



American Association of University Women

Tomah WI Branch – Organized in 1972

the **Twig** branch newsletter – March 31, 2020

A Note from President Audrey Chambers:

Hello Ladies and Dick,

There are a few things that will cause us to be creative with the Tomah Branch of AAUW.

Please do **NOT** renew your membership online using the National database. I have a few questions on how the process works and until I receive the answers, I am asking you to please wait.

New officers

- Joline Powell will continue as our VP of Membership
- Deb Thiel is a candidate for President
- Audrey Chambers is a candidate for Treasurer

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

Please respond via E-mail so everyone is informed if there are other candidates nominated.

The voting will also be done online so everything is transparent to our members.

On a personal note:

Thinking about each of you as we go through this frightening survival mode dealing with COVID-19. It seems strange to be so isolated - soon I might talk to myself, just to hear a human voice. Actually, more phone calls are being made to keep in touch with family and friends. To keep me busy and bring some sunshine into my days my sewing machine will be humming as I make a few quilts, I am finishing two quilts on the Underground Railroad and starting one on the Barns Without Corners; The Round Barns of Vernon County.

Do you like Trivia?

The blocks for the Underground Railroad are actual signals to those who are trying to escape slavery. Women would hang their quilt over the fence with a pattern telling the run away slaves what to do next. For example a quilt made with the North Star pattern tells the run away to head North (Canada). The block with a basket in the center of each block tells the runaway to gather food for the long journey which will start soon etc.. The pattern of the Anvil tells the runaway to gather tools for the journey. The quilting book on the Underground Railroad not only gives the patterns for each block but has an article with each block telling the meaning and history of each block. Very interesting.

Here are some facts regarding round barns. Did you know the United States is the only country in the world that made round barns. In Vernon County most of the construction and supervision of the round barns was done by Alga (Alge) Shivers, once a slave from Tennessee. He used the Underground Railroad and ended up in Vernon County. I have not done much applique so it will be a new learning experience. The history of these 12 barns written by Kevis Alderson and his wife, Patsy and painted pictures of the barns taken from photographs. The name of the book is "Barns Without Corners: The Round Barns of Vernon County.

This has been a difficult and challenging project. First, I contacted the Alderson's to get their permission to use Patsy's paintings as a pattern for my quilt blocks. Enlarging them to scale took some creative thinking. Finding the wool in the colors needed to mirror the painting of the barns has also been a challenge. It has been especially difficult to find the right color wool in white. There are many shades of white used in her paintings, i.e., white with a blue shadow, dirty white, yellow white, etc.

Someday, if this project turns out, I want to display the quilt at the Historical Society of Vernon County and arrange to meet with the author and artist, Kevin and Patsy Alderson. It will be rewarding to either finish the quilt during this isolated time at home time or at least complete a number of the blocks. Wish me luck!

Please stay safe and find a special project or activity that gives you a purpose each day.

Audrey

Our Mission: The American Association of University Women (AAUW) advances equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

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- If you have newsletter items, please send them to Bonnie Peterson, AAUW Secretary, at wordemp@centurylink.net or 12808 County Hwy. PP, Tomah, WI 54660. Phone: 608-372-7501

HELLO! I'm also wishing all the best for our AAUW members and their families. As for my life, I am busy with Grandmas's Day Care for my two little guys, ages 4 and 2. Just trying to do my part in keeping them safe. I love their being with me, but I have to admit that I'm hoping for some warmer weather so we can be outdoors. Whew ... they are busy! When I was younger, much younger, I always wished to have three children and, of course, a career. Yes, I've had a career and am still working from home, as I have since 1994! We were blessed with one daughter. As for longing for three kids, I now see how misguided that aspiration was! Ha, Ha! These two little guys have me running in circles! I hope we make some good memories along the way, though!

Bonnie