



# Southern Highlights

AAUW

Austin Minnesota Branch



Volume 8 Number 4

December 2009

## Shaping the World One Woman at a Time

### Co-President's Column



Remember that our December social is an excellent time to invite a friend or prospective member to come and see what a treasure of sisterhood our organization embodies. We are really looking forward to celebrating the season with all of you and to hearing "Forte" accompanied by Janet Gilbertson.

Our January meeting topic of medical ethics is certainly timely. Peggy has heard the speaker on public radio and highly recommends her. That will be a great time to stretch our minds and deal with very knotty issues. And it is another good time to share our meeting with a friend.

When looking for a Christmas gift of words to send to all of you, our AAUW friends, I came across this anonymous poem that expresses our feelings very well:

"May peace fill all the empty spaces around you and in you. May contentment answer all your wishes. May comfort be yours, warm and soft like a sigh and may the coming year show you that every day is really a first day, a new year. Let abundance be your constant companion, so that you have much to share. May mirth be near you always, like a lamp shining brightly on the many paths you travel. May you be truly loved."

**HAPPY HOIDAYS!**

**Carolyn and Peggy**

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Our December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting will celebrate the Holiday Season with a gathering at the Coffee House on Main. Holiday treats will be served at 6:30 PM. Please support The Coffee House on Main by purchasing your beverage at the shop. Our entertainment will be provided by 'Forte' with accompaniment by Janet Gilbertson. Members are invited to bring new unwrapped toys or merchant give cards to donate to the Salvation Army. Enjoy Holiday music and reflections or memories from a few of our members.

On January 12<sup>th</sup> we will meet to enjoy a program presented by Ellie Garrette from the Minnesota Center of Health Care and Ethics (St. Olaf College, Northfield). The program will discuss Medical Ethics – Health Care Reform and H1N1 issues. We will meet at the Austin Public Library in the Large Meeting Room. Dessert will be served at 6:30 PM with the meeting and program to follow at 7 PM.

We hope you are able to make it to these programs!

Dani Heiny & Sue Howard  
Program Committee Co-chairs



## Small Groups

These groups are open to any member wishing to attend.

Morning book group will meet on Thurs., December 17 at 9:00 at Jerry's Other Place. We are reading The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. In January we will be reading The Help by Kathryn Stockett. Call Gerry Rustad at 433-3718 if you would like to join us.

Evening book group will meet on Tuesday, December 15th at 7 PM at Carolyn Bogott's home, 406 21<sup>st</sup> St. NW. We will be discussing the book My Antonia by Willa Cather. Please RSVP Carolyn at 433-4457. In January we will be reading Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout. We will meet at Peggy Benzkofer's home, 104 21<sup>st</sup> St. NW. Please RSVP Peggy at 433-5934.

Just Come will meet on Friday, December 4th at 11:30 AM. We will meet at The Austin Country Club. Please call DedaRae Graber at 433-7897 or email at [drgrab@charter.net](mailto:drgrab@charter.net) by Thursday, December 3rd to RSVP.

Travel Group will meet at Pat Purcell's home (604 Oakland Place NE) on Thursday, December 3rd at 7 PM. The program will be on Greece. Please call or email Pat if you plan to come. (433-2607, [patopurcell@charter.net](mailto:patopurcell@charter.net))

Great Decisions will next meet on January 25<sup>th</sup> in Room C128 at 1 PM. We will discuss "Human Rights in a New Era: Wars for Peace?" We will watch the DVD and discuss the article. Our new discussion topics will begin in February and we invite all members to join the group. With each topic we learn new information and gain different perspectives about people, places, and problems. Complexity becomes easier to understand. The topics for next year include the following: Special Envoys, Kenya/East Africa, Global Crime, China, Financial Crisis, Russia and Its Neighbors, Persian Gulf, and Peace Building.

### **Austin Branch AAUW Board Meeting November 24, 2009**

Members present: Carolyn Bogott, Peggy Benzkofer, Sue Howard, Janet Gilbertson, Evelyn Guentzel, and Laura Tjomsland.

#### 1. Reports:

The secretary minutes were read and approved by the board.

Treasurer's Report: received \$155 for dues; \$750 in Bancroft Funds; Total income is \$905.00; Disbursements were \$2,636.80; Closing Balance for 11/30/09 was \$7,642.67.

2. On December 8th the branch will meet at the Coffee House on Main at 6:30 for a holiday social time. People may be asked to share a memory. Hospitality chairperson Janet Gilbertson has several volunteers who will bring treats, and coffee will be purchased by members. Members are asked to bring an unwrapped toy or a gift card and the donations will be taken to the Salvation Army for distribution. Forte will sing for us. Members will be called about the December meeting.

