



Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Shirley and Pat
Co- Presidents

Wilzetta
Program Vice President

Gwen
Membership Vice-President

Volume 50

March 2015

Pat, Editor

MARCH BOARD MEETING

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

FEBRUARY BRANCH MEETING

The February meeting, scheduled for February 16, was cancelled due to weather.

MARCH BRANCH MEETING

Film showing for Women's History Month

In celebration of March as Women's History month, the Branch meeting will feature the film "Feminist: Stories from Women's Liberation." This highly-rated film by Jennifer Lee documents personal stories by a diverse group of feminists from the 1960s and 1970s. Included are reflections from women of all economic and social status. The film can be previewed at www.feministstories.com.

Pam Ross, a national officer of the Veteran Feminists of America, will introduce the film and moderate a discussion following the showing. Ms. Ross has been active in correcting societal issues in St. Louis for a number of years and has served on a number of boards advocating improvements in society.

The meeting and film showing will be held Monday, March 16 **at the Florissant Public Library, 195 South New Florissant Road, Florissant**, in the lower level Community Room. An elevator is available. The meeting starts at 7:00 pm and is free and open to the public.

PRESIDENTS' LETTER

State of the State of Missouri Women

March Women's History Month Report

As we celebrate March as Women's History Month, it is well to assess the real status of women in Missouri in 2015. Although women have been making great strides in a number of aspects of life, inequity abounds and there is much work to be done.

Nationally, the press has been promoting the rising economy and the end of the Great Depression. While this is true in some cases, it is not true for all segments of society. Women as a group are still affected negatively by a great number of economic factors.

Pay inequity is still a major problem; nationally, women make 78 cents for every dollar a man makes on average. Various sources report between 71 cents to 79 cents per dollar of a male's salary in Missouri. Regardless, at this rate, it will be at least 2058 before pay parity is reached. An increase in women's wages could lift many families out of poverty. The figures are worse for female-headed households with children; more than one-fourth live in poverty in Missouri.

Jobs typically held by women are still the lowest paying. Retail is a good example. The typical saleswoman is paid \$4.00 less per hour than her male counterpart.

Of Missourians ages 65 or older, 6 percent live in poverty; two-thirds of those living in poverty are women.

Women comprise over half of the state population (53 percent), yet the state legislature that was

just sworn in has only 46 women out of 163 Representatives in the House and only six women out of 34 Senators--barely one-fourth of the 197 positions. There are no women holding statewide office in Missouri.

Domestic violence has risen in Missouri from a total of 37,308 incidents reported in 2007 to 41,494 in 2012. Twelve wives and 16 girlfriends were killed by their partners in 2012.

Missouri's legislature has refused to expand Medicaid on the grounds that it is too expensive, even though most of the cost would be borne by the federal government. Two-thirds of those who rely on Medicaid for their healthcare are women and their children.

Social Security provided benefits to 617,110 women in Missouri in 2012 (20.1 percent). These earned benefits lifted 202,000 Missouri women out of poverty. Without Social Security benefits, half of all elderly women in the US would have been in poverty. Yet many legislators in Missouri support abolishing Social Security.

As can readily be seen, women in Missouri are at a great economic disadvantage in several areas.

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE by Judy, Diversity Chair

I was asked to be the Diversity Committee chairperson for this year and thought it was something I would like to do. However, I would like some other committee members to help.

After a little research, here are some of the conclusions I have come to as to what the concerns of the Diversity Committee could be.

The first thing most of us think of is racial. We do have some African-American members along with lots of Caucasians in our branch. But we do not have any Asian Americans or Hispanic members that I can think of.

A second area of diversity could be ethnic groups. You fill in the blanks here. Other areas could be age--young women, middle age, older. How is our branch represented here?

And on we can go to the different lifestyles--students, working women, stay-at-home moms, empty nesters, retirees, the single woman with or without children. Then there are the various kinds of disabilities such as visual, auditory, mobility, mental concerns. And, also, the women who are in the LGBT population.

All of this is diversity and I am sure you could even think of some I have not included.

Other concerns of the committee would be not only to think about what new members can do for our branch as they bring their diverse backgrounds to us, but what VALUE we can offer our new members? Will all new members be comfortable and feel they have a place with us that has VALUE for them and for us?

And, while AAUW by definition, serves and advances those with higher education degrees, we are all aware and appreciative of the many friends without degrees who support by their presence and financial help, some of the activities and programs we have. We need to promote the fact that what we do is good for all women.

This is just the beginning point for the new committee. If you would like to meet with me just once or as an ongoing member, please let me know by calling me.

