



## Northwoods News – May 2025

### MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS ANDREA AND LINDA

Happy Spring, Ely Branch Members (although there is snow out my window this morning),

My goodness, our 2024-2025 branch meeting season is nearly complete – just our May Banquet and Silent Auction coming up on May 12 (remember, it's a **Monday!**) at 5:30 at the GEL. As usual, Kay has been diligently putting the baskets together and, as always, it will be a great time to socialize with friends and bid on some beautiful items and consumables donated by our generous branch members. We hope to see everyone then!

Last Friday, ten of us from our Ely Branch traveled to Austin, MN for the AAUW Minnesota Annual Meeting, where we gathered with members from the other Minnesota branches. State President Kelsey Waits shared highlights from the past year and discussed the need to navigate the challenges currently facing our communities relating to gender equity. We want to express special appreciation to our Ely members, Teresa Sagen (State Finance Chair and Administrative

Assistant) and Barb Wonson-Liukkonen (VP AAUW Funds) who had prominent roles in the proceedings. Also, congratulations to Ely member Karen Reichensperger who is the newly elected State VP of Program. Thanks to all of you!

Our branch presented a Resolution that was adopted by the membership stating that “AAUW branches in Minnesota will work toward fostering a sense of safety and support for LGBTQIA+ residents and visitors in our communities.” Thanks to Kay Vandervort for writing the Resolution and providing resources to all the branches for ways to accomplish the goal.

A highlight of the Annual Meeting was spending time with the Ely women who attended, three of whom had never attended one before. Having the time to spend getting to know each other better (including an “after party” sharing a glass of wine or two in one of our hotel rooms) was delightful. Our appreciation for the women in our branch is impossible to overstate.

Once again, because of the generosity of our members, the Ely Branch is able to provide scholarships for:

- A non-traditional student from MN North College – Vermilion Campus,
- A Women in the Trades Scholarship for the first time,
- Two students to attend the Northwoods Young Writers Camp,
- Three 5th grade girls to participate in the STARBASE STEM Youth Camp, and,
- A young MN North – Vermilion Campus Wildlife Law Enforcement student to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL).

Finally, we want to express our gratitude for all that YOU do to make our branch a pretty special organization. It’s a pleasure to spend time together doing good advocacy work, supporting the AAUW mission of equality for all women and girls, and having a whole lot of fun as we work together. Hope to see you all on May 12 (**Monday**)!

Linda and Andrea



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**May 12, 5:30 PM, GEL - Branch Meeting (Note the change to Monday, not Tuesday! Thanks!)**

End of year banquet and silent auction.

**If you need a ride** to a meeting or event, please be sure to contact Linda Sutton!

**BOARD MEETINGS** are held the Monday after the branch meeting each month.

## WOMEN IN THE TRADES SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship committee is happy to announce that this year's Women in the Trades scholarship has been awarded to Carena DeBeltz! This \$2000.00 scholarship is given to a woman (high school or beyond) that is accepted or enrolled in a nontraditional trade program (ie plumber, electrician, mechanic, HVACTech, boilermaker, construction worker, line person). Carena graduates this year from Ely and will attend NDSU's Construction Management program.



Pictured are Sarah Paro, Carena DeBeltz, Barb Soderberg, and Darlene Nemanich.

## FUNDRAISING



**By Kay Vandervort**

### **May Banquet**

Once again, we'll do an auction at the May Banquet which is scheduled for **Monday, May 12** with bidding starting at 5:00.

We hope that everyone will be able to donate toward one or more of our auctions during the year. It doesn't have to be much. We find there's no best guess on what people will bid on so if you're unsure, the answer is yes. Items valued between \$10 and \$25 will be placed in the bucket raffle or combined with other items in the silent auction. Our bidders particularly like food and experiences.

If you plan to bring food items, let Kay know in advance and then bring them before 4:45 the evening of the banquet. Other items can be dropped off at Kay's house, 629 E. Boundary St as quickly as possible. Call or text 218-235 6102 just to make sure she is home before bringing your items. We are looking for wine, coffee, tea, and snack items to complete some baskets. People also like personal care items etc.

