

## Richland County Rules & Resolutions Committee

### Agenda Item Cover

**Agenda Item Name:** Women's History Month

<b>Department</b>	n/a (County Board)	<b>Presented By:</b>	Shaun Murphy-Lopez
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	3/4/21	<b>Action Needed:</b>	Resolution
<b>Disclosure:</b>	Open Session	<b>Authority:</b>	Committee Structure, Section D
<b>Date submitted:</b>	3/1/21	<b>Referred by:</b>	None

#### **Recommendation and/or action language:**

Recommend a motion, to present a resolution to the County Board celebrating Women's History Month.

#### **Background:**

March is Women's History Month, an annual observance remembering the contributions and achievements of women over the course of history in a variety of fields. Historian Crystal Foley of the Richland County History Room has summarized notable contributions and achievements of Richland County women:

- The most notable is Ada L. James (1876-1952), daughter of David Goodrich James and Laura A. Briggs James. She and both of her parents were instrumental both locally and statewide in campaigning and organizing for women's suffrage. She also worked as a social worker for Richland County for many years and contributed to child and family assistance programs very early in Richland County, probably 1920s through 1940s. The Richland County History Room has information on her. Also the Wisconsin State Historical Society has several boxes of her papers because when she died in 1952 the Richland County History Room did not exist. There is a historical marker dedicated to her in Krouskop Park next to the 4-way stop sign.
- Dr. Bertha Reynolds (1868-1961) was a long-time doctor in the Lone Rock area. She delivered many babies on both sides of the Wisconsin River and had a practice in Lone Rock and then Avoca. It was rumored that before he was famous, Charles Lindbergh was a pilot who would travel around the country doing shows at fairs and other programs. One time Dr. Reynolds needed to get across the Wisconsin River and there was a flood or something preventing her from getting across so Charles Lindbergh gave her a ride across the river and back. There is a historical marker dedicated to her near the fire station in Lone Rock.
- Mary Maria Cook Speidel (1848-1931). Sebastian Spiedel, was a jeweler in Richland Center. When he died, his son, Charles took over. Charles' widow, Mary Spiedel, became the first woman licensed watch repairer in the country. Her daughter, Edna Spiedel Pier became the second woman licensed watch repairer in the country.
- Margaret Helen Scott (1898-1994) wrote quite a few books about the history of Richland Center and Richland County and she was the first historian at the Richland County History Room, which she organized starting in 1969. She was also a teacher, librarian, and artist.
- Eno Downs Jones Renney (1876-1933) and Emelia E. Snyder (1906-1968) were both local artists.
- Another early woman doctor was Dr. Sarah A. Thomas Elliott. She studied at Colorado State University around 1896. Her husband, Dr. T.B. Elliott was also a doctor. She studied after he died. She interned in Chicago around 1901 and practiced in Richland Center after that. Other times she studied 1907 in Vienna, Austria.

Obituaries of each of these women are included in the attachment.

**Richland County Rules & Resolutions Committee**

**Agenda Item Cover**

**A Resolution Celebrating Women’s History Month**

WHEREAS the County Board wants to join in the celebration of March as Women’s History Month, which has been celebrated across the country since March 1987, when Congress first designated it, and

WHEREAS women have struggled with adversity to achieve full inclusion in American society, and

WHEREAS notable Richland County women such as Ada James, Dr. Bertha Reynolds, Mary Speidel, Margaret Scott, Eno Renney, Emelia Snyder, and Dr. Sarah Elliott have made contributions to that struggle, and

WHEREAS unnamed women across many centuries have held careers and raised families in Richland County, and,

WHEREAS the Richland County History Room educates residents about the history of our county.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Richland County Board of Supervisors that the County Board hereby celebrates March as Women’s History Month, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Board encourages residents to learn about and embrace the historical contributions of women in Richland County, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage and publication.

---

**Attachments and References:**

Attachment: Obituaries of Notable Richland County Women
---

**Financial Review:**

(please check one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	In adopted budget	Fund Number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apportionment needed	Requested Fund Number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other funding Source		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No financial impact		

**Approval:**

**Review:**

---

Department Head

---

Administrator, or Elected Office (if applicable)

---