



Northwoods News - September 2025

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS ANDREA AND LINDA

Once again, summer is winding down, fall is definitely in the air and it's just about time for our first branch meeting of the 2025-26 season. We really look forward to seeing our friends again on Tuesday, September 9 and welcoming our thirteen (!) new members to the branch. We've tried to capture a few highlights since we were last together.

The annual Garden Party in July was a smashing success – Kay will report more on that front, but we want to extend a huge thank you to Barb Soderberg (and Kurt too, of course) and as always Kay Vandervort for her considerable work in pulling it all together with the assistance of an enthusiastic committee.

We are so pleased this year to have been able to provide almost \$8,000 in scholarships. The college scholarships included our first-ever Woman in the Trades scholarship, the non-traditional MN North scholarship and sponsoring a young college student to the National Conference for Collegiate Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) in Washington, DC. In addition, we sent two young high school girls to the Northwoods Writing Camp on Atsokan Island on Rainy Lake and three 5th grade girls to STARBASE Stem camp in Duluth. The recipients have all expressed their gratitude and reported excellent experiences.

We had the opportunity to work with the Ely State Theater to show the movie *Lilly*. The 2024 film depicts the life of Lilly Ledbetter as she battles the court case, Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. We were fortunate to be able to provide the Ely community the opportunity to learn more about this amazing woman who inspired the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009. AAUW National was instrumental in supporting the passage of this important law that helped bring transparency to the workplace and was an integral step on the continuing path toward gender pay equity. Thanks to the many members (and especially Fredrica Musgrave who was at the theater every day) who greeted attendees and provided information about pay equity and the work of our branch.

An exciting note for the upcoming year is that our Ely branch will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2026. We'll celebrate this milestone together at our May meeting. A number of members will be needed to plan a meaningful tribute to the branch. It should be a good chance to learn more about the early days and the women who started it all and the issues that mattered to them at that time.

On the subject of "looking for" people, several new board members are needed for the 2026-27 season. Those positions include a President/Co Presidents, a Finance Officer and a Membership VP. Please give some thought to serving in one of these capacities, even if you're currently quite new to the branch. It's a good chance to make a difference, promote the good work we do in the community and make great new friends!

Finally, for now, we hope everyone has had a great summer and look forward to starting another successful year of learning together, raising money for scholarships and generally enjoying the company of fabulous women.

Linda and Andrea

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Branch meetings are held the second Tuesday, 5:30 pm, Grand Ely Lodge.

September 9 - Carly Wogen: We are introducing a theme for the year of intentional living in a remote area. Our first program begins with the benefits of having access to higher education through the lens of intentional living, and specifically the resources the college can provide this remote community.

October 14 - Enjoy a book! ***Housekeeping*** by Marilyn Robinson

November 11

December 9

January 13

February 10

March 10

April 14

May 12

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.

PUBLIC POLICY meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays of every month, 3 pm at Grace Lutheran Church in Ely.

OCTOBER'S BOOK SELECTION

By Jan Guerin

An additional feature in our programming has been to read a novel chosen for its potential for interesting discussion due to great writing, strong characters, and thematic depth. Past selections have been *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell and *My Antonia* by Willa Cather.

This year we will read the 1980 novel *Housekeeping* by Marilyn Robinson. This novel has complex characters; a lonely yet beautiful landscape; themes of loss and family; and the hopefulness of resilience innate in the human condition.

Robinson was deeply influenced by the transcendentalists and their collective belief that truth and spiritual insight can be found in nature. We will use the role of nature in the novel and how it influences the characters as a springboard for our discussion. Past discussions have been engaging and lively, and Robinson's dense but beautiful novel will be a great addition to our past (and hopefully future) discussions.

AAUW-Ely Adopt-A-Highway Spring 2025

By Jeanne Tomlinson

A success for our Spring roadside litter pickup that we did on May 16, 2025!

We had our traditional meeting for breakfast at the GEL prior to heading out to our assigned Highway 169 stretch of highway. Rain was threatening but we all decided that we wanted to drive out and give it a shot anyway. We had 8 volunteers total so we divided into teams of two, each covering a ½ mile stretch of the highway. Some of us ended up

getting pretty wet because a downpour started just before we finished. Others managed to finish before the downpour. (Well done, Caroline & Denise!!)

Thank you so much to Deb Busch, Denise Case, Julie Hignell, Caroline Owens, Sue Peterson, Andrea Pike, and Linda Sutton for braving the elements and getting it done.

We'll be doing our Fall Litter Pickup soon, so if you feel like you missed out, you can watch for a sign-up sheet at our September 9 branch meeting or contact me and let me know you're interested at tomlinson.jeanne@gmail.com.