PUBLIC POLICY by Shirley, National APPC Committee

AAUW Public Policy Program 2015-2017

AAUW's Public Policy Program is one of its most highly-recognized and respected initiatives. It is revised every other year the year of the national convention. The revision begins about a year prior to the convention and consists of several steps. The most important of these is the solicitation of input from members throughout the country. With their suggestions, the APPC [Association Public Policy Committee--national] determines what is pertinent and where changes need to be made.

This year, as in most previous years, the changes are important but do not greatly alter the document.

In this year's revision three statements have been added or given more emphasis. Several additional topics have been identified.

The additional topics are

- Sexual assault
- Safe, livable and affordable housing
- Open and fair elections

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

Ratification of CEDAW [Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, currently signed by all countries except the US, Iran, Tonga, Palau, South Sudan, Sudan, and Somalia] has been given stronger emphasis.

Three statements were added as separate entities:

- Vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights pertaining to education
- Passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment
- AAUW supports affirmative action to improve racial, ethnic, gender and cultural diversity and inclusion. This includes creating a culture of involvement, respect and connection, where the richness of ideas, backgrounds and perspectives are fully appreciated and utilized.

SPRING FLING

The Interbranch Council Spring Fling will occur on Saturday, March 21. The event will feature a portrayal of Rachel Carson, lunch, and a raffle of baskets to raise funds for IBC. Reservations are due by March 6. Please see the flyer with details and sign-up information included with this newsletter.

EQUAL RIGHTS ACTION DAY

The annual Equal Rights Action Day is set for Tuesday, April 14, at the State Capitol in Jefferson City. Events will include a legislative briefing, a March for Women's Rights, an equity rally under the capitol dome, and a chance to lobby your state senator and representative. Please see the flyer included with this newsletter.

SAVE THE DAY FOR THE ANNUAL MAY LUNCHEON

The Ferguson Florissant Branch May Luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, May 16, at Rizzo's on Dunn Road at 11:30. We will meet in the private banquet room, where members and guests can order from the menu and will receive separate checks. A count of how many are coming will be needed by the restaurant 4-5 days in advance. Watch for more information, such as program details, in coming newsletters.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet on March 10 at 11:30 at the Corner Coffee House. Wanda will review *Marley and Me* by John Grogan. **Please note that this is a change of book to be reviewed.** Notify Wanda if you plan to attend.

BRANCH LENDING LIBRARY

Virginia has sent a list of books she has available in the branch lending library. A donation of \$1.00 each is a fundraiser for LAF. If you are interested in borrowing any of these books, contact Virginia.

- *Where the Heart Is* by Billie Letts
- *Fast Food Nation* by Erich Schlosser
- *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry
- *A Thesaurus of Women* by Barbara Joan Zietz, MA
- *Half the Sky* by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn
- *night road* by Kristin Hannah
- *Sidney Poitier* by Aram Goudsouzian
- *The Sum of Our Days* by Isabel Allende
- *Our Endangered Values* by Jimmy Carter
- *Stones from the River* by Ursula Hegi
- *Nine and Counting (The Women of the Senate)* written with Catherine Whitney
- *In Her Own Right, the Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* by Elisabeth Griffith
- *The Ladies of Seneca Falls (The Birth of The Women's Rights Movement)* by Miriam Gurko

ADELANTE BOOK GROUP

The Adelante Book Group will meet on March 26 at 1:30 at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson in Chesterfield. Linda will review *My Beloved World* by Sonia Sotomayor.

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

DOWNTOWN LUNCH GROUP

The Downtown Lunch Group will meet Tuesday, March 17, at Rooster (Crepes), 3150 S. Grand, 63118 (314-772-3447) at 11:45. RSVP to Kay.

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.

The topic for March 10, 2015 is "Will 3-D Printing Change the World?" The speaker will be Warren Doherty, Market Wide Format Specialist at Konica Minolta. Mr. Doherty, from a background of 23 years in the printing and copying field, will explain how this revolutionary technology works, what it has produced in the past, and how it could affect our world in the future.

LADIES TEA TIME TRIVIA

The St. Charles branch is planning its Ladies Tea Time Trivia for Saturday, April 25, starting at 1:00 pm. This is their annual fundraiser for local scholarships/education. The flyer with all the details will be included with this newsletter.

CALENDAR

March 2--Branch board meeting

March 10--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group

March 10--International Relations Lecture

March 16--Branch Meeting, Women's History Month

March 17--Downtown Lunch Group

March 21--Spring Fling

March 26--¡Adelante! Book Group

April 14--Equal Rights Action Day

April 25--St. Charles Ladies Tea Time Trivia

May 1-2--Missouri state meeting, Columbia

May 16--Annual Branch Luncheon

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