Spring = favorite time of year. Hands down. New beginnings with calving, planting, blooming. April is the official month of “Hope” and May marks Mother’s Day. It’s impossible not to reflect on how my roots were planted in Agri-Women, where many women may or may not be mothers, but they are definitely mentors.

Three women were the travel agents who helped launch my Agri-Women journey by inviting me to a meeting of Illinois Agri-Women at the Wildlife Prairie Park near Peoria, Illinois: Pat Lawfer, Eleanor Zimmerlein and Shirley Bartelt. Each amazing in her own way and for different reasons. Their form of mentorship was not one that would be the “life coach,” “accountability,” “in touch with your feelings,” “your specialness sets you apart” style that is trending. But their approach was the perfect fit for me. They invited and left the choice to me. They asked and I had the choice of how I would answer. And most importantly, their approach was based on respect. At various points in time, they would ask what I and other members thought. And then they waited to hear what we thought and considered those thoughts as we worked as a group to reach a conclusion. They were willing to try new approaches and I was willing to honor traditions.

About seven years later, another member, Linda Swiercinsky thought I’d be a capable member of the American Agri-Women officer team. And this is the point where I recognize my mom’s contribution to helping me develop skills in public speaking; keeping records; caring about others; following through; appreciating geography, art, and history; and learning how to deal with different personalities and individuals’ goals in sports, through our 4-H club, FFA and other activities. After some investigation into the time commitment and skills required, Linda nominated me and my name went onto the slate. The rest, as they say, is history to be shared in future messages.

This summer, we have the chance to recognize Agri-Women members who have been effective mentors in our states by nominating them for the McCrum-Erickson Mentoring Award.
Right now our members who are experienced in federal policy are preparing to support first time attendees to our Fly-In to Washington, D.C. from June 5-7th. Another team of members is working on a Leadership Development program for members who want to improve their leadership abilities and creating resources to assist with onboarding officers and candidates. The Montana Agri-Women have a fun and educational convention planned for everyone at Bozeman – options starting on Nov. 2 and wrapping up on Nov. 7 – and we could all use a break and a change of scenery!!!

These are just a few of the many ways to engage at home and at the national level. Thank you for joining your fellow women in agriculture on this journey!

Sincerely,

Heather Hampton+Knodle
President
Affiliate: Illinois Agri-Women
aawpresident@americanagriwomen.org

Jacquie Compston
Vice President, Education
Affiliate: Nevada Agri-Women
education@americanagriwomen.org

Kim Bremmer
Secretary
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Kathy Goodyke
Treasurer
Affiliate: Minnesota Agri-Women
treasurer@americanagriwomen.org

Karolyn Zurn - Past President | Affiliate: Minnisota Agri-Women
pastpresident@americanagriwomen.org

2022 Executive Committee

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Treasurer
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Karolyn Zurn - Past President | Affiliate: Minnisota Agri-Women
pastpresident@americanagriwomen.org
American Agri Women
2022 Mid-Year Meeting

By: Rose Tryon, AAW First Vice President

American Agri Women (AAW) holds a Mid-Year meeting every March or April. This year’s Mid-Year meeting was from March 24th through 26th in South Jordan, UT.

We had several Zoom meetings with vital issues leads from agricultural business and economics, education and commodities, and natural resources to start the review of our policy positions before the Mid-Year meeting.

During the Mid-Year meeting, American Agri women members meet to update the organization’s legislative policy positions. We had great discussions and learned a lot from each other during this meeting. These policy updates were voted in and will be used to create AAW’s position statements for the upcoming year.

These position statements will form the bases of our whitepapers, given to legislators and regulatory agencies during our legislative Fly-In in Washington DC. This year’s Fly-In is June 5th -7th, 2022.

Our guest speaker at Mid-Year was Margaret Hage Byfield from American Stewarts of Liberty. Byfield spoke to us about the 30 x 30 initiative. President Biden issued an executive order to tackle the domestic and abroad climate crisis. In this executive order, President Biden established a national goal to conserve at least 30% of US lands and freshwater and 30% of US ocean areas by 2030. This initiative is referred to as 30 x 30.

