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

Co-President’s Message

Now that the holidays are approaching, one cannot turn on the television without noticing the many advertisements for Pandora jewelry. These pieces of jewelry are beautiful when they stand alone, but with the addition of charms, they become even more astonishing. The charms add brilliance, elegance and adventure to the bracelet. Charm bracelets serve a function: to celebrate the events of important people in our lives, successes, hobbies, goals and sometimes just our favorite “things.” I bring up the charm bracelet as a metaphor because it reminds me of the way the AAUW organization functions. National, state, and local chapters are the bracelet. They are the part of the organization dedicated to the promotion of empowering women. AAUW has supported legislation to change many professions that had been hostile to women and provided a place where our voices are heard.

Carla Anderson-Diekmann and Courtney Wyant

So, what part of AAUW would I considered as the charms? At the branch level, I consider the interest groups as one set of charms. Our branch offers travel, crafts, and book interest groups. Community and networking is another charm. This provides an avenue to develop our talents and meet other members of the branch. There are opportunities to work with students like our science fair projects this year, which will influence the success of future generations. There are also social events like our yearly potluck, new member wine and cheese where all can be a part of eating and having fun. We also shopped at Hy-Vee to raise money for projects in the branch. As we participate in these activities, we help to fulfill the goals of the organization. We add some charms to our bracelet and build memories together.

Welcome to a new and exhilarating year with the Austin Branch AAUW.  Carla and I are very excited to be serving as co-presidents to this community of smart, socially conscious, friendly, supportive, hardworking, spontaneously fun-loving women. Over the next two years, we hope to contribute in renewing our commitment to our mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

~Courtney Wyant, Co-President

**November Program**

Our meeting this month will be held at Christ Episcopal Church on November 11th.  Social time starts at 6:30 PM with the program featuring Representative Jeanne Poppe to follow at 7:00 PM.  Representative Poppe will be sharing her insights on being a female politician as well as some of the educational issues she has worked on during her 10 years as our representative.  She will also share some of the issues she will be working on during this coming session.  Join us for this informative meeting!

**Small Groups**

**AM Book Group** Morning book group is reading*Stalking Susan* by Julie Kramer.  They will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, at Barley's with discussion led by Nancy Dobberman. If this time and place work for you, we’d love to have you join us.

**PM Book Group** The evening book group will discuss The War Bride by Helen Bryan on Tuesday, November 18th at 7 PM at the home of Barb Hunter. Please RSVP to Barb at [hunterbarb41@gmail.com](mailto:hunterbarb41@gmail.com). Our December selection is *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak.

**Great Decisions**

Great Decisions will finish with a discussion of the U.S. Trade Policy on November 5th at 1:00 PM at Riverland. We invite members to join us as we begin the next round of discussions in February of 2015: Russia and the Near Abroad; Privacy in the Digital Age; Sectarianism in the Middle East; India Changes Course; U.S. Policy toward Africa; Syria’sRefugee Crisis; Human Trafficking in the 21st Century; and Brazil’s Metamorphosis. Prepare to be challenged!



**Travel Group** The Travel Club is going to be visiting the “Four Daughters Winery" on Saturday, November 8th.  We will be meeting at Riverland College and carpooling to the winery for lunch and possibility a short tour.  We plan to be back in Austin by 2:00 PM.  Several women have signed-up.  If you haven’t contacted me and would like to join us, please either email ([drgraber@charter.net](mailto:drgraber@charter.net)) or call (433-7897) and leave a message ASAP.  We need to know numbers for both the carpooling and the reservation at the winery.  Thank you. I hope to see many of you there on Saturday, Nov. 8th. ~DedaRae Graber

**First Friday** First Friday will join the Travel Club in November as they venture to Four Daughter’s Winery!

**Knitting & Handiwork** We continue to meet most Saturdays at the Coffee House on Main at 9:30 AM. You need not be able to knit/ do handiwork to attend!

**C:\Users\Rae Dawn\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\Z0ZL0TI6\MC900301340[1].wmfELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY!**

More women than men are registered to vote, so women can control the outcome of elections—but only if we vote. **Have you checked out the latest election resources from the AAUW Action Fund?** (Control + click to follow links)

* The [***Congressional Voting Record* (CVR)**](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=Hbj1Qd2UU%2B%2F2RGAqKskN0OlLnoJ%2ByHuk) provides information about senators’ and representatives’ co-sponsorship and votes on AAUW’s issues, including budget and appropriations, economic security, education, and civil rights.
* [**Voter guides**](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=UZEfTZJtTyQdCkAoYOWGcOlLnoJ%2ByHuk) provide nonpartisan information about candidate positions on AAUW's issues. The 2014 AAUW Action Fund voter guides cover nationally significant U.S. Senate and gubernatorial races in nearly 20 states.
* State ballot initiative and state referenda language can be confusing, and even manipulative, which is why AAUW has put together [**this handy guide to ballot initiatives in several states**](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=X4LPzt%2BQ3jNDXOP6wsadpelLnoJ%2ByHuk).

