

WHM2020TRIBUNE

ENTRIES FOR THEME OF: VALIANT WOMEN OF THE VOTE

The theme for Women's History Month in 2020, as set by the National Women's History Project Organization (www.nwhp.org) is Valiant Women of the Vote. This theme celebrates the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote. As we celebrate the fact that Congress passed the 19th Amendment in 1919, and 36 states ratified it by August of 1920, it is important to realize that the 19th Amendment did not guarantee ALL women in the United States the right to vote.

In 1924 the Indian Citizenship Act deemed Native Americans U.S. citizens, but it still was up to states to decide if indigenous people could vote. In 1934 the Magnuson Act granted Chinese in America the right to become citizens and therefore to vote. And in 1962 New Mexico became the last state to enfranchise Native Americans. In 1965 the Voting Rights Act eliminated many of the restrictions that had excluded African Americans and Native Americans from voting, such as poll taxes, literacy tests, and intimidation. However, the struggle for voting rights continues.

MARCH 1

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902)



In 1869, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a major leader in the women's suffrage movement, delivered a lecture at the Pomeroy Opera House, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The opera house was located on the southwest corner of Fourth and Main Streets. Stanton was a popular speaker and a gifted writer, and her lecture in La Crosse argued for women's right to vote. Her appearance was sponsored by the Young Men's Library Association, and she was paid \$73.50. The next day, a local newspaper, *The Evening Democrat*, reported that their editors were not in agreement with Stanton, as they reported she drew a clear picture of the sad problems women faced, but didn't show how women winning the right to vote would improve their condition. Stanton was the president of the National Women's Suffrage Association and the political partner of Susan B. Anthony for 50 years. From the 1840s on, her life was dedicated to the suffrage movement.

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MARCH 2

Nellie Mann Opdale (1860-1941)



Born in New Lisbon, Nellie Mann grew up in Racine, graduated high school, then taught in the public schools until her marriage to Julius H. Opdale. Their wedding was officiated by Reverend Olympia Brown who was pastor of Racine's Universalist Church and a famous advocate for women's suffrage. However, Nellie's husband, a drinker, corrupt attorney, and the first to be disbarred in Wisconsin history, died early, along with their child. With the help of Olympia Brown, Nellie changed the course of her life. In 1893 Nellie Opdale became the state lecturer for the Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association. In 1894 she became licensed to preach, and in 1898 she came to La Crosse and became pastor at St.

Paul's Universalist Church, the first female minister in La Crosse. She also served as a pastor to congregations in Maine and Georgia. In her Georgia county she personally registered every woman to vote, and went with them to the polls lest a husband or father tried to stop them. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

March 3

Theodora Winton Youmans (1863-1932)



A pioneer woman journalist and the first historian of Wisconsin's suffrage movement, Theodora Youmans received her first byline in 1886 in the *Waukesha Freeman* for a series reporting on her travels alone in Wisconsin's Northwoods. Youmans wrote an article entitled "How Wisconsin Women Won the Ballot," in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, and started a suffrage column. She sent a postcard questionnaire to newspaper editors around the state about women voting, and worked on publicity, public speaking, and promoting suffrage throughout the state and beyond. She was a brilliant organizer and became president of the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association and the first vice president of the Wisconsin League of Women Voters. And of how the movement would be remembered, she wrote, "...the careless world will probably continue to think that woman suffrage just happened, that it was 'in the air'; but we know that the changes in the opinions of society which made it possible are the result of ceaseless, unremitting toil."

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MARCH 4

OLYMPIA BROWN (1835-1926)



One of the few first-generation suffragists who lived long enough to vote, Olympia Brown, born in Michigan, was also the first ordained woman minister in the U.S. She was a charter member of the American Equal Rights Association which was created at the end of the Civil War to advance the rights of African Americans and women. However, soon abolitionists and suffragists were at odds about their tactics and philosophies and about which cause should have priority. In 1878 Olympia and her family moved to Racine and she dedicated herself into local suffrage work. In 1887, Olympia Brown voted in Racine in the spring municipal election. However, a female voting confused the male election officials and her ballot was thrown out. She sued and the matter went to the state Supreme Court where the justices ruled against her, saying the law which gave women the right to vote needed to be written more clearly. In 1901 Wisconsin women could vote because the legislature determined there should be separate ballot boxes for women, so that women's votes would only be counted in school-related races. In her life, Brown traveled throughout the country giving hundreds of speeches advocating for states to pass suffrage amendments.

