



## Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley Breeze and Pat Kelemen  
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta Bell  
Program Vice President

Gwen Westbrooks  
Membership Vice-President

Volume 51

April 2016

Pat Kelemen, Editor

### BRANCH BOARD MEETING

The board will meet April 4, 11:30 at the Corner Coffee House.

### FEBRUARY BRANCH MEETING

The February meeting that was postponed due to weather finally took place on February 29. Attorney Robyn Stranquist spoke about Estate Planning for seniors. She provided clear information and answered many questions from the audience. An unusually large number of guests attended, meaning we provided a service not only to our members but also to the community.



Robyn Stranquist



Members and guests listen to Robyn speak

### MARCH BRANCH MEETING

On March 21, Dr. John Wright spoke to more than 30 members and guests about Famous African-American Women from Missouri. Those he mentioned included Elizabeth Keckly, a former slave who was a seamstress, entrepreneur and activist. She worked as a seamstress for Mary Todd Lincoln. They became friends and she may have indirectly influenced President Lincoln. Margaret Bush Wilson, an attorney who rose to be the National President of the NAACP. Annie Malone and Mme. C. J. Walker, who both built cosmetics empires and used their wealth as philanthropists. Entertainers Josephine Baker, Grace Bumbry and Tina Turner. Children's author Patricia McKissack who has won numerous awards.

After the program, there was a brief business meeting. Pat Kelemen distributed a Member

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Survey, which will help with program planning, both for branch meetings and other activities. Completed surveys should be returned to Pat or Shirley by May 25. The program planning meeting will be at Hidden Lake on June 13.

The nominating committee chaired by Judy Holmes announced the slate of officers for 2016-17. They are Shirley Breeze and Pat Kelemen Co-Presidents, Wilzetta Bell Program Vice President, and Myra Talkington, Secretary. There were no nominations from the floor.

#### **APRIL BRANCH MEETING**

##### **STEM in St. Louis**

The St. Louis area has a great number of very active and nationally-recognized STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) projects and activities. Find out what is happening in the area at the April 18 branch meeting.

Siinya Riley, who has been involved with the STEM program at the St. Louis Science Center for 25 years, will present the latest initiatives of that institution. This program is nationally recognized.

Christina Hughes, Science Coordinator the Hazelwood School District, will give an overview of STEM activities in a major suburban school district. Hazelwood has been an innovator in school STEM programs.

The meeting will be April 18 at 7:00 pm in the Educational Building of Immanuel UCC Church, 211 Church Street, Ferguson. It is free and open to the public. The presentation will be followed by a branch business meeting. For more information, call 314-517-8973, 314-831-5359, or 314-831-6884.

#### **PRESIDENTS' LETTER by Pat Kelemen**

It is time for members to be thinking about the coming year. The program planning meeting will be held June 13 at Hidden Lake. Once again the management will provide us with a free lunch--there really is such a thing. Every branch member is invited to attend and help with the planning.

While this meeting has traditionally focused on planning programs for the monthly branch meetings, there is much more to the programs, events, and activities we are involved in. All aspects of what we do as AAUW members deserve thoughtful consideration. As a result, a survey of branch members is included with this newsletter. It asks wide-ranging questions about the talents, interests, and skills of our members. What can you contribute to our activities? Which of the issues AAUW supports do you want to work toward? What are your priorities as a branch member? How involved do you want to be?

Some of the items in the survey are "homely" like hosting events (food?), while others are more issue-related like STEM education. All of them help the branch to be a vital, functioning unit. Several of them contribute to the community as a whole.

As you know, there is much more to what branch members do than our monthly meetings with interesting speakers or other programs like the legislative forum last October. We work on STEM, both as mentors to the Robotics team and by having a table at the Hazelwood STEM Extravaganza. We have registered voters and assisted others in updating their registrations. In this Presidential election year, we will be working to GOTV--Get Out the Vote--with registration initiatives. Through Interbranch Council (IBC) we help send local college women to the NCCWSL leadership convention. On March 19 we co-sponsored Celebrate Writers, featuring local writers from the area. We have a frequent presence at the Ferguson Farmers' Market. These are a few of our activities. What else are we interested in doing? We mustn't forget to have fun, either!

The survey will provide information on what members are interested in. This will help planners with programming, setting up various types of events, and organizing small group activities. All our events are open to all members, and often to community members as well. Not all draw large numbers of participants: a book group meeting or a "funraiser" to Earth Dance Farm and then the Whistle Stop for ice cream might have 5-8 participants.

Your input is vital as we plan our next year. If you did not receive the survey as a handout at the March branch meeting, please **print out and fill out** the survey. All members should return it to Pat Kelemen or Shirley Breeze by postal mail or by hand delivering it at any board or branch meeting. Please

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return the survey by May 25.

### **DIVERSITY by Jann F. Mueller**

To those who might be concerned:

I volunteered to write an article for AAUW on disabilities.

I had polio when I was 4 years old. My right leg and foot are smaller than my left one. I have been very fortunate to be able to work, play and live without government benefits. I have also been blessed with many friends who I think don't judge me for having a limp.

I wish our government would find it honorable to help all of our soldiers and Wounded Warriors. Our government should pay with money, medical, jobs and all other expenses they need rather than have a fund for volunteering to give money. The fund raiser takes advantage of them and the citizens of the United States.

