



Northwoods News - November 2022

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS ANDREA AND LINDA

We hope everyone is enjoying the end of fall and getting ready to enjoy all the things we love about winter in Northern Minnesota (unless of course, you escape to warmer states – you know who you are). The rest of us will be skiing, snow blowing, shoveling, making soup and stew, and reading in warm socks and sweatpants.

It's been a busy and successful fall for our branch! The presentation by Mak Mars from PAVSA (Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault) at Tuesday Group as part of "Awareness.....Then Change" was very well attended and informative. Great job, Autumn, Jodi, and the entire Public Policy team!

The School Board Candidate Forum on October 13 was very well done and provided voters the opportunity to choose the candidates that they feel will be best for our Ely students. Thanks to the Public Policy Committee and Ely Rotary for another fine job informing the community!

Seven of our branch members attended the Northland Get Together hosted by the AAUW Brainerd Branch. It was a beautiful early October weekend and the inspiring speakers on the panel shared their experiences growing up as Indigenous or immigrant women. We were also able to learn about the activities of other branches in Northern Minnesota and share our successes with them.

We had about twenty members, along with several spouses, attend the final undefeated varsity girls' volleyball game. Many of us had dinner at the Boathouse beforehand and had

lots of laughs along with excellent food and drink. It's a good reminder that the women in our branch share good friendship as well as support for the mission and values of our organization. We would love to do more of these fun pop-up events so feel free to share your ideas.

Finally, we had an excellent program at the October branch meeting with Dr. Nancy Ensley who spoke about both her art and her experiences as an orthopedic surgeon. Nancy is a pretty amazing person with many talents. We had thirty-one women attend the meeting!

Please take a look at the updates to our website at [AAUW Ely Branch of Minnesota](#). We hope you'll find it more informative and up to date.

We will send out a short interest survey in November to all members. We hope to find out what individual talents and experiences our members might bring to the AAUW mission and our branch activities as well as what issues you care most about.

Come to the next branch meeting on November 8 to hear Marcia Homer, Jean Gendreau, and AAUW member Sally Koski present Women in Music! With a focus on women composers internationally, nationally, regionally, and locally, they will highlight a few and play some examples of their music in a multimedia presentation. Sounds wonderful!

Hope to see you on November 8!

Andrea and Linda

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Join us for the November program! Marcia Homer, Jean Gendreau, and AAUW member Sally Koski present **Women in Music!**

BRANCH MEETINGS for 2022-2023 are as follows:

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.

PUBLIC POLICY

AAUW Ely, Public Policy Committee

By Pam Ransom

The Public Policy Committee continues to work on its goals for this year which include:

(1) “Creating public awareness and a greater understanding about the underlying causes of pay inequity for Indigenous women, through presentations to key stakeholders in the greater Ely area”... and

(2) ”promoting an informed electorate” through “collaborating with Rotary to host candidate forums.”

In October, we sponsored two community events that raised awareness about: (1) the impact of underlying causes that lead to economic insecurity of Indigenous women, and (2) sponsoring, with Rotary, a Candidate Forum for the upcoming Ely School Board election on November 8th.

1) Indigenous Women, Sexual Abuse, and Available Services:

On October 4th, AAUW Ely co-sponsored, together with Empower, Mak Mars’ presentation to Tuesday Group. Mak works for PAVSA (“Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Abuse”) in Duluth, MN. He spoke about justice for Native American / Indigenous women and the services that are available to victims of sexual assault. Special thanks to Autumn Cole and Jodi Chaffin for taking the lead on planning and executing this event, and Linda Sutton, Kay Vandervort, Jessica Anderson, and Mary Setterholm, and other public policy committee members who helped make this a success.

2) Ely School Board Forum for upcoming election on November 8th:

This Forum, held on October 11th, was planned and co-sponsored by AAUW Ely and the Ely Rotary Club. On the auditorium stage at Minnesota North – Vermillion College auditorium were seven of the nine Ely School Board candidates including: Ray Marsnik, Anthony Bermel, Tony Colarich, Chad Davis, Jeremy Engen, Rochelle Sjoberg and Jennifer Westlund. Candidates not able to attend the Forum included Claire High and Mike Scherbing. The Forum was moderated by Teresa Sagen, candidates were asked questions by Kay Vandervort (AAUW) and Jeff Sundell (Rotary), and “Timers” included Caroline Owens and Linda Sutton. Special thanks to these AAUW members and others who helped coordinate and volunteered at the School Board Forum.

At the Forum, candidates were given the opportunity to introduce themselves and provide an opening statement. Then Kay and Jeff asked each candidate a question on a specific topic. Examples of questions to specific candidates included:

- “If the budget has to be reduced, where would you look to make those reductions?”
- “If COVID cases within the community or school rise significantly, under what circumstances would you vote to return to remote learning or masking?”
- “What other measures do you recommend to protect the health of students and staff?”
- “In addition to the school building project, are there any measures you would propose to better protect our students?”