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MARCH 5

Zitkala-Sa/ Red Bird/Gertrude Simmons (1876-1938)



A writer and reformer, this Lakota leader from South Dakota fought against racist stereotypes and sought to bridge Indigenous people life with white life. Zitkala-Sa, also known as Red Bird, spoke out against poverty on reservations and called for improvements in health care and education. At age 19, she started speaking out for women's rights and believed that Indigenous people should be citizens and have the right to vote. In 1916, Red Bird became the secretary of the Society of the American Indian and worked as the liaison between the society and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She founded the National Council of American Indians in 1926 and called for cultural recognition and preservation.

It was her investigation of land swindles against Native Americans that led to her appointment as an adviser to the U.S. government's Meriam Commission of 1928. The commission surveyed conditions on Indian Reservations in 26 states and the findings led to important reforms. A multi-talented leader and teacher, Red Bird also collaborated with composer William F. Hanson in writing the libretto for the opera *The Sun Dance*, the first opera by a Native American.

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MARCH 6

January 15, 1912

Hotel Stoddard, La Crosse, WI



An important suffrage meeting was held on January 15, 1912, in the parlors of the Hotel Stoddard which was located at the southeast corner of Fourth and State streets in La Crosse. At this time, area women's involvement in the women's suffrage movement was kept guarded as far as who attended. Harriet Grim from the National Woman Suffrage Association, and the Reverend Olympia Brown, president of the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association, spoke to the La Crosse Women's Club, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and some members of the Twentieth Century Club. Later in that same day, 30 prominent

women in La Crosse went into a private session to organize a local suffrage committee. On January 25, 1912, approximately 30-40 women met at the home of Mrs. R. J. Russell of South 11th Street and signed the constitution and elected officers for the new La Crosse Equal Suffrage Society. Anyone who wished to apply for membership needed to apply to Miss Mary Alice Smith, librarian. In February, the organization sponsored a lecture at City Hall which 200 women attended.

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MARCH 7

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS LA CROSSE AREA (1920-



Alice Green Hixon (1883-1982)



On January 26, 2020, Mary Nugent, president of the League of Women Voters La Crosse area, in a letter to the editor of the La Crosse Tribune, called attention to the fact that the national League of Women Voters is celebrating 100 years of service to democracy this year. This non-partisan, grassroots organization has promoted voting and advocated for government policies that protect the public interest. The La Crosse Area League of Women Voters was founded in 1924. The group first met at the home of Alice Green Hixon to organize their local league. Other La Crosse names at this first

meeting included Crowley, Van Steenwyk, Hintgen, Oyen, and Hirshheimer. Alice Hixon was elected the first president, Mrs. A.J. Roberge, first vice president, Mrs. O.J. Oyen and Mrs. Henry Spence, corresponding and recording secretaries, treasurer Mabel Young. In 1929, the league conducted a voter forum for the four candidates running for mayor. By 1930 the La Crosse LWV was considered a strong group which held debates on issues and had an educational purpose. That reputation continues in 2020. Alice Hixon was active in the social scene in La Crosse, and, in 1962, she donated the Hixon House to the La Crosse County Historical Society. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 8

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906)



One of the most visible figures in the fight for women's right to vote was Susan B. Anthony. Heavily influenced by the Quaker belief that everyone was equal under God, she was a teacher and an abolitionist and gave many passionate speeches against slavery at a time when many people thought it was too improper for women to speak publicly. She was excellent at strategy and demanded women be given the right to vote and that they receive equal pay for equal work. In 1872, Anthony was arrested. For voting. She was tried and fined \$100 which she never paid. At a protest she led at the 1876 Centennial of U.S. independence, she gave a speech which included a Declaration of Rights in which she proclaimed, "Men, their rights, and nothing more; women, their rights, and nothing less." In 1886, Anthony lectured in La Crosse and was introduced by Olympia Brown. Anthony said that the ballot for women was not just important for the wealthy, but for 3 million poor, working women who needed the vote to improve their lives.

