



## Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

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Co- Presidents

Wilzetta  
Program Vice President

Gwen  
Membership Vice-President

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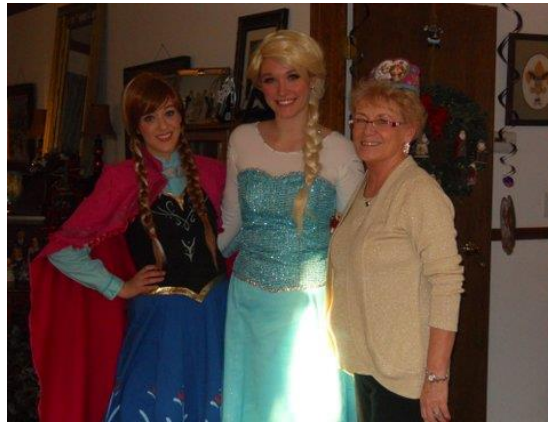
Pat, Editor

### JANUARY BOARD MEETING

The board will meet on January 12 at the Corner Coffee House at 11:30.

### ANNUAL HOLIDAY EVENT

The annual holiday party was held on December 14 at the beautifully decorated home of Fran. Members arrived with all kinds of holiday goodies to share. Special entertainment was provided by singer/actors portraying Princesses Elsa and Anna from the popular movie *Frozen*. Best of all was the good company we shared. In addition to the photos here, taken by Carolyn, more will soon appear on our website.



Hostess Fran with "Anna" and "Elsa"

Many thanks to Fran for sharing her lovely home with us and to Carolyn who made the arrangements with the entertainers. Carolyn is also becoming an expert at recording branch events with her camera. Her photos appear in the newsletter and on the website. Thank you.

### IT'S GAME TIME AGAIN!

Mark your calendar: Monday, Jan. 19<sup>th</sup>. Annual Game Day Branch Fund Raiser, Lutheran Church of the Living Christ. (See flyer: **Note new venue this year.**)

Invite friends/family to join you at a game table. Post flyers. There is no paid admission. Long tables will be provided. Bring a card table if you wish. Bring games or cards, of course!

We need the following to make the day a great success:

**SILENT AUCTION:** Re-gifted or gently used nice items or services to offer. We have bid sheets to fill out.

**RAFFLE:** BASKET/SPECIAL ITEM: Contact Wilzetta.

DESSERT OR SALAD FOR LUNCH: Contact Lovene.

VOLUNTEERS: Greeters, auction, raffle, set up (9:00 am), clean up (1:00 pm). Contact Carolyn.

Admission: Paper products for “THE GIRLS” or travel-size toiletries for homeless people.  
RSVP # of people, if possible. Carolyn or Myra

No limit on the people you invite! There will always be a place to join in a game!



“Anna” and “Elsa” pose with some of the branch members at the holiday party.

### **PRESIDENTS’ LETTER**

We are all aware of the many public policy issues facing women, such as the passage of the ERA, violence against women, sexual trafficking, discrimination, pay inequity, paid family leave, STEM, adequate health care, harassment in the military, etc.

However, there are some other activities that women are deeply concerned about and, if initiated, would greatly improve women’s status in society.

One is CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. This “Women’s Treaty” has been ratified by 187 countries; those remaining include the United States, the Sudan, South Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Palau, and Tonga. The treaty would provide an international base for the fair and equitable treatment of women. Some areas it addresses are sex trafficking and domestic violence, education and vocational training, voting privileges, forced marriage and child marriage, inheritance rights, access to maternal health care, and the right to work and own a business without discrimination. The last US action on the Treaty was June 24, 2014, when a Senate hearing was held. It is supported by President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry. By ratification, the US would be speaking out against inequities against women across the globe.

