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Branch President Message

Deborah Richie

A new year is underway – President Obama recently provided his State of the Union address, Illinois has a new Governor, and newly elected representatives begin their service in our local communities, in Springfield and in Washington.

AAUW continues to be actively engaged in advocacy work and I urge all members to continue with, even increase, their engagement. As noted on the website, AAUW defines their advocacy role as “members and all citizens concerned with equity being knowledgeable and aware of the current status of important issues.” (<http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/aauw-issues/>). Important issues addressed on the website include civil rights, education, economic security and Title IX. The list of topics under each of these issues is expansive, so take a look.

What can you do to become more knowledgeable and aware?

- Stay in touch through regular review of the AAUW website – for example, this piece is now posted - *Federal Legislative Priorities for Women and Families in the 114th Congress* – at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/priorities-for-women-in-114th-congress/>.
- Become a Two-Minute Activist and receive important messages about opportunities to get your voice heard on important issues - <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/>.
- Share your information with friends and family and encourage others who care about the issues important to AAUW to get involved, too – becoming an AAUW member, making a donation, sending a message to an elected official, volunteering at an event...



“Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has.” ~ Margaret Mead

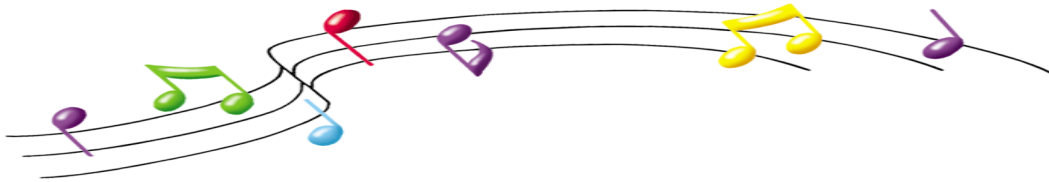


WINE, WOMEN AND SONG

Saturday, March 7, 3 to 5 pm

Milo's Restaurant, Urbana

Invitations will be sent soon. This event has a long tradition and is our major branch fundraiser for local scholarships and Legal Advocacy Fund. Please plan to attend and invite friends and family. Entertainment will be provided by the Champaign-Urbana Theatre Company.



BRANCH NEWS

In December, the branch board members met with Durl Kruse, a representative from the C-U Citizens for Peace & Justice (CUCPJ) to learn about the CUCPJ statement to halt police militarization in our community. CUCPJ had asked that our branch join other local organizations to support the statement. At the conclusion of the meeting with Mr. Kruse, the request and supporting information was sent to board members for their input. In addition, we were in communication with the Grassroots Advocacy Coordinator at AAUW. Based on the information we received from national, the Branch made the decision to not sign in support of the CUCPJ statement. We appreciated the opportunity to learn more about this important issue, as well as learning about the work of AAUW with local advocacy. In summary, we learned that AAUW uses the member-adopted Public Policy Program and policy resolutions as their guide to examine federal policies and programs prior to taking any position. Given that the CUCPJ statement referenced a specific federal program (1033), which AAUW had not yet examined, the Branch decided to not take a position at this time.

Important to note – our process of considering the request enabled us to engage with one another and with community members around important issues of safety and racial justice – activities encouraged by AAUW. Thank you to everyone for their careful consideration of this question.



C-U AAUW Scholarship Committee

Chair of the Committee, Laura Keller, met with the sub-committee to review the local scholarships and the recommendations will be considered at the January board meeting. Stay tuned for more news.

University of Illinois Partnership

Two board members, Deborah Richie and Brenda Wilson, met with Provost Adesida who is the designated representative for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The discussion focused on specific activities that might be undertaken to increase campus awareness of activities of AAUW Champaign-Urbana branch.



STATE AND NATIONAL NEWS

The State Convention - May 1-2, 2015, DoubleTree, Bloomington, IL. Several branch members will be volunteering – please attend to learn and share and represent our branch. The upcoming Link will include more details about the meeting.

The National Convention- June 18 – 21, 2015, San Diego. information at <http://convention.aauw.org/>

2015 AAUW Art Contest - Want to share your artwork with thousands of AAUW members and the head of the National Museum of Women in the Arts?

For centuries, women artists were unrecognized, discouraged, or even discredited and only 5 percent of the art currently displayed in U.S. museums is by women. AAUW is working with the one major museum in the world dedicated solely to women artists, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, to host an annual art contest to get women artists the equal attention they deserve.

