



## Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley Breeze and Pat Kelemen  
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta Bell  
Program Vice President

Gwen Westbrooks  
Membership Vice-President

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Pat Kelemen, Editor

### **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

The board will meet on November 2, 11:30 at the Corner Coffee House.

### **LEGISLATIVE FORUM OCTOBER 17**

Our branch hosted a lively Legislative forum on October 17 in Ferguson. Five women legislators (Senator Jill Schupp, representatives Kim Gardner, Rochelle Walton Gray, Tracy McCreery, and Margo McNeil) detailed some of the antics (often amusing) and bills that came out of the last session and what to expect for the new session beginning in January 2016. Representative McNeil will again be working on Energy legislation. Senator Schupp will re-introduce a suicide education bill. Representative Walton Gray will again be working on legislation that would limit financial penalties for young people under the age of 21 for traffic offences. Representative McCreery will work with human trafficking and pay loan legislation. Representative Gardner will work with cultural training for health care practitioners and police. Each legislator indicated that she will again sponsor and be involved with a great number of other issues and bills.

Membership VP Gwen Westbrooks reports that 13 branch members and 23 guests attended. Co-President Shirley Breeze is happy to report that a new member joined at the Forum. Welcome!

Several members helped with the set-up and clean-up for this important meeting. Judy Holmes oversaw registration of members and guests, Gwen Westbrooks greeted people as they arrived, and Lovene Hartman secured the use of the Fellowship Hall at the First Presbyterian Church of Ferguson and set up the hospitality table for the meeting. Thank you to all of them for helping to make the meeting a success.



Reps. Tracy McCreery and Kim Gardner  
Photos by Carolyn Herkstroeter



Shirley Breeze and Sen. Jill Schupp

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Visit our website at [fergusonflorissant-mo.aauw.net](http://fergusonflorissant-mo.aauw.net).

## **NOVEMBER MEETING**

### **In Honor of Military Veterans**

November is the month to recognize the many contributions that military veterans have made to the United States. The Missouri Veterans History Project works to have these many contributions identified and preserved. Audrey Mack, the Executive Director, will provide the details of this extensive, important project at the November 16, 2015 branch meeting. Connie Abelen will be speaking about the project also. She is a veteran who served in several places with the US Army; she retired as a Major.

The meeting will be held at Immanuel UCC Church Educational Building, 211 Church Street, Ferguson, at 7:00 pm. The meeting is free and open to the public, so bring friends. For more information, call 314-921-5120, 314-831-6884, or 314-831-5359.

### **PRESIDENTS' LETTER by Shirley Breeze**

#### **Maya Angelou Bust in Hall of Famous Missourians**

Remember our excitement when we installed a bust of Virginia Minor in the Hall of Famous Missourians in the State Capitol (third floor) last year? We now need to put this enthusiasm and commitment toward honoring another famous Missouri woman Maya Angelou.

Maya Angelou is internationally-known as an author whose works include I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings and Mom and Me and Mom. She also wrote outstanding works of poetry including Wouldn't Take Nothing for my Journey Now and Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Die.

Ms. Angelou was born in St. Louis and spent some of her young life there.

The Speaker of the Missouri House determines who gets a bust in the Hall and the methods used to make this happen. There is a new Speaker so the process has been delayed somewhat. However, his office asks people promoting an individual to send him an e-mail requesting a person be considered with a short statement about the attributes of the person being nominated. These should be sent to Speaker of the House Todd Richardson at [todd.richardson@house.mo.gov](mailto:todd.richardson@house.mo.gov). The final decision is not expected until spring 2016. However, it helps to solidify the choice of Maya Angelou to have a great response early in the process.

Should Maya Angelou be chosen as one of the nominees, private money would need to be raised (about \$10,000) to hire a sculptor, and provide funds for the pedestal and the installation of the bust. She would be only the ninth woman in the Hall; there are 36 men represented.

### **PUBLIC POLICY by Karen Francis**

Public Policy is at the center of AAUW's mission. November brings attention to the issue of violence against women through the United Nations' Secretary General's UNITE to End Violence Against Women and Girls and its global initiative, Orange the World. Encourage your friends to wear orange between November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence and throughout the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence leading up to Human Rights Day on December 10. AAUW has participated in the 16 Days Campaign since 2011. When you review AAUW's Public Policy program, you'll notice the freedom from violence and fear of violence is highlighted. On September 10, 2015, AAUW's Vice President of Government Relations, Liza Maatz testified before Congress on "Preventing and Responding to Sexual Assaults on College Campuses."