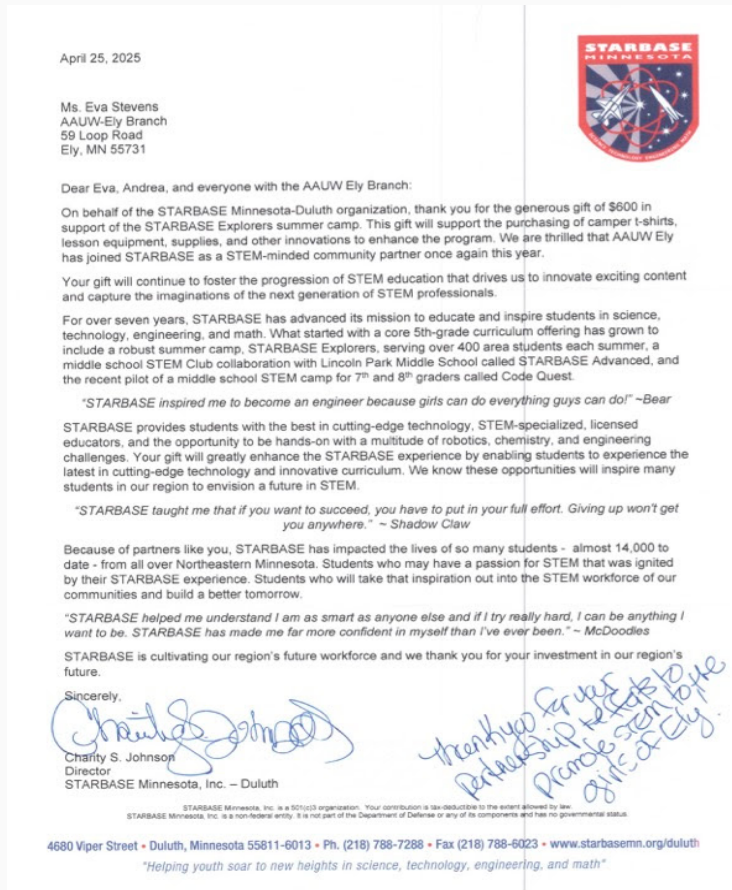
Picture shows the "wet crew": Deb Busch, Andrea Pike, Julie Hignell, Sue Peterson, Linda Sutton.

Photo taken by other wet crew member, Jeanne Tomlinson.



STARBASE STEM

We received this lovely thank-you note from STARBASE. This summer, we sent three girls to the program.



MINNESOTA NORTH - VERMILION CAMPUS SCHOLARSHIP

We received this nice thank-you letter from our Vermilion scholarship recipient, Haley Sherman.



1900 E Camp St, Ely MN 55731 / 218-235-2166 / Elizabeth.chapman@minnesotanorth.edu

Scholarship Thank You

Dear American Association of University Women (AAUW) Scholarship Committee,

I want to thank everyone who decided to award me this scholarship. It means so much to me because it gives me the ability to continue my passion of studying for my future career without having to worry about if I will be able to continue my studies because of the tuition costs. Again I just want to express my greatest gratitude for this scholarship because now it eases most of that burden. I will continue to work hard and continue to push myself so that I can graduate and do what I love also because I do not want this scholarship to be taken for granted.

Sincerely, Haley Sherman

FUNDRAISING



By Kay Vandervort

Pigs on Parade in September

Bring your loose change, your penny jar, or that gorgeous AAUW pig you decorated and filled with change to the September meeting. (If one community can build a hospital with their loose change, we can surely help support our scholarship funding with the change buried at the bottom of our purses.)

For those of you new to the group, we have plain piggy banks that you can decorate, and then when you throw your loose change on the dresser or clean out your purse, drop it in to donate to AAUW for our scholarships fund and mission projects.

Garden Party

Thank you to everyone who made this year's garden party a success. As always, Barb Soderberg's gardens were gorgeous and Barb and Kurt were gracious hosts. We had a record crowd and record fundraising with a total of almost \$3,700 raised. And a special thanks to all those who donated toward the lunch and/or the auction. We had fantastic food and really desirable auction packages. There were some guests from the AAUW in Hibbing, and they raved about our event. Also, thanks to all the members who promoted the garden party and who attended. This event is successful because of your involvement.

Next up: Christmas Party Auction

It's never too early to drop off items for the Christmas party auction. But for sanity purposes, it can be too late. Please think about what you can

donate now. It does not need to be a complete package. Sometimes a bowl, a book, an accessory, a piece of art, or a non-perishable food item inspires a terrific, themed package. But it takes time to locate the other items that might be added in order to have people bidding higher and higher.

Drop off at Kay's house, You can text at ... to make sure I'll be home to receive your donation.

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.

Use this QR code (or Google "Ely AAUW") to view the Ely AAUW webpage. The webpage includes a link to our Membership Form (printable) or online membership link and highlights of what our branch has been doing.



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.