For the candidates’ answers to these questions and more, please see The TIMBERJAY (edition 10/21/2022, page 9B) and the Ely ECHO (edition 10/22/2022, page 2).

Program in November: On November 22nd at Tuesday Group, Dani Pieratos (Harvest Nation Food Security in Bois Forte) will discuss Indigenous Women and Economic Development. Dani Pieratos is the Harvest Nation President, Bois Forte Food Sovereignty and Sustainable Agriculture Group Co-Founder. Dani is deeply rooted in food sovereignty and access. She graduated from Stanford University in 2012. Since that time, she has worked in a Tribal housing program, been a government program administrator, and is a grass-roots organizer. In 2018, she took a leap of faith and became a social entrepreneur (with her mother) to investigate the potential viability of Harvest Nation, an indoor CSA farm concept. While she waits for the farm to launch, Dani is helping to build the food sovereignty movement in her community by assisting in the development of the Bois Forte Food Sovereignty Agriculture Community Group. These experiences have provided Dani with a unique perspective concerning systems change and the opportunity to contribute her talents to food justice work.

AND.....Another issue that you might be interested in reading about--Native Adoption Law is at the center of a Supreme Court Case, Brackeen v. Haaland, that “threatens the federal law protecting the bond between Native American children and their families and tribes.”

- [A Native grandmother’s custody battle reaches the Supreme Court \(msn.com\)](#)

- [Native adoption law at center of Supreme Court case used ‘every day’ in Minnesota | MPR News](#)

- [Supreme Court to Hear Challenge to Law on Adopting Native American Children - The New York Times](#)
([nytimes.com](#))

<https://www.bing.com/search?q=supreme+court+native+american+cases&FORM=QSR>
[E6](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

AAUW-Ely STEM 2023 Underway

By Jeanne Tomlinson

For those of you who are new to our branch – and as a reminder for those who aren’t – we’ve been doing “STEM Workshops” since 2012 (although skipping 2 COVID years). This is a Saturday event held sometime in March or April for 5th through 8th grade girls and provides hands-on 50-minute workshops in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. We do this event in an effort to get more girls interested in STEM fields as a possible career choice since women are still under-represented in these fields.

Our first committee meeting for our 2023 event will be a luncheon meeting on Thursday, November 10, at a local restaurant. We’ll talk briefly about general plans, then review the application we’ll be submitting to Lake Country Power for an Operations Round-Up grant, and then discuss next steps in planning for the event.

We need lots of helpers for this event, especially on the day before the event preparing materials and the day of the event. We also need women willing to help in the planning and promoting processes.

If you would be interested in participating in any aspect of this event or just want a little more information, please contact Jeanne Tomlinson at tomlinson.jeanne@yahoo.com or 218-235-8470. I'll add you to my "STEM contacts" list, and you'll get notifications about meetings as well as minutes from the meetings.

FUNDRAISING



PIGGY BANKS CAN BE EMPTIED AT EVERY MEETING!

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.

NEW MEMBER!

Meet Kym Poulsom!

I'm Minnesota born and raised, married for 25 years with two children and six grandchildren. I have been fortunate enough to travel the world for both work and pleasure which includes a four-year tenure in Saudi Arabia and several mission trips throughout Africa.

I currently work for Allianz Investment Management where I design and govern vendor management programs. I recently made a permanent move from the cities to "the cabin," and AAUW has been a key contributor to my acclimation to the area. I enjoy too many hobbies to list or to partake of regularly but spending time with my family is always a priority.



NEW MEMBER!

Meet Denise Johnson-Case!

Hi all! I'm Denise - happy to meet all the Ely AAUW members!

My family is native Ely, and we return pretty much every summer. For many of us, Ely feels like home. I love the lakes and forests, the beautiful seasons, the wildlife and the people.

I'm accidentally an engineer, jumping off my intended path after earning my BS and immediately having twins. It got difficult and they "lost me" for a bit (childbirth is still way too dicey!), but they brought me back, and I've been enjoying bonus rounds ever since. Thirty years after the BS, I crossed a big one off my bucket list and earned a doctorate. I joined the faculty at a student-centered state school in Missouri where I discovered I loved being a professor as much as a student. The only thing missing nearby was family. We lost my mom, a great Finn, full of sisu and adventures, just before COVID. She reminds us life is way too short and even when it's challenging, never miss a great boat ride and fishing trip.

Came to Ely with a friend who started looking for land, and somehow it was me who ended up finding heaven in a bit of forest on Eagles Nest Lake. It's a challenging spot, and I enjoy working with my dad to make it habitable. We've been clearing and hauling gravel down the bluff so much he's traded his walking stick for a sledge hammer and chainsaw. My university launched some popular online programs and I can teach from anywhere. Wouldn't miss this chance for anything. One cousin is here already, and more are looking. My brother and sis-in-law just found a place. My kids and their families are still too far, but we'll figure it out. As my aunt and uncle said during a recent visit, "Ely will steal your heart". I enjoyed meeting so many welcoming women at the September meeting - looking forward to working with you!