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MARCH 9

Laura Ross Wolcott (1834-1915)



Laura Wolcott earned her medical degree in Pennsylvania and moved to Milwaukee in 1857 where she worked as a consulting doctor at schools and hospitals. She was the first female physician in Wisconsin but was denied membership in the Medical Society of Milwaukee County because she was female. She was later admitted to the Society, but only after a bitter dispute (and after she married the society's president.) Wolcott became the first president of the Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association, and under her leadership the group expanded to include other areas of Wisconsin. She fought for higher education for women and called out the segregated system at the University of Wisconsin, referring to it as, "...one of the petty ways in which girls can be defrauded of their rights to a thorough education by narrow, bigoted men entrusted with a little brief authority." In 1869, she organized the first women's suffrage convention in Wisconsin. She also researched and published her findings on the marital property rights of women in Wisconsin.

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MARCH 10

Jesse Jack Hooper (1865-1935)



Jesse Jack Hooper was born in Winneshiek County, Iowa, and moved to Oshkosh where she became a dedicated suffragist. She created a kindergarten visiting nurse program as well as a sanatorium for people with tuberculosis. Her work helped Wisconsin become the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. Hooper became very prominent in women's organizations and toured Western states to encourage ratification of the amendment. Other causes she championed were changing the children's code in Wisconsin to raise the age of consent for girls, changing jury duty laws, and advocating for the protection of women in industry jobs. Jesse Jack Hooper became the first president of the Wisconsin branch of the League of Women Voters. In her later years she became more interested in world peace, and in 1933 she campaigned for the United States' entry into the World Court.

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MARCH 11

Carrie Chapman Catt (1859-1947)



Carrie Chapman Catt was born in Ripon, WI, but moved as a child to Iowa. At age 13, she had become furious when she learned that her mother could not vote in the presidential election. She put herself through Iowa State Agricultural College (now Iowa State) and became a teacher in Mason City. As a school administrator she developed her organizational skills which made her very successful as a suffragist leader for the next sixty years. Carrie Catt lectured on women's suffrage in Iowa and then across the nation. In 1900, an aging Susan B. Anthony brought Catt onto a convention stage and introduced her as her successor. Catt continued the traditional approach of trying to get suffrage passed as an amendment, emphasizing state campaigns and enlisting more members to the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) of which she was president. In November, 1917, Carrie Catt addressed the all-male Congress and pointed out their hypocrisy by saying, "Behold our Uncle Sam floating the banner with one hand, 'Taxation Without Representation is tyranny,' and with the other seizing the billions of dollars paid in taxes by women to whom he refuses representation."

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MARCH 12

IDA B. WELLS (1862-1931)



Ida B. Wells was born a slave during the Civil War. She graduated from college and became a schoolteacher. Strongly opposed to segregation, Ida once bit the hand of a train conductor who tried to remove her from the ladies' car. Wells sued the railroad for their policy of segregated seating and won, at first. But then the Tennessee Supreme Court overturned the ruling. She carried a pistol for protection and lost her teaching job after protesting the unequal way black students were treated. She became a journalist for an African American newspaper, *The Memphis Free Speech*, but in 1892 three well-known black businessmen who were her friends were shot to death by a white mob. Ida risked her own life when she spoke out against the murders and she recommended that blacks use economic pressure to get justice. Her newspaper office was mobbed and destroyed, and she had to flee for her life. 30 years passed before she returned to the South. She founded the Alpha Suffrage Club in Chicago with black suffragists and marched in Washington, D.C., and Chicago suffrage parades. Her life's work was focused on racial and gender equality. She became a one-woman campaign to stop lynching and used facts to raise awareness. In 1893 and 1894 she launched speaking tours in England to convince the British to pressure white Americans to stop lynching. Ida B. Wells was one of the founders of the NAACP.