Another important campaign is the establishment of a National Women’s History Museum Building in Washington, DC. The museum, without a building, was established in 1996. Collection of women’s artifacts has been continuing since that time. Now, the push is to establish a building to house all the women’s history items in one place. This building would showcase women’s accomplishments and provide research opportunities to scholars. The latest activity toward this goal was the passage on December 12, 2014, of legislation to establish a commission to determine how this goal can be accomplished. It is well known that visibility in terms of concrete examples has a huge impact on the value society places on a subject.

Social Security will celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> year of existence on August 14, 2015. This program provides substantial support for millions of women who were “stay at home” moms or had a limited work history outside the home. It is estimated that more than half of these women would fall into poverty without these benefits; 48 per cent of non-married women age 65 and older get 90 per cent or more of their income from Social Security. There is a current movement to restructure the program. It is important that

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this restructuring maintain and enhance benefits for those people, mostly women, who rely on it for their very existence.

### **PUBLIC POLICY by Martha**

It is encouraging to review and reflect on AAUW accomplishments this past year as we begin our plans for 2015.

It is sometimes tempting to think that one phone call . . . or one letter. . . or one small check to AAUW Funds will hardly matter. But the results of our collective efforts this past year are truly astounding.

Are you a Two-Minute Activist? AAUW Vice-President of Government Relations, Lisa Maatz, reports a “57% jump in the number of Two-Minute Activist messages” sent to various elected officials by AAUW members this past year. Undoubtedly many of you have also made phone calls or sent snail mail letters to congressmen, state representatives, etc.

Simultaneously, AAUW Action Fund Capitol Lobby Corps members have continued their weekly trek to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress or their staff, completing over 1500 such visits in 2014. The Paycheck Fairness Act has an additional six co-sponsors in the Senate, thanks to the Lobby Corps efforts.

Our branch was among the many who registered voters before the November election. Across the nation, AAUW members “hosted more than 240 voter registration and voter education events in at least 40 states and Washington, D.C.” according to an AAUW report.

Efforts to promote STEM education continue, as branch members provide support for an after-school robotics program locally and AAUW members at the national level take part in the White House Committee on STEM Education. AAUW was represented at Senator Claire McCaskill’s roundtable on sexual assault. Lisa Maatz is now featured on Huffington Post, and she was asked by the White House to speak on a panel re: women’s issues.

The fact that AAUW received a \$90,400 grant from Lockheed Martin and a \$250,000 grant from Alcoa Foundation reinforces the idea that AAUW does have influence.

And there’s more! So while we haven’t solved every issue, we in AAUW definitely have made a difference!

The Annual Women’s Issues Legislative retreat will be held in Columbia, MO, Saturday, January 10 from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm, at Hy-Vee Grocery Conference Room, 405 E. Nifong Blvd. A review of the 2014 Legislative Session with a preview of the 2015 MO Legislative Session and determination of 2015 priorities will be on the agenda. **If you are thinking of attending, contact Shirley.**

We hope everyone enjoys the Holiday season! We look forward to more progress in 2015.

### **AAUW QUICK FACTS/LEADER ESSENTIALS**

During its over 130 years of existence, AAUW has always emphasized leadership enhancement. With the recent addition of several staff members and the establishment of a separate department for leadership, this emphasis has been greatly increased.

Two of the most effective but by no means the only resources available to member leaders are the Leader Essential Resource guides and the Quick Facts position papers.

Leader Essentials includes the procedures and skills that you need to know to be an effective leader. Leader Essential guides are available for 13 different leadership positions, including programming, membership, LAF, fundraising, finance, and STEM. For the beginning leader and the experienced one, these guides provide valuable information and material which not only makes the leader’s job easier and more rewarding, but makes the position more professional-looking.

The Quick Fact papers provide valuable current information concerning AAUW’s position on a number of important topics. These can be used in a number of ways. They can enhance a program presentation (hand them out to attendees), can be used to write op eds and letters to the editor, and provide essential information to testify before legislative committees. The papers consist of information on 18 different current topics, including immigration, career and technical education, common core, gender pay gap, vouchers, health care and a number of other areas.

