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

service and leadership development.

Co-President’s Message

Feeling the warmth of the sun, and observing Red Admiral butterflies swarming on the pollen-covered pussy willows, means that springtime is finally here. On the other hand, how can it be that another AAUW year is almost complete? The way we experience time is one of the all-time curiosities of human kind. How can several months seem so long and also so short?

That brings us to curiosity and wonder at how the other AAUW board members found time and energy to fulfill so skillfully their responsibilities this year. Each of them has a busy life with many other time-demands, and they still did an outstanding job for our Branch.

Thank you 2018-19 Austin Branch Board!!!!

We hope to see all of you at our banquet on May 14, 5:30 at the Hormel Home. Some of the Austin High School Women’s History Month contest winners will share their projects.

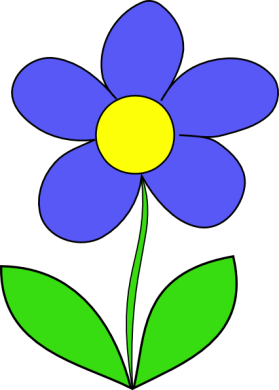
Remember to continue to live with curiosity!!!

“I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift should be curiosity.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Carolyn Bogott and Jen Lawhead

Co-Presidents, Austin Chapter – AAUW

**May Program**

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

**Membership Renewals**

Dues for the upcoming AAUW year will be collected at the spring banquet on May 14, 2019. This year the dues remain steady at $75 which includes dues to the national, state and our Austin branch. Checks can be made out to AAUW or cash is also welcomed. This will cover dues until next spring of 2020. If you are choosing to not renew your membership, please email jennibraaten@hotmail.com to advise as such. Otherwise, you may be receiving reminder emails to pay your dues if not paid at the banquet.

Last August 2018,  AAUW hosted an ice cream social to encourage prospective members to join our Austin branch. As a result, we were able to enjoy six new members this past year within our branch. As membership chairs, we are hoping to do another membership drive event in August as a means to increase AAUW's membership. Please keep this in mind and consider reaching out to neighbors, friends or colleagues who may have values and interests which align well with the mission of AAUW. Stay tuned for more details to come on a prospective membership night.

Kerry Bartlett and Jenni Braaten

**Member Spotlight – Evelyn Guentzel**

“AAUW has been part of my consciousness since my senior year in college at St. Cloud State. At the time there was a corporate membership and a representative talked to the women about becoming members. After four years of teaching English and History I married and we moved to Rochester, Minnesota, where Dick taught History at John Marshall and I substitute taught and joined Rochester Branch of AAUW. After one year we moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, when Dick began to pursue a Ph.D. I returned to full time teaching at Lincoln High School. In 1967 Dick was offered a position at Austin Community College (now Riverland) and we have lived here ever since and raised two successful daughters. My teaching continued in Austin at the Junior High and Senior High Schools, and Ellis Middle School.

Shortly after arriving in Austin I joined AAUW and a leadership pattern beyond the classroom began. Early on I served on the Human Rights Commission and received my Key to the City. At the time I was briefly a member of the League of Women Voters. AAUW took more of my attention and one of my early roles was as the leader of a discussion group on the future of education in Austin. Our study groups drew in people from the community also. I served as President of Austin Branch at the time when the Equal Rights Amendment was a major topic of discussion and debate, and is still. While my leadership career began with the above activities education got me involved with the Southeastern Minnesota Reading  Group where I held several offices and then moved on to leadership for Minnesota Reading Association and later was an International Reading Association Regional Coordinator. During those years and for almost 20 years, along with Polly Jelinek and Ruth Robinson READING ON THE MALL was a well-received community event. Those were golden years for the promotion of reading and literacy.

In addition to these activities, I had the privilege of participation in several school committees, served as DFL Mower County Chair, sang in church choirs and Northwestern Singers, and eventually earned a degree to become a High School Principal. Leadership has been a journey that few would have predicted, but AAUW paves the way for a variety of opportunities to grow. These also include Great Decisions and Morning Book Group where members share enjoyable common interests. My role as Public Policy for Austin Branch has been a way to more deeply appreciate the roles that women can play in in leading and creating a more equal and just society.

Fifty years in AAUW have flown!”

**Small Groups**

**PM Book Group**

We will be meeting at the home of Kathy Kester on May 20th at 7 PM to discuss *Being Mortal* by Atul Gwanda. Please RSVP to Kathy at kkester2013@icloud.com. We will meet at 7 PM on June 17th to make book selections for the 2019-2020 program year.