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MARCH 13

ROSE SCHNEIDERMAN (1882-1972)



Rose Schneiderman was born in Poland to parents who valued education for girls. In 1890 the family moved to New York City. But when Rose's father died two years later, her mother could not support the family for long, so Rose was temporarily placed in an orphanage. When she returned home, her mother worked nights so Rose could stay in school. When her mother lost her job, Rose had to find work at age 13. She became a salesclerk, but working conditions were poor and wages were low, so she became a cap maker. Rose grew interested in the labor movement and was convinced labor unions could help the working poor. Rose organized NYC's garment workers and became a very important figure following the deaths of 146 garment workers in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire on March 25, 1911. The fire was caused by neglected safety features and locked doors inside the factory that prevented the garment workers from escaping. Rose became a suffrage leader in New York and said of her working-class sisters, "Women in the laundries stand for thirteen and fourteen hours in the terrible steam and heat with their hands in hot starch. Surely these women won't lose any more of their beauty and charm by putting a ballot into the ballot box." Rose Schneiderman became a nationally famous figure and was a friend and advisor to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt and served as the only woman on the National Labor Advisory Board as New Deal legislation was being shaped.

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MARCH 14

BELLE CASE LA FOLLETTE (1859-1931)



Born in Summit, WI, Belle Case moved with her family and grew up on a farm in Baraboo. When she was 16, she started school at UW-Madison where she met her husband Robert M. La Follette. Belle was the better student. After graduation she became a teacher and the assistant principal at Spring Grove High School. While Bob studied for a law degree, Belle helped him with his classes and cases and then she studied law herself. In 1885, Belle became the first woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School. Belle believed women should have the right to vote and she argued for racial equality and peace. While Bob ran for office, she managed his campaigns and wrote his speeches. She co-edited *La Follette's Weekly Magazine* which later became *The Progressive*. Belle La Follette lectured, wrote, and traveled the country arguing for women's right to vote and for racial equality. She also championed the causes of pure food and drug legislation, wage, and prison reform.

MARCH 15

LUCY STONE (1818-1893)



A gifted student and speaker, Lucy Stone spent years putting herself through school and became the first Massachusetts woman to earn a college degree. As a teacher, she was paid half what a less-experienced male teacher earned, and as a student she was not allowed to debate or to speak in public. But in a short time, she got a job as a speaker and organizer for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society where she spoke out for the abolition of slavery and women's rights. She even went so far as not paying her taxes because she did not have representation as a voter, and her possessions were taken away from her. When she married she kept her own last name, but when she tried to vote in 1879, because a new law allowed women to vote in school-related matters, her vote was thrown out because she registered under her own name not her husband's surname. Lucy Stone disagreed with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton when the abolition and suffrage issues were separated, and she was horrified by their sometimes-racist rhetoric. She never wavered in her support for voting rights for blacks and women. Stone's vivid storytelling and use of words made her a legend as a speaker, and one Syracuse newspaper editor remarked, "...she threw her voice over the assembly, and swayed it with pity, and grief, and scorn, and indignation, as if it was the helpless plaything of her imagination."

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MARCH 16

DR. MABEL PING HUA LEE (1896 -1966)



Mabel Ping-Hua Lee was born in China and moved to the U.S. in 1905. By 16 years old she was already known as a member of the New York suffrage movement and she helped lead the 1912 suffragist parade there, attended by 10,000 people. Mabel Ping-Hua attended college at Columbia and Barnard and became the first Chinese woman to earn her Ph.D. in economics. Mabel Lee argued that suffrage for women was necessary to a successful democracy and she strongly urged the Chinese community to push for girls' education and the participation of women in civic matters. Although women in New York won the right to vote in 1917, Chinese women could not vote until 1943 because of the Chinese Exclusion Act, a federal law that prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming citizens. She fought on, arguing for women's right to vote even though she would not be included. She became the head of the First Chinese Baptist Church in Chinatown in New York City in 1924 and she founded a Chinese Christian Center whose services included kindergarten, a health clinic, and English language classes.

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MARCH 17

ADELAIDE JOHNSON (1859-1955)



