

*The American Association of University Women advances gender equity for women and girls through research, advocacy, and education.*



Wilzetta Bell and  
Pam Meyers  
Co-Presidents  
Volume 56

Shirley Breeze  
Program Vice President

Carolyn Herkstroeter and  
Carolynn Henning  
Membership Co-Vice Presidents  
Pat Kelemen, Editor

February 2021

#### **Note from the editor**

I am happy to resume preparing our newsletter after 11 months. AAUW activities are picking up as we all adjust to doing things differently. In most cases, that means that meetings and conferences will occur virtually for the foreseeable future.

Events at the branch, IBC, state and national level are being planned that you need to know about.

#### **BOARD MEETING**

The board will meet via Zoom on Monday, February 1 at 7:00 pm. Board members should watch for the Zoom information from Co-President Pam Meyers a few days ahead of that time.

#### **FEBRUARY BRANCH MEETING**

The February Branch Meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, February 15 at 7:00 pm. Watch for Zoom information a few days ahead of time.

What is it like to teach music in the time of COVID? Two music educators will share the challenges and successes they have experienced.

Daniel Shavers is currently Band Director at Brittany Woods Middle School and has been teaching instrumental music in the University City School District since 2001. At University City High School, he introduced a percussion class, string ensemble and a steel Drum band. He is a graduate of Northeast Louisiana State University where he earned a Bachelor of Music Education and Arkansas State University where he received a Master of Music Education. In addition, he is an active professional musician in the St. Louis area.

Jeanine York Garesche is a clarinetist who holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Master of Music performance from the St. Louis Conservatory. She is active in several music organizations in St. Louis. She is known throughout the Midwest as a private instructor, chamber music coach and clinician. Her students have won top honors in Missouri's District and State competitions and honor bands.

Join other branch members and guests for the February 15 meeting.

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**Find us on Facebook**

**AAUW Ferguson-Florissant Chapter, Missouri**

**Our chapter is now on Facebook! Type “AAUW Ferguson-Florissant Chapter, Missouri” into the Facebook search bar on your screen. Then “Like” our page!**

Patty Murray has developed this Facebook page for our branch. Thank you.

**PRESIDENTS’ LETTER by Pamela Meyers**

Hello to Everyone, and to February.

February is the second and the shortest month of the year that gives us the birthstone of the Amethyst, as well as a busy month full of beloved national holidays, births of famous Americans, and historical events.

This last year in 2020 we celebrated the suffragists and the 19<sup>th</sup>. Amendment to have the Right to Vote. This year 2021 we celebrate the first women to be elected the 49<sup>th</sup>. Vice President Kamala Harris. The highest-ranking female elected official in U. S. and the first African American and the first Asian American vice president.

**PUBLIC POLICY/DIVERSITY by Lisa Taylor**

I was able to attend a diversity webinar hosted by AAUW and the presenter was Lisette Garcia. The webinar introduced the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Toolkit.

To start the use of the toolkit and the goal is to have a plug-and-play program (webinars) on a quarterly basis to help branches with DEI efforts. The first webinar will be in February 2021 and everyone will be invited to attend.

In addition to webinars being available to support DEI efforts, a Diversity Officer position has been created. Some of the duties for the position is to support the recruitment and retention of diverse members. Be able to establish strong working relationships with AAUW Inclusion and Equity Committee, which will enable them increase overall representation and engagement. The officer will also manage external diversity partnerships and will serve as the diversity liaison in various internal entities.

It is recommended that each state and branch (if appropriate) fill this role with someone who is passionate about diversity and inclusion, and demonstrates a respectful curiosity to embrace change. It is a volunteer (nonpaying) position.

Since I am the chair for our DEI committee, I plan to attend the webinars and share with you what I learn and hopefully we will be able to support the DEI initiatives for AAUW. During the webinar it was suggested maybe we have a book read, attend an event, etc. that has a focus on DEI efforts and encourage ongoing dialogue.

As Maya Angelou said, “In diversity, there is beauty and there is strength.” AAUW respects and celebrates the diversity of our members and those differences form the backbone of our organization!

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### **AAUW NATIONAL—IMPORTANT ISSUES**

There are two changes in that members can comment on now. There is a brief summary of each here. More detailed information can be found at [aauw.org](http://aauw.org).

#### **PROPOSED CHANGES IN NATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES**

Every two years, AAUW members vote on revisions to our Public Policy Priorities. Now through February 5, 2021, you can comment on the changes recommended by the AAUW Public Policy Committee. The proposed edits make the following changes based on member leader feedback:

- Refinement and added specificity regarding AAUW’s commitment to addressing systemic racism
- Refinement of our commitment to equitable access to higher education for all
- Emphasis on the importance of high quality data collection

You can also propose new changes to the PPP that you would like to see on the ballot in the AAUW national election this spring.