Making use of these two valuable resources can greatly enhance branch leadership and activities.

### **WOMEN HELPING WOMEN**

Jan, who is St. Louis Branch Co-President, IBC Chair and Women’s Yellow Pages of Greater St.

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Louis publisher, is about to publish a new edition of an online directory of women-owned businesses. She has offered **free listings for women-owned businesses in Ferguson which have been impacted by recent events**. This is a great branch project to help women who contribute to our community, and we have already been working to contact some of these businesses for the January edition. Other businesses can be listed in upcoming editions.

We need help in this work, especially from branch members who are Ferguson residents. Ferguson women helping Ferguson women's businesses is especially authentic. A committee to do this will be discussed at the January board meeting. If you can help, notify Carolyn or Shirley.

### **ROBOTICS FOR A BETTER WORLD?**

"What would you have your robot do?" the instructor asked.

"Something to make a better world," the little boy promptly replied.

Robots will likely influence how we live in the future, but it is the bright young minds of children that will make them real--children like the fifth and sixth graders in Ferguson-Florissant School District who participate in the after-school Robotics program.

Along with mathematic and computer skills, Robotics stresses leadership, teamwork and the ability to explain and communicate clearly. Classroom teachers report renewed interest in achievement, better math skills, and more focus on studies.

Sponsored by PAKT COMMUNITY RESOURCE PROGRAM, 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY and the GIRL SCOUT COUNCIL EASTERN MISSOURI, under the guidance of PAKT president/branch member Toni, students from Duchesne and Walnut Grove Elementary Schools take part in the Robotics program, now in its second year. For the past semester, AAUW members Pat, Lovene, Martha, Lillian, Myra and Carolyn have attended weekly sessions as mentors to support and encourage these students.

"These are low-income, at-risk children," said Toni. "They have been selected by their classroom teachers because they need remedial work, have behavior issues, show interest, or whose parents work. Participation in Robotics provides them a safe place to be."

The Robotics program will continue throughout the school year and will provide the opportunity for dedicated students to pursue robotics through middle school and in the future. In addition to Robotics, we will partner with OASIS as reading tutors in the Ferguson-Florissant School District.

As AAUW members, we are honoring our commitment to education and STEM, especially to the girls involved. As Toni said, "We are giving children a chance to succeed. We are giving them hope."

**Please consider joining us in helping children and our community through education.**

Our branch, along with the robotics children, will participate in the **Hazelwood School District STEM EXTRAVAGANZA on Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>**. We hope you will join us at the AAUW/ROBOTICS stations.

--Carolyn, STEM Co-Chair

### **GIFT WRAPPING**

Thanks to Carolyn for arranging for us to wrap gifts at Barnes & Noble in Ladue and to Lovene for handling the scheduling. Those who signed up to work included Myra, Fran J., Virginia, Gen, Pat, Linda, Jann, Carolyn, Lillian and Shirley. Karen has pledged to send a check since she didn't sign up. Donations were generous, so that in 2 days, especially Christmas eve, we received a total of \$338.63. The funds will be used locally, probably for Robotics.

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Robotics students at the Saturday celebration at Duchesne School

### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS WEEK**

There will be a Human Trafficking Awareness Week event on January 10, 2015 from 10:00 am-12:00 pm at the Spencer Library, 427 Spencer Road, St. Peters, MO. Please see the flyer included with this newsletter for further information.

### **NEW MEMBER PROFILE**

This is a continuation of the series introducing our newest members. We are so glad they have not only joined us, but also have quickly become active in many of our programs and events.

#### **Joyce**

Joyce was born in St. Louis, grew up in Northwoods, and graduated from Normandy High School in 1959. She went to Washington University, where she earned her degree in elementary education in 1963.