I want to thank Heather Hampton+Knodle, Jacqueline Compston, Kim Bremmer, Kathy Goodyke, Deb Whalen, and Ruth Jensen for their help and advice during the Mid-Year meeting planning.

We hope to see you all in Washington DC, June 5th – 7th for Fly-In!!
Annual AAW Legislative Fly-In to Washington, DC

By Ruth Jensen

Plans for the American Agri-Women Fly-In to Washington, DC are falling into place very nicely after a rather rocky start with many COVID restrictions presenting challenges to our planning team and members hesitant to travel. In light of the tremendous road blocks, we forged ahead and secured plans. With the limited space, this event is now sold out.

Activities will be kicked off during Orientation led by Vice President, Rose Tryon, when we review our issue policy statements and white papers.

Our over-arching theme is Rebirth, Renew, Refuel which will be highlighted at the Monday morning Symposium and will feature excellent presenters from the Agriculture and Fossil Fuel industries.

We have planned for a roundtable discussion with leaders of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, as well as, USDA agencies such as the Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Farm Service Agency to name a few. Some of the issues we will include: the 2023 Farm Bill, Renewable Fuels, Rural Broadband, Rural Infrastructure, Food Security, and Ag Labor.

Congressional visits will be followed by a ceremony honoring the two AAW Champion of Agriculture awards.

This year, we will host a Special Event at the National Press Club on the “Russia – Ukraine War: A Looming Global Food Supply Crisis” featuring a spokesperson from the Center for Security Policy, the World Bank, a representative from both houses of congress Ag Committees and a few other experts on the subject of impending crisis of worldwide food shortages.

The Government Affairs team is working hard to prepare the Policy Position and White Papers.

For more information contact: Ruth Jensen 805-264-4476 msjensen@comcast.net

Donate to AAW via Amazon Smile

Go to smile.amazon.com select “AAW Foundation” as your charity, and anytime you make a purchase, Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchase.
Legislative Fly-In Schedule
Preliminary Schedule - Subject to Change.
Embassy Suites - Crystal City

AAW 2022

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2022
Breakfast is included with your hotel room and served in the dining area.

2:30 p.m. Registration, Hotel

3 – 5:00 p.m. AAW Orientation, Hotel

Dinner on Your Own

MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2022

7:45 a.m. Taxi, Uber, Metro from Hotel Lobby

7:50 a.m. USDA Jamie Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave., Jefferson Drive Entrance

8 – 8:30 a.m. Security Clearance

9 – 11 a.m. 28th Annual Symposium – “Rebirth, Renew, Refuel” Sponsored by the AAW Presidents’ Council, USDA 107-A Press Room

11:30 – 1:00 Lunch - API

1:15 p.m. Arrive at EPA

1:30 – 2 p.m. Security Clearance

2:00 – 3:30 p.m. EPA Agency Roundtable Visit 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Special Event National Press Club 529 14th Street, NW Russia – Ukraine War A Looming Global Food Supply Crisis (A discussion on impending shortages of food, fuel, fiber, and pharmaceuticals – Is the world prepared?)

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2022

7:30 a.m. Taxi/Ubers Departs for USDA Jamie Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave., Jefferson Drive Security Clearance

7:45 a.m. USDA Roundtable (Homeland Security, NRCS, FSA, USFS, NASS) USDA Williamsburg Room 104-A

8:30 – 11:30 a.m. USDA Roundtable (Homeland Security, NRCS, FSA, USFS, NASS) USDA Williamsburg Room 104-A

Noon – 1:30 p.m. Lunch – On Your Own

1:30 – 4:30 pm Congressional Appointments (On your own)

4:30 p.m. Champion of Agriculture House Agriculture Committee 1300 Longworth

Return to Hotel on your own

Attendees are encouraged to set their own congressional appointments for Tuesday from 12-4pm, and Wednesday as they see fit.

Fly-In Meeting Descriptions:

- **Orientation:** The Orientation Meeting is late Sunday afternoon to allow participants time to arrive and to check in to the hotel. Orientation is the opportunity for everyone to gather together, get an overview of the Itinerary for the week, review the key AAW issues that participants will take to their appointments, and hear from invited speakers. This is also the time when the name tags, agenda packets, and advocacy packets are distributed.

