



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 next meet on February 1, 11:30 at the Corner Coffee House.

DECEMBER HOLIDAY EVENT

This year's Holiday Event was held on December 13 at St. Peter's UCC Church. Hostess Fran Johnson arranged for us to use the church's fellowship hall and brought a beautiful punch bowl for the food table. Carolyn Herkstroeter and her friend Carol spearheaded the set up. Several attendees, especially board members who had signed up, brought delicious finger foods to complement the punch Fran made. About 20 members enjoyed the afternoon, especially the performance by the madrigal singers. Dressed in medieval costumes, the a capella group sang Christmas songs for the group. It was very entertaining and over too fast.

Thank you to all who helped with set up and clean up, including Fran Johnson, Carolyn Herkstroeter, her friend Carol, Linda Ferber, Karen Francis, and Pat Kelemen.



Judy, Dorothy and Pam choose treats.



Our hostess, Fran

ANNUAL GAME DAY--Also see the attached flyer

Save the date for our fun event at Lutheran Church of the Living Christ. Bring your favorite

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games, friends and family. There will be large tables and card tables at the church. Lunch will be provided.

(Game Day continued)

RAFFLE: If you have a special item or plan to make a theme basket for the raffle, let Wilzetta Bell know, wilzetta8@gmail.com; 522-0414 H; 517-8973 C **after January 3.**

SILENT AUCTION: We need nice items, services or events to make our silent auction special. Since space is limited, we would prefer quality items (save the garage sale stuff for spring fund-raiser). Also popular for silent auctions are services; i.e. offer to bake a cake, give a computer or craft lesson, host a theme party or movie night, etc.

LUNCH: The food committee requests salads and desserts. Call Myra, 921-5120 or Judy, 355-1125.

VOLUNTEERS: Volunteers will be needed to help set up--9:00, clean up, sign in. Call Carolyn, 867-4755.

GREETERS: Needed! Two volunteers to greet visitors and keep sign-in sheets for members and guests in attendance. Great opportunity for new members to get involved! Please contact Gwen Westbrooks at 314-609-8467 or gwestbrooks@hotmail.com. before January 11 if you can help out.

Please distribute flyers and invite people. Don't forget the items for the homeless--these donations are the "price" of admission.

FERGUSON FARMERS' MARKET

We will have an information table set up at St. Stephen's in Ferguson for the Winter Market on Saturday, February 20th from 9 a.m. --noon. Volunteers must be there by 8:30 a.m. We need two volunteers for that event. If you can oblige, please contact Gwen Westbrooks at 314-609-8467 or gwestbrooks@hotmail.com.

GIFT WRAPPING SUCCESS

Thank you to everyone who participated in holiday gift wrapping at Barnes & Noble, both on scheduled dates and by answering spur of the moment calls for wrappers: Pam, Linda, Virginia, Wanda, Lillian, Myra, Gwen, Dorothy, Pat, Fran J., Karen, Judy, Joyce and Shirley. Several of us wrapped several times. Thanks also to Lovene and Myra for organizing the times and wrappers. It was fun and although we do not have the total amount, our efforts will be well rewarded. Gift-wrapping honors should go to Lillian, Linda and Myra who went the most times or manned the longest shifts. Barnes & Noble probably think they are staff!



Linda and Pam wrap books as gifts

--Carolyn Herkstroeter, Fund Raising Chair

PRESIDENTS' LETTER by Pat Kelemen

In this newsletter, you will find information about many activities and events you might become

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involved in. The new year brings with it a burst of energy and opportunities to support the improvement of lives of women and girls in our area. Learn about the scourge of human trafficking, legislation in Missouri affecting women, efforts to increase the diversity of our branch members, STEM in North County, and more. Details are here in the newsletter and the accompanying flyers. Consider choosing one or more of these causes and getting involved. After all, this is the time for New Year's resolutions.

You may be relieved to know that not all things AAUW are serious. We also have fun, sometimes while also contributing to the welfare of others. Game Day on January 18 is a prime example. Bring friends and games you love, bid on items in the silent auction and join the raffle "kitty." This fund raiser for the branch is free, but donations of canned goods or travel sized toiletries will benefit those in need. Also coming up is the annual IBC Spring Fling in March--again, food, fun, and fund raising.

Branch members were very busy in December, as you can see from this newsletter. After a pause to enjoy the holidays, we can begin 2016 with renewed energy.

PUBLIC POLICY by Shirley Breeze

Several controversial bills have been pre-filed in the Missouri legislature. Most all of them were addressed in the last session. Among these bills is Voter ID, or more realistically, Voter Suppression.

Voter ID laws require that all citizens must present identification to vote. Often the ID requires a photo.

Those individuals who oppose this legislation state that the US should be finding ways to increase opportunities to vote rather than restricting voting. Requiring a photo ID puts an undue burden on certain segments of society, particularly the elderly and disabled, minority groups, those residing in remote areas of the country, and the poor. Married women, also, often have difficulty because of name changes due to marriage or divorce.

