

the**Twig**branch newsletter – October 23, 2020

Minutes of the Last Meeting

We had a Google Meeting at 6 p.m. on October 19, 2020.

Participating were: Deb Thiel, Tammy Hewuse, Ann Gerzel, Deb Young, Cindy Zahrte, Barb Sullivan, Sonia Olson, Dick Thiel and Bonnie Peterson.



Happy Halloween 2020 Style!

Scholarships

There was discussion regarding the branch's scholarship program with Wisconsin Technical College. We have about \$1,000 earmarked for scholarships, enough to fund two \$500 scholarships. This will be the third year we are offering scholarships. We discussed the current criteria for the scholarships, that being a single mother from Monroe County in her second year of a WTC program. Questions raised: Is that too restrictive? Should we broaden the criteria? It was decided that we will continue the second-year criteria and Monroe County student status. We will broaden the scholarship access, but instead of limiting it to a single mother we can expand it to a woman with special circumstances as a priority and who has a financial need. Motion made by Cindy Zahrte, seconded by Dick Thiel. Motion approved unanimously.

Barb Sullivan suggested that in future years, we may want to consider a scholarship for a woman entering a non-traditional training program.

AAUW-WI

President Deb Thiel updated us on the state's 5-Star Commitment, an effort to align local branch, state and national levels in a strategic plan. She has information that she will be sending out, and also suggested that it be discussed at a future meeting.

An All-District Zoom meeting will be held on November 17. Deb T. will also be finishing her role as District 4 Coordinator next year. A nominating committee is being formed to fill vacancies. Would you be interested in a District position? Contact Deb T. for more information.

The AAUW-WI state convention for 2020&2021 will be a free, virtual event in April. Do you have an idea or suggestion to share?

Barb Sullivan said that the Wisconsin Retired Educators Association recently held a virtual meeting, noting that it went well.

Membership / Finance

There was nothing new to report.

Mary Kay Fundraiser

Anna Mae Rudolph, the sweetie that she is, will be helping us raise scholarship funds again this year! She will be sending out catalogs. She asks that you phone in your order by November 18th. Anna Mae will give you the order total and then you will need to send her a check. The products will arrive to you via mail. Her phone number is 608-372-2235.

Social Media

Megan Divyak is keeping our Facebook page and website populated and updated. Thank you, Megan! She wants our branch members to find and “like” the AAUW-Tomah page. Megan has been in contact with the State AAUW Web Page leader and is working to be sensitive to any potential perceived bias, provide appropriate information and to increase our visibility and engagement with the public.

Program

Deb Young stated at our next meeting, Megan may lead a discussion about using social media and Tina Thompson will provide an overview of the Tomah Chamber and Visitors Bureau.

Deb introduced a PBS video “Wisconsin Women Vote” which we watched together. Here are a few snippets from the women featured in this excellent video.

US Senator Tammy Baldwin: “Remind others that we all have the capacity to be role models.” Regarding the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage she said, “I think this is a really big deal. It’s so important to understand how recent it has been and how far we’ve come.” Her advice to women wanting to make a difference, “Roll up your sleeve and just do it.”

US Representative Gwen Moore: “I’m so proud that this was the first state to ratify the women’s right to vote.” She also reflected on the accomplishments of Eleanor Roosevelt, saying, “When I think of her, I feel very inspired.” Regarding women’s right to vote she added, “You know what they say. If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.” Her advice, “We need you, young women. We need you to be at the table.”

Former WI Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch: “As a mother of two young girls, I look forward to a day when they grow up and there are no more glass ceilings and they’ll just wonder how all the glass got on the floor.” “We can celebrate ballot box equality.” Yet, in terms of the number of women in government, women lag behind, she explained. “There are more women voters, but women representation has not kept the same pace. In Washington DC, it’s about 25% and in Madison, it’s also about the same.”

Wisconsin Representative Jessie Rodriguez: She is from an immigrant family from El Salvador. “Those suffragettes were working together, building coalitions, talking to their fathers who could vote. It’s a reminder of what we can do and how far we’ve come.” Her advice to women interested in entering politics is, “Get to know your community and know what you stand for, you core beliefs.”

The video also included short interviews with a variety of women voters of differing ages.

We discussed the video before adjournment at 7:28 p.m.

Our Next Meeting: Will be a Google meeting on Monday, November 16 from 6 -7:30PM

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