Also, we need to do more for our mentally ill, such as housing, medical care, counseling, whatever is in their best interest.

Our government helps other countries with many things but we need to help our very own people of America. Use our taxes and keep the money at home; then we can help other people in other countries.

### **SPRING FLING**



Barbara Lackritz Award winners.

This year's winner Jan Scott is shown in the white jacket.



Gwen and Wilzetta prepare for raffle.

Spring Fling March 12 was a success in many ways. Members from IBC branches attended and enjoyed a meal and great company. Entertainment was provided by the Gateway Spotlight Chorus, including St. Charles Branch member Teri Brecht.

Ferguson Florissant branch was responsible for the fundraising: selling raffle tickets for the eleven baskets that were donated, plus a board of lottery tickets, and then conducting the drawing itself. Carolyn Herkstroeter and Virginia Jost organized the tables of baskets. Wilzetta Bell and Gwen Westbrooks conducted the drawing. Thanks to all of them, the raffle went very smoothly.

Carolyn, Virginia, Myra Talkington and Shirley Breeze created the three baskets our branch donated: a "Me Time" basket with items ranging from a yoga mat to scented candles, and other treats designed to promote relaxation, a "Doggy" basket with items for a pet, including doggy biscuits baked by Virginia, and a pasta basket assembled by Myra and including a grocery gift card contributed by Shirley.

Various members contributed gift cards or money to buy them for the baskets.

Thanks to everyone who helped make our part a success. The raffle earned \$421 for IBC.

Thirteen branch members attended Spring Fling this year.

### ***Save the Day***

*The annual May Luncheon will be held on Saturday, May 21 at*

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*Rizzos on Dunn Road. More details will follow in the May newsletter. Mark your calendars and plan to be there.*

#### **DONATIONS AT GAME DAY by Judy Holmes**

The Lutheran Church of Living Christ would like to thank all who brought toiletry articles for the homeless and food for the TEAM food pantry on AAUW Game Day in January. The very generous contributions were much appreciated by the clients of the organizations that received them. THANK YOU!



Branch members at Spring Fling: (From left to right) Myra, Tommie, Shirley, Wanda, Gwen, Sylvia, Wilzetta, Mable, Virginia, Lillian, Lovene, Pat, and Carolyn.

#### **DIRECTORY ADDITIONS--a new member and an address change**

We are happy to welcome a new member, Tommie Turner. Her address is 3026 Laclede Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101. 314-340-5955 [TurnerT@hssu.edu](mailto:TurnerT@hssu.edu).

Pam Meyers has a new e-mail address: [wpemeyers@gmail.com](mailto:wpemeyers@gmail.com).

#### **TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP**

Tuesday Afternoon book group will meet at the home of reviewer Mary Ellen Starr at 11:30 on April 12. Mary Ellen will discuss *The Missing Class* by Katherine S. Newman and Victor Tan Chen. Because she has discovered that this book is very scarce in the Ferguson Library and the County Library System, Mary Ellen will include an overview of other books that discuss the problems of the shrinking middle class in the United States.

Notify Mary Ellen if you plan to attend and bring a sandwich when you come.

#### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS LECTURE SERIES**

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The International Relations Lecture Series will meet Tuesday, April 12, 2016 at the Ethical Society of St. Louis, 9001 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63117. The meeting begins at 10:45 am in the upper auditorium. Free parking is available in the rear of the building. The 45-50 minute lecture will be followed by a question and answer period. Attendees are invited to bring lunch and to stay and discuss the day's topic. In case of inclement weather, you may call 314-991-0955, ext. 224.

The presentation will be "A Global Perspective on Addressing Gun Violence" by Ryan D. Kulik, MA, BA Political Science, BFA Theater Arts, Managing Partner RD Kulik and Assoc., Head Editor for SeedSing.com.

Mr. Kulik has spent over 20 years working as a lobbyist, public relations consultant, and policy advisor in regards to gun violence prevention. He specializes in taking controversial issues and creating new partnerships with the goal of implementing positive social change. The US has recently seen a spate of high profile shootings. With an eye toward this violence, Mr. Kulik is going to delve into the issue of how our laws effect the overall well-being of our global society.

#### **ADELANTE BOOK GROUP**

The Adelante Book Group will meet April 28, 2016, at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson at 1:30. **The original books for April and May are switching.** The April book will be *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed. The reviewer will be Janice Rumpfelt.

#### **DOWNTOWN LUNCH**

The Downtown Lunch group will meet at 11:45 am on Tuesday April 19 at Felix's Pizza Pub, 6401 Clayton Road, 63139. RSVP Kay Meyer 314-962-7487 or [kicmeyer51@gmail.com](mailto:kicmeyer51@gmail.com).

#### **TEA TIME TRIVIA**

The St. Charles branch is once again sponsoring Ladies Tea Time Trivia. It will be Saturday, April 23 from 1-3 pm. This is a local scholarship/education fund raiser. A flyer with all the details will be included with this newsletter.

#### **CALENDAR**

##### **April 12--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group**

April 12--International Relations Lecture

##### **April 18--Branch meeting**

April 19--Downtown Lunch

April 23--Tea Time Trivia

April 28--Adelante Book Group

**May 21--Annual May Luncheon**

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