Why is this so important? The numbers: Sexual assaults disproportionately affect college women and impede their ability for fully participate in campus life. The U.S. Department of Justice found that 1 in 5 women are targets of attempted or completed sexual assault while they were college students, compared to 1 in 16 college men. In 90 percent of the reported cases, the victim knew the attacker. Less than 5 percent of rapes and attempted rapes of college students are reported to campus authorities or law enforcement. A recent study conducted by Gallup for Inside Higher Ed shows that the prevalence of assaults on campuses are not

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apparent to college administration. "About one-third (32%) of the respondents agree or strongly agree that sexual assault is prevalent at American colleges and universities. But few presidents (6%) agree or strongly agree that sexual assault is prevalent at their institution." (<http://college.usa today.com> 2015/03/20. This is why we continue to focus on this and other issues facing women and girls.

## DIVERSITY

### Where is the Ethnic Diversity in North County? By Joyce Wolf

AAUW has a goal of increasing the diversity of the organization and its branches. Our branch has a newly formed Diversity Committee working to achieve this goal. Last month, the newsletter had an article on "What is Diversity?" This month, we are looking at where the diversity exists in St. Louis County. To answer that question, there are maps attached to this newsletter that show the percentage of African-Americans, Asians, and Hispanics living in North County. These maps were created for us by John Schwob, Director of Pastoral Planning for the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He did an excellent job and was very willing to help.

## THANK YOU

*Several members have helped with branch projects in the last few weeks. Without their contributions, those activities would not have been successes. Thanks to all of you. In addition to those who helped with the legislative forum, mentioned above, they were:*

- *Lillian Boly edited and assembled the new branch directory for 2015-2016.*
- *Carolyn Herkstroeter took photos of the legislative forum. Some are included here and others will be posted on our website.*
- *Gwen Westbrooks coordinated staffing for our table at the Ferguson Farmers' Markets. Those who participated included Lovene Hartman, Elaine Simpson, Carolyn Herkstroeter, Virginia Jost, Susan Donnell, Judy Holmes, and Shirley Breeze.*
- *Judy Holmes, Lillian Boly, Carolyn Herkstroeter, and Shirley Breeze staffed a voter registration table at the Ferguson Public Library.*
- *Sylvia Miller arranged for publicity articles about the Legislative Forum in local papers. She quietly and consistently takes care of this for every branch meeting.*

## LEGISLATIVE RETREAT JANUARY 16, 2016

Join women activists from all over the state on January 16, 2016, for the Annual Legislative Retreat. Hear presentations from women working with Missouri legislation and legislators, discover what legislation is proposed for the Missouri House and Senate for the 2016 session, make plans for effective lobbying for women's issues, learn how to effectively work with legislators, determine legislative priorities, and much more.

The Retreat will be held in the second floor conference room at the Hy Vee Grocery, 405 E. Nifong Boulevard, in Columbia. It begins at 8:30 and will be completed by 2:20. There is no cost for registration. A free complimentary continental breakfast will be available upon arrival at 8:30. Lunch Saturday will be purchased at the Hy Vee Deli by each participant.

To register call 314-831-5359 or 573-449-8062 or e-mail [sbreeze@mindspring.com](mailto:sbreeze@mindspring.com) or [gbutler111@aol.com](mailto:gbutler111@aol.com).

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### **TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP**

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet on November **10** at 11:30 at Life Care Center. Carolyn Herkstroeter will lead the discussion of *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson. Notify Carolyn if you will attend. Bring a sandwich and a drink.

### **DOWNTOWN LUNCH GROUP**

The Downtown Lunch Group will meet on November 17 at 11:45 at Old Standard Fried Chicken, 1621 Tower Grove Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110, 314-932-7818. RSVP to Kay Meyer, 314-962-7487 or [kicmeyer51@gmail.com](mailto:kicmeyer51@gmail.com).

### **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.

### **AAUW BALLWIN-CHESTERFIELD SPEAKER**

On Thursday, November 12, 2015, Ballwin-Chesterfield will present "Start Smart-Work Smart" with speaker Suzanne Gellman, Family Financial Education Specialties, University of Missouri-St. Charles Extension.

Suzanne will explain these two programs that were developed to reduce or eliminate the gender wage gap. The programs provide participants with the skills to successfully negotiate their salary and benefits packages.

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.

### **CALENDAR**

October 31--Fall Focus

**November 2--Branch board meeting**

**November 10--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group**

November 12--Ballwin-Chesterfield "Start Smart-Work Smart"

**November 16--Branch meeting**

November 17--Downtown Lunch

January 16--Legislative Retreat

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