3. January 12th we will have a presentation on care and ethics by Ellie Garrette from the Minnesota Center of Health. The meeting is at 6:30.

4. Student Affiliate. Sue Grove will inform students and invite them to the December meeting. There was a discussion about the National Student Leadership Conference and recruiting student(s) to attend. Students may join with a free e-membership. Further discussion was had about a fee for becoming an affiliate member; students could attend up to three meetings as guests.

5. Austin Branch is building a web site. The information will be the same as what is in the branch phone book.

6. Women's History Month. We continue to try to raise funds for Anne Bancroft's visit to Austin on March 10. There was a discussion about having lunch with Bancroft, perhaps at the high school museum location. Invited guests would include student winners of the history month project.

7. Membership is currently at 50.

#### 8. Small Groups

- The board agreed to pay for the three extra copies of the study booklet for Great Decisions. In the future, participants will pay for their study booklet and share the cost of the DVD. Evelyn will contact the treasure, Joyce Goetz for reimbursement.
- Just Come will gather for lunch at the Country Club on December 4th.

9. The Newsletter Deadline is November 27th.

10. The next board meeting is January 26th at Peggy Benzkofer's home.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Guentzel, Substituting for Ellen Stark

## Public Policy Notes

I can't do better than this to bring closure to 2009. We have much to be proud of as members of AAUW.

As the end of the year approaches, AAUW reflects back on the many things we have to be thankful for this year. Here are just a few of them:

We're thankful for Lilly Ledbetter, whose tireless advocacy led to the enactment of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and House passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act, and who continues to fight for passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act in the Senate.

We're thankful that, after more than a decade of advocacy, victims of hate crimes motivated by their actual or perceived gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability will now have the protection of federal hate crimes laws.

We're thankful to the House for prioritizing one of the single largest investments in higher education ever to ensure that college will be more affordable for millions of students and their families, and we're looking forward to the Senate doing the same.

We're thankful for the creation of the White House Council on Women and Girls, the Office of Global Women's Issues, a position for a White House Advisor on Violence Against Women, and the first-ever congressional subcommittee that focuses specifically on global women's issues.

We're thankful for health care reform legislation that includes our priorities of gender rating and preventive care, and for committed advocates who will continue to fight for complete reproductive health coverage as well.

We're thankful that the Supreme Court now has another woman's voice that will move the Court forward and uphold the rights of all Americans.

We're thankful for the record number of women--95--in the 111th Congress.

We're thankful that the House recognized the importance of paid parental leave for federal employees, which is a positive first step toward paid parental leave for all American workers.

We're thankful for recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and a statement of support from the Obama administration that encourages employers to provide job-protected paid sick days to employees.

We're thankful to Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA) for helping to protect AAUW's good name and grassroots strength.

We're thankful for advocates, including former AAUW Fellow Heather Boushey, who brought attention to women's issues in The Shriver Report- A Woman's Nation Changes Everything.

We're thankful that American women are one step closer to having a place of honor on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

We're thankful for the leadership and the friendship of the late Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), who championed many of AAUW's issues--including pay equity, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the minimum wage increase, education, and civil rights--throughout his 47 years of service in the Senate.

We're thankful to the Nobel Foundation for honoring a record number of five women, including one AAUW member, with Nobel Prizes this year.

We're thankful for college students who work to improve equality on their campuses, become leaders in their communities, and build the pipeline of future female political leaders.

We're thankful for our online community and their help in spreading the word about issues impacting women and girls.

We're thankful for all the members, officers, speakers, and government officials who joined us in St. Louis for AAUW's National Convention.

We're thankful for the AAUW Action Fund Capitol Hill Lobby Corps, whose persistent and thoughtful volunteer advocacy helped pass critical legislation and held lawmakers accountable on their votes.

We're thankful for AAUW members and supporters who put their money where their mouth is, generously giving time and resources to help women earn their degrees and develop leadership skills, support our research, fight sex discrimination, and further our advocacy efforts.



### January Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 26<sup>th</sup>

6:30 PM

Home of Peggy Benzkofer

104 21<sup>st</sup> St. NW

**AAUW Monthly Financial Report  
November 2009**

**Period: 11/1/09-  
11/30/09**

**Opening Balance:** **\$9,374.47**

**Income:**

Dues	155.00
Bancroft Funds	<u>750.00</u>

**Total Income:** **\$ 905.00** \$10,279.47

**Disbursements:**

Directory Printing	18.00
Postage	8.80
Insurance	125.00
Ed Foundation	600.00
LAF	250.00
Scholarships	1,500.00
National Dues	115.00
State Dues	20.00

**Total Disbursements:** **\$2,636.80**

**Closing Balance 11/30/09** **\$7,642.67**

*Mission Statement:* AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research

*Vision Statement:* AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

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