



Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley Breeze and Pat Kelemen
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta Bell
Program Vice President

Gwen Westbrooks
Membership Vice-President

Volume 51

February 2016

Pat Kelemen, Editor

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The board will meet on February 1, 11:30 at the Corner Coffee House

GAME DAY A HUGE SUCCESS

Let's Celebrate!!! Our fourth annual game day was a great success. We raised \$362, which will enable branch members to attend state and regional conferences and other important networking and leadership events.

Huge thanks to everyone who worked so hard--the kitchen committee for the delicious food!--Wilzetta Bell for organizing the raffle, the hard-working auction committee, Virginia Jost's LAF book sale, Linda Ferber for once again bringing the GIRLS' jewelry--always an attraction--to greeters, ticket sales and money handlers. To our branch members of Living Christ Lutheran Church for offering a great venue and to the church for their generosity in the use of their facility and tables. Thanks to all members who invited friends, brought salads, desserts, auction and raffle items and donations. We hope everyone had fun and enjoyed this event. Especially thank you to the great fund raising committee.

To all branch members--what awesome women!

--Carolyn Herkstroeter, Fund-Raising Chair

These photos are by Carolyn Herkstroeter--Thank you. Look for more pictures of Game Day soon on our website.



Pam, Thelmarene, Myra and Mable at the cashier's table. scrabble



Lillian and Wanda (both on right) play with guests.

Contact us by e-mailing Gwen Westbrooks at gwestbrooks@hotmail.com
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Guests play cards with Wilzetta



Wilzetta conducts the raffle

FEBRUARY BRANCH MEETING February 15, 2016 at 10:00 am.

Estate Planning in Missouri

Attorney Robyn Stranquist will present the program for the February branch meeting. Ms. Stranquist has been a practicing attorney for almost 30 years in Missouri and Illinois. Her practice focuses on estate planning and probate administration. Her work includes preparing wills, trusts, powers of attorney and health care directives; assisting with probate matters, non-probate transfers and real estate transactions. This presentation will provide practical information on estate planning and the probate process. Durable Powers of Attorney and Durable Powers of Attorney for Health Care will also be addressed.

We will meet on February 15 at 10:00 am in the Educational Building of Immanuel UCC Church, 211 Church Street, Ferguson. For more information, call Shirley, Carolyn or Pat.

FERGUSON FARMERS' MARKET

We will have an information table set up at St. Stephen's in Ferguson for the Winter Market on Saturday, February 20th from 9 a.m. --noon. Volunteers must be there by 8:30 a.m. We need two volunteers for that event. If you can oblige, please contact Gwen Westbrooks at 314-609-8467 or gwestbrooks@hotmail.com.

PRESIDENTS' LETTER by Pat Kelemen

Fund raising chair Carolyn Herkstroeter and her committee have organized extremely successful events to raise money for our branch. Several additional members have worked shifts or otherwise contributed to our success. Gift wrapping at Barnes & Noble brought in a record number of donations. Not only did branch members work the dates we had contracted for with the store, but several women also answered last minute requests for help from Barnes & Noble. More recently, Game Day on January 18 was fun and raised significant funds. Details for that event are in Carolyn's report above.

All of this hard work has a purpose. It provides funds for our branch to use in a number of ways. One important opportunity is to send or help send members to conferences, state and regional meetings, and other programs. The hope is that as many women as are interested will be able to attend, established members and newer ones as well. It is hugely beneficial for branch members to participate in programs beyond our branch and Interbranch Council. Those who do can better see what AAUW accomplishes regionally and nationally.

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Often these programs require registration fees and other expenses to attend. If our branch is able to fund or partially fund members, more may be able to attend. This is a benefit to the individual woman and to the entire branch. It is the outcome of the hard work of the fund raising committee. Don't hesitate to accept such an opportunity.

PUBLIC POLICY by Shirley Breeze

LEGISLATIVE RETREAT January 16, 2016

Representatives from women's organizations across Missouri convened in Columbia January 16, 2016, for the Annual Women's Legislative Retreat. They heard legislators talk about the expected action this year in Jefferson City, and experts' analysis of proposed right-to-work legislation, photo identification for voting, and Medicaid expansion efforts. Participants then determined the priorities for women's issues for the session.

Representative Stephen Webber was the keynote speaker for the event. He gave a detailed presentation of how the Missouri House works, including the various ways a bill can become law and the negotiations that entails. As many as eight different individuals have a part in getting a bill to its final stage.

Several candidates for public office made appearances including Bill Otto (candidate for Missouri house, District 46), and Brianna Lennon (candidate for Boone County Commissioner).

Attendees had an opportunity to discuss the pre-filed bills (there are over 1,000). Priorities adopted were the following: Tier 1, Reproductive Rights, ERA; Tier 2, Voting rights, Medicaid Expansion, Pay Equity, Violence Against Women; Tier 3, Labor Issues (Minimum Wage, Right-to-Work), Social Justice. Gun Issues and Education also received a number of votes.

Organizational representative in attendance included those from AAUW, NOW, League of Women Voters, MWLC, WILPF, MO Women's Political Caucus, NCJW, MWN, NEA, and others. The women's organizations had an opportunity to discuss with the group their current legislative focus and their next action or activity.



