

# AAUW TIMES

Elgin Area Branch  
1920-2016



*Working for 96 years to promote equity for all women and girls,  
Life-long education and positive social change*

February 2017

American Association of University Women

Vol. 22, No. 5

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## General Meeting

**Wednesday, February 15 – 7 P.M.**  
**Larkin High School Black Box Theatre**



Please join us for a unique theatrical program created by Juniors and Seniors from Larkin High School's Visual and Performing Arts Academy. With *Femmeprov's* Gareth Mann Sitz as their facilitator, these talented teenagers will present an evening of original sketches, songs, monologues, and poems targeting issues from the AAUW website. Material will range from comic to poignant, as we see the world from their youthful perspective. Gareth is grateful for input from *Femmeprov* company members, social activist Ali Wegner, storyteller Marcia Gutierrez, and Drama Academy instructor Reddy Royse Andren. Our program committee hopes you will take this opportunity to invite prospective members, as this evening of theatre embodies AAUW's core values and should appeal to a diverse audience. After the 45 minute show, the cast will be available to answer questions from the audience.

The Black Box Theatre is at the far west end of Larkin High School near the auditorium. You should use the doors at that end to enter the building. Please plan to arrive early, as we would like to start the performance promptly at 7:00.

## Calendar

- Feb. 1 **Movie Discussion Group** 4:30 pm  
Colonial Café  
*Hidden Figures*
- Feb. 8 **Good Tastes** 5 pm  
Porter's Pub, 1250 Bowes Creek Blvd., Elgin  
847 214 5877
- Feb. 9 **Morning Book Group** 9:30 am  
Location: Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren  
*Miller's Valley*, Anna Quindlin
- Feb. 13 **Great Books** 7 pm  
Gail Borden Public Library  
*Persuasion*, Jane Austen
- Feb. 15 **Branch Meeting** 7 pm
- Feb. 16 **Women & Culture** 10:30 am  
Hostess: Sue Schulz
- Feb. 20 **Knitting/Crocheting Group** 1 - 3 pm  
Hostess: Patty Harkin
- Feb. 20 **Newsletter Deadline**
- Feb. 22 **Evening Book Group** 7 pm  
Gail Borden Public Library  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room  
*Epitaph*, Mary Doria Russell
- Feb. 27 **The Book Club** 7 pm  
Meeting place TBD  
*Till We Have Faces*, C. S. Lewis
- Feb. 28 **Reel Women for Real Women** 6 pm  
Gail Borden Public Library  
*Queen of Katwe*

## Non-Branch Events

- Feb. 14 **The Long Red Line** - ECC – 10-11:30 am  
March 18 **Women’s History Month Brunch** (See below)  
April 8 **Fellowships Brunch at Lambs Farm**  
May 5-6 **AAUW State Convention** - Champaign  
May 11 **YWCA Leadership Luncheon**  
June 14-17 **AAUW National Convention**

## Co-Presidents’ Message

From Muriel Fenzel

As I write this, we stand at the threshold of the Presidential Inauguration. We are all experiencing various levels of apprehension, uncertainty and foreboding. I would like to quote parts of an article written by Amy Becker, AAUW National Political Manager:

“..... AAUW intends to approach our work with the new administration and Congress with our mission in mind. After this hyper partisan election year, AAUW’s nonpartisan leadership and research-based advocacy is needed more than ever.”

Ms. Becker quotes Lisa Maatz, AAUW Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy: “AAUW will find common ground with the new administration and the new Congress on issues that are important to women and working families. Women want progress on issues that affect them, and AAUW intends to be a fair critic and a valued ally. We will not hesitate to speak truth to power.....AAUW believes democracy demands work every day of the year, and hyper partisan rhetoric only damages the chances for reasonable consensus. Women voters are watching. We’ve laid out our priorities, and we will hold each and every candidate accountable.”

AAUW held a Post Election Conference Call on Positions and Issues after the election. This was a call put out to all members of all stripes, united by Women’s Issues. I would like to list a summary of the Issues addressed. As members of AAUW, we all value women’s issues. Our branch has been, and is, an active participant in pressing forward on these issues. My thanks to Sue Schultz for this summary:

### AAUW POST ELECTION CONFERENCE CALL POSITIONS & ISSUES

- ACA (Affordable Care Act)
- Reproductive Rights
- Title 9 (discrimination in education and civil rights)
- Perkins Act (Workplace discrimination – women in non-traditional fields)
- Reject & Prevent:
  1. Hate crimes
  2. Campus sexual assault
  3. Bigotry and bias against any peoples
- Grassroots Issues:
  1. Raise minimum wage
  2. Paid sick leave
  3. Voter registration reform

4. Funding for K-12 education
5. Equal pay bills

## Membership Matters

### Befrienders: Becoming a Friend to New

From Rosemary Dyson

Our Elgin Area Branch AAUW continues to look at ways that we can attract and retain new members. One of the most awkward parts of joining a new group is not knowing anyone. Assigning each new person a mentor or buddy gives her a connection — someone she’ll know in the group. These mentors or buddies should be responsible for talking to new members, introducing them to other members, bringing them to branch meetings and interest group events, and making them feel welcome and part of the branch.

