Our Mission: To honor women and girls, empowering them through education,

service and leadership development.

Co-President’s Message

March potlucks in the homes were enjoyed by all those attending. We hope more will participate in this event next year. It is such a great time to get to know other members . Thanks to hosts, Dorothy Krob and Sandy Folk, for opening their homes to us.

Our program for April concerns preserving our water resources. For us in Minnesota, clean water seems plentiful, and we will probably not face severe shortages for a long time in the future. However other parts of our country and the rest of the world are already facing water scarcity. More than 1.2 billion people lack access to clean drinking water. Futurists see “water wars” as a very real possibility at some point.

As we learn more about our water resources here at home, keep in mind those who are already facing water problems and learn how we can help to conserve water for future generations. Curiosity can lead us to being open to solutions for big problems like water scarcity. As AAUW members and concerned citizens, realize the potential of the human spirit as defined in this quote:

“Human spirit is the ability to face the uncertainty of the future with curiosity and optimism. It is the belief that problems can be solved, differences resolved. It is a type of confidence. And it is fragile. It can be blackened by fear and superstition.” Bernard Beckett

REMEMBER THE BOOK SALE IS APRIL 26 AND 27. CAN YOU HELP WITH SORTING OR ON THE SALE DAYS???? WE ARE COUNTING ON YOU!!!

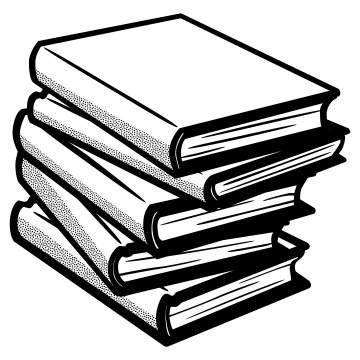
Carolyn Bogott and Jen Lawhead

Co-Presidents, Austin Chapter – AAUW

**Upcoming Programs**

Our next meeting will be held on April 9 in the Riverland West Building, room B 116 at 6:30 pm. Join us for a presentation by Tim Ruzek on the Cedar River waterway. Tim is an Austinite who has developed quite an interest in the environment, especially water. Come hear plans for the Cedar River!

SAVE THE DATE! Our annual spring banquet will be held on Tuesday, May 14 at the Hormel Historic Home.  This is a great time to connect with AAUW members, think about the past year and make programming suggestions for the next year. We will have students who won the Women's History Event be the guest speakers. The banquet will be catered by Hy-Vee with a social hour beginning at 5:30 pm and dinner will be served at 6:00 pm. Wine and mixed drinks may be purchased at the bar. Cost for the buffet dinner is $20, advanced payment is required and no refunds will be given. You can send your reservation to either Barb Hunter or Jenni Braaten. See you there for a fun evening!

Jenni Braaten & Barb Hunter

**Library Used Book Sale April 27-28!**

ALL HANDS ON BOARD!  Used book collection begins Monday, April 15th.  Set up will begin in full swing on Tuesday, April 16th.  PLEASE pick at least one day to come in and help with set up and arranging.

Sale Dates are Friday and Saturday April 26th and April 27th.   We need everyone to take a two hour shift on one of those days.  Additionally, we are in need of a few committed volunteers to serve as the main AAUW contact on the two actual dates of the sale. Joyce and Laura have commitments that require their presence elsewhere and may be reaching out to see if this opportunity is for YOU.

I know many of us belong to the Friends as well as AAUW.  For this project YOU are part of AAUW.  We are expected to do our share of the work.   Times of the sale begin at 10:00 AM and go until 5:00 PM each day.   PLEASE let Laura know when you are planning to help with the sale.  REMEMBER bag sale is Saturday afternoon.  This is a big project and so are the financial rewards. Proceeds from this sale alone have historically covered the entire financial commitment we make towards Riverland scholarships.

Joyce and Laura   Co-chairs

**A Great Opportunity:**

**AAUW State Convention to be held April 26-27 in Grand Rapids**

The Friday night convention banquet speaker will be Dr. Kathleen Annette, the first woman of the Minnesota Ojibwe Nation to become a physician and now the President/CEO of the Blandin Foundation. “Optional Activities” include visits to Minnesota Historical Society Forest History Center, the Judy garland Museum and Home, and the Itasca Historical Society Museum. These are just a very few of the activities that will go on. Contact Carolyn Bogott if you want to attend. Our Branch helps pay the registration fee, depending on how many want to attend. It is always a wonderful experience for those attending the convention! For more information check online for the Minnesota AAUW State Convention.

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| **AAUW Monthly Financial Report** | | |
| **March 1 - March 31, 2019** | | |
|  |  |  |
| **Period: 3/1/19 - 3/31/19** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Opening Balance:** |  | **$10,440.20** |
|  |  |  |
| **Income:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Income:** | **$ -** | $10,440.20 |
|  |  |  |
| **Disbursements:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Women's history speaker | 100.00 |  |
| Women's history awards | 400.00 |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Disbursements:** | **$500.00** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Closing Balance 3/31/19** |  | **$9,940.20** |

**Member Spotlight – Liz Richardson**

Liz Richardson has been an active member of our AAUW Austin Branch since she completed her degree in 1984. She had started college part time at Bethel College in St. Paul where she met her husband, Bruce. They were married in 1959 and she did not go back to college until after her children were well along in their growth.