Shirley addresses the Retreat.



Keynote speaker Stephen Webber speaks with attendees.

NEW MEMBER

Please welcome Robyn Stranquist, who has joined the branch. She is a lawyer who will be the speaker for the February Branch Meeting. Her address and contact details: 407 Langdon Street, Alton IL 62002, 618-463-0352 (H), 314-808-5666 (W), rlstranquist@gmail.com.

DIVERSITY--from AAUW Oklahoma, Diversity Strategies--2010-2011

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

“The joy of creation is in its infinite diversity and in the ways our differences combine to

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create meaning and beauty.” --Mr. Spock, “Star Trek”

Valuing Diversity: Premises (core beliefs)

- Valuing diversity strengthens our ability to work together to achieve great things.
- Valuing diversity goes beyond race and gender to include age, education, job function, life styles, disabilities and other characteristics and factors that make us different.
- Diversity introduces individuality and new perspectives into any organization.
- Uniqueness should be celebrated.
- We all want an equitable and harmonious world for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.
- State and branch leaders must set the example for change.
- A commitment by EACH and EVERY ONE OF US to and understand the value of diversity.

BRANCH HISTORY

The historical documents of Ferguson-Florissant Branch are deposited at the State Historical Society of Missouri depository housed at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The collection is at the UMSL Truman Library. Lillian Boly had a treasure trove of our material and Shirley Breeze saw to moving it to UMSL.

BOOK GROUP

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet at Life Care Center on February 9 at 11:30 am. Pat Kelemen will lead the discussion of Jane Smiley’s *Early Warning*. Bring a sandwich and a **drink**. Salad and dessert will be provided. Contact Pat if you will attend.

ADELANTE BOOK GROUP

The Adelante Book Group will meet February 25, 2016, at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson at 1:30 Julie Triplett will review *Never Home* by Laird Hunt.

HAZELWOOD STEM EXTRAVAGANZA

Our branch was represented again at the Hazelwood STEM Fair. Carolyn Herkstroeter organized our efforts. She was assisted by Virginia Jost, Lovene Hartmann, Martha Panetti and Shirley Breeze. They handed out AAUW materials and made contact with several women who expressed interest in AAUW. Thank you to the women who staffed our table.

MIDWEST TEN STATE AAUW BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

This conference will be held June 3-4 (Noon Friday to Saturday Late Afternoon) at Great Wolf Lodge in Kansas City, Kansas. The flyer included with this newsletter provides details on registration and hotel accommodations.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION FORUM ON SEXUAL ASSAULT, RIGHT TO WORK, AND MINIMUM WAGE

This Forum will be presented by the St. Louis Branch on Saturday, February 27, 2016, at Grace Methodist Church in St. Louis. Details on this free event and registration information are found in the flyer included with this newsletter.

BALLWIN-CHESTERFIELD SPEAKER February 11, 2016

Fighting for Missouri Consumers in an Era of Corporate Power by Joan Bray

Joan Bray is Executive Director of Consumers Council of Missouri. She is a former newspaper editor and Missouri senator. She will explain some of the ways the Consumers Council is fighting for consumer’s rights,

Coffee at 8:45 am, Business Meeting 9:30, and Program 10:15-11:45. The location is Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road (At Clayton Road and 141) Chesterfield, MO 63017.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS LECTURE SERIES

The International Relations Lecture Series will meet Tuesday, February 9, 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 program will be **The Climate Crisis--Status post-Paris** by Ken Denson, Climate Change Activist, St. Louis

He is a life-long environmentalist, with a heavy focus on recent years on understanding the causes and solutions to the Climate Crisis; he has resided in the St. Louis area since 1980. This presentation will provide an overview of the Climate Crisis and examine where we are following the UN Climate Conference held in Paris December 2015.

Coordinator Julie Triplett, Assistant Coordinator Barbara Jefferies

DOWNTOWN LUNCH

The Downtown Lunch group will meet at Mathew's Kitchen, 5625 Hampton Ave, 63109, on Tuesday, February 16 at 11:45 am. RSVP Kay Meyer, 314-962-7487 or kicmeyer51@gmail.com.

SPRING FLING

The annual Spring Fling is fast approaching. It is set for Saturday, March 12, and the registration deadline is March 5. Detailed information and the registration form are found on the flyer included with this newsletter.

AAUW POLICY REVIEW 2015--Accomplishments of AAUW Advocacy

Over 250,000 emails were sent by Action Network members to their legislators, both statewide and nationally. Your online advocacy efforts amplified AAUW's voice far and wide and across the nation. Each Thursday, when AAUW's Action Fund's Lobby Corps hits Capitol Hill, they are able to show members of congress how many of their constituents are AAUW activists. Our Action Network was a critical force in furthering our public policy priorities in the states and in Congress in 2015!

CALENDAR

February 1--Branch Board Meeting

February 9--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group

February 9--International Relations Lecture

February 11--Ballwin-Chesterfield Program

February 15--February Branch Meeting

February 16--Downtown Lunch

February 20--Ferguson Farmers' Market

February 25--Adelante Book Group

February 27--Legislative Action Forum, St. Louis Branch

March 5--Registration deadline for Spring Fling

March 12--Spring Fling

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