An artist who helped preserve and celebrate the legacy of suffragists, Adelaide Johnson was born in Illinois and lived in Rome and Washington, D.C. She dreamt of a museum of women's history. She was commissioned by the National Woman's Party and asked to create the Woman Suffrage Monument which was donated to the government. Six months after the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote, a large group of over 70 women's organizations, along with members of Congress, assembled at the U.S. Capitol Rotunda to unveil the statue. However, as reported in a May 12, 2017 article in *Smithsonian Magazine*, the very next day after this monument was unveiled, it was moved to the basement crypt. Congress even went so far as to order that the inscription at the base of the monument, which listed the artist as well as the names of the women depicted, be scraped off. There were numerous attempts to bring the statute back up to the rotunda, but Congress refused to pass bills that would restore the monument to public viewing. The argument was that it was too large and too expensive to be moved, even though they had moved it to the basement. On May 14, 1997, it was finally moved back to its rightful place, using money raised from donors across the United States. This famous work now sits in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda, the meeting place between the House and the Senate, and it includes depictions of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucretia Mott. The commission that Adelaide Johnson received for this sculpture barely covered her materials. The problem of visible representation of women has existed for a very long time. In Statuary Hall, a place in the U.S. Capitol which includes 2 statues of famous citizens from each state, there are 100 statues. Only 9 depict women.

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MARCH 18

Rosalyn Terborg-Penn (1941-2018)



What we learned about the women's suffrage movement 50 years ago is not the same as what we can learn about the movement today. With improved technology came broader access to the newspapers, diaries, letters and documents of the time. And with more women historians and historians of color, we can find out the stories of the black suffragists and their contributions to the suffrage fight. One very notable black historian, Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, born in Brooklyn, earned a Ph.D. in history from Howard University and taught for over 3 decades as a professor at Morgan State University in Baltimore. It has been her deep research as well as her authorship of 7 books of African American history that have served as counterpoint to the previous and traditional viewpoint that the suffrage fight was dominated by white suffragists. Professor Terborg-Penn specialized in African American history and black women's history, and her seminal work, published in 1998, is [African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote: 1850-1920](#). This work is one of the very first full-length examinations of the fight for the vote that challenged the previous narrative. In this book, Terborg-Penn identified more than 120 black suffragists who were active participants. She also detailed the 1913 racial split between white and black suffragists by describing a major suffragist parade that year in Washington, D.C., when the white suffragists told the black suffragists to march in the rear of the parade. Professor Terborg-Penn had to fight to have black historians' research accepted and valued and she went on to create The Association of Black Women Historians. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 19

ALICE STOKES PAUL (1885-1977)



Born into a Quaker family that believed in equality, Alice Paul graduated from Swarthmore with a degree in biology and went on to earn a master's degree in social work. She attended suffrage rallies with her mother. When it became obvious to her that her social work alone would not solve the problem of discrimination against women, and that current suffrage efforts were slow-moving and ineffective, she went to England and found she could be passionately involved in the suffrage fight there. Back in the United States in 1910, she worked on getting change at the federal level for passage of the 19th Amendment. An inspirational quote from this suffragist is, "There will never be a new world order until women are a part of it." It was Alice Paul who made the suffrage fight more militant, and it was Alice Paul who organized the 1913 protest parade in Washington, D.C. Under her leadership in 1917, suffragists stood in front of the White House displaying protest banners through all kinds of weather. In the fall of that same year, Congress retaliated against the strikers and increased their jail times. Alice was arrested and taken to the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia. The arrested women were beaten, deprived of food and sleep, and forced to live in filth surrounded by rats and cockroaches in icy cells. Alice went on a hunger strike and was force fed by guards, then put into a hospital and treated as insane. Lucy Burns was beaten and chained to her cell and another protestor was thrown against a concrete wall and left for dead. Nevertheless, Alice persisted, and she was arrested 7 times and jailed 3 times in England and 3 times in the U.S. Once the 19th Amendment was passed, Alice Paul continued to plan for more legal progress for women and earned a law degree in 1922 from the University of Pennsylvania. She wrote the text for the Equal Rights Amendment, and she was an influence on the charter of the United Nations.

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MARCH 20

MARIA TERESA KUMAR (1974-)



Born in Bogota, Columbia, and now a citizen of the United States, Maria Kumar is the founding president and CEO of Voto Latino which is an Hispanic advocacy group. Her family moved to California when she was 4 years old. She graduated from the University of California, Davis, with a degree in international affairs and economics in 1996, and later enrolled at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard where she earned a master's degree in public policy and business in 2001. Kumar is known around the world as a television personality providing commentary and analysis on political rights issues, many times on the voting right of minorities. Voto Latino is a non-profit, non-partisan group which encourages young Hispanic and Latino voters to register, learn how to vote, and become involved in advancing the issues that matter most to them. Voto Latino has now registered over a quarter million voters. Maria Teresa Kumar has been nominated for an Emmy, been named one of the most creative minds in business, and been named one of the 10 most influential women in Washington, D.C. She is well known as a political correspondent on MSNBC, serves on the national boards for EMILY's List, and is part of the Latino Leaders Network. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 21