  "I looked forward to becoming an AAUW member upon graduation from college, and have continued as a member since.  I appreciate the friendships as well as the learning experiences.  I especially enjoy the good discussions in Morning Book Group.  Sharing with Travel Group has also been enjoyable, and the monthly programs for all have been very educational.”

Liz has served as our branch in many capacities. She has been Program Vice-President, Secretary, Education Foundation Representative, Visibility Chair, Newsletter Editor for a total of 9 years (winning seven awards at the state conventions), Co-President, National Convention delegate in Washington, D.C., Co-Chair of the house tour, and A.M. Book Group Chair for years.

After her kids were in school, Liz worked in the Hormel Corporate office, First United Methodist Church office and St. Mark’s office. When she finished her B.S. degree at Mankato State in 1984, she was hired as secretary at the Christian Education Center and worked there until her retirement in 1995.

Liz has been very active in church work, both at Sterling Christian Church before it closed and then at First Congregational church. Since the beginning of Habitat for Humanity in Austin in 1991, Liz has been a stalwart worker with that organization, along with Bruce. She also has been active in politics serving as Secretary of the Mower County DFL and Treasurer for Rep. Leo Redding for 8 years.

Liz likes to read, play golf and bike, as well as travel. She and Bruce have visited all 50 states and a number of other countries. Lifelong learners, Liz and Bruce have enjoyed 35 Roads Scholars programs.

Liz, we thank you for all your service to our Austin Branch of AAUW. We salute you for all your work in the community.

**Peg Seath to Be Honored With a Named Gift to the National AAUW Fund**

Following a motion by our Treasurer, Nicole Cizik, our board voted to honor Peg Seath with a named contribution of $750 to the AAUW Fund.

Some of you may not know Peg. She has been a member of the Austin Branch of AAUW for 56 years and was usually in attendance at all activities until about 2 years ago. She currently lives in assisted living at the Cedars and has short-term memory problems, as well as other health challenges. She was responsible for resurrecting our branch about 25 years ago when we were near death due to poor leadership.

The AAUW Fund is a general fund for unrestricted gifts, which is used when and where it is most needed.  AAUW national membership dues cover just 30 percent of the funds needed to support the mission based programs and advocacy efforts that are fundamental to AAUW’s ongoing effectiveness. This fund also gives support to struggling branches. Our branch’s contribution to the AAUW Fund will allow for us to help AAUW make a greater impact. The amount of our contribution will be $750, because that is the minimum for Named Grants. Other contributions to the AAUW Fund are always welcome in any amount.

**Membership Renewals**

At the upcoming banquet in May, we will once again be collecting annual dues for the next year with AAUW. The dues will remain steady at $75 and can be either paid in the form of cash or check. We are always seeking out new members to join our fun group so if you can think of someone who may consider joining us, please invite them to the April meeting or the spring banquet.

Jenni Braaten and Kerry Bartlett

**Small Groups**

**PM Book Group**

We will be meeting at the home of Rae Dawn Rao on April 15th at 7 PM to discuss *As Bright as Heaven* by Susan Meissner. Please RSVP to Rae Dawn at rao\_raedawn@yahoo.com. We will meet at 7 PM on May 20th to discuss *Being Mortal* by Atul Gwanda.

**AM Book Group**

Morning book group meets at Perkins at 9:00 on April 18th. Bonnie Ripple will lead the discussion of *A MAN CALLED OVE*, BY Frederick Backman. How and why did Ove get to the point of needing and wanting to buy a computer? Attempts to kill himself are continually and accidentally foiled, by the sudden appearances of unexpected connections and friendships with people and animals.

**First Friday**

First Friday will be at Steve's Pizza on Friday, April 5th, at 11:30. RSVP to Dorothy Krob

at [sdkrob@live.com](mailto:sdkrob@live.com) by Thursday, April 4th by noon.

**Travel Group**

The Travel Club will meet on Wednesday, April 10th, at the home of Sue Grove at 1:00 PM.  Members will continue to share information on different Minnesota cities or towns.  Ann Odegaard will be sharing about New Ulm,  Lana Epley will be sharing about Taylor Falls, and I will be sharing about Pipestone. We are continuing to learn much from each other.    We welcome new members to join us.  Please let me know (433-7897), by Tuesday, April 9th if you are planning to attend.  Thank you.

DedaRae Graber

**Great Decisions**

 We will meet next on April 22nf at Riverland at 1 PM, room TBD. Weather permitting we will begin the discussion of article II entitled THE MIDDLE EAST: REGIONAL DISORDER by Lawrence G. Potter.  Which country(ies) are the biggest cause of problems? Are U.S policies in our best interests and / or those of the Middle East?

**PUBLIC POLICY**

Evelyn Guentzel

Will March go out like a lamb?  Just wondering. For AAUW this has been an extraordinary month.

