



Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley Breeze and Pat Kelemen
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta Bell
Program Vice President

Gwen Westbrooks
Membership Vice-President

Volume 50

October 2014

Pat Kelemen, Editor

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING

The branch board will meet on October 6 at 11:30 at the Corner Coffee House in Ferguson.

ANNUAL SEPTEMBER RECEPTION

The annual opening reception to inaugurate the branch year was held Sunday, September 21 at the home of Shirley Breeze, Co-President. Shirley welcomed several branch members and 6 guests. Refreshments were provided by Shirley and the board members.

Four of the guests joined the branch by the end of the reception. Shirley provided a brief introduction to the purposes and activities of AAUW nationally and the branch locally. Carolyn Herkstroeter spoke about Get Out the Vote activities, especially voter registration times at the Ferguson Farmers' Market and Florissant Valley Community College. She had a sign up sheet. Sue Barley of Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch spoke about the Legacy Circle and distributed informational materials on ways members can help fund AAUW now and after their deaths. Co-President Pat Kelemen presented Carolyn with a certificate honoring her for her 50 years of membership in AAUW. Dorothy Stade, who was not present, was also awarded a certificate for 50 years of membership. Branch member Karen Francis, who is also Co-President of Ballwin-Chesterfield and state Public Policy Chair, presented a brief history of AAUW's longtime involvement in public policy issues affecting women and girls. She focused on key issues and how various AAUW Funds support women affected. Pat Kelemen spoke about our STEM Robotics project and possible tutoring.

The afternoon ended with more refreshments and a chance to socialize.

FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. September 20 marked the Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act.

AAUW has long worked to reduce violence in all forms, particularly against women. Since the VAWA was passed, great strides have been made in the reduction of incidents of domestic abuse.

- Between 1993, the year VAWA was introduced, and 2010, violence against family members and intimate partners in the US declined 67%.
- There has been as much as a 51% increase in reporting of such violence by women and 37% increase in reporting by men.
- Between 1993 and 2007, the rate of intimate partner homicides of women decreased by 35%, and the rate of intimate partner homicides of men decreased 40%.
- VAWA has saved taxpayers billions of dollars in costs for medical and mental health services, as well as costs for law enforcement and justice system expenditures.

PUBLIC POLICY by Lovene Hartman

SEXUAL ASSAULT ON COLLEGE CAMPUS

According to an article in Time Magazine (Sept. 1, 2014 edition) 1.8 million women will arrive on college campuses in the U.S. this fall. One in five will become a victim of an attempted or completed sexual assault during college. The students are more at risk during their first six weeks on campus.

Senator Claire McCaskill and a bi-partisan group of senators have introduced legislation called The Campus Accountability and Safety Act to combat sexual assault. Four democrat and four republican senators are co-sponsoring the bill ranging from the most conservative to the most liberal.

Senator McCaskill's office took a survey on how colleges and universities deal with sexual assaults and found:

- 20% of campuses give athletic departments . . . oversight of sexual violence cases involving student athletes.
- About 40% have not reported a sexual assault investigation in the past 5 years.
- More than 20% provide no training on dealing with sexual assault reports for faculty and staff.
- More than 30% provide no training on the issue to students.

If the legislation passes, it would:

- Require schools to designate "confidential advisors" for those who report they were victims of assault.
- Prohibit schools from disciplining students who admit to other campus infractions, such as drinking, when reporting assaults.
- Set minimum training standards for campus personnel dealing with allegations.
- Mandate annual surveys of students about sexual assault, to be published online.
- Require campuses and local law enforcement to come up with agreements about how they will handle all allegations.
- Stiffen penalties for noncompliance, providing for fines of up to 1% of a school budget.

Because of all the attention generated, colleges that did nothing before are ramping up efforts to make students safer. Time magazine reported that colleges such as Williams, Loyola, Oklahoma State and Dartmouth have introduced various programs to do so.

McCaskill and co-sponsors hope to debate the bill on the senate floor when congress returns.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 8 BOARD MEETING

Officer and committee reports included Lillian Boly's report on the **checking and savings accounts**. Together they total \$5705. Interest is very paltry, and the bank has announced a \$2 monthly fee for mailing bank statements. Lillian will investigate alternatives. Elaine Simpson reported that **\$100 given to any AAUW fund** would enter the donating member into the Century Club. Carolyn Herkstroeter said that **Robotics** will resume on Sept. 23 at Duchesne School; **The board voted to pay for T-shirts** for branch mentors to wear to Robotics competitions as a way to show support to the girls. The other teams have parents and others wearing shirts. Arrangements with the school district need to be made before we can **add tutoring** during the school day to our support of Duchesne School. Lovene Hartman will be setting a schedule in October for bringing **refreshments to branch meetings**. Carolyn discussed **fund raising plans and ideas**. Besides **Myra's coasters**--which are very attractive--Virginia Jost is setting up a **small rotating library** of her books. **It is a fun raiser**, so borrowers will contribute \$1 to the branch. **Gift wrapping** is set for Barnes & Noble in Ladue Dec. 4 and 24. **The branch will decide where money raised will be given at the October meeting**. The board chose 3 options, Legal Advocacy Fund, Scholarships for Women, and Support for our STEM project. **Carolyn was to attend the GOTV meeting** at Pat Shores' and work will begin on that project. A committee will begin working on an **AAUW grant proposal** in hopes of receiving money to support our STEM/Tutoring work.