- **Symposium:** This year AAW celebrates its 29th Annual Symposium. The AAW Past Presidents host the Symposium to feature an expert panel on a timely topic. After the speakers present, audience members may ask questions from a microphone. This event is usually recorded, transcribed and made available to members.

- **Agency Roundtable:** The USDA Agency Roundtable has always been a favorite for Fly-In and planned for Tuesday morning. High level agency officials are invited to speak in 15 – 20-minute increments, allowing 5 minutes for Q&A. Two – three hours are generally allowed for this event, depending on the number of speakers.

Evening on Own
2022 AAW Position Statements

You can find the 2022 Position Statements online at www.americanagriwomen.org under the Government Relations tab.

American Agri-Women Foundation

by: Linda Schiffer

Our purpose is to receive and administer funds for promoting and developing educational and leadership programs and opportunities relevant to agriculture. Our overall objective of this organization shall be educational.

Other objectives include:

• To raise funds to support education about agriculture, agricultural education, and leadership development.
• To promote the leadership of American Agri-Women through scholarships, grants, projects, and training.
• To serve as a partner with American Agri-Women in the development of educational and leadership programs and materials.
• We have nine members from across the United States. The terms are three years and there is a two-term limit.

• President: Linda Schiffer
• Vice President: Ardath DeWall
• Secretary: Arlene Kovash
• Treasurer: Chris Wilson
• Anna Morrison
• Lesley Schmidt
• Linda Swiercinsky
• Maggie Howley
• AAW Liaison: Jacquie Compston, Vice President of Education

Would you like to contribute?
The AAW Foundation is funded by donations. To make a donation online do so at: americanagriwomen.org/aaw-foundation or mail a check to:
AAW Foundation
2103 Zeandale Rd
Manhattan, KS 66502

If you have questions please email foundation@americanagriwomen.org.
I would like to donate $__________ at this time.

Please designate where you would like your money to go. If there is no designation, the money will go into the general fund.

Daughters of American Agriculture (for further education)

_____Jean Ibendahl (age 18-23)
_____Sister Thomas More Bertels (ages 24+)
_____Helen Whitmore Convention Scholarship
_____Gail McPherson Fly-In Scholarship
_____Legacy Kids Fly-In Scholarship
_____Mini-Grants
_____Other designated for_______________________________________________________________

_____Other Undesignated Is your gift given as: (please designate as above as well) __________________

_____Memorial gift in remembrance of____________________________________________________
_____In Honor gift ______________________________________________________________________

Address for either if notice is to be sent____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Your Name ______________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________
City, State, Zip ___________________________________________
Phone __________________________________________________
E-mail _________________________________________________

Checks should be made payable to AAW Foundation. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you for your contribution!

Please send donations to:

AAW Foundation Treasurer, Chris Wilson
2103 Zeandale Rd.
Manhattan, KS 66502
The Goal of Belonging

When I was serving on the Board of Directors of the American Hereford Auxiliary, I was asked to represent them at the American Agri-Women Convention. My mission was to ask for their support for the Country of Origin labeling for beef products. Upon joining AAW, my first committee assignment was to chair the Animal Welfare Committee. This was a hot topic that I was very familiar with within the livestock industry. At the time, it was obvious that belonging to this organization would assist us all in reaching our goal. The goal was to stop the Animal Rights Agenda. Examples of what events had occurred are: The Dixon Auction Yard was sabotaged, the UC Davis Animal Research Building was set on fire, and several ranchers were threatened with lawsuits.

The commonality of the AAW and AHA mission statements, goals, and motto, were evident to me. What I had forgotten is that there is an emotional need to affiliate and to be accepted by members. The need to belong, also known as “belongingness” can lead to changes in behavior, beliefs, and attitudes. In motivational theory our actions are motivated by certain psychological needs. The need to belong is an intrinsic motivation to be socially accepted and join with others. An effect of belonging is to create long lasting relationships. AAW has definitely allowed many of us to make lasting friendships.

