



IFRW History...Celebrating over 80 years.

Our IFRW History is important to know - lest we forget!

According to state history, "In 1891, the women in Illinois had been granted the right to vote in school elections, and to these women that meant political action. In 1896, a group of Illinois women felt that the time had come for action and advertised in the newspapers for a mass meeting of women to be held in Springfield just before the regular state convention." The call stated it was for the purpose of "perfecting a women's Republican club" and selecting a woman candidate for university trustee.

Later, the National Federation of Republican Women (NFRW) was founded at a conference held at the Palmer House in Chicago, Illinois, September 23-24, 1938.

In the following years, independent clubs were formed. In September 1940, Republican women from all over the state met and elected Marie Suthers the first state president. In addition, IFRW affiliated with the NFRW in 1940.

Marie Suthers served as IFRW president until 1943, the year she was elected president of the NFRW (1944-1947). Two other former state presidents have also served as NFRW president: Patricia Hutar (1976-77) and Mary Jo Arndt (1998-99).

IFRW Past Presidents

- Jayne Lehman Raef 2020-2023
- Linda Yoakum 2018-2019
- Susan Wynn Bence 2016-2017
- **Michelle Buckwalter-Schurman** 2012-2015***
- Joyce Hundhausen 2008-2011
- Lois Frels 2004-2007
- Kay Hatcher 2000-2003
- Chloanne Greenhouse 1998-1999
- Charlotte Mushow 1994-1997
- Jan Landis 1992-1993
- 1986-1989
- Marge Masse 1982-1985
- **Mary Jo Arndt** 1977-1981*
- **Patricia Hutar** 1974-1976*
- Virginia MacDonald 1972-1973
- Hazel Watson 1968-1971
- Ginny Kenney 1965-1967
- **Phyllis Schlafly** 1960-1964**
- Maryan Boardman 1956-1959
- 1954-1958
- 1950-1953
- 1946-1949
- 1944-1945
- **Marie Suthers *** 1940-1943

* NFRW Past President

** Phyllis Schlafly served as NFRW 1st Vice President, 1964-1967

*** Michelle Buckwalter-Schurman has served on the NFRW Executive Board as Secretary, Treasurer, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, and 3rd Vice President, 2016-2025.

Note: If you know any history / dates of the following past presidents, please contact us with any information you may have. Thank you.

**Shirley Fazio
Maralee Lindley
Regina Benson
Frances Killey
Josephine Oblinger**