



Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley Breeze and Pat Kelemen
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta Bell
Program Vice President

Gwen Westbrooks
Membership Vice-President

Volume 51

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Pat Kelemen, Editor

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The board will meet on October 5, 2015 at 11:30 am at the Corner Coffee house

SEPTEMBER RECEPTION

The annual September reception was held Sunday, Sept. 20 at the home of Shirley Breeze. Nearly 20 members and guests gathered for conversation and refreshments. State President Diane Ludwig described the national priorities and highlighted the activities of Missouri branches as well as Missouri women. Ferguson-Florissant boasts two women, Shirley Breeze and Karen Francis, who hold national positions. This was a Shape the Future event, so any guest who joined was asked to pay only half of the national dues for their first year.

Thanks to Shirley for once again inviting the members and their guests to her home on a beautiful fall day.



Shirley, Virginia and Joyce at the reception



State President Diane Ludwig speaks to us.

OCTOBER 17 WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE FORUM

What new actions and surprises await Missouri residents in the upcoming legislative session which begins January 6, 2016? How will the new Speaker of the House affect legislative efforts aimed at improving the status of Missouri's women? What ramifications will the actions of the Veto Session have? Learn what prominent local women legislators have to say about these and other current issues at a Women's Legislative Forum.

Several local women state legislators and state senators will serve on the panel.

This forum, sponsored by our branch, will be held October 17, beginning with refreshments at 9:30. The forum will be from 10:00 to 11:30 am at Ferguson First Presbyterian Church, 401 Darst,

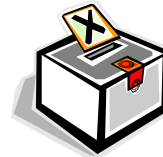
Contact us by e-mailing Gwen at gwenrosenfeld@sbcglobal.net.

Visit our website at fergusonflorissant-mo.aauw.net.

Ferguson. Park in the back parking lot and enter through the back door. The event is in the Fellowship Hall, which is the first facility off the parking lot.

Bring your friends. This Legislative Forum is open to the public. It is a Shape the Future event. Two years ago, Ferguson-Florissant hosted a similar event which was well received and got very positive publicity.

For information on this event, call 314-831-6884, 314-422-0413, or 314-831-5359.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Pat Kelemen

We are well on our way for the new branch year. Projects have resumed, such as informational tabling at the Ferguson Farmers' Market and mentoring Robotics, this year at Central School. The reception at Shirley's home included several invited guests and new members, including two very new members. It is always our hope that guests transition into members, and at least one already did. Fund raising and "Fun" raising are under way, enabling us to fund various activities.

The upcoming Legislative Forum on October 17 will perhaps be the most important program we present over the next few months. It will inform attendees about the issues facing women in Missouri and what the local women state legislators are working to accomplish. They will speak about their efforts, the challenges they face, and the difficulties of working in a highly partisan legislature where compromise is hard to come by.

Politics will be especially important in the coming months, with presidential campaigns already underway, and of course state and local events as well. Keeping up on the events and issues will help inform each member's votes when the time comes. Understanding where candidates' stands on issues affecting women and girls will provide one of several lenses through which to view them.

As Bette Davis said, "Fasten your seatbelts . . ."

PUBLIC POLICY

AAUW Public Policy Program Adjustments 2015-2017

AAUW has a well-respected, comprehensive Public Policy Platform. Each biennium, at the national convention, the Platform is updated, sometimes extensively, but usually with very limited additions/subtractions. The major changes from the 2013-2015 Platform which will now appear in the 2015-2017 Platform are as follows:

In the Principles for Action Section

Added sexual assault.

Added "We see an urgent need for meaningful campaign finance reform, open and fair elections, and nonpartisan voter education efforts that will promote equitable political participation and representation in appointed and elected office."

AAUW supports affirmative action to improve racial, ethnic, gender Added "and cultural diversity and inclusion. This included creating a culture of involvement, respect, and connection, where richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives is full appreciated and utilized."

Dropped "AAUW values and is committed to the arts and humanities, which develop and enhance our pluralistic and cultural heritage."

In the Biennial Action and Priorities Section

Added "Vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education."

Moved "Increased access to quality, affordable health care and family planning services, including expansion of patients' rights."

Added "Passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment."

Some minor verbiage changes were made within other sections of the document. The remainder of the 2013-2015 document was accepted as presented in the last biennium. All proposed changes were approved by the membership for the 2015-2017 document.

Contact us by e-mailing Gwen at gwenrosenfeld@sbcglobal.net.

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WHAT IS DIVERSITY?*

Diversity is a multi-faceted concept, not limited to race or gender. It includes age, education, sexual orientation, national origin, class, job function, life styles, disabilities, cultural background.

As we as an organization move in the direction of more diversity, several factors need to be taken into consideration:

- Involve all the members
- Employ various educational methods: newsletter articles, speakers, field trips
- Use pictures, graphics that reflect diversity because perception is important
- Be creative in promoting and recruiting member diversity
- Network with other groups who have been successful in their diversity efforts

Diversity should be valued. Uniqueness should be celebrated.

The Ferguson-Florissant Branch has a new Diversity Committee which has begun meeting and making plans. The ultimate goal of the committee is to educate the members about diversity, to be an information source for what diversity is and how to approach it, and to increase diversity in the membership and programming. If you have ideas or wish to join the effort, contact Judy Holmes.