To increase our sense of belonging, a conscious effort needs to be made by members to participate in the activities that exhibit a commonality. Familiarizing ourselves with the Affiliate Handbook, the Directory, Policy and Procedures Manual, and Bylaws is a must. A member must be focused on similarities and commit time and effort to learning about the organizational details. By doing these things you will be better equipped to learn and accept new and different ways of rational thinking. A sense of belonging provides personal growth by enhancing mental well being. Ask a friend to join AAW and support them when they are willing to accept the responsibilities of being an informed and active participant in American Agri-Women activities.

Sincerely,

Jacquie Compston
Vice President of Education
AAW presents the LEAVEN AWARD to those persons who, to an outstanding degree, have acted as “leaven”, a truly feminine concept since “lady” means giver of bread. “Leaven” (yeast) is a small element that can interact and influence everything around it. It permeates and raises the elements it’s mixed with. Leaven multiplies its effectiveness for good. AAW presents the LEAVEN Award annually to recipients that are nominated by AAW affiliates. An Awards Committee comprised of four (4) former Leaven Award Recipients makes the final selection. The first Awards Committee (1977) came up with the word “Leaven” as a means of evaluating the candidates. Please submit the name of a person whom you feel is outstanding and deserving of recognition for efforts in agriculture and service to AAW. List the qualities and contributions that you feel are appropriate to AAW. There should only be one nominee per affiliate. Candidates must be members of AAW.

The application can be found online at americanagriwomen.org under Membership - Member Login. Submit nominations by August 1 to leaven@americanagriwomen.org.

ELIGIBILITY: The committee will give consideration to a candidate’s achievements, be they on a state, regional or national scale. You may include additional information; comment and letters of support that you feel may strengthen your candidates’ qualifications. The Awards Committee will use an evaluation system, allotting from 1 to 10 points for each quality described by the person (s) making the nomination.

- (L) Loyalty to the mission of AAW
- (E) Enthusiasm
- (A) Anticipatory (thinks and plans ahead; does not react to crisis only)
- (V) Valiant (has courage; overcomes any natural timidity)
- (E) Effectiveness (exhibits ability to produce intended effects)
- (N) Nurturing (encourages and helps develop talents and skills of others)

American Agri-Women Veritas Award

American Agri-Women presents the Veritas Award annually to the person or persons who have given public witness to “the pursuit of truth” in accordance with the principles enunciated in the AAW State of Philosophy: The Call to Power. Of specific interest is responsible media coverage of issues, events, or personalities of the importance of agriculture. Preference is given to persons of institutions who are not required to report on agricultural issues as a means of livelihood. Coverage may include reporting (news stories, features, documentaries, surveys, and/or pictorial representations, i.e. (photographs and cartoons).

The application can be found online at americanagriwomen.org under Membership - Member Login.

Please submit the completed form to veritas@americanagriwomen.org by July 1. The Committee chair will acknowledge receipt of the application by notifying the submitter.

For committee consideration: the ‘selected’ nominee should be able to attend the Convention to receive the award. (If unable, this candidate could be deferred to the following year.)
When you hear about cybersecurity, do you think, “I’m not a big hospital or a bank or an airport control tower. Cyber security is someone else’s worry.”

Alas, it’s becoming more and more our worry. Since Russia’s war on Ukraine, Russia’s malicious cyber-attacks have greatly increased. Friends who work in cyber security tell me that since the war, the attacks are so many and so intense that my friends are working 22-hour days.

Ransomware State-sponsored attacks are disguised as ransomware attacks. Cybercriminals inject malign code into your computer that will not only lock down all the data on your computer, it also locks down all the information in any backup device that you have that’s connected to your computer or network.

In theory, you pay the hacker several hundred dollars, and you get your data back. Recently, there are reports that you pay the money, and you still can’t get your data back. It’s a bad scene.

What Can You Do?

One of the first actions to take is to visit the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, CISA) at https://www.cisa.gov/uscert/ncas/tips/ST19-001

You’ll learn about precautions you should take. In addition, make complete backups of your entire computer or computers. It’s essential, once you make a backup, to disconnect the external hard drive from your computer or network. Ransomware typically encrypts all the computers and all the backup drives that are connected to the computer or network.

