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# RWSA NEWSLETTER

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Volume 1, Issue 8

June 2011

## Planning Continues for the Fredericton Conference

As announced in October, Atlantic Canada will be the site of the next Triennial Conference of the Rural Women's Studies Association. Our hosts in 2012 will be the University of New Brunswick and Saint Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, in cooperation with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. Susan Machum and Sasha Mullally currently are working with co-chair Deborah Stiles on local arrangements. Members of the program committee are excited about the excellent proposals they have received thus far, but they hope that the deadline extension will encourage many more submissions. Please encourage your friends and colleagues to submit proposals for papers and panels in their areas of expertise (see the revised CFP this page).

## Wanted: RWSA Secretary

There was no response to the October call for a volunteer to assume the office of RWSA secretary, so a replacement for outgoing secretary Deborah Fink is still needed. The primary duty of the office is to take minutes at the Triennial Conference business meetings and, when possible, the meetings held annually at the Agricultural History Society conference. The secretary also is responsible for typing up the minutes and forwarding them to the newsletter editor. Please contact Rebecca Montgomery at [rm53@txstate.edu](mailto:rm53@txstate.edu) if you can help us out by filling this position.

## Reminder: RWSA Meeting at Agricultural History Society

All RWSA members and friends are invited to attend a breakfast meeting at the 2011 Agricultural History Society Annual Conference in Springfield, Illinois. The meeting will be held Friday, June 17, and will include a light breakfast. For more information on the conference, see the AHS website at: <http://www.aghistorysociety.org/meetings/index.html>

## 2012 Triennial Meeting Call for Papers

The deadline for proposals for the 2012 Triennial Conference of the Rural Women's Studies Association (RWSA) has been extended to August 15, 2011. The theme of the conference, "Rhymes, Rhythms, and Rituals: Twenty-Five Years of Rural Women's Studies Revisited," reflects the dual focus of the meeting. It will include presentations on current research on rural women and gender as well as presentations that take a retrospective look at the field of rural women's studies. The RWSA seeks proposals for individual papers, panel sessions, workshops, and roundtable discussions on topics related to the conference theme or organized around historiographical reviews or state-of-the-field assessments of research on rural women and gender.

Topics related to the conference theme might include:

- The role of the arts, music, and literature and literary movements in rural and gendered contexts;
- Comparative and/or interdisciplinary frameworks and ethnographic approaches that give structure, agency, rhythm and sense to rural women's voices as forms of power and arbiters of change;
- Research that examines the intersection of rural women and/or gender with social, cultural, and political institutions.
- The significance of gender in social and social reform movements, social and welfare policy initiatives, and in agriculture (including policy, production, land use, and the utilization of science and technology).
- Sustainability, ecology, and environment-related topics.

The RWSA especially welcomes proposals for panels that provide an overview of sub-themes in rural women's history, such as those that examine the

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## ***About the RWSA***

Founded in 1998 as an outgrowth of the Sixth Conference on Rural and Farm Women in Historical Perspective, the Rural Women's Studies Association is an international organization for the advancement and promotion of farm and rural women's gender studies in historical perspective. The Association aims to encourage research, to promote existing and forthcoming scholarship, and to establish and maintain links with contemporary farm and rural women's organizations. The RWSA aims to encourage scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds and countries to communicate about their research and all other activities that are supportive to the Association's goals.

### **Co-Chairs:**

Deborah Stiles, Nova Scotia Agricultural College  
Rebecca Montgomery, Texas State University

### **Secretary:**

Deborah Fink (Outgoing)

### **Treasurer:**

Debra Reid, Eastern Illinois University

### **International Membership and Communication Coordinators:**

*Pacific*—Kate Hunter, Victoria Univ. of Wellington

*Canada*—Margaret Kechnie, Laurentian University

*Europe*—Margreet van der Burg, Wageningen Univ.

### **Graduate Student Coordinator:**

Jenny Barker-Devine, Iowa State University

### **Web Master:**

Kathleen Hilton, University of North Carolina-  
Pembroke

### **Web Site:**

<http://www.uncp.edu/rwsa>

### **Newsletter Editor:**

Rebecca Montgomery, Texas State University

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relationship between gender and labor, health, the professions, cultural heritage, leadership, and creative expression in rural contexts. Proposals that are inter-, trans- or multi-disciplinary are encouraged, as are those that develop connections between rural women's history and present-day social and economic concerns, worldwide. Alternative methods of presentation, such as workshops, interactive sessions, posters, performances, readings, and/or audiovisual presentations are encouraged and welcomed.