--Source: Oklahoma AAUW "Diversity Strategies."

FERGUSON YARD SALE in May

A belated thank you to Virginia Jost for organizing and hosting the sale at her home. And to those who staffed the sale and/or contributed items: Carolyn Herkstroeter, Lillian Boly, Fran Carney, Myra Talkington, Elaine Simpson, Lovene Hartman, Gwen Westbrooks, and Shirley Breeze.

PHOTOS FROM EQUALITY DAY BRUNCH August 22, 2015

Here are photos of the brunch, taken by Carolyn Herkstroeter. Thank you, Carolyn!



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Shirley Breeze introduces honoree Laura X
 Laura X is a lifelong feminist activist

Speaker Caroline Frederickson,
 author of *Under the Bus: How Working
 Women are Being Run Over*

FARMERS' MARKET

Special thanks to Gwen Westbrooks for organizing and staffing our booth at the Farmers' Markets. And thanks to those members who participated: Lovene Hartman, Elaine Simpson, Carolyn Herkstroeter, Virginia Jost, Susan Donnell, Judy Holmes, and Shirley Breeze. Pictures follow.



Elaine, Virginia, Gwen, and Carolyn staff the informational table at the Ferguson Farmers' Market

SEPTEMBER GARAGE SALE

The Garage Sale held on Saturday, September 19 was a great success

A special thank you to Myra for organizing the Garage Sale and having it at her home, and to her son who helped with the heavy lifting in the pre-setup. Thank you to Pam Meyers for online publicity. And thanks to those members who worked at the sale: Joyce Wolf, Karen Francis, Lillian Boly, Virginia Jost, Lovene Hartman, Elaine Simpson, Carolyn Herkstroeter, Martha Panetti, Pat Kelemen, Shirley Breeze. The sale netted over \$200 for the branch.

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Myra, the sparkplug behind the garage sale



Elaine, Joyce and Martha pause during the sale

TOUR OF EARTH DANCE ORGANIC FARM

On Tuesday, September 22, Fundraising chair Carolyn Herkstroeter led several members on a visit to Earth Dance Organic Farm in Ferguson. The tour was followed by treats at the Whistle Stop. Carolyn shares these photos she took. Again, thanks to her for the visual record of a “Fun” raiser on a beautiful September day.



Martha, Joyce, Virginia, and Judy



Myra and Elaine

BOOK GROUP

Tuesday Afternoon book group will meet on October 13 at 11:30 at Cannolis. Elaine Simpson will lead the discussion of *41, A Portrait of My Father* by George W. Bush. Notify Elaine if you plan to attend.

BALLWIN-CHESTERFIELD SPEAKER

“Assisting Women in Successful Transition from Prison to Community”

Laura Toledo, Executive Director of Women in Transition and Agnes Wilcox, Founder of Prison Arts Program

Women in Transition assists women in the criminal justice system to make a successful transition back to their families and communities. The Prison Arts Program uses the arts to help inmates learn the life skills that prepare them to become productive, creative, and law-abiding citizens.

The meeting will be held Thursday, October 8, 2015 at Trinity Lutheran Church, 14088 Clayton Road (Clayton Road and 141), Chesterfield, MO 63017. Coffee and socializing, 8:45 am, business meeting, 9:30, **Program 10:15-11:45 am.**

BALLWIN-CHESTERFIELD TRIVIA NIGHT FOR LAF

Ballwin-Chesterfield branch is hosting a Trivia Night to raise funds for LAF (Legal Advocacy Fund). It will be held on Saturday, October 23, at Trinity Lutheran Church at 141 and Clayton Rd. Details are included in the flyer accompanying this newsletter.

DOWNTOWN LUNCH

Contact us by e-mailing Gwen at gwenrosenfeld@sbcglobal.net.

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The Downtown Lunch group meets the third Tuesday of the month at 11:45 am. RSVP to Kay Meyer 314-361-5303 or kicmeyer51@gmail.com.

October 20 at Mama Josephine's, 4000 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO, 314-771-4001.

FALL FOCUS WITH MARK HOPKINS, AAUW CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER

This is an opportunity for local AAUW branch members to obtain tools and strategies to use in their programs. The focus will be on AAUW Fund and Start Smart/Work Smart.

The event is free. It will be at Whitmoor Country Club, St. Charles, on October 31 from 1:00-3:30 pm. (NOTE: Whitmoor has a no denim policy.)

An optional lunch with the state board will be available for \$20; E-vite coming soon.

The state board will meet in the morning.

SAVE THE DATE--The AAUW Mid-West Regional meeting will be held June 3-4, 2016, at Great Wolf Lodge, Kansas City, KS.

CALENDAR

October 5--Branch board meeting

October 8--Ballwin-Chesterfield Meeting "Transition from Prison to Community"

October 13--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group

October 17--Women's Legislative Forum

October 20--Downtown Lunch

October 23--Ballwin-Chesterfield Trivia Night to benefit LAF

October 31--Fall Focus with Mark Hopkins

Looking ahead

November 16--Branch meeting

December 13--Branch holiday event

December 18--Gift Wrapping, Barnes & Noble

December 21--Gift Wrapping, Barnes & Noble

December 24--Gift Wrapping, Barnes & Noble

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