It’s a really good idea to have several complete backups on several external hard drives. If you’d really be stuck if all your data is unavailable, you might want to follow what I do.

I invested in five external hard drives, each one big enough to contain all my data. I do a fresh complete backup on one of them at least once a week. I then put the newest backup in a drawer, far removed from my computer. The next week, I’ll do a complete backup on another hard drive. The week after, same thing, and on the sixth week, I’ll do my backup on the first hard drive. In other words, I’m rotating them.

Buying External Hard Drives

You can buy external hard drives on Amazon. From personal experience, I strongly recommend against the cute little “slim” drives. I’ve had two of them fail. I like Seagate, WP, La Cie and Porsche.

What I’ve just been describing may be overkill for you. For me, I feel I save whatever the cost of the five hard drives is by not having to spend the money on the psychiatry bills I’d be up against from the TOTAL BREAKDOWN I’d experience if I lost all my data.

Meanwhile, don’t open attachments in your emails without checking with who sent them. And maybe be ten times more suspicious about emails than you ever were before. With the War in Ukraine, things have changed.

Remember, the data you save may be your own.
American Agri-Women Members are Farm Journal Foundation Farmer Ambassadors

AAW President Heather Hampton+Knodle, Illinois, AAW Past President, Karolyn Zurn, Minnesota, and AAW Trade Issue Lead, Renee Strickland, Florida, serve as their states lead farmer ambassadors. Farm Journal Foundation’s Farmer Ambassadors represent a vast and diverse network of passionate and engaged producers from across the country.

Farm Journal Foundation is dedicated to achieving global food security by sustaining modern agriculture’s leadership role and ability to meet the vital needs of a growing population. The mission is to bring together stakeholders from across the agricultural spectrum – including students, farmers, industry leaders, and policymakers – to create tangible solutions to the biggest challenges facing today’s food and agricultural value chain.

The Farm Journal Foundation operates as an independent, nonpartisan, and nonprofit organization, with a range of related programs under three umbrellas: thought leadership, education, and advocacy. Here’s how our work fits together in practice: Figure 1.

Farmer Ambassadors host more than 100 meetings each year with national-level policymakers, author influential op-eds for state and national-level publications, engage with thought leaders on widely attended panels, and demonstrate the necessity for responsible, technology-based agricultural solutions.

The Farmer Ambassador program builds a coalition across the agriculture community to connect the role of modern agriculture and U.S. farmers to the empowerment of smallholder farmers in emerging economies.

Farm Journal Foundation recently published its latest impact report, showcasing its programmatic work and successes from the past year. You can find the report at www.farmjournalfoundation.org/impact-report.
American Agri-Women Helen Whitmore Memorial Convention Scholarship

This scholarship was named to honor Helen Whitmore, a well-respected rancher and teacher from California. It was initiated in 1993 by a friend and AAW Past President, Mitzi Ayala Perdue. It was established to increase active involvement in AAW and to encourage members to influence their home affiliate members.

This scholarship is available to any AAW member to attend the annual AAW Convention held in November of each year. The applicant may be of any age, but cannot have attended a past Convention. The purpose of this scholarship is to encourage an awareness of AAW in young women, to increase active involvement in AAW, and to challenge them to have an influence on their peers. Only one applicant per affiliate will be accepted.

The scholarship is for $500 and the committee may award up to three scholarships. You can find the application at [https://americanagriwomen.org/scholarships](https://americanagriwomen.org/scholarships). Applications are due by August 15th of each year to aawfoundationscholarships@americanagriwomen.org or by mail to

Chris Wilson  
2103 Zeandale Rd, Manhattan KS 66502.