The Elgin Area Branch wants to make sure that all new and recently joined members have the best possible experience in our local AAUW and beyond. In the last year our branch board members have taken on the challenge of being *Befrienders*. A Befriender is an existing board member who agrees to take a new and recently joined member under her wing, to welcome her and help her feel connected to our branch. The Befriender also helps guide new members into areas that best suit their strengths and talents and encourage them to become active members in the branch.

**So far, this mentoring program has been confined to branch board members. We are now asking branch members to become Befrienders. Following are things you can do as a Befriender:**

- Contact your person and invite her to our branch meetings and activities.
- Check to see if she is receiving newsletters, emails, etc.
- Guide her into areas that best suit her strengths and talents.
- Build a relationship with her, be a friend, invite her to a meal or a drink or just socialize.

Becoming a Befriender is easy, just contact one of the membership vice presidents, Rosemary Dyson, [rosemarydyson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rosemarydyson@sbcglobal.net) or Sue Schulz, [sue.schulz@att.net](mailto:sue.schulz@att.net). We have new members who would love to have a current member who will show them the ropes.

### MLK Weekend Celebration 2017

Our members are an integral part of Elgin’s diverse community. We work diligently as volunteers at Gail Borden Public Library, the Elgin YWCA and the Elgin Symphony just to name a few. Our members also joined the Elgin community in volunteering and celebrating diversity at Elgin’s 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, held January 14-16. Several members of the community have commented on our branch’s dedication to Elgin. Sue Schulz coordinated volunteers for the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Leadership Conference. I

served on the City of Elgin Martin Luther King Scholarship Committee. This additional visibility has translated into requests for membership in Elgin Area Branch AAUW. As we continue to be good neighbors, we also strengthen our branch.

### **From Becky Olson Adelante! Book of the Month Club**

Are you a participant in the AAUW Adelante Book group? Are you aware of the literary gender gap? Female authors have fewer reviews in newspapers and magazines than their male counterparts. The percentages have been so low that AAUW created the Adelante! Book of the Month Club. Members are connected to web author discussions of stories and writings of women with varying backgrounds. Would you like to start an Adelante Monthly Book Club, or do we have enough book groups? Your opinion is important in planning a future book group venture. Please share your views with me at [rso\\_8mpp@yahoo.com](mailto:rso_8mpp@yahoo.com), 847.697.5683.

For more information:

[aauw.org/resource/adelante-program-in-a-box/](http://aauw.org/resource/adelante-program-in-a-box/)  
[aauw.org/resource/adelante-book-of-the-month-club/#events](http://aauw.org/resource/adelante-book-of-the-month-club/#events)

Upcoming Events on second Website –

**February 9** – 6:30 pm

*Florynce “Flo” Kennedy: The Life of a Black Feminist Radical*, Sherie M. Rudolph

**March 28** – 7 pm

*Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World*, Linda Hirshman.

## **Reel Women for Real Women**

**From Barbara Evans**



**Tues., February 28:** *Queen of Katwe* (2016) PG

Starring newcomer Madina Nalwanga, Lupita Nyong’o of *12 Years a Slave* & David Oyelowo of *Selma*

Based on the book by Tim Crothers, *Queen of Katwe* is the true story of Phiona Mutesi, a young girl from the impoverished Ugandan slum of Katwe who spends her days not in school but fetching water for her family and selling corn on the streets. Quite by accident she meets Robert, a soccer-player-turned-missionary who is teaching some children to play chess. Invited to join the group, Phiona proves to be a natural, so talented, in fact, that Robert begins entering her in tournaments.

That the film has received rave reviews from critics is not surprising, for as critic Sandy Cohen wrote, "*Queen of Katwe* is as much a portrait of marginalized life in Uganda as it is of an unlikely champion. In telling Phiona's story, director Mira

Nair captures the vibrancy of a small village, the toughened dignity of its people and a state of poverty so oppressive you can feel the desperation in the dusty air."

*Open to the public, Reel Women meets at Gail Borden Library at 6 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of every month except December. You are welcome to bring food and drink into the movie. Discussion follows the show.*

**Tues., March 28:** *Loving* (2016), the film about the interracial couple whose right to live together was affirmed by the Supreme Court in 1967. Though we'd hoped to show this film for Black History Month, its release date required us to schedule it for March instead.