One summer, Joyce did some graduate work at the University of Colorado in Boulder, and married in 1966. For four years after college, she taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade at Becky-David School in the Frances Howell School District before leaving to become a full-time mom. She and her husband bought a house in Wedgwood Greene in 1967, where Joyce still resides. (Her husband passed away in 1990.) While her children were growing up, Joyce substitute taught in the Hazelwood School District and then taught for two years in the Frances Howell District. She and her husband had two children, and she now has one grandchild. Her daughter and her husband live in O'Fallon, MO and her son and his wife and daughter live in Los Angeles, CA, where Joyce annually visits.

Two years after her husband died, Joyce went to work at New Dawn Natural Foods in South St. Louis. She bought into the store, and managed the day-to-day operation since the other two owners lived out of state. In 2011, New Dawn Natural Foods received a "Neighborhood Business of the Year" award from Mayor Slay. Joyce sold the store in January 2014 and retired.

In her retirement, Joyce is looking for interesting and informative things to do. She now has time to devote to volunteer work and is an active church member in Lutheran Church of the Living Christ. Joyce believes that AAUW can fulfill her desire to be active in a productive and meaningful way. Judy and Jann encouraged her to join the Ferguson-Florissant branch of AAUW.

### **HAZELWOOD STEM EXTRAVAGANZA**

The Hazelwood STEM Extravaganza will take place on Saturday, January 24 from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm at Hazelwood Central High School, 15875 New Halls Ferry, 63031. Ferguson-Florissant AAUW and the PAKT sponsored Robotics team will participate.

### **NANCY**

As of this writing, Nancy is not at home. She has been in Christian Hospital since before Christmas and will likely return to Lifecare on Parker Road when she is released.

### **JEAN MEMORIAL SERVICE**

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The memorial service for Jean will be January 17 at 1:00 at Kirkwood United Methodist Church, 201 West Adams. The family plans to celebrate a life well-lived and invites all friends. There will be a dessert reception following the service.

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

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet on January 13, 2015, at the home of Carolyn. Carolyn will lead the discussion of The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd. Bring a sandwich and notify Carolyn if you will attend.

#### **DOWNTOWN LUNCH**

The Downtown Lunch group will meet on January 20 at 11:45 am at Giovanni's Kitchen (Italian), 8831 Ladue Road, 63124 (314-721-4100). RSVP to Kay.

#### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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

The 2015 International Relations Lecture Series, presented by The Tuesday Women's Association of Ethical Society and AAUW meets promptly at 10:45 in the lower meeting room of the Ethical Society of St. Louis, 9001 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63117. 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.

On January 13, 2015, the topic will be **The End of the Ottoman Empire, the Creation of the Modern Middle East**. The Speaker will be Dr. Tahmineh Entessar, Retired Assistant Director of the Graduate Program in International Relations, Webster University. What role did the politics of oil and the politics of containment of communism play in the creation and maintenance of the modern Middle East? How did these political events create the conditions for the development of terrorist groups? Dr. Entessar will answer these questions and enlighten us on how these issues affect us and the world.

#### **ADELANTE BOOK GROUP**

The Adelante Book Group will meet on January 22 at 1:30 at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson in Chesterfield. Julie will review *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline.

#### **CALENDAR**

January 1-March 15--Half off National dues

January 7--AAUW's Annual Art Contest begins

Missouri Legislative Session Begins

January 10--Women's Legislative Retreat

January 11--Human Trafficking Awareness Day

**January 12--Branch Board Meeting**

**January 13--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group**

January 13--International Relations Lecture

January 15--Announcement of Winner of Convention Package

Deadline National Convention Best Value Registration Fees

January 17--Memorial Service for Jean Shull

**January 19--Annual Game Day Fund Raiser**

January 20--Downtown Lunch Group

January 22--Adelante Book Group

**January 24--Hazelwood Stem Extravaganza**

Missouri Board Meeting (Conference Call)

January 26--NCCWSL Registration Opens

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