March 8 celebrated International Women’s Day, which recognizes  the achievements of women worldwide and continued efforts to accelerate gender equity. March 11 - 22 AAUW will participate with government officials, NGO and civil society and activists around the world for the 63rd UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN and the NGO Committee on the status of women forum.

March in National Women’s History Month. The National Women’s History Museum has countless stories of women’s contributions to society. Austin students have been working on their history projects to present to AAUW members.

At the national level, AAUW has been focusing on the PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT and Congress is set to act on it later in March. This is critical legislation that will take steps to close the gender pay gap. IT PERSISTS, and while it affects millions of women and their families, it also impacts some men in those families and in their own work life. Some companies, to their credit, recognize the benefits of the increase in women’s economic participation and have enacted policies similar to those found in the PFA. In other instances challenging discrimination will have more clout. It is a policy that could strengthen and grow our economy.

In April we will have the opportunity to learn more about a local issue, the Cedar River Watershed District with Tim Ruzek.

**Board Votes an Alternative to Taking a Silent Auction Item to State Convention**

Since our past experience has been that our silent auction item for the state convention has not always sold for even as much as it cost to put together, the board voted to repeat what we did last year. We will take up a collection at the April meeting and send the money rather than having members donate items. This seems to be a better way to support AAUW.

**Mark Your Calendars: Fall House Tour to Be Held October 6, 2019!**

We are so thrilled to announce that we have in place dynamic co-chairs for the fall house tour, as well as talented and seasoned co-chairs for finding the houses. Carolyn Rugg and Rae Dawn Rao have agreed to lead this fundraiser. Sue Grove and Sonia Larson have agreed to find the houses. A kick-off meeting with the co-chairs has been held and the “finders” are talking with homeowners. **Now we need you all to save the date so we can have your help making this a successful fundraiser.**

**AAUW Presents: WORKSMART ONLINE**

**An Invitation from Our National Organization**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | If you’re a woman, chances are you deserve a raise. Here at AAUW, we’ve [designed a free online course](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=%2FDi4N31y1%2BQ6OQkvuZdFE%2BswVppB60Yi) to give you the tools to help you advocate for a raise.   We’re so committed to closing the pay gap, we’ve set a goal of registering 100,000 women for the course by August. [Can you register today to help yourself and AAUW to reach our goals](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=MxjIvt5eDLjFldofy12eLT6VwgAdWVUF)?  Work Smart teaches practical skills to get you the pay you deserve. From salary research to negotiating for better pay, we’ll help you navigate getting a raise.  Help us end the pay gap, [register for Work Smart Online](http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=gVpildsFSp2DwWR8BOloQD6VwgAdWVUF) today.  Thanks, Kim Churches, CEO | |

**BOARD MINUTES OF AUSTIN, MN BRANCH AAUW**

A meeting of the board of the Austin, MN Branch of AAUW was held at 5:30 p.m. on March 5, 2019, at the Carolyn Bogott’s home. Members of the board in attendance included Carolyn Bogott, Jenni Braaten, Barb Hunter, Nicole Cizik and Peggy Benzkofer.

Discussion was held about the pot lucks in member homes and it was decided that there would be two homes of six people each. There will be an alternative date for people unable to attend on the 12th.

It was announced that the support of scholarship winners program needs volunteers for April and May. The hostesses at the pot lucks will be asked to ask for volunteers to fill those slots.

A discussion of Women’s History Day events followed. Peggy made a motion to award each of the four first place projects with $75 with $50 going to each of the second place projects. Barb seconded the motion and the motion passed. $100 will be given to the speaker, Lora Lee of KAAL.

The date for the House Tour has been set for October 6. Co-chairs are Carolyn Rugg and Rae Dawn Rao. Several homes have been suggested but if members have suggestions, they should contact Sue Grove or Sonia Larson.

Spring book sale is coming up quickly. Carolyn will contact chairs to determine if they want sign up sheets at pot lucks.

AAUW state convention will be held April 26 and 27th. Carolyn reported that the state organization has asked for a description of a successful fund raiser. She is writing about our book sale. They also asked for up to three books that our branch would suggest. Carolyn will contact the morning book group for a suggestion. A discussion of a donation to the silent auction was held and it was decided to ask for donations at the April meeting instead of preparing a basket to be auctioned.

Jeni reported that she and Jennifer had met to begin planning for the Story Show. The lecture hall at Riverland is a possible site for the event.

Nicki reported that the January luncheon made about $30 due to a confusion of people not coming due to weather and other people attending. A discussion was held about the donation to the national organization. Last year our branch gave $750 in memory of Eulalah Adwell. Jeni made a motion to donate $750 in honor of Peg Seath. Barb seconded and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted: Peggy Benzkofer, 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.

**Southern Highlights Editor:** Rae Dawn Rao [rao\_raedawn@yahoo.com](mailto:rao_raedawn@yahoo.com) **Minnesota State Website:** <http://www.aauwmn.org> **Association Website:**  <http://www.aauw.org> **Association e-mail: info@aauw.org**



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AAUW Southern Highlights

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