ADA JAMES (1876-1952)



Wisconsin earned the status of being the first state to officially ratify the 19th Amendment through the efforts of a suffragist family in Richland Center. Reformer, pacifist, and suffragist Ada James lived in Richland Center her entire life with parents who believed that women should be able to vote. Ada graduated from the University of Wisconsin and for a time was a schoolteacher. But then she began to spend more time as an activist and became vice president of the Wisconsin Woman Suffrage Association when Olympia Brown was president. Ada's father, David, was a state senator, and he had introduced a bill that led to a statewide referendum to allow women to vote. But since only men could vote on the referendum, it failed. When the U.S. Congress finally approved a constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote, each state had to give consent to it to make it official. And once a state ratified the 19th Amendment, their official ratification papers had to be delivered to Washington, D.C. By June 10, 2019, 4 states had ratified, but Ada appointed her father David to be Wisconsin's messenger to D.C. and the race was on. He borrowed money from the Wisconsin Secretary of State Merlin Hull, borrowed Ada's bag, and boarded a train to Washington, D.C., where he hired a taxi. On June 13, he arrived at the US State Department with Wisconsin's ratification papers in hand. The papers were filed, and he received a signed statement that Wisconsin was first. When he returned to the Secretary of State's office, he was met by a representative from Illinois who had just arrived to announce that Illinois would be first. But Ada and David James made Wisconsin first. Ada James later was active in movements that promoted pacifism, birth control, and prohibition. She became vice chairman of the Republican State Central Committee and chairman of the Richland County Children's Board. Today, in Richland Center, the Ada James Place offers transitional housing for low-income households.

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MARCH 22

EDITH MAYO (1940-



Edith Mayo is an historian of the women's suffrage movement and she started her career at a time when most historians ignored women's history. A graduate of George Washington University, she also taught there and has been a distinguished lecturer for the Organization of American Historians. Through a 40-year career with the Smithsonian Institution, Edith Mayo is recognized as an expert in women's history, and most especially respected for her work in documenting the history of African American suffrage. She is recognized as an expert on women's suffrage and on First Ladies. Mayo is the author/editor of *The Smithsonian Book of the First Ladies: Their Lives, Times, and Issues*, published in 1996, which is the first comprehensive biography of First Ladies written for young readers and is available through La Crosse Public Library. At both the National Museum of American History and at the Smithsonian Institution, she has curated major exhibits on women's history, voting rights, political history, and has served as curator emerita. She has appeared on C-SPAN, CNN, PBS, and in numerous other media outlets. In 2006, she published the book *Presidential Families*. Mayo has been an honorary member of the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial in Occoquan, Virginia, home of the Occoquan Workhouse where many suffragists, aged 19 to 73, were jailed in dire quarters for picketing the White House in support of suffrage. The memorial is set to open in 2020. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 23

ANA ROQUE de DUPREY (1853-1933)



An educator, suffragist and co-founder of the University of Puerto Rico, Ana Roque de Duprey was born to a family of privilege and trained to be a teacher. She was a gifted student and became the youngest teacher's assistant in Puerto Rico at age 11. In 1866, at age 13, she founded her own school in her house. Nicknamed "Flor der Valle" (Flower of the Valley), she wrote a textbook on universal geography. She was learned in astronomy and made an honorary member of the Paris Society of Astronomers. At age 40, Ana founded Puerto Rico's first feminist newspaper, *La Mujer* (Woman). Fighting for women's suffrage, Ana was one of the founders of the Puerto Rican Feminist League and the Puerto Rican Association of Suffragist Women. In 1903, Ana Duprey founded the Liceo Poncecno School, which was one of the few non-religious affiliated accredited schools in Puerto Rico. She also created magazines which promoted women's rights. In 1929, voting rights for literate women were secured. She died at age 80 in 1933, one year after Puerto Rican women won the right to vote. There are still schools named after her in her native land. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 24

LUCY BURNS (1879-1966)



