



Ferguson-Florissant (MO) Branch

Wilzetta Bell and
Pam Meyers
Co-Presidents

Shirley Breeze
Program Vice President

Carolyn Herkstroeter and
Carolynn Henning
Membership Co-Vice Presidents

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Pat Kelemen, Editor

SEPTEMBER RECEPTION

The annual reception to open the branch year will be held on Sunday, September 16, 2:00-4:00 pm at the home of Shirley Breeze. Refreshments will be served.

State Program VP Marsha Koch will give some remarks on the state plans for AAUW for the coming year. An overview of AAUW's mission, programs, and activities will be featured. Because this is a wonderful time to introduce AAUW to friends who are non-members, invite someone who might be interested. Information about AAUW advocacy programs and research reports will be available for those who want them.

For more information, call 314-831-5359, 314-522-0413, or 314-921-7109 or email wpemeyers@gmail.com, herkcmw@att.net, or carhenning@att.net.

EQUALITY DAY BRUNCH

The 31st Annual Equality Day Brunch will be held on Saturday, August 25th from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm at the Clayton Plaza Hotel, 7750 Carondelet, in Clayton.

If you plan to attend, you can sign up with Eventbrite or by postal mail with Julie Triplett, 401 Oakmont Circle, Ballwin, MO 63011. Missouri Women's Network is pleased to announce that the featured speaker will be Martha S. Jones, an expert legal and cultural historian specializing in race, law, citizenship, slavery and the rights of women. She is a professor at Johns Hopkins University and the author of many books.

Four women will be honored for the exceptional work they do across Missouri:

- Ellen Alper, Executive Director of the National Council of Jewish Women, St. Louis Section
- Sonia Gholston-Byrd, the first African-American woman to hold the seat of chairperson of St. Louis AFL-CIO
- Jane Mudd, a mid-Missouri artist who uses her skills to introduce the public to the plight of many Missouri groups
- The Honorable Stacey Newman, who has filed and supported numerous pieces of legislation on women's issues

--Please register today.

Contact us by e-mailing Membership Co-Vice Presidents Carolyn Herkstroeter at herkcmw@att.net or Carolynn Henning at carhenning@att.net.



George Hodgman speaks to us.



Pam Meyers and George Hodgman

MAY LUNCHEON RECAP

The annual May Luncheon was held May 19 at Catering to You in Florissant. Members and guests enjoyed a buffet lunch and a special program. The named gift honoree, Joyce Wolf, was recognized. The certificate naming Ferguson Florissant Branch as a 10-Star Branch was on display. Past Presidents and Board members were honored. Incoming Co-Presidents Wilzetta Bell and Pam Meyers were introduced.

The program speaker was George Hodgman, author of *Bettyville* and friend of Pam Meyers. He spoke about his experiences as caregiver for his mother Betty as her health deteriorated. He also talked about the process of writing a memoir.

PRESIDENTS' LETTER

As the American Association of University Women, Ferguson/Florissant branch begins its official 2018-2019 year, we embark upon important and serious work ahead of us. Our continuing goal is to secure equity for women and girls in all areas of their lives. We promote the economic, social and physical well-being of all persons, however, we underscore the importance of enhancing the equity of all women and girls by breaking through barriers that prevent this. Our branch will continue to work vigorously toward this goal.

--Wilzetta

WELCOME NEW CO-PRESIDENTS

We would like to welcome our new Co-Presidents, Wilzetta Bell and Pam Meyers, to the exciting experience of leading an AAUW branch. It is one of the truly heart-warming undertakings you will ever be a part of. The position, of course, will have its highs and lows--but definitely more highs.. The high marks are, in part, because of AAUW's strong mission statement--a statement that really describes what women desire during this unbelievable time on our country's history.

--Pat Kelemen/Shirley Breeze, Immediate past Co-Presidents

NATIONAL BYLAWS PROPOSALS

This spring, AAUW members across the country had the opportunity to vote on three proposed amendments to the bylaws. The amendment to have the terms of national board members staggered passed. The amendment to include non-members on the national board and the amendment to allow persons without degrees to be members of the organization both failed.

Ferguson Florissant Branch members can be proud that 60% of our members voted on these

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proposals, **the highest percentage of voters in Missouri.**

OCTOBER COMMUNITY PANEL--Save the date!

Planning for the October Panel, NORTH COUNTY--RICH IN MULTICULTURALISM, is well under way. Chairperson of the Diversity/Public Policy Committee Judy Holmes is spearheading the organizing of the event. It will be held on Saturday, October 20, 2018 at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 315 Graham Road, Florissant, MO 63031. The panel will be presented from 10:00 am until noon, but the branch will have access earlier for set up.

Panelists will be Ruffina Farrouk Anklesaria, Sister Mary Michael McCulla, and Sousesan Darwech. Each brings a unique perspective on living in North County, and the event should be very informative.

Panelists will speak for about 15 minutes each followed by a question and answer period.

Look for more details on each of the speakers in the October newsletter. Invite friends and neighbors.

PUBLIC POLICY by Shirley Breeze

Women and Social Security

Social Security is vital to million of American women, young and old. Over half of older women would fall into poverty were it not for SS. It helps young mothers and their children when their breadwinners are disabled or die.

Women make up 65 percent of all SS beneficiaries age 62 and older, and 66 percent of all beneficiaries age 85 and older. Women age 65 and older are more likely than men of the same age to be widowed. Of female SS beneficiaries age 62 and over, only 51 percent receive benefits based solely on their own work record.