Some people are hoping that women won't turn out for the election this year, or that new voting restrictions and requirements will turn people away from the polls. **But we know that we're turning out this November to make our voices heard. There's too much at stake for women to let others make decisions for us—and when we don't vote, that's exactly what we do.** When women don't speak, the conversation suffers without us—and so do the issues we care about.‎ When women speak, we change the conversation.  When women vote, we change the outcome of elections.‎

**EXCITING OPPORTUNITY!**

**Supplies and Help are STILL** needed for the Science Fair Mentoring Project!

**Thanks** to those of you who **are already** supporting own branch member, Catherine Haslag, who is spearheading a plan to mentor kids at Sumner and Neveln Schools for science fair projects. She has put in many hours organizing this effort, and her enthusiasm and charisma are infectious!! She has marshaled lots of help in the community **but she needs your help too**!

We hope lots of you will **volunteer as mentors**, but there are other ways you can help out as well:

1. Volunteer to be a host at one of the school sites when the mentoring is going on.

C:\Users\Rae Dawn\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\94HS6ER1\MC900351968[1].wmf 2. Donate supplies: Pencils, rulers, construction paper (both white and colored), stick-on name tags, transparent tape, letter stencils, and paint pens. These can be brought to the AAUW meetings in November and December.

For more information, contact Catherine [cshaslag@gmail.com](mailto:cshaslag@gmail.com), Carolyn Bogott [csbogott@charter.net](mailto:csbogott@charter.net), or Peggy Benzkofer [pjbenzko@gmail.com](mailto:pjbenzko@gmail.com).

**PUBLIC POLICY NOTES**

By Evelyn Guentzel

Empowering women is a slow process, but it is happening. We have talked about the gender pay gap before: it is real, it is disrespectful of women and hurts families To reprise:

* Among full-time, year-around workers, women have typically been paid 78 percent of what men are paid.
* The pay gap has been worse for women of color.
* As all factors know to affect pay are taken into account, one year after college women are still paid almost seven percent less than men.
* The pay gap has changed little in the last decade.
* Recently, executive orders have directed the Department of Labor toissue new regulations. It is a privilege to be rewarded a federal contract and now federal contractors must regularly report by gender, race and ethnicity what they pay their employees. Twenty-eight million  
  people are federal contractor employees (20 percent of the American workforce!) We can hope for proactive  changes in the pay practices of these contractors. The opportunity to comment on this executive order closes soon and the Department of Labor needs to hear from people who support equal pay for equal work.

Other groundbreaking news:

* A 17 year old, Malala Yousafzai, is the youngest person in history to be awarded the Nobel Prize. She has dedicated herself to being an advocate for the rights of children and young people and the right of girls worldwide to an education. It goes without saying that she is a  
  role model for all young women.
* Voting rights are in disarray: in North Carolina same-day registration and out-of–precinct voting have been reinstated (Supreme Court); in Wisconsin the implementation of voter identification has been stopped (Supreme Court); in Texas a federal judge struck down a  
  strict voting law.
* Supreme Court cases will deal more in the coming year with the issue of marriage equality, access to contraception impacting the rights of women and girls across the country; and voting rights.
* AAUW cheered for the three female Marine Corps Officers who passed an intense combat endurance test.  Along with 67 men who passed we may see female graduates of the Marine Corps’ Infantry Officer Course.
* AAUW’s jeer was directed at an article in Men’s Health suggesting that women dislike sports and math!

**MEMORANDUM**

Life-time member, Gudrun Bulger, passed away on October 22.  She was an active member of AAUW until a few years ago when she fell, and then eventually needed care.  She lived at St. Mark's Lutheran Home at the time of her death.

**AAUW Board Meeting Minutes**

**October 14, 2014**

AAUW Board met at the Austin ArtWorks Center. Present were Carla Anderson-Diekmann, DedaRae Graber, Catherine Haslag, Catherine Lemons, Jill Maxfield and Ruth Monson. Secretary’s report was approved.

Carla gave a brief Treasurer’s update. Motion made and seconded to pay the $175 annual insurance fee for our AAUW Branch. Motion carried. The HyVee fundraiser brought in $136.58.

Catherine Lemons gave a membership update – currently we have 67 members and two unpaid members. The Board discussed offering another new member invitation this fall. It was decided that at the November General Meeting, Catherine Lemons will bring invitation cards which members can distribute to prospective members inviting them to the December Holiday Social.

Website and Facebook update: Carla offered to post new information periodically on the Branch’s Facebook page. State convention committee had nothing new to report

New Business: Catherine Haslag gave an update on the Science Fair Mentoring project. She is currently gathering funds and is preparing for a November kick-off with Sumner School children.

Newsletter items need to be submitted to Rae Dawn on or before the last Friday of the month and Board agenda items need to be submitted to Carla and Courtney on or before the first Tuesday of the month.

The November meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on November 11th at Christ Episcopal Church. The Board will meet at 5:45 p.m. and membership will gather at 6:30 p.m. for social time, with the program beginning at 7:00 p.m. Rep. Jeanne Poppe, member of the Minnesota House of Representatives, will present a program on Women in Politics and give an update on what is happening the Minnesota Legislature.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Monson, Secretary

*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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