Southern Highlights

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**Volume 12 Number 5** **February 2014**

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**\_\_\_\_ Shaping the World One Woman at a Time\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_**

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 **Marijo Alexander and Sue Grove, Co-Presidents**

## Co-President’s Thoughts

Happy 2014! We started off the year with an excellent program by Kathryn Colestock-Burke, who talked about her adventures as a National Park Ranger. Her program and her beautiful photographs made me want to head out to the parks as soon as I can. If you were unable to attend, here is a link to her blog, where you can see some of the gorgeous scenery. <http://arches.wordpress.com>

Our many small groups continue to be lively and entertaining. Great Decisions starts its new year in February. Knitting/Crocheting/Fellowship continues every Saturday morning at 9:30 at the Coffee House on Main. Book groups and Travel Group have provided interesting discussions and great treats.

Mark your calendars for the AAUW State Convention in Minneapolis April 11th and 12th. The format will be a bit different this year with no Saturday banquet. It will begin Friday afternoon and end Saturday afternoon. It would be helpful if many of you could at least attend for the day on Saturday, especially since we will be hosting it in 2015.

Also, the Book Sale is scheduled for May 2nd and 3rd. We will need everyone who possibly can to volunteer for sorting books ahead of time as well as for working at the sale. A couple of hours helps a great deal. Stay tuned for details.

The days are getting longer. Let’s hope the worst of the cold is behind us!

Sue Grove and MarijoAlexander

![MC900024290[1]]()Co-Presidents

## February Program

Our February meeting is scheduled for the 11th at the Austin Public Library in their large meeting room. Our guest speaker for the evening will be Kristin Nelson, Mower County District Attorney. Refreshments will be served at 6:30 PM with the program to follow at 7 PM. We hope you can join us!

Carla and Yesenia

### Small Groups

**Morning Book Group**

In February, we will be discussing *The Invisible Thread* by Laura Schroff & Alex Tesniowki. We will meet at Barley’s at 9 AM on February 20th. For March we will read and discuss the classic *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck.

**Evening Book Group**

We will be discussing A Girl of the Limberlost by Gene Stratton-Porter on Monday, February 3nd at 7 PM at the home of Dorothy Krob. Please RSVP to Dorothy at sdkrob@charter.net. On March 3rd we will be discussing the Austin Page Turners’ selection *The Cartographer of No Man’s Land* by P.S. Duffy.

**First Friday**

First Friday Luncheon will be at Barley’s on February 7th at 11:30 AM.  Email Dorothy at sdkrob@live.com by February 5th if you would like to attend.

**Knitting/ Handiwork Group**

We are still meeting every Saturday at 9:30 AM at the Coffee House on Main. Everyone is welcome to join even if you just want to enjoy a cup of coffee!

##### Travel Group

The AAUW Travel Club will be meeting at the home of Sandy Folk (1605 - 8th Ave. N.W.) on
Thursday, February 13th at 2:00 PM.  Sandy will be sharing information and photos from their trip
to Norway.  I'm sure it will be extremely interesting and enjoyable. Please let me know if you plan to attend via email or call me (433-7897) by Wednesday,
February 12th.  Thank you. I hope you can join us.

DedaRae Graber

**Great Decisions**

Great Decisions will meet on Wednesday, February 5th at 1:00 pm in Room C 108 at Riverland’s East campus.

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| **AAUW Monthly Financial Report** |
| **Dec. 2013-Jan. 2014** |
|  |  |  |
| **Period: 12/1/13-1/31/14** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Opening Balance:** |  | **$8,358.41** |
|  |  |  |
| **Income:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Dues Received |  65.00  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Income:** |  **$65.00**  | $8,423.41 |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Disbursements:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| National Dues |  49.00  |  |
| State Dues |  9.00  |  |
| AAUW Funds |  850.00  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Disbursements:** | **$908.00** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Closing Balance 1/31/14** |  | **$7,515.41** |

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**Party Caucuses Set**

 **for Tuesday**

Local DFL & GOP parties are ready to host their precinct caucuses this coming Tuesday evening, February 4th. The Mower County Senior Citizens Center, LeRoy Community Center, and Racine City Hall will all host the GOP caucus for Mower County residents. The Mower County DFL’s caucus will take place at the El Parral Ballroom. These will all begin at 7 PM.

Precinct caucuses are open to the public and are an excellent opportunity to discuss issues as part of political parties. Exercise your civil rights and be a part of where change begins!

**WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH PROJECT**

Plans for the Women’s History Project at Austin High School are moving forward with several changes from years past. There will not be an all-school assembly this year and staff at Austin High School is organizing a panel discussion on Title IX which will be presented three times to groups of students.

We will have the student projects as we have done in the past. The judging of the projects will take place in Knowlton Auditorium on February 27th. The questions the students will be working with are:

 1. Explain what Title IX is. Explains how it impacted opportunities for women in the following areas: athletics, education, workforce or political involvement. Explain the opposition women faced because of it in one of the following areas: athletics, education, workforce, political involvement.

2. Compare opportunities available for women 40 years ago to today (before the development of Title IX compared to today). This may involve women in the United States or in other countries of the world.

Due to class size, the teacher is splitting the group into two parts with some presentations from 8:15 to 11:30 and the other from 12:15 to 2:30. We will need many of you to volunteer as judges to accomplish two separate events. Everyone who has volunteered in the past has enjoyed it greatly. The students are great and the projects inspiring. Please contact Peggy Benzkofer at 433-5934 or pjbenzko@gmail.com or Carolyn Bogott at 433-4457 or csbogott@charter.net to volunteer. Please remember that you are welcome to come for part of one of the sessions if that works better for you.

The awards ceremony will be held on Wednesday, March 12, during the sophomore presentation and we are invited to attend. We don’t know the time as yet. The results of the contest will be included in the presentations given to the other grades on that day.

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**Public Policy**

**Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act Reaches Five Year Anniversary!**

This past week marked the 5 year anniversary mark of the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. The law makes it easier for workers to seek redress for discrimination on the job. Lilly herself was a guest at the State of the Union. She is encouraging the president to do more to advance equal pay. She also spend the next couple of days following the State of the Union with AAUW and members of Congress urging passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act.

**‘Bits and Pieces’ – From AAUW’s Washington Update**

- In January, the 41st anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion was observed. However, as loyal readers of *Washington Update* know, the right to access abortion has been under increased attack in several states – check out AAUW's website for more information.

- Last week, the Army announced it will open up 33,000 combat positions to women, bringing the total of newly opened Army combat positions since last year to 55,000. The recent announcement coincides with the one-year anniversary of the Pentagon’s announcement that it would lift its ban on women in combat.

- The National Education Association (NEA) announced that it will give $60 million in grants to its state and local affiliates nationwide over the next decade to fund the implementation of the Common Core State Standards Initiative (“Common Core”). AAUW supports Common Core, which is a state-led, voluntary effort that establishes a single set of educational standards for K-12 in English and mathematics.

*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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**Minnesota State Website:**

 http://www.aauwmn.org

**Association Website:**

 <http://www.aauw.org>

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