Please submit the following information by **August 15, 2011**:

1. Title of paper/session/workshop/performance
2. One-page abstract of paper or brief description of proposed session/workshop, etc.
3. Brief vita/bio of paper presenter or session participants and complete contact information.

**Submissions should be sent electronically to:**

[pedersjm@uwec.edu](mailto:pedersjm@uwec.edu) and  
[Diane.Umble@millersville.edu](mailto:Diane.Umble@millersville.edu)

If it is not possible to send proposal electronically, if submitting from the Americas, please send by regular mail to:

Jane Pederson  
Department of History  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
Eau Claire, WI 54702

Submissions by post from elsewhere in the world should be sent to:

Margreet van der Burg  
Rural History, Social Sciences  
Wageningen University  
Hollandseweg 1  
NL-6706 KN Wageningen  
The Netherlands

## **Send Us Your News!**

RWSA members would appreciate hearing of your accomplishments and awards, changes in employment, forthcoming publications, and research discoveries or needs. We welcome announcements from institutions and organizations regarding historical holdings, job openings, activities, and events. Send submissions to Rebecca Montgomery at [rm53@txstate.edu](mailto:rm53@txstate.edu). The next newsletter will be sent out in December 2011.

# Member News

## Riney-Kehrberg now department chair

Dr. Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, Professor of History at Iowa State, recently was appointed chair of the History Department. Pamela also is Director of the Agricultural History and Rural Studies Program, which is the only doctoral program of its kind in the United States. Congratulations to Pam on her new position and new publication (see page 4).

## Adams “Retirement”

Although Jane Adams (Professor Emerita in the Department of Anthropology at Southern Illinois University) retired a year ago, she has been keeping busy with two book projects dealing with the history of Downstate Illinois and migrations to the lower Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. She also recently was elected to the Carbondale City Council, which has delayed her writing schedule, but she announces that “historian will remain high on my priorities”!

## Reschly Provides Keynote Address

Steven Reschly, currently residing in northern Germany while his spouse holds a Fulbright at the University of Rostock, was invited to be one of two keynote speakers for the “British Historians of Women in the Americas” conference to be held July 6. A blog on the conference is located at <http://hwa2011.tumblr.com/>. He also hopes to attend the Feminist and Women’s Studies Association (UK and Ireland) meeting July 5-7 at Brunel University.

## Montgomery Wins Article Award

Rebecca Montgomery won the Missouri Conference on History Article Award given for the best article on Missouri history published in 2010. Her essay, “With the Brain of a Man and the Heart of a Woman: Missouri Women and Rural Change, 1890-1915,” was published in the April 2010 edition of *Missouri Historical Review*. It examines how gender politics, both on the farm and in agricultural institutions, shaped rural women’s responses to the social and economic changes spurred by expansion of market production.

## New initiatives by Mbatha and the Women’s Comfort Corner

Women’s Comfort Corner Foundation Trust, founded in Harare, Zimbabwe, by Rita Marque Mbatha in 1998 to improve the criminal justice response to violence against women, recently launched an important new campaign. The “Start by Believing” campaign includes educative materials and a twelve-module course on child sexual abuse prevention that will be introduced into all public schools in Zimbabwe.

On March 16, Mbatha spoke at the launching ceremony, which also was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Thokozani Khupe, Harare Mayor Muchadeyi Masunda, Deputy Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs Obert Gutu, and Deputy Minister of Women’s Affairs and Gender and Community Development Jessie Majome, among other officials. Mbatha shared with the audience her own experiences with sexual harassment and the findings of a study her center recently completed on the impact of rape on school girls.

The Start by Believing campaign uses a number of strategies designed to ensure that sexual assault victims get the support and attention necessary for healing and justice. It encourages members of the community to reject the silence and shame traditionally associated with sexual assault so that victims feel safe in reporting the attacks and receive the medical attention required for successful prosecution. Women’s Comfort Corner focuses on the public response because a friend or family member usually is the first person a victim confides in after an assault.