The six winning entries will be featured in a collection of note cards mailed to AAUW members in the spring. And, for the third year in a row, one of the six winners will take home an [NMWA](#) Award of Distinction! For more info and to enter, go to <http://www.aauw.org/contests/>



BRANCH INTEREST GROUPS

Participation is welcome by members and non-members. Invite others to join us and introduce them to the variety of interests shared by the members of our branch.



ADELANTE BOOK DISCUSSION

Meets the fourth Tuesday at 2:30 PM at 104 E. Willard, Urbana. The books focus on a wide range of diversity issues. Contact: Phyllis Cline 344-4806, plcline@comcast.net.

Upcoming Selections:

January 27 - *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World* (2003) by Tracy Kidder.

Doctor, Harvard professor, renowned infectious-disease specialist, anthropologist, and recipient of a MacArthur “genius” grant, Farmer found his life’s calling: to diagnose and cure infectious diseases and bring the lifesaving tools of modern medicine to those who need them most. The story takes us from Harvard to Haiti, Peru, Cuba, and Russia as Farmer changes minds and practices through his dedication to the philosophy that “the only real nation is humanity”—a philosophy that is embodied in the public charity he founded, Partners in Health. Jim Yong Kim, current President of the World Bank, is also featured in the story for his early work with Partners in Health.

February 24 - *The Bill of the Century: The Epic Battle for the Civil Rights Act* by Clay Risen (2014) – or – *An Idea Whose Time Has Come: Two Presidents, Two Parties, and the Battle for the Civil Rights Act of 1964* by Todd S. Purdum (2014).

Passage of The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a broad, epic struggle, a tale of unceasing grassroots activism, ringing speeches, backroom deal-making, and finally, hand-to-hand legislative combat. The Kennedy brothers, Lyndon Johnson, Martin Luther King Jr., Hubert Humphrey and Everett Dirksen, plus many other legislators whose roles are less well known, are the featured players in these highly detailed reports of the process that vividly supports the adage that we don’t really want to know how either laws, or sausage, are made. Both books utilize the same historical resources so you can read either book to get the inside story.



March 24 - *The Girls of Atomic City: The Untold Story of the Women Who Helped Win World War II* by Denise Kiernan (2013).

At the height of World War II, the US government secretly created a city in Tennessee for enriching uranium to fuel the new atom bomb that was being assembled at Los Alamos, NM. Called Oak Ridge, the city housed more than 75,000 workers at its peak, many of them young women. Workers were told that their work would speed the end of the war, but were never told the true nature of their tasks until the war was officially over. Secrecy was strictly enforced and workers were not allowed to discuss their work or to even speculate about its purpose, either with fellow workers or outsiders. The author interviewed former Oak Ridge workers, now in their 80s and 90s, who described their lives and work during this historic time.



Drama Group meets at 3:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of February, March, April, May at The Windsor of Savoy, Contact: Phyllis Cline, 344-4806.



Drinks and Dialogue is a monthly discussion group (usually the 2nd Tuesday of each month) that meets 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Milo's in Urbana. Discussion focuses on a current event or topic specifically of relevance to women, usually with a recent article to start the discussion. Contact: Nancy Dietrich, 217-337-0334, nancydietrich01@gmail.com



GREAT DECISIONS C-U AAUW participates in the program sponsored by the Foreign Policy Association. Each year they issue a book and DVD about eight topics of international importance. Discussion participants read the chapter in the book, then gather to view the DVD and discuss the topic.

Great Decisions meetings are held on the third Wednesday, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Because the book is not available until January, we begin the new book's topics in February and finish that book the following January. The meeting place is the Activity Room at Windsor Court at The Windsor of Savoy. Branch member Doris Jones, a resident of Windsor Court, is the hostess..

The new books are available at \$20 per book. Contact Jenny Harvey at jennygharvey@yahoo.com, 217-344-5339 to request a book. For directions, contact Phyllis Cline plcline@comcast.net, 217-344-4806.

The 2015 topics and dates are:

Russia and the Near Abroad - February 18
Sectarianism in the Middle East - April 15
U.S. Policy Toward Africa - September 16
Human Trafficking - November 18

Privacy in the Digital Age - March 18
India Changes Course - May 20
Syria's Refugee Crisis - October 21
Brazil in Metamorphosis - January 20, 2016



Writers Group meets at Windsor Court, 401 Burwash, Savoy, at 1:30 PM on the third Friday. Members are encouraged to present their writings and resources for writers are offered. Contact person is Barb Scott, 352-7364.



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Please send news items,
comments or corrections to:

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