Our Mission: To honor women and girls, empowering them through education, service and leadership development.

**Co-President’s Message**

Spring is here…well, sort of. The trees are leafing out, flowers are springing up, but there are also still sporadic snow showers and cold days that require the winter coats to emerge once again. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say Minnesota spring is here.

Thanks to all of you who have made this past year a success by volunteering to help out with the House Tours, Library Book Sale, Women’s History Month, Science Fair Mentoring Project, or the many other initiatives our branch undertakes. The passion and drive our members have to be involved is always inspiring. If you would like to be more involved, please talk to us and we can help you find a way to get plugged in. The more involved our membership is, the stronger our branch will be.

We look forward to seeing you at the Spring Banquet on May 9.

~Jill Maxfield and Catherin Haslag, Co-Presidents

**May Program**

Our AAUW spring banquet will be at The Hormel Historic Home on May 9. Social time begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Historic Home and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. in the Banquet Hall. A cash bar will be available. **The cost is $20.00; pre-payment is required on or before May 4.** Marijo and Sue will receive your checks at the April 11th meeting −OR− you may call to make other arrangements.

**Anyone attending must RSVP on or before May 4**.You mayemail Marijo at[***marijo.alexander@riverland.edu***](mailto:marijo.alexander@riverland.edu)or Sue at[***sue.grove@riverland.edu***](mailto:sue.grove@riverland.edu)***.*** When you arrive at the Hormel Historic Home, please check in with us.

**We hope to see you on May 9!**

~Sue Grove and Marijo Alexander, Program Committee co-chairs

**Small Groups**

**Great Decisions**

Great Decisions is in Room C107 at Riverland at 1:00 pm on Monday, May 22nd.

**AM Book Group**

Morning Book Group will read "Elizabeth is Missing" by Emma Healey.  We are scheduled to meet on Thursday, May 18, 9:00 a.m., at Perkins.  Bonnie Ripple will lead discussion of the book.

**PM Book Group**

The evening book group will meet next on May 16th at the home of Jill Maxfield at 7 PM. The book is *Indian Givers* by Jack Weatherford. Please RSVP to Jill at jillmaxfield99@gmail.com. In June we will meet at the home of Angie Ruhter to make our book selections for 2017-2018.

**First Friday**

First Friday is at Torge's at 11:30 on Friday, May 5th. RSVP to Dorothy Krob at [sdkrob@live.com](mailto:sdkrob@live.com) by Thursday afternoon if you would like to attend.

**Travel Group**

The Travel Club will be meeting at the home of Anne Warner on Thursday, May 11th at 2:00 PM.  We will be planning future months and events for the Travel Club.  Please let me know if you plan to attend.  I hope to see you there.  Thank you.  DedaRae Graber

**Used Book Sale Approaches!**

****HELP!!!

Joyce and I have been working every day this week setting up and organizing the books.  We have been assisted by several members of the Friends and Sue Grove. We would love to see more members of AAUW join in this team effort!!!!

We will be accepting books through Wednesday, May 3rd. So if you still need to bring in books, please do it sooner, rather than later.   If you could spare an hour or two with this set up process, it would be great.

 Work schedule still has openings for helpers.

Friday in the Main room:  9:30 - 11:30 one person needed.

Friday in the Main room:  3:30 - 5:30 one person is needed.

Saturday in the Main room: 1:30 - 3:30 one person is needed.

Saturday in the Kids room: 1:30 - 3:30 one person is needed.

Saturday in the Main room: 3:30 - 5:30 two people are needed, and with the bag sale another one or two would be appreciated.

Saturday in the Kids room: 3:30 - 5:30 one person in needed.

This is a HUGE event and one of our largest fund raisers.  Please make it a team effort, your help is desperately needed.  Please let me know which shift you will be able to fill.  Send me an email: [viola212.lt@gmail.com](mailto:viola212.lt@gmail.com)

Thanks so much for your help!

