



## Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Carolyn Herkstroeter, President

Shirley Breeze and Judy Holmes  
Program Committee Co-Chairs

Ruth Field, Membership VP

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Pat Kelemen, Editor

### SEPTEMBER RECEPTION

Our branch held a reception and information session Sunday, September 22 from 2-4 pm at the Home of Shirley Breeze. Several guests were present as well as members of the Creve Coeur and St. Louis branches.

In welcoming the group, Shirley Breeze mentioned that new members are welcome to join any branch that suits one best geographically or in any other way. The presidents of the visiting branches told the group about their organizations.

Donna Eichman, President of the Creve Coeur Branch, explained the geographical territory her branch covers. The branch is an offshoot of Ferguson-Florissant. They meet the first Monday of the month in the evening near Olive and 270. She described their interest groups and fund-raising events.

Jan Scott and Carol Davis-McDonald are Co-presidents of the St. Louis Branch. They discussed some of their programs and said they find small projects suit them best. They are currently researching mentoring programs for women. They meet on Saturdays. Their branch is 120 years old.

Judy Holmes, co-program chair for Ferguson-Florissant, welcomed the group on behalf of President Carolyn Herkstroeter, who was out of state. Judy touched on upcoming programs for October on anti-bullying in schools and on immigration for November. The March program will feature a civil-war nurse re-enactor to celebrate Women's History Month. Other branch members spoke about mentoring a girls' robotics team, the book group, and the February program featuring women legislators.

### *Carolyn's Corner*

Welcome everyone to a new year of great AAUW plans and programs. We can look forward to working with the All Girls Robotics Team, attending LIFELONG LEARNING at UMSL, innovative "FUN RAISERS," timely issue-oriented programs addressing the issues of bullying in our schools and immigration, initiating our branch **website and welcoming new members. I regret I was not able to attend our September reception, always a lovely day**, but I hope everyone had a good time. Thank you to Shirley for once again opening up her home. It is really exciting to enter our 51<sup>st</sup> year as a branch and an honor to be president of Ferguson Florissant Branch AAUW.



**Members at the reception included Nancy, Judy, Lovene, Ruth, Sylvia, Lillian, Wanda, Shirley, Virginia and Kathy.**

Thank you to Debbie McWard of Creve Coeur Branch for the following article on Lifelong Learning. I hope many of us can participate.

“Remember reading *Half the Sky* and how horrified you were at the idea that people are still being sold into slavery? You will be receiving a flyer and invitation to a November 8<sup>th</sup> event at The University of Missouri at St. Louis about HUMAN TRAFFICKING. It will be a terrific program since the University has been able to line up people experienced in dealing with all phases of this hideous crime that is taking place in our backyard--not just in “the city.”

“Lifelong Learning is a fledgling program that UMSL has undertaken,. AAUW has offered to support it because Human Trafficking is an important issue involving women and girls (although not only them). What makes UMSL’s lifelong learning experience unique is that not only does it educate but also offers an opportunity to use that information to plug into ways to help, advocate and support the agencies that are addressing this issue and targeted topics in the future. UMSL, as a College/University Partner, has given much support to pay them back.”

*Carolyn*

### **STEM AND ROBOTICS**

The Robotics Team is ready to go! “PAKT YIPP” Robotics Team of 10 girls will be competing in the first round of First Lego League competition on **October 27<sup>th</sup> at Bishop DuBourg High School, 5850**

**Eichelberger Street** in South St. Louis. Our help and support is needed as they prepare for competition, where they will be judged on teamwork and leadership as well as technology. Please sign up to volunteer on **Tuesdays between 3:30 and 6:00, beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> at Duschene School in Florissant** and on **Sundays, 3:00-5:00 at First Presbyterian Church in Ferguson**. On **September 29, at the church**, we are invited to a special introduction to meet the girls and hear about their project. We can attend the competition in October and cheer for “our girls.” Let’s give these STEM girls support and encouragement! Please contact Carolyn or Toni.

## **BOARD MEETING**

The board will meet on Monday, October 7 at 11:00 am at the Corner Coffee House in Ferguson.

## **OCTOBER BRANCH MEETING**

Bullying has a devastating effect on thousands of school children and young adults each year. Find out what policies local school districts have in place to deal with this destructive situation at the October 21 branch meeting.

School administrators from local high school and middle school districts will outline the process they use in cases of bullying that occur on their campuses. They will also detail the educational prevention systems and policies they have in place to inform young people of the dangerous nature of this activity.

This presentation will begin at 7:00 pm on October 21, 2013, in the Educational Building at Immanuel Church of Christ, 221 Church Street, Ferguson.

Invite your friends to this presentation of a topic that is currently making news headlines.

## **WEBSITE**

The branch is beginning to build our new website with the assistance of Megan Morrison, our site resources contact at AAUW national. The branch website team has met and is gathering materials to be included on the website. We hope this will be a new resource that will increase our visibility to potential members and provide another means of communication with branch members and other branches.

## **PUBLIC POLICY** **--by Martha Panetti**

I hope all of you enjoyed your summer respite. I certainly have relished the slower pace. But of course, as you know, the serious public policy issues facing us have not been resolved. I’m pleased to tell you that Lovene Hartman has agreed to help with the Public Policy portfolio. Lovene and I have talked and will meet soon as she begins her work.

I have written, then rewritten, parts of this article many times as I consider which issues to prioritize: pay equity, voter ID and registration, sexual harassment in the military, expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), public education, to name a few. Each of these deserves a full article. Where can we make a difference?