However, those who support the practice of requiring a photo ID say that this is just logical to prevent fraud. Photo IDs are required for other major activities in life, such as boarding an aircraft, picking up a prescription, receiving government checks or assistance.

Most people agree that requiring identification for voting is not necessarily a bad thing; however, those with photos are much more difficult to obtain. Should these be required, access to getting them should be easy and readily available and should be free or inexpensive.

BRANCH DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS

Please update your branch directory by correcting the information for Mable Davis. Her apartment is Apt. C, and the phone number is 314-326-2930.

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The Diversity Committee will meet January 22, 2016, at 10 am at the home of Judy Holmes. She says "we will be working on completing a proposal for a national by-law change regarding membership of non-degreed women in AAUW to present to our local branch board meeting in February. Members not currently on the committee are welcome to attend."

BOOK GROUP

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet January 12 at 11:30 at the home of Lillian Boly. Lillian will lead the discussion of *Death on a Platter* by Elaine Viets. Bring a sandwich. Notify Lillian if you will attend.

ADELANTE BOOK GROUP

The Adelante Book Group will meet January 27, 2016, at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson at 1:30. Deb McWard will lead the discussion of *Disgruntled: A Novel* by Asali Solomon, 2001-2002 AAUW American Fellow.

HAZELWOOD STEM EXTRAVAGANZA

Ferguson Florissant AAUW will be represented at the Hazelwood School District STEM FAIR

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on Saturday, January 23rd from 10:00-2:00. This will be our 3rd year to participate in this event, held at Hazelwood Central High School. It is a great opportunity for branch exposure and gives us the possibility of recruiting new members, as well as networking. Toni Burrow and the PAKT Robotic Team we have mentored will have a presentation adjacent to us. Come and see what these students have achieved.

We need two people at our table throughout the event. Please let me know if you can give some time. Thank you, Carolyn Herkstroeter, STEM Co-chair, herkscmw@att.net or 867-4755.

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.

State Representative Stephen Webber will be the keynote speaker.

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 or gbutler111@aol.com.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SYMPOSIUM

This very important symposium, presented by the St. Charles Coalition Against Human Trafficking (SCCAT) is made possible in full by a grant from AAUW.

It will be held at the Spencer Library, 427 Spencer Road, St. Peters, MO 63376 on Tuesday, January 12, 2016, from 8:15 am until 1:00 pm.

The flyer included with this newsletter provides detailed information about this program. It is free, but attendees must register in advance.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS LECTURE SERIES

The International Relations Lecture Series begins January 12, 2016 at the Ethical Society of St. Louis, 9001 Clayton Road, St. Louis, MO 63117. The meeting begins at 10:45 am in the upper auditorium. 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.

In January, the topic is **Politics and Problems of the World's Water Resources**. Dr. Robert Criss, MS, PhD, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Washington University, is the speaker. Dr. Criss worked as a geologist with the United States Geological Survey. He is the author of *Principles of Stable Isotope Distribution* (Oxford University Press, 1999). His published papers and editorial commentary encompass many disciplines and have appeared in more than 40 different scientific journals, several government series, numerous books and four newspapers. Touching on his experience Dr. Criss will discuss the water crisis in Mexico, China, and the United States.

ROE V. WADE ANNIVERSARY

A flyer about the 43rd anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision is included with this newsletter. The event is scheduled for Saturday, January 23, 2016, at the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis.

DOWNTOWN LUNCH

The Downtown Lunch group will meet January 19 at Nordstrom Cafe Bistro, 47 West County Center, Des Peres 63131, 314-255-2000 at 11:45 am. RSVP Kay Meyer 314-962-7487 or kicmeyer51@gmail.com.

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SPRING FLING

This year's Spring Fling is scheduled for Saturday, March 12, 2016, from 11:00 am until 2:30 pm at Keagan's Restaurant, Highlands Golf and Tennis Center, 5163 Clayton Ave., St. Louis, 63110. The entertainment will be Gateway Spotlight Chorus.

All the details, including menu, registration, directions and more, are included in the flyer for this event, which is included with this newsletter.

From AAUW ACTION NETWORK:

U.S. Women's Soccer Team Wins World Cup

For the first time since 1999, the United States women's national soccer team won the FIFA World Cup. We're thankful for the team's remarkable achievement, and we think they should be paid equally for their championship win. Congress introduced resolutions that call on FIFA to pay men's and women's championship teams equally--not the current \$35 million to \$2 million ratio. Ask Congress to show its thanks by urging them to cosponsor the resolution .

CALENDAR

January 12--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group

January 12--Human Trafficking Symposium

January 12--International Relations Lecture Series

January 16--Legislative Retreat

January 18--Game Day

January 19--Downtown Lunch Group

January 22--Diversity Committee meeting

January 23--Hazelwood STEM FAIR

January 27--Adelante Book Group

February 1--Board Meeting

February 20--Ferguson Farmer's Market

March 12--Spring Fling

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