ELIBILITY:

- Affiliates are encouraged to provide additional funds, if needed, and assist with housing, travel and registration arrangements for their scholarship recipient.
- Applicants must have an agriculture relationship and interest.
- Recipients are required to write a report on their convention experience. Reports or excerpts will be used in the AAW Voice and affiliate newsletters.
- Recipients do not have to be a current AAW member, but must agree to join for the current membership year. If they wish to vote at the current year’s Convention, dues must be paid to the AAW treasurer by September 30th. Recipients are also encouraged to join a local affiliate.
- Application form is to be signed by the applicant and the president/or other designated officer.
- Winners and their affiliate president will be notified September 15th of the current year.
- Affiliate presidents will need to see that the scholarship winners get registered at the early registration rate; all winners are eligible for this rate, but need to get it in as soon as possible.
- Scholarship recipients are expected to attend the full convention.
BE Disclosure Standard Impacts Most All Food Products

By: Donnell Scott

Congress passed the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard in July 2016. The law designated the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of USDA to establish standards on labeling food if it contains a BE food or food derived from a BE food. The mandatory compliance date was January 1, 2022. You will start seeing the disclosure statements on some food products, but not all. The compliance is for those food products labeled on or after the compliance date. Any food products packaged and labeled before January 1, 2022, could have been labeled without disclosure.

The regulations for the disclosure standards are found in 7CFR66. The standards identify the current list of BE foods, what products are subject to the standards, and how the products are to be labeled. Even though USDA established the standards, the standards impact FDA products and USDA products. There have been manufacturers under the perception the BE disclosure standards do not pertain to their products since they are under FDA jurisdiction. If food is BE food or contains an ingredient derived from BE food, the product would fall under the BE disclosure standards. As with most regulations, there are exemptions. Meat and Poultry products in which the predominant ingredient is meat or poultry are exempt from BE disclosure standards, even if they contain an ingredient derived from a BE food. Meat or poultry derived from an animal fed a BE substance is not considered a bioengineered food.

The BE standards identified the following BE foods: alfalfa, apple (Arctic varieties), canola, corn, cotton, eggplant (BARI Bt Begun varieties), papaya (ringspot virus-resistant varieties), pineapple (pink flesh varieties), potato, salmon (AquAdvantage), soybeans, squash (summer) and sugar beet. AMS will review the list annually for updates. Note that there are specific varieties of certain foods that are bioengineered. For example, not all apples derive from bioengineering, only the Arctic varieties. Same for pineapple, papaya, eggplant, squash, and salmon. Not every bioengineered variety is raised in the US but is included in the list due to the potential for the foods to be sold to consumers in the US. AquAdvantage salmon is being raised in the US.

The standards provided different ways to disclose bioengineered foods by text, symbols, electronic or digital, and text messages. Next time you pick up your favorite cereal, you may see disclosures if it contains a bioengineered ingredient ‘Contains a bioengineered food ingredient.’ This statement should be below the manufacturer’s information or on the front of the package.

The standards do not address ‘Non-GMO’ statements. The BE standards pertain to products that are BE food or derived from BE food to disclose to consumers when these foods are present in their packaged food products.

AMS asked for comments before establishing the standards and has provided additional information in a question and answer format at the following website: www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/be
THANK YOU TO OUR AFFILIATES!

• American National Cattlewomen
• California Women for Agriculture
• Ceres International Fraternity
• Colorado Agri-Women
• Florida Agri-Women
• Foremost Farms USA
• Fur Commission USA
• Idaho Women in Timber
• Illinois Agri-Women
• Kansas Agri-Women
• Kentucky Women In Agriculture
• Maine Agri-Women
• Minnesota Agri-Women
• Montana Agri-Women
• National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
• Nevada Agri-Women
• New Mexico Wool Grower’s Auxiliary
• Oregon Women for Agriculture
• Oregon Women in Timber
• Sigma Alpha Sorority
• Texas Agri-Women
• United Ag
• Wisconsin Women for Agriculture
• Women of Kansas Agriculture Aviation Association
• Women’s Mining Coalition
• Wyoming Agri-Women

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

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• Syngenta
• Texas Agri-Women
• University of Minnesota Ext.-Women in Ag Network
• Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety & Health Center
• Versatile
• Western Growers Association
• Western Skies Strategies
• Women in Ag Network
• Zurn Farm
American Agri-Women
Spotlights

Affiliate Profile:
California Women for Agriculture (CWA)

California Women for Agriculture (CWA), founded in 1975 in the Coachella Valley, also became a State Affiliate of American Agri-Women that same year. The name was chosen to welcome a cross-section of members. The nucleus of the first chapter was made up of consumers, farmers, and ranchers.