Suffragist Lucy Burns carried a protest banner which read “Resistance to Tyranny is Obedience to God.” She was the militant suffragist who spent more time in prison than any other American woman suffragist. Born in Brooklyn to a big Catholic family, Burns graduated as a superior student from Vassar College in 1902. She went to Europe to attend graduate school and while there she encountered militant suffragists leading big demonstrations. She joined them, leaving her studies behind. She was arrested several times with other

protestors, and it was in a London police station that she met and befriended Alice Paul. They each believed that the American suffrage movement was not accomplishing much and needed new energy. Burns was talented at organizing large group actions and firing up big audiences. Their first action was to lead a woman suffrage procession down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., on the day before Woodrow Wilson’s inauguration. Burns and Paul separated from other suffrage leadership and started the National Woman’s Party, intent on gaining support for the 19th Amendment through actions that would garner national publicity. In 1917, Lucy led protests and began picketing the White House. However, public sentiment for the suffragists changed after the U.S. entered World War I and the picketing continued until the suffragists were jailed and beaten. Lucy Burns led prisoners on hunger strikes. She was force fed and suffered damage to her esophagus. Nevertheless, she persisted and played an important part in the ratification of the 19th Amendment. After its passage, she retired. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 25

MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE (1826-1898)



Matilda Gage was the mastermind of radical thinking in the suffrage movement, making effective arguments to have suffragists around the country test state laws and vote in their local elections. She had attended the famous National Women’s Rights Convention in Syracuse, New York, in 1852 and made her first public speech on suffrage. Along with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Gage helped to create the National Woman Suffrage Association. In 1876, along with Stanton, she drafted the *Declaration of Rights of the Women of the United States*, which then became a part of the proceedings that year of the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. Gage also worked as an historian for the

suffrage movement and believed that the established churches of the time served as a defensive wall, or bulwark, of male supremacist teaching. In New York, when Governor Lucius Robinson vetoed a bill which would have given women the right to serve on school boards, Matilda Gage and other suffragists worked tirelessly to remove him from office. The governor who replaced Robinson signed that bill into law in 1880. Gage remarked, “...when men begin to fear the power of women, their voice and their influence, then we shall secure justice, but not before...” In her hometown’s next election, the slate of officers was all female. Gage’s research also revealed a prejudicial way of thinking which indicated women scientists and inventors were not often given credit for their work like men in the same occupations. This tendency to deny women credit for scientific invention is referred to as the Matilda Effect. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 26

MARIE FOSTER (1917-2003)



Marie Foster was a quiet dental technician in Selma, Alabama, who grew tired of the discrimination and division in that city. She became one of the original members of the Dallas County Voters League, also called the Courageous Eight. Along with other civil rights leaders and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., she helped make Selma the very center of a national voting rights crusade. Marie Foster had tried to vote 8 times, but each time election officials found a new reason to deny her. She tried to help other blacks comprehend the deliberately confusing voter registration tests. On March 7, 1965, later referred to as Bloody Sunday, Marie Foster joined other civil right activists in a march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in an attempt to march to the state capital. Armed police then attacked and beat the protestors with billy clubs, horses, and tear gas. She was clubbed by a state trooper and both her knees were injured. When President Lyndon Johnson went on television on March 11, 1965, to state that he would send Congress an important voting rights bill, Dr. King was visiting in Marie Foster's living room and watched and wept to hear this news. And on March 21 when the march was allowed to peacefully continue, Marie walked 50 miles in 5 days with injured knees. Foster worked for equality all the rest of her life, registering voters and teaching children to read.

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MARCH 27

GERTRUDE DURDEN RUSH (1880-1962)



Gertrude Durden Rush was born in Texas but moved to Des Moines, Iowa, in 1907. She became the very first African American attorney to be admitted to the Iowa Bar. Until the 1950s she was the only African American female to practice law in Iowa. She earned her law degree and passed the Iowa Examination in 1918 but was denied membership in the American Bar Association because of her gender. She and four other black attorneys, who were male, then created the National Bar Association which began in Des Moines in 1925. Rush also founded the Charity League and Protection Home which provide a place where working women could lease affordable rooms. It was due to Gertrude's advocacy that a black probation officer was appointed to the juvenile court and a black caseworker to Des Moines' Associated Charities organization. Assuming the chairmanship of the Mother's Department of the National Association of Colored Women from 1924-1926 was another achievement as was serving as secretary of the Des Moines Comfort Station Commission.