Laura  - Book Sale Co-Chairs

**SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBERS**

**Pat Purcell**



Happy 90th Birthday to Pat Purcell!!!

Here is Pat’s story in her own words:

“I grew up as “Patty Ochs” in Springfield, MN. I have always loved music and sports. I am a baseball fanatic!

I went to the College of St. Teresa and University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and majored in Chemistry and Nutrition. I took my Dietetic Internship at Harper Hospital in Detroit. In 1949 I joined the American Youth Hostel and biked through Europe. Other summers I was the lifeguard and water safety instructor at the Springfield Municipal Swimming Pool. I married Tom Purcell and moved to Austin, MN. We raised our 5 children here.

I began working as a Dietitian at Austin’s St. Olaf Hospital in 1952. Later on I worked at nursing homes in Hayfield, Blooming Prairie and Dodge Center. I was also an instructor for Nursing Home Food Service Supervisors for accreditation at Riverland College.

After retirement I had more time to join organizations. AAUW was first on my list. It has always been an outstanding group. I especially liked the emphasis on education, woman’s leadership and equity. The programs are informative and excellent.

I received my early initiation in AAUW as Program VP with Sue Grove. She helped this newcomer immensely. I enjoyed the following years as Program VP working with Kaye Schultz. I especially like the small groups, such as Great Decisions and Travel. Attending State Conventions is a must. I learned so much from speakers and fellow attendees from around the state. Other organizations I belong to are Austin Floral Book Group, and the Symphony Study Club. I continue to work with the Austin Mayo Medical Center as a Hospice Volunteer. This is my 17th year working with that marvelous program.

I am fortunate to have so many wonderful friends in AAUW. I just turned 90 in April and YOU ALL have “put up” with this senior citizen and have made me feel very welcome. I am truly blessed.

Thank you!”

We are truly blessed, as well, with Pat’s enthusiasm and wisdom. She is a treasure to all who know her!

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| **AAUW Monthly Financial Report** | | |
| **April 1 - April 30, 2017** | | |
|  |  |  |
| **Period: 4/1/17 - 4/30/17** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Opening Balance:** |  | **$7,697.13** |
|  |  |  |
| **Income:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Income:** | **$-** | $7,697.13 |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Disbursements:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Disbursements:** | **$0.00** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Closing Balance 4/30/17** |  | **$7,697.13** |

**PUBLIC POLICY**

Evelyn Guentzel

MARY PETRON has provided many thoughtful insights regarding AAUW’s commitment to current issues. AAUW’s primary focus is on the effects decisions make on women and girls. And AAUW’s new blog directs us to a variety of topics. Below is a quoted piece shared by Ms. Petron:

“At the beginning of each new legislative session, a majority of governors deliver a State of the State address. They tell stories of past successes, recount acts of bravery among their citizens, and outline priorities for the continued progress of their state. Governors reassure their legislatures and citizens that ‘the state of our state is strong’ and attempt to build excitement for the year ahead. This year the majority of governors’ agendas failed to cover AAUW priorities. Most didn’t even use the word “women.”

AAUW calls for rich discussions of policies important to women and girls, but only 12 of the 45 governors who had addressed their states by early March even said the word “women.” Despite that low bar, many of those mentions were not even substantive. The silence from the majority of governors regarding the role of women and girls in these policy areas is striking. We need strong, engaged governors who are willing to not only mention, but also advocate for, the issues that are vital to the success of women and girls.

So what did the governors spend their time talking about? AAUW’s new blog examines governors’ take on our issues, including STEM, human trafficking, LGBT issues, paid sick days, and family leave. The Education Commission of the States also has a nice round up of education-specific topics, and the Pew Charitable Trusts summarizes the major themes of the year.