To find the complete proposal, make comments on any changes, or suggest other changes, go to [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and scroll down to 2021 Comment Period: Public Policy Priorities.

#### **PROPOSED CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

This spring AAUW members will vote on proposed changes recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would eliminate the degree requirement for membership. Now through February 5, you can comment on the proposed changes. The basic rationale for this change is that AAUW’s mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. The membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. This is simply the right thing to do.

To comment, go to [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and scroll down to 2021 Comment Period: Bylaws Amendment.

### **SPRING FLING**

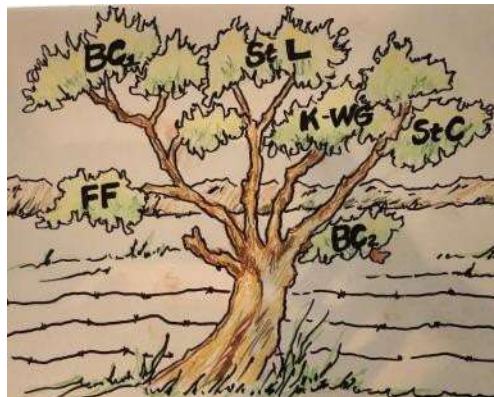
Zoom to Spring Fling on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021



St. Louis Metro IBC is holding this year’s Spring Fling via Zoom on March 13<sup>th</sup> from 10:30am to noon. The theme is “Zoom to Spring Fling” We will honor Mary Jermak as the Barb Lackritz awardee from 2020 and are planning for a Speaker (still to be announced). Attending the event is free and guests are welcome!

Our fundraiser this year is a raffle for one of six Gift Cards. Celebrate Spring 2021 as a winner of an AAUW “leaf” from the “Spring Fling Tree”. Six be drawn at Spring Fling 13. Each leaf

card(s) with value of \$50. Tickets are three. Fill in the form for Spring Fling of chances. Then mail money and indicated address by March 8. The winners will be held at the meeting. attend the meeting to be a winner. sent in the mail the following week.



winning names will the 2021 Zoom meeting on March will contain gift available in lots of indicating number form to the drawing for the leaf You need not Gift cards will be

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Although the event is free, we are encouraging members to also give donations regardless of whether they enter the raffle. The suggestion amount is \$20 if possible, but any amount is appreciated. This is the only fundraiser for IBC this year... please be generous!

Registration is now open and the Flyer can be found at the end of this newsletter.

### **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS LECTURE SERIES**

This series is presented by the Tuesday Women's Association of Ethical Society and AAUW. The presentation will be via Zoom. To participate, go to the Zoom.us website, click "Join a Meeting," and enter the Zoom meeting I.D. provided below. The 45-50 minute lecture will be followed by a question and answer period.

The February Lecture will be presented on February 9 at 10:45. The Zoom I.D. is 384 422 5785. The speaker will be Dr. Stephen Graves. His topic will be "Reparations to Redress Historical Injustices." Dr. Graves is Director of Undergraduate Studies, University of Missouri Department of Black Studies. He specializes in Black Politics, Political Theory and Government. He is the author of *A Crisis of Leadership and the Role of Citizens in Black America*.

### **WOMEN'S MARCH**

This year's Women's March has been postponed until Saturday, March 6, 2021. See the flyer included with this newsletter.

### **VOTER PROTECTION COALITION**

Denise Lieberman holds a Voter Protection Coalition meeting every Monday at 10:00 am. The Zoom meetings are extremely informative on the upcoming elections and policies being voted on in our state and in the United States Congress and Senate. The meeting I.D. is 921 4988 4120.

### **SYLVIA MILLER**

Long-time member Sylvia Miller is settled in Houston and would be glad to hear from any of us. Her address is 880 W. 34<sup>th</sup> St., Apt. 2119, Houston, TX 77018. Telephone 314-749-4240, e-mail [sylviafm62@gmail.com](mailto:sylviafm62@gmail.com).

### **CALENDAR**

\*\*Unfortunately, some groups that usually meet are unable to do so successfully in a virtual format. They expect to resume once in person meetings are approved.

Every Monday—Voter Protection Coalition with Denise Lieberman  
February 5—Deadline for comments on National Proposed Changes  
February 9—International Relations Lecture  
March 6—Women's March  
March 8—Deadline for Spring Fling registration  
March 13—Spring Fling