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MARCH 28

FLORENCE KELLEY (1859-1932)



Florence Kelley's work in New York City continues to be respected today since she worked to document poor working conditions and very long hours for women and children toiling away at sewing in garment districts. Because women were not allowed to vote, they had no government recourse to address issues that most hurt working women. She risked smallpox and typhoid fever as she went out to survey city tenements and sweatshops where family members continued to sew for 15-hour workdays while other family members were dying in the same slum. Kelley fought for a minimum wage, for needed reforms, and for an end to child labor. At the time in NYC, children as young as 8 years old were working very long days in sweatshops. She was shot at for her ideas and efforts. She led the National Consumers League in New York City, and was vice-president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Kelley was a pacifist and helped to organize the NAACP. Much of her work was carried out in Chicago and she was influenced by Jane Addams and her experiences at Hull House. Before the rise of unions, there was almost no state or federal legislation to protect workers. Florence Kelley's father was one of the founders of the Republican Party in Pennsylvania and her mother came from a Quaker family which was opposed to war. Florence enrolled at Cornell University in 1876 as a member of its first coeducational class. Due to Florence Kelley's efforts, the Illinois Factory Act was passed in 1893. The law limited women to 8-hour workdays, restricted child labor, and established an office of factory inspector. After going back to school, Kelley worked towards her law degree and graduated from Northwestern University in 1895. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 29

LUCRETIA COFFIN MOTT (1793-1880)



Lucretia Mott was born to Quaker parents in Massachusetts and became a renowned women's rights advocate, abolitionist, and religious reformer. She was a supporter of William Lloyd Garrison and his American Anti-Slavery Society. By 1821 Mott had become a Quaker minister and was associated with the more progressive wing of that faith. Very much opposed to slavery, she boycotted products of slave labor, and opened and closed the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848 since she was unafraid of public speaking. After the end of the Civil War, Mott worked to gain rights for black Americans. In 1869 she founded Swarthmore College and tried to unite the suffrage movement's sides when they split in two. "The world has never yet seen a truly great and virtuous nation because in the degradation of women the very fountains of life are poisoned at their source." **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 30

TYE LEUNG SCHULZE (1887-1972)



Community activist Tye Leung was nicknamed “Tiny” due to her height of 4 feet. However, her life and achievements were huge. Born in San Francisco’s Chinatown, Tye Leung experienced early segregation because local laws forced the Chinese Americans into separate schools from whites. Girls had very few options after elementary school, but she was given refuge at a Presbyterian Mission. When Tye Leung’s sister escaped an arranged marriage, Tye’s parents thought she should take her sister’s place, even though Tye was 13 at the time. Nevertheless, she persisted, and continued to study at the mission where she was an exceptional student. She gained a job as a translator and interpreter in court and helped the Mission work to free Chinese women from sex slavery. Because she was successful in her job, Tye decided to take the civil service exam in 1910. After passing that, she became the first Chinese American woman to be employed by the federal government. She was employed at the Angel Island Immigration Station and served as a translator for detained Chinese women immigrants. In 1912 she became the first Chinese woman to vote in the United States in the that year’s presidential primary. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**

MARCH 31

MAUD YOUNGER (1870-1936)



Nicknamed “the millionaire waitress” Maud Younger was a rich socialite who identified with working women. She had inherited a fortune but for five years she lived in New York City’s College Settlement and learned about poor waitresses by becoming a waitress working alongside them. Younger lobbied and organized others and helped form and lead a union. Due in part to her efforts, California passed a labor law granting an 8-hour workday for women. To Maud Younger, restrictive working rights and voting rights were closely related and she was an effective speaker and tireless worker for the suffrage movement. She drove a team of six horses pulling a suffrage float in the 1911 Labor Day Parade in San Francisco, and in 1919 she described her lobbying work in a *McCall’s Magazine* article entitled “Revelations of a Woman Lobbyist.” After the 19th Amendment passed, Younger worked with the Women’s Trade Union League and then began work on the campaign to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. **SPONSORED BY AAUW LA CROSSE**