In order to improve public response, the campaign also provides members of the community and law enforcement free access to a state-of-the-art online training program on the criminal justice response to sexual assault. The twelve-module course addresses the unique challenges of investigating and prosecuting sexual crimes, including obstacles presented by community attitudes and biases. As Women’s Comfort Corner notes, sexual violence hurts entire communities, and the Start by Believing campaign seeks to make entire communities part of the solution.

# Announcements

## Member Inquiries Panel Participants Sought

Joan Jensen is trying to put together a panel for the 2012 Triennial Meeting on "Professional Women in Early Twentieth Century Agriculture: New Women and the New Patriarchy." She especially would like to add presentations on non-U.S. research. Interested parties may contact her at [jjjen2@q.com](mailto:jjjen2@q.com).

Rebecca Montgomery is working on a panel on women and rural education and seeks a third presenter. Current participants will focus on woman teachers and school supervisors in the U.S. South. For further information on the focus of the panel, contact her at [rm53@txstate.edu](mailto:rm53@txstate.edu).

## New Publication *Growing Up On a Farm*

A book for 10-14 year olds by Pamela Riney-Kehrberg will be published by Texas Tech University Press in September. Entitled *Always Plenty to Do: Growing Up on a Farm Long Ago*, it tells the story of childhood on America's farms in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Fleshing out the contours of everyday life, it reveals what farm children saw, heard, smelled, tasted, and felt—and how they worked, played, and learned. *Always Always Plenty to Do* describes America's farm heritage by showing it through the eyes of children who experienced it. Drawing upon rich primary sources from the Great Plains and Midwest, Riney-Kehrberg combines biography and historical narrative to invite young readers into the nation's rural past.

## New Publication *Food, Farming, and Sustainability*

Susan Schneider's new book, *Food, Farming and Sustainability: Readings in Agricultural Law*, has been published by Carolina Academic Press. Agricultural law is the study of the unique network of laws that apply to the production, marketing, and sale of agricultural products. Traditionally, agriculture has been favored with exemptions, exceptions, and rules

that reflect the uniqueness and political power of the industry. In recent years, the study of agricultural law has expanded its scope to include issues of food safety and sustainability. This book provides an issues-based study of these complex topics. It is divided into units designed to introduce some of the critical legal issues facing the industry and consumers, and provides a mix of readings in law and policy.

## Award-Winning Publication *Women and the Agrarian Ideal*

Congratulations to Janet Galligani Casey, whose book *A New Heartland: Women, Modernity, and the Agrarian Ideal in America* (Oxford University Press, 2009) has been awarded the Gita Chaudhuri Prize of the Western Association of Women Historians. The Chaudhuri Prize recognizes the best monograph about women in rural environments from any era or place. *A New Heartland* demonstrates the importance of rurality to the imaginative construction of modernism/modernity, and asserts that women, as objects of scrutiny as well as agents of critique, have had a special stake in that relation.

## New Publication *American Woman in the Philippines*

Theresa Kaminiski announces that the University of Tennessee Press will publish her book, *Citizen of Empire: Ethel Thomas Herold, An American in the Philippines*, later this spring. It examines the life of a woman whose sense of patriotic duty took her from small-town Wisconsin to the Philippines in 1922. Herold traveled with her husband to the islands to teach in public schools as a way to spread American ideals abroad. She remained there throughout World War II, but felt increasingly isolated after Philippine independence and finally returned to Wisconsin in 1959. Herold remained politically active and sought solutions to American Cold War problems in the conservative wing of the Republican Party. Her transpacific life and views on patriotism and citizenship offer a remarkable example of how the personal and political came together during the "American Century."

## RURAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

### MEMBER INFORMATION

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FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

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MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

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E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO RWSA

Annual dues are \$10.00; if you would like to secure membership for the entire three-year inter-conference period (2010-2012), please send \$30.00.

We also encourage contributions to the Jensen-Neth Fund (to help with registration fees for graduate students and international participants).

(RWSA is a 501C-3 non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible.)

CONTRIBUTION TO THE JENSEN-NETH FUND \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail a personal check or international money order made out to RWSA to:

Debra Reid, RWSA Treasurer  
Dept. of History, Eastern Illinois University  
600 Lincoln Ave.  
Charleston, IL 61920

217-581-7272  
Fax: 217-581-7233  
e-mail: dareid@eiu.edu