It is important for women to receive all they are entitled to under SS. Women tend to take time out of the work force to care for children or aging parents. They have earned less than men and experience the pay gap when they are working. Therefore, even if they have retirement plans where they work, SS often fills the gap between what they receive from working less.

There are currently several challenges to SS. One of the most prominent is privatization. Privatization has not been proven to be the most effective way to keep entities vibrant and healthy. Another challenge to SS is the legislative push to scale down operations by limiting funding for the agency. A further challenge is the constant negative allegations that the agency will not have enough money to pay out benefits when they come due. Several reforms have been promoted to alleviate some of these perceived problems with SS. One is to raise the payroll tax cap, which will increase the income, thus lowering any cash shortfall. Another reform is a caregiver credit, which would give SS credits to people who step away from paid work to care for family members.

These and other criticisms are sometimes used to devalue SS's value to society==and especially women. Women need SS support now more than ever.

AAUW MISSOURI STATE BOARD MEETING

The State Board met on July 14. Topics included

- Public Policy goals for 2018-2019--Get Out The Vote, protection and enforcement of Title IX, and closing the pay gap.
- Dues--Shape the Future dues (\$49.50) and the elimination or reduced dues from March to June.
- The new Mission Statement--*The mission of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, advocacy, and education.*
- Career Development Grant--The Ferguson Florissant/Shirley Breeze Fellowship is partially funding Carolyn Moore, who is pursuing an MS in management and leadership at Western Governors University in Salt Lake City. She is fire captain in the St. Louis Fire Department.
- Grant Monies--This year AAUW will distribute \$3.9 million in grants.
- Research--There has not been an announcement of the topic of the next research report.

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- National and State Board Positions of Branch Members--Karen Francis chairs the National Public Policy Committee. Mable Davis, Pat Kelemen, and Shirley Breeze serve on the MO State Board.
- National Meetings--there is a very tentative plan for the 2020 meeting to be several, held in different parts of the United States.
- Bylaws--Another tentative plan is to have bylaw voting pretty much every year.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Several new members have joined the branch. We are pleased to welcome them. Please add them to your branch directory until the new one is issued.

- Yvonne Marie Elliott, 4032 Portland Ridge Drive, Florissant 63034. myelliott61@gmail.com. 314-210-4774.
- Flossie Henderson, 1341 Aspen Woods Dr, St. Louis, 63138. flossiehenderson3@gmail.com. 314-741-8541.
- Cathie Lehr, 20 Castle Drive, Florissant, 63034. clljuly@gmail.com. 314-809-4477.
- Lisa Taylor, 14549 Rosant Ct., Florissant 63034. lisa-taylor58@sbcglobal.net . 314-838-2431.

NEW FACEBOOK PAGE

Mable Davis has created a Facebook page for our branch. If you are on Facebook, check our page. Mable suggests liking us, tagging us, and sharing information about the branch. It's a very good way to increase our visibility.

FERGUSON FARMER'S MARKET

Branch members staffed an informational table at the Ferguson Farmer's Market on July 14. Thanks to Mary Ellen Starr, Joyce Spiller, Virginia Jost, new member Lisa Taylor, Carolyn Henning and Carolyn Herkstroeter for volunteering on an extremely hot day.

We are also committed to the market on August 25 and September 22. Contact Carolyn Herkstroeter if you can help.

VOTER REGISTRATION

We will be assisting citizens with voter registration at the Ferguson Public Library on four dates, September 8, September 13, September 20, and September 29. Watch for more information by e-mail and sign up to help.

GIFT WRAPPING JUNE 16

A big thank you to branch members who wrapped gifts at Barnes & Noble in Ladue on June 16, right before Father's Day. They are Virginia Jost, Carolyn Henning, Shirley Breeze, Lillian Boly, Tommie Turner and Carolyn Herkstroeter.

FUNRAISERS BY MABLE

Mable Davis has organized several fundraisers this summer. She set up ice cream parties at the Whistle Stop in Ferguson and an excursion to the Fin Inn Aquarium Restaurant in Grafton. That event will be August 17, but reservations and payment for the bus were due to Wilzetta by August 10.

Thanks to Mable for her work organizing these events and her creative ideas for us to have fun and raise money for the branch.

AFTERNOON AT THE MOVIES

Afternoon at the movies will meet Monday, August 27 at 2:00 pm in the Hidden Lake Theater Room. The movie will be "The Family Man" with Nicholas Cage and Te'a Leone. Please notify Judy Holmes if you will attend.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Mary Ellen Starr will host the book group at Cannoli's on September 11 at 11:30 am. The

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author and title are *Here Comes the Sun* by Nicole Dennis-Benn. We will also put together our book schedule for the remainder of the 2018-2019 year. Please come with book ideas. Please let me know if you are coming.

Thanks!

Mary Ellen Starr

ADELANTE BOOK GROUP

Teri Brecht says that AAUW will not compile a list of book suggestions for Adelante this year. She polled the frequent members and reviewers. They agreed that they want to continue with the group. They will meet at Barnes & Noble on Clarkson on September 27 at 1:30 pm. Lynne Roney review *The Guilded Years: a Novel* by Karin Tanabe.

Send Teri a list of timely titles and authors of books you think worthy of our review or bring suggestions to the September gathering.

Anyone who is interested is welcome!

CALENDAR

August 25--Equality Day Brunch

August 25 and September 22--AAUW table at Ferguson Farmer's Market

August 27--Afternoon at the Movies

September 8, 13, 20 and 29--Voter Registration

September 11--Tuesday Afternoon Book Group

September 16--Opening Reception

September 27--Adelante Book Group

October 20--Community Panel--North County--Rich in Multiculturalism

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