### **Summer Garden Party**

The Summer Garden Party will be **Saturday, July 12** at Barb and Kurt Soderberg's house. This is the event that brings in the most revenue and the most new members, so start thinking about what you could donate and/or who you will bring as a guest.

A few ideas for donations:

- If you're dividing perennials, place a few in a pot, label them and nurture them so they're lovely in time for the garden party
  - Garden pots or decorations
- Great things to do like pontoon ride with cocktails or learning how to bake bread or to cook a Mexican meal
  - Art, pottery, quilts
  - Accessories such as purses, scarfs, and hats
  - Kitchen items and food of course

We will be looking for volunteers to help with organizing and serving the meal and with keeping the auction and bucket raffle flowing smoothly.

**POP UP! It's Your Birthday! It's My Birthday, it's Everyone's Birthday!**

**Sunday May 18, 2:30 pm**, at the Folk School.

Bring a wrapped gift that you made or that cost no more than \$10. We'll welcome back our snowbirds and get to know each other better.

There'll be presents, cake of course, beverages, and fun. We'll also pass a hat for donations toward our scholarships and mission projects.

Feel free to bring a friend.



**MEET OUR MEMBERS!**

**SAY HELLO TO AUTUMN COLE!**



I'm a happy, active person who is community minded and enjoys being a part of groups like AAUW. I joined AAUW because of the Public Policy Group as I have long been a social activist, especially involving equal rights for women and girls.

I grew up in New London, MN with two loving, working parents and my brother. My parents grew up on a farm, and I still like the view of farmland. In my younger years, i worked as a ranch hand, a chimney sweep, a billboard painter, a mason tender, and a YCC camp director. I spent time traveling to Europe and to most of the national parks in the U.S.

With a love of learning and over many years, I got my Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, specializing in providing therapy to survivors of sexual and domestic abuse. I was a therapist for 40 years and provided counseling and staff supervision at three different community mental health facilities. And yes, I actually enjoyed counseling teenage girls! During some of this time, I was also a foster mom to Jayson and taught at three different community colleges in MN and Colorado. I directed the Bemidji State Applied Psychology program in Hibbing for many years and also taught many classes there. And being a student of positive psychology, I became a Certified Happiness Coach and taught Happiness classes, too.

I love Ely and have lived here for 35 years and am happily married to my husband Phil, a retired archaeologist and realtor. We love to



bicycle year-round and had fun biking on the lakes this winter. I have participated in numerous triathlons and hope to do a triathlon this summer with my Godchild, Cate. I enjoy being active outdoors which includes swimming across Miner's Lake, canoe trips, skiing, and bike trips. Since i have always liked fashion and thrifting, this led to being an owner of Secret Sisters

Boutique for 11 years, an upscale consignment shop at the edge of town. I still miss working there.

For most of the past year, I was a caregiver for my brother who lives in Willmar, as he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Gratefully, he is now doing well. So yippee, I am back teaching sewing classes at the Ely Folk School and sewing quilts, instructing spin cycle classes at Functional Fitness, attending the Presbyterian church, helping with the ECR kids mountain biking classes, participating in two book clubs and two quilt guilds, taking spiritual classes, and trying to follow our family motto of "Helping others is what life is all about." It's important for me to be kind, accepting of people from various backgrounds and perspectives, and to focus on the small things in life that bring joy. Now that's enough of me!! I wish YOU a superbly grand day and see you all soon! Go AAUW!



## MEMBERSHIP

If you know someone who might like to join us, bring them to any meeting to check us out with no pressure. Or, schedule a coffee get together for the person and invite another member or two to talk about AAUW.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ely Branch of AAUW respectfully acknowledges that we are on the homelands of the Lake Superior Bands of Ojibwe people and within the ceded lands of the Treaty of 1854, where they retained rights to hunt, fish, and gather.

We also recognize other Indigenous peoples who lived here before the Ojibwe people. These include Dakota, Cree, and other tribes that have occupied and utilized this land.

We recognize the perseverance and survival of our Indigenous neighbors who continue to live throughout this region. We're deeply grateful for the multitude of ways that the Anishinaabeg have and continue to contribute to collective well-being through sharing of knowledge and time.