness

- Autumn Cole

March 14th – TBD

- Jan Guerin leading a book discussion OR Planned Parenthood speaker

April 11th – Annual Meeting

- No program

May 8th - End of the Year Meeting

- Banquet, Silent Auction

Program Committee: Sally Koski, Peggy Stolley, Sue Peterson

BOARD MEETINGS are held the fourth Monday of the month.

Upcoming Events

By Jeanne Tomlinson

Fall 2022 Adopt-A-Highway litter pick-up plans

I was hoping to get our Fall Hwy 169 litter pickup scheduled in September, but weather and travel plans have interfered with that plan, so it's looking like we'll need to do it in October. Here's the new plan:

Once again, we'll spread this out over 3 days. Weather permitting, on Thursday, October 13 and Saturday, October 15, I will be at Wolf Lake Rd at 10:00 AM with MNDOT vests, trash bags, and maps.

There will be a sign-up sheet at the October 10 Branch meeting at the GEL for you to pick which day you'd be willing to do. The sign-up sheet will also include a section for anyone interested in doing pick-up with a partner (another AAUW member, spouse, friend...) at some other time between October 13-15.

If you won't be able to attend the branch meeting to sign up, please call me (218-235-8470) or email me (tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com), and we'll arrange for "transfer times" for the aforementioned vests, trash bags, and maps.

Branch Updates

Welcome Back to Ely, Pam!

The AAUW Ely branch is happy to have friend and former president, Pam Brunfelt, back in Ely after being away for an extended period of time dealing with health issues. Pam looks wonderful and brings the same feisty personality that we all remember so fondly!

Pam looks forward to connecting with her AAUW friends again. She is now using a wheelchair so has some mobility challenges. Pam would appreciate hearing from folks who would be able to pick her up from time to time for errands, meetings or fun outings. She has a car that she would be glad to let someone else drive. Phone calls, letters and cards to stay in touch are also welcome.

Pam's contact information is:

Phone: 218-780-3932

Address: Sibley Manor, 210 West White St, Apt 102

Email: pam.brunfelt.moh@gmail.com

Fundraising



PIGGY BANKS WILL BE EMPTIED IN OCTOBER!

Bring your piggy banks to the October meeting! Prizes will be awarded for the most clever/artful/or silly decorations on the banks. They will be emptied. Then you can trade them if you want or take yours to refill and bring back throughout the year to empty before they get too heavy to carry!

This is an ongoing fundraiser for AAUW, and funds will go to scholarships and to support our mission projects such as STEM education, pay equity, voter education and Native American justice.

At our December dinner meeting, we will do both an auction and bucket raffle to raise funds. If you have items to donate, bring them to either the October or November meeting or get them to Kay in advance of the December meeting.

Other fundraising--let Kay know if you would like to host:

- **A wine and appetizer pop up**
- **A cooking or craft class of some kind**
- **Organize a movie night**

Membership

Do you know someone who might be interested in becoming a member? Give them a membership card and encourage them to join and/or provide their contact information to Kay for follow up.

And thank you for all your efforts to recruit new members! Please reach out to those you have recruited and encourage them to come with you to the events and meetings.

Kay can be reached at 218-235-6102 or khv771@gmail.com.

Let's Talk About:

Bodily Autonomy

by Anna Heil

Protests have been raging across Iran over the last two weeks after the death of Mahsa “Jina” Amini. The country’s “morality police” (who serve to enforce the 1981 law that women must cover their heads whenever they are in public) arrested the 22-year old Iranian woman on September 13th. This branch of the police determines which women are found to be “improper” and transport them in vans to detention facilities. At one such facility, the Vozara Detention Center, Amini was severely beaten and fell into a coma shortly after collapsing. She died three days later. The public response has been swift and violent; police have reacted to protests across Iran with brutality, with reports of live ammunition, pellet guns, and tear gas being deployed. The government has restricted access to the internet and mobile networks, making organizing and media coverage difficult.

It might be easy for us as American women to view this crackdown on Iranian women’s freedoms as forced conservative Islamic values, but it is important to remember that headscarves and religion are not the problem: patriarchy, government corruption, and a fear of women who are in control of their own bodies are the root causes. The right for women to control their own bodily autonomy is a fundamental liberty that is under attack in many different degrees in many different countries at this moment in history. As recently as February, French lawmakers voted to ban women and girls from wearing a hijab while playing sports; one more step among many by the French government that seeks to target and police European Muslim women.

The women’s movement in Iran is different from what we face here in the U.S., yes, and Muslim women in particular have a unique tightrope to walk. We are fortunate in the United States to have a distinct freedom of press that allows us to discuss politics like this without fear of government retaliation. Despite these differences, I can’t help but see shadows of similarity between what’s happening in Iran and what is happening in the United States. The protests happening across Iran now are nonviolent protests met with disproportionate aggression by a policing arm of the government, and have already resulted in the deaths of at least 9 Iranian citizens. This reminds me of the turmoil of the Black Lives Matter movement and the fear that peaceful citizens had while exercising their first amendment rights. The death of a female citizen by government agents, without any sort of due process or accountability, reminds me of cases like Breonna Taylor, a black American woman who was shot in her home in March of 2020, with no officer charged for the murder. The state-level dictation (and enforcement) of what women can do and cannot do with their bodies reminds me of how the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in June in the first instance of the Court taking a backwards step and reversing a previously recognized civil liberty.

Bodily autonomy is not conditional—we, as a nation and as individuals, should not be able to dictate what choices a woman (or anyone, regardless of gender) makes with her own body, in ANY circumstance. Although we may not always agree with the decision, whether an adult chooses to have surgery, chooses to

have sex, chooses to wear a hijab, or chooses to terminate a pregnancy should never be under threat because of the restrictions placed on her by a government. Accepting bodily autonomy as an essential and unconditional liberty is the most fundamental of all civil rights—after all, if you do not own yourself, you own nothing. I urge you as readers to continue to critically view the evolving legal landscape in the United States for cases that respect or disrupt this idea of essential bodily autonomy, and take whatever political action is in your ability to ensure that this idea remains protected for all.

New Member!

Meet Alison Bell!

Hi. I'm Alison Bell. Here's a very brief history of how I ended up in Ely. I first heard about Ely when I was in high school, and an outfitter came down to Chicago to talk about canoe trips. Although it took me until I was married with children to visit, I fell in love with the area and started coming up every summer. This lasted until a divorce and many years as a single parent.

Although I started my college years at Northwestern University, marriage and three children took precedence, and it wasn't until I was 31 before I finally got my degree in Experiential Education at Northeastern University. Throughout my twenties, I had taken several week-long and weekend intensive workshops on wilderness skills and awareness and had already been teaching for a school based in Wisconsin. I taught all survival skills including wild edible and medicinal plants, primitive shelters, tanning, and tracking. After I received my degree, I created Dirtworks, a program for children. I taught in Montana, North Carolina, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Twenty years ago I met my husband, Toby. We've been fortunate enough to live in many places and travel extensively. I brought him up to Ely one summer and he too, felt as I did. We moved up the summer of 2021. Now we are both semi-retired and enjoying spending as much time as possible in this beautiful wilderness.

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