As legislative sessions progress and bills move to governors’ desks, AAUW members are at the forefront of advocating for progress. We are helping to advance good legislation, fighting to stop bad bills, and holding our elected officials accountable. AAUW staff recently had the opportunity to meet with Governors Kate Brown (D-OR) and Asa Hutchinson (R-AR) to discuss our priorities, and AAUW of Louisiana members welcomed Gov. John Bel Edwards (D-LA) to an equal pay event last week.

AAUW is watching; we will continue to make our voices heard.”

Kate Nielson,  State Policy Analyst

The amount of news that comes to me from AAUW is almost overwhelming, sometimes, interesting other times and disconcerting still other times. There isn’t enough room in our newsletter to cover all these topics but these are timely issues that require more attention. Public Education is a hot button issue that affects us all.

--**Nevada Poised to Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment**

--**In a Backlash Against the Backlash, States Attempt to Curb Protests**

--**2017 Brings More Women in State Legislatures than Ever**

--**The New Trend: Ranked Choice Voting**

--**States Offer Differing Approaches to Transgender Students**

--**What does your Legislature Look Like and How Can You Be a Part of It?**

--**Promote Your State or Local Legislative Agenda**

--**Reports Highlight Threat of Vouchers and Tax Credits to Public Education**

With U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos pushing for school choice and a constant drumbeat coming from the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), states are taking notice. Every state has some kind of law enabling parents to send their children to schools outside of their neighborhood, but there are major differences between exploratory public options that uphold state and federal civil rights laws, versus voucher schemes that send taxpayer money to private schools. The Century Foundation (TCF) released a report that identified school vouchers and tax credits as a real threat to public education. In addition to redirecting funding away from public schools, TCF argues that vouchers

(Public Policy – continued)

also increase student segregation by race and socioeconomic status. The Economic Policy Institute published a study with similar findings, arguing that privatization detracts from known methods for improving student learning. Vouchers, which siphon taxpayer money to private schools, may have a potentially negative impact on student achievement.

--**Adding Equity to the Higher Education Conversation**

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

**Austin AAUW General Meeting Minutes**

April 11, 2017

The AAUW Board met at Riverland Community and Technical College. Present were Marijo Alexander, Carolyn Bogott, Dee Graeber, Sue Grove, Dorothy Krob, Catherine Lemons, and Jill Maxfield.

Jill Maxfield called the meeting to order. There was not a quorum present so the meeting continued as follows.

President’s Address – It is too expensive for both of our Co-Presidents to go to the National Convention. Catherine Haslag will attend alone.

Secretary’s Report – Peggy Benzkofer was absent due to illness. Catherine Lemons took the minutes in her absence. Since there was no quorum, no action was taken on the Minutes from last month.

Treasurer’s Update – Nicole Cizik was absent but sent a message through Marijo Alexander that a check for the Regional Science Fair had been sent on April 10.

Program Update – Marijo Alexander and Sue Grove reported that the banquet will be at the Historic Hormel Home on May 9th. The cost is $20 payable before May 4. The 2017-18 program is pretty well lined up. There will be a Saturday meeting again in January and potlucks in February. With a historically low March attendance, Marijo and Sue will suggest at the meeting that there be a winter break with no meeting in March.

Membership Update – Catherine Lemons reported membership remains at 71.

Bylaws Update – No report.

Website Update – No report.

Women’s History Month Update – Carolyn Bogott reported that the Women’s History Month event went well at the high school. Winners of the project were to present their program at the meeting, but one of the winners was ill. He is willing to present later.

Science Fair Mentoring Project – No report.

AAUW State Convention – Neither Catherine Haslag or Jill Maxfield are able to go to the Convention. Sue Grove is attending and hoping someone else will be able to attend with her.

NCCWSL - Katlynn Schmick will be attending.

Sue Grove announced that we will be able to have a house tour again this year even though technically it would be an off year. She will be finalizing the homes soon.

Jill Maxfield commented that she was really enjoying the write ups in the Newsletter about our members.

Our next meeting is the banquet on May 9th.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Lemons for

Peggy Benzkofer

*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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AAUW Southern Highlights

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