But the question asked in the last sentence of today’s (Sept. 18) lead editorial in the Post-Dispatch caught my attention.

**“Why are we sending Missourians’ federal tax dollars, and the jobs they promote, across our borders?”** the Post asks, after explaining that 26 states, including 5 of the 8 bordering Missouri, have decided to expand Medicaid under provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA or “Obamacare”) thus receiving billions of federal dollars to provide health insurance for low-income residents and at the same time expanding employment opportunities for residents who work in the health care industry. Missouri, as you know, is not one of the 26.

The Post also points out that ten of the states that are expanding Medicaid have Republican governors. The latest are the states of Michigan and Pennsylvania. Of course, you know public opinion polls still show strong opposition to the ACA. Many of us realize the bill is long and complex and suspect much of the opposition may be due to lack of information. Who has time to read through thousands of pages of a law?

**“Be informed and educated about the AFFORDABLE CARE ACT”** headlines an article in the League of Women Voters current Metro newsletter. The League refers us to several web sites where we can get understandable information. I checked out the Kaiser Family Foundation web site <kff.org> and found an animated video which breaks down the basic ways the ACA will affect each of us. I encourage each of you to research the facts. Then contact your state legislators and ask why Missouri is refusing to expand Medicaid.

**Pay Equity is still an issue!** You may have seen that the U.S. Census Bureau has just issued the latest data on the pay gap between men and women in similar jobs. As you might guess, nothing has changed recently. Maxine Lampe, currently President of AAUW Iowa, played an important role in an extensive study of technology employees in Iowa which showed that women’s salaries averaging \$59, 548 were significantly less than men’s average salaries of \$71, 093, despite the women averaging more experience on the job.

Anastasia Engelbretson has described her experience of lower pay despite having a degree in physics, and learning after the fact that her male colleagues had negotiated their salaries. She emphasizes the importance of negotiating starting pay because “the base salary will affect your retirement.”

AAUW will also participate in the National Voter Registration Day September 24. It always amazes me when I meet someone who has never registered to vote. Currently, some states are enacting stringent photo id laws which could prevent untold numbers of people from voting. Stay tuned.

#### **IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS AT UMSL**

On October 26, 2013, AAUW is hosting the first national gathering of educators who teach women’s and gender studies in middle and high school, the **AAUW Gender Studies Symposium, Creating Classrooms of Justice: Teaching Gender Studies in School.** A flyer and an information sheet will be included in mailed copies of this newsletter and e-mailed at the same time as electronic versions.

On November 8, 2013, UMSL will present its first Lifelong Learning program, **Human Trafficking: A Challenge to Action.** A flyer will be included in mailed copies of this newsletter and e-mailed at the same time as electronic versions. Karen Francis indicates that the best way to register for this event is **by phone. Call Mattie Lewis.**

#### **FIRST FRIDAY VIDEO**

The First Friday Video will be **A Good Woman**, starring Helen Hunt and Scarlett Johansson. It is a witty and elegant comedy of manners based on Oscar Wilde’s *Lady Windemere’s Fan* about a seductress who insinuates herself into high society and the life of a wealthy couple.

The movie will be shown at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, October 4 at Nancy Gerber’s apartment. Notify her if you will attend.

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

Tuesday Afternoon Book group will meet at the home of Lillian Boly on October 1 at 11:30. Lillian will review *After Camelot* by J. Randy Taraborrelli. Bring a sandwich. Please notify Lillian if you will attend.

#### **BALLWIN-CHESTERFIELD BRANCH MEETING**

**Human Trafficking in the Metro St. Louis Region, Thursday, October 10, 2013.** Coffee and socializing, 8:45am, Business Meeting 9:30 am, Program 10:15-11:45 am at Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road (at

Clayton Road and 141), Chesterfield, MO 63017.

Speakers are Cindy Mallot, Supervisor YWCA St. Louis Regional Sexual Assault Center, Sgt. Adam Kavanaugh, Supervisor of Special Investigations, St. Louis County Police Department, and Lt. Chris Mateja, St. Charles County Sheriff's Department, MO Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

The extended program will include a presentation and panel discussion by three dedicated professionals. Their experiences in the metropolitan area will provide you with up-to-date information on collaborative initiatives being utilized in our region. Their goal is to provide support services to human trafficking victims; to reduce re-victimization in cases of domestic human trafficking and to encourage the successful prosecution of traffickers.

### **DOWNTOWN LUNCH GROUP**

The Downtown Lunch Group will meet at 11:45 on October 15 at Russell's, 5400 Murdoch Avenue. To attend, contact Jean Shull.

### **CALENDAR**

**September 28-- AAUW Branch Fund Raiser Garage Sale**

**September 29--Introduction to Robotics team and project**

October--Deadline filing 990

**October 1--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group**

**October 1--Robotics begins**

**October 4--First Friday Video**

**October 5--Registration deadline for Gender Studies Symposium**

**October 7--Board Meeting**

October 10--Ballwin-Chesterfield program on Human Trafficking

October 11--UN International Day of the Girl Child

October 15--Deadline for Application For LAF Plaintiff

October 15--Downtown Lunch group

**October 21--Branch meeting**

October 21--Campus Action Projects Applications due

**October 25--Early registration deadline for Lifelong Learning program on Human Trafficking at UMSL**

**October 26--AAUW Gender Studies Symposium**

**October 27--Robotics First Lego League competition**

**November 8--Lifelong Learning program on Human Trafficking at UMSL**