OCTOBER BRANCH MEETING

VOTER SUPPRESSION AND THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

How will voter suppression affect the federal mid-term elections? Attorney Denise Liberman will address this issue at the October 20 Branch Meeting. Ms. Liberman has worked with this issue for a

Contact us by e-mailing Gwen at gwenrosenfeld@sbcglobal.net. Visit our website at fergusonflorissant-mo.aauw.net.

number of years. As former legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Eastern Missouri, she frequently was called upon to provide information on the effect of voter suppression. This responsibility also included testifying on the subject at hearings of the legislature in Jefferson City.

The meeting on October 20 will be held at Immanuel UCC Church, 211 Church Street, Ferguson at 7:00 pm. The meeting is free and open to the public. Invite your friends or prospective members. People are very interested in election issues at this time since the elections are just a few weeks away. Shape the Future incentives apply to this meeting.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT FUND/AWARD

Begun in 1988, the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund supports AAUW research to provide analysis, data, and accurate information about issues that are important to women and girls. Past reports include Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (2010), Graduating to a Pay Gap: The Earnings of Women and Men One Year after College Graduation (2012), Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School (2011), The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap (2014), and the current report, Women in Community Colleges: Access to Success (2013). In process for distribution next year are a report on Women in Leadership and another STEM report focused on engineering.

The fund also sponsors an award (established in 1989) honoring an individual, project, organization, or institution for outstanding contributions to equality and education for women and girls. The award is given for a broad range of activities including classroom teaching, education and research, and legal and legislative work toward equality for women and girls.

COMMUNITY ACTION GRANT

SHIRLEY BREEZE/FERGUSON FLORISSANT BRANCH

Those who were at Sunday's reception will remember a brief mention of the Grant named for Shirley Breeze and how grants are distributed. The very next day, Yvonne Morrison, AAUW MO Funds Officer, notified Shirley and the branch about the recipient of "our" grant. The grant goes to St. Claire Medical Center in Morehead, Kentucky, for its project Gaining Rural Opportunities for Women (GROW). High school junior and senior young women who are strongly interested in a healthcare career will attend a one-week summer camp designed to acquaint them with various aspects of rural healthcare.

This is our branch in action.

OUR NEWEST MEMBERS by Gwen Westbrooks, Membership VP

Our branch is expanding because we have welcomed several new members recently. Please encourage friends who might be interested in joining us to attend meetings and events, and hopefully join us. Other new members will be profiled in coming newsletters.

Most recently, Marveena Miller has joined. Welcome!

This is the second profile of a new member, Linda Ferber. Others will follow in later issues. Linda has lived in the St. Louis area (Maplewood) all her life. She received an Associate's Degree at Meramec Community College and then attended Southeast Missouri University, where she received certification in Elementary Education, Special Education, Behavioral Disorders, and Physical Education and Health.

Linda taught in the Missouri boot heel area at Delta Elementary School, and during her tenure there, the school went from an "A" rating to an "AA" rating for state accreditation. She found her teaching there rewarding, as well as "an awakening." Being a city girl working in a rural area, Linda says she truly learned more about life from her students than she could ever teach them.

Linda's career took many turns. She worked in sales of roofing coatings and coverings, medical billing and collection, hospital emergency room triage, hospital insurance contracting for physicians and coding.

Since retirement, Linda has found her place in her love for volunteer work. The lessons and experiences she learned from teaching about volunteering and giving of oneself have served Linda well in working with "The Girls," who make jewelry, and her volunteer work at her church. She says she continues to be rewarded in ways that money could never surpass.

Linda joined AAUW because of the friendships she has formed there. She hopes to be a productive, contributing member to the work of the organization.

**Contact us by e-mailing Gwen at gwenrosenfeld@sbcglobal.net.
Visit our website at fergusonflorissant-mo.aauw.net.**

TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

The Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet at Cannoli's on October 14 at 11:30 am. Elaine Simpson will review *A Fighting Chance* by Elizabeth Warren. Please call Elaine if you plan to attend.

A NEW FUND RAISER

From Myra Talkington: Please keep in mind that I will be making sets of coasters for sale at meetings or functions, that will be \$8 for four. Different patterns, colors, seasons. These would be good for small gifts, hostess gifts or stocking stuffers. All money will go to AAUW.

Any member who wants to organize a fun raiser can do so. They are "fun" events where those who participate donate a small amount beyond the cost of the event, such as \$2, to the branch.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

UMSL and the University of Missouri are offering two programs of interest to women, both of them supported by AAUW. The Lifelong Learning program at UMSL is presenting a Symposium on the Pay Gap on October 31. MU Extension is presenting a 5-session series on Women's Financial Education during October. Please see the flyers included with this newsletter.

DOWNTOWN LUNCH GROUP

The Downtown Lunch Group will meet at LHC (Local Harvest Café) 3137 Morgan Ford Road at 11:45 on October 21. Please email or phone Jean Shull to make a reservation.

CALENDAR

October 6--Branch Board Meeting
October 14--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group
October 20--Branch Meeting
 October 21--Downtown Lunch Group

**Contact us by e-mailing Gwen at gwenrosenfeld@sbcglobal.net.
 Visit our website at fergusonflorissant-mo.aauw.net.**