CWA is the most active, all-volunteer agricultural organization in the state. The 1,300 members represent farmers, ranchers, bankers, lawyers, accountants, marketing professionals, support services, consumers, and the vast stakeholders of the agriculture industry. The 20 chapters, from Butte County to California’s southern border, make up our Ag team.

The CWA promotes leadership within local communities, advocacy on critical local, state, and federal issues, public service and outreach, agriculture literacy in our schools, and promotional initiatives to preserve and educate those living in our increasingly urbanized California landscape. United, we advocate today for the economic sustainability of the diverse California agriculture community so future generations can continue to produce a healthy, diverse food supply.

Organization’s Annual Meeting:
CWA Convention & Statewide Meeting: January 6-8, 2023

CWA Mission:

- Promote and develop the interest of California women involved in or interested in agriculture and to promote a strong agriculture industry in California. CWA’s efforts are guided by 5 principles:
- Speak on behalf of agriculture in an intelligent, informative, direct and truthful manner.
- Keep CWA members informed on legislative activities pertaining to agriculture.
- Join forces when the need arises to deal with agricultural issues and challenges in the agriculture community.
- Improve the public image of farmers by educating the public about farming.
- Develop a rapport with consumers, educators, and governmental & business leaders in communities throughout the State of California.

Contact Person:
Sharron Zoller, CWA President- szoller@hotmail.com
Member Profile: Sharon Steffens

American Agri-Women is proud to profile one of our founding mothers, Sharon Steffens, Michigan, in this Spring edition of the VOICE.

As a leader in Women for the Survival of Agriculture in Michigan (WSAM) to serving as temporary National Coordinator, elected National Coordinator and ultimately the first President of American Agri-Women, Steffen led four states (Michigan, Wisconsin, Washington, and Oregon) that were charter organizations to the formation and charter of American Agri-Women when they met at a coalition meeting, November 14, 1974, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

During her service, the newsletter, “Voice of the American Agri-Woman,” began publication. Steffens continued as Editor until 1980-1981. American Agri-Women held its first national convention in Kansas City in 1976. In 1977, AAW coordinated a trip for 50 women from 12 states to Washington, D. C. The first AAW Directory (history, policy, annual report, and directory) was edited and published by Steffens in 1980 and a supplement in 1981. Many accomplishments were made in these early years by a group of very dedicated and enthusiastic women, which continues today.

Before the founding of AAW, Steffens served as State Chairman of Women for the Survival of Agriculture in Michigan (WSAM). Other activities included 4-H leader, Kent Co. Farm Bureau Editor, and Sigma Alpha Iota Grand Rapids Alumnae Chapter. In 1984, she began 24 years of service in elected positions for Alpine Township, Kent Co., Michigan serving as Clerk, Supervisor, and Trustee. Steffens was appointed by two Governors of different parties to the Michigan Agriculture Labor Association, serving from 1979 to 1986. She also served on the Michigan Apple Research Committee, 1982-1988. Steffens was honored with the Founders Award, Women for the Survival of Agriculture in MI, 1974 AAW Leaven Award – 1977, Agriculture Spokesman of the Year NE Region by Chevron Chemical Co., 1977 Distinguished Service to Agriculture award, 1987, Michigan State Horticultural Society Kent County Farm Bureau, Distinguished Service Award, 1999 State of Michigan Special Tribute, Gov. John Engler, and in November, 2000 she received the “Hometown Hero” Award. Walmart Corporation presented Steffens with $5,000 to use for her township at the 2000 National Town and Township Association convention in Washington D. C.