**AM Book Group**

MORNING BOOK GROUP will meet at Perkins at 9:00 AM on May 16. Bonnie Ripple will lead the discussion of MR. CHURCHILL’S SECRETARY by Susan Ella McNeal.  ''Mr. Churchill's Secretary captures the drama of an era of unprecedented challenge—and the greatness that rose to meet it. London 1940, Winston Churchill has just been sworn in, war rages across the Channel, and the threat of a Blitz looms larger by the day. But none of this deters Maggie Hope."   Our June book is:  My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult   Janet Gilbertson will lead discussion on June 20. We meet at 9 AM at Perkins.

**First Friday**

First Friday lunch group will meet at 11:30 on Friday, May 3rd, at the Old Mill. Contact Dorothy Krob at [sdkrob@live.com](mailto:sdkrob@live.com), if you plan to attend.

**Travel Group**

The Travel Club will meet on May 8th at 1:00 P.M. at "Discover Austin."  This is located at 301-North Main Street (at the corner of Main Street and 2nd Ave. NW.)  Nancy Schnable, the Executive Director of "Discover Austin,” and a member of AAUW, will be sharing some interesting facts and information about Austin.  I hope you will join us and learn some new things about Austin.  Please email me if you plan to attend.  Thank you.

DedaRae Graber

**Great Decisions**

GREAT DECISIONS will meet at 1:00 P.M.  in Room C107 on May 20.  (The fourth Monday is Memorial Day.)  Topic 2 is “THE MIDDLE EAST: REGIONAL DISORDER. As the presidency of Donald J. Trump passes the halfway point, the Middle East remains a region in turmoil. The Trump administration has aligned itself with strongmen in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt, which along with Israel have a common goal of frustrating Iranian expansion. What will be the fallout from policy reversals such as withdrawing from the Iranian nuclear accord and moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem? Does the United States see a path forward in troubled states such as Syria, Yemen, Libya and Iraq? Is the United States headed toward war with Iran?

**PUBLIC POLICY**

Evelyn Guentzel

The merry month of May is coming. We mark the ending of another stimulating series of meetings and get togethers which bond us in common purpose as members of AAUW. Thanks to all of you who made this time successful.

Public Policy has been my interest for a long time because it sets the parameters for our efforts to advocate, educate and strive for equity in many areas of daily life. At this time of 2018 and 2019 we are seeing more discussion of violence against women and sexual harassment, of drawing attention to the intolerance and ignorance surrounding the LBGTQ community, of continued pressure for women’s right to choose, i.e. reproductive rights, of pay equity, of building more support for STEM, of lobbying for more economic equity and security, and encouraging women to actively engage with legislators to communicate the issues we value. This is a tall order, but as a community it is our policy to speak for women and girls. The “Two Minute Activist” is an easy way to express your concerns.

 AAUW has many learning tools at our disposal: how-to guides for advocacy; current status of equity issues; Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap; campus initiatives for building leadership skills, strengthening personal and professional skills; networking and learning from local leaders.  It goes without saying that AAUW is an amazing resource.

On another note, I draw your attention to the National Women’s History Museum (NWHM). May “evokes warmth and nurturing and marks annual celebrations for both mothers and nurses.” In that spirit NWHM has many resources and the unique impact women have had in these capacities. See the lesson plan on the history of nursing in the U.S. Happy Mothers’ Day and National Nurses Week from NWHM. It is a treasure trove of stories about women’s lives.

 Enjoy the summer!

**Mark Your Calendars:**

**AAUW Board Retreat – July 10, 4:30-6:30.**

**Fall House Tour to Be Held October 6, 2019!**

**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 April 9, 2019, at the west campus of Riverland Community College. Members of the board in attendance included Carolyn Bogott, Jennifer Lawhead, Jenni Braaten, Barb Hunter and Peggy Benzkofer.

Members need to pay to reserve space for the May dinner by April 9. A survey will be conducted at the dinner.

Discussion was held regarding the banquet and whether or not to pay for dinners for the Women’s History Month award winners who will be speaking. The decision was made to provide dinners for them.

The offices of secretary and treasurer will be up for election at the banquet. Catherine Haslag and Carolyn Bogott will be the nomination committee.

The date for the House Tour has been set for October 6. One house has been selected.

Catherine Haslag reported that the school district has changed the way the science fair is being held with fairs in each of the schools. For this reason it is very difficult to give an AAUW award.

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.

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AAUW Southern Highlights

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