Steffens is a graduate of Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, 1958 with a Bachelor of Music degree. She became a Certified Municipal Clerk - International Institute of Municipal Clerks in 1988. Steffens is the proud mother of five children, who have graced her with seven grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter. Her husband, John Steffens, passed away in 2019 after 59 years of marriage. Steffens continues to live on the home farm of Steffens Orchards with her son, Robert, a 4th generation farmer. Steffens was a city gal who married an apple farmer. They enjoyed a long and wonderful life together. Sharon has continued that legacy.
Member Profile: McKayla Robinette

McKayla R. Robinette grew up on a century farm in eastern North Carolina, where she continues to raise grass-fed beef cattle and manages a USDA slaughter and processing facility alongside her grandparents, parents, and brother. Her childhood was filled with 4-H and FFA events, dirt roads, and everything else that comes with farm life. In 2020, McKayla graduated from Brevard College with a bachelor’s degree in Environmental Studies and a focus in Sustainable Agriculture and Pre-Law. She is expected to graduate from Auburn University in Spring of 2022 with a Master’s in Rural Sociology and begin a Ph.D. in Fall of 2022 focusing on the role of female farmers.

McKayla appreciates her experience as a member of the American Agri-Women and credits the organization for much of her personal and professional development. Before joining herself, McKayla was able to observe her mom, Amy, learn from and fellowship with the network of strong, passionate women that AAW creates. The annual fly-in in Washington, D.C. is McKayla’s most rewarding AAW event. This opportunity sparked her interest in policy and provided McKayla with a network of prominent women in all parts of agriculture to mentor her. AAW has taught McKayla how to be a strong woman in a male-dominated industry, and taught her that lipstick and cow pastures go hand-in-hand.

Mary Holzapfel
May 9, 1932 - February 5, 2022

With a heavy heart, we share the news of the passing of Mary Holzapfel, who served as Oregon Women for Agriculture’s first President and a founding member of the organization.
Call to Service
Officer Nominations

The 2022 Nominating Committee of American Agri-Women is seeking members to join our exceptional organization's leadership roles. Our organization members are tremendously talented, intelligent, and dedicated women. In a “Call to Service,” we call AAW members to apply for the various positions: Vice President of Education and Secretary for the AAW Executive Board, three positions for the AAW Foundation Board, and four positions for the Nominating Committee. The application can be found online at americanagriwomen.org under Membership - Member Login. The job descriptions are in the Policy and Procedure Manual found in Member Login. Please consider applying for a position in American Agri-Women. Elections are in Bozeman, Montana, at the National Convention November 3-6, 2022. The deadline for applications is August 1.

Send your completed application to Melody Speer, Nominating Committee Chair, by email at nominating@americanagriwomen.org. If you have any questions, please email the Committee Chair or text/call 830-591-7727.

AAW Foundation Names
2022 Gail McPherson Fly-In Scholarship Recipients

This scholarship was named to honor Gail McPherson of Pennsylvania. Gail was a founding mother of AAW and a past president of the Foundation. She was proficient in parliamentary procedure, and she was chair of the bylaws committee and author of many pertinent resolutions. Gail was instrumental in the creation of the first AAW Fly-In.

This scholarship was available to any AAW member to attend the annual AAW Fly-In held in June in Washington, DC. The applicant may be of any age but cannot have attended a past Fly-In.

Gail McPherson Fly-In 2022 Scholarship:

Kathy Goodyke, Minnesota Agri-Women

Cheryl Lambert, California Women for Agriculture

Debbie Bacigalupi, Nevada Agri-Women
American Agri-Women
48th National Convention

Do you hear them? The Mountains are Calling, the mountains in Bozeman, Montana, to be specific.

Join Montana Agri-Women as they host the American Agri-Women 48th National Convention on November 2-6, 2022. Details can be found online at americanagriwomen.org under Events – Convention.

Have a membership question?
Need to update any of your information?

*Membership is due September 30 of each year*

Contact Kathy Goodyke, AAW’s treasurer,
treasurer@americanagriwomen.org or write Kathy at:
American Agri-Women
25204 210th St. SW,
Crookston, MN 56716
VOICE ELECTRONIC ONLY OPTION

Reading the electronic version of the VOICE but still getting a paper copy?

Help AAW cut costs on printing & postage by sending an email: communications@americanagriwomen.org

In the subject line “Opt-Out of the paper VOICE”

You will be removed from the paper copy mailing list & only receive the electronic version.

-Thank you!

“Agriculture is a fundamental source of national prosperity.” - J. J. Mapes