## **Diversity Committee**

**From Sue Schulz**

"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action." Martin Luther King Jr.

January is usually a very quiet month, but not this year. In fact, life has been very busy for many of us since November. For some, it has been overwhelming, paralyzing and yet urgently calling for actions that will protect people and issues that are being threatened. People everywhere, including many who have never gotten politically involved, are now rising up. **This is our time** to become **vigorous and take positive actions** representing women's issues (human issues) through the mission of AAUW. It has been very encouraging to see many of our branch members involved and representing AAUW in the many community activities that have recently occurred. **This is our time** to become more **visible as an organization** and draw in new members who are concerned about the issues we represent. People are looking to find others who are like-minded. **This is our time** to become the **community leader for women's rights** (human rights).

But we do have to be realistic and recognize and understand, some of the challenges we have in our specific branch in order to make the most of this very crucial time....

- We are an aging population; many are not able to participate because of health.
- Those who are active are also very active in a number of organizations.
- Most of our members are members for the social engagement and intellectual stimulation our branch's interest groups provide.
- Many are concerned that facing the issues before us will divide us.

So here are some positive actions we can take to become more productive and engaged in the activities of our branch...

- Stay informed and educated. You can always contribute your knowledge and voice.

- **We cannot do it all.** Become more focused on an issue that you think you can contribute the most to. My hope is that those involved with many organizations will chose to wear the hat of AAUW and be its representative when it is a women’s rights issue.
- Our organization is a non-partisan, political group whose mission is based on the issues that face women. At this point in time, this is what will draw a diverse group of women who are younger and will be women of color. The issues before us will greatly affect these groups, and we are challenged by National to address them.
- Our point of unity is to focus on the issues before us and not the parties that contribute them. Blame does not solve the problem. It is important to understand and examine the problem, address the problem and then determine what we can do.

**Let’s not be too late!** Keep watch for notices that will come by email informing you of opportunities in the community and the branch. Save the date for, **Issues and Actions – Salon March 25<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00**, and join us for the very important conversation that will guide branch activities. Be visible, as AAUW members, talking about the issues concerning AAUW within your interest group activities, as well as with those we meet on the street.

Our diversity mission challenges us to not only *value* it but to *seek* it out. We can’t continue to expect others to come to us through our programs and activities. *This is our time to seek*, to reach out, to go to others. Our members, who have participated in community events and have represented AAUW, have made our branch more visible and viable. *This is no time* for apathy or complacency. Join us during this fierce urgency of now. *This is our time to build our future and branch legacy.*

**Public Policy**  
**Women and the Draft**  
**From Emily Navin**

The question has arisen about AAUW’s policy in regard to ‘Women and the Draft’ for nation’s wars. With looking into this subject, it was confirmed that AAUW has a long history of supporting the inclusion of women in the Selective Service. In 1947, AAUW went on record in favor of drafting women, noting that the principle of equality for women meant equality of responsibility, as well as equality of rights. In 1980, we reaffirmed our support for including women in any proposal for military registration. And, in 1981, AAUW joined a brief in the Supreme Court case *Rostker v. Goldberg*, where we, along with coalition partners, argued that “Equal rights for men and women mandate an end to an all-male draft registration. The exclusion of women from registration is based solely on archaic notions of women’s role in society.”

The [Selective Service System](#) and the registration requirement is a structure and a system of guidelines that would lead to a prompt, efficient, and equitable draft, if the country should

need it. There are also some [benefits linked to registration](#). Currently, someone who fails to register with Selective Service may be ineligible for federal student financial aid, state-funded student financial aid in many states, most federal employment, some state employment, security clearance for contractors, job training under the Workforce Investment Act, and U.S. citizenship for immigrant men.

In 1944, AAUW member Judge Sarah T. Hughes, who was a part of the AAUW National Committee on Economic and Legal Status of Women, said, “The benefits of victory in this war will be the same for men and women. The obligations to their country should be the same.” Hughes went on to say that “every individual should be willing and be required to render service according to his or her abilities.”

As of January 2016, women are not required to be registered, since Congress would have to amend the law. If interested in learning more about AAUW’s position and the current laws, please check out the following websites:

[sss.gov/](http://sss.gov/)  
[sss.gov/Registration/Women-And-Draft](http://sss.gov/Registration/Women-And-Draft)  
[sss.gov/Registration/Why-Register/Benefits-and-Penalties#\\_blank](http://sss.gov/Registration/Why-Register/Benefits-and-Penalties#_blank)

**Education Opportunities**  
**Mah Jongg Lessons**  
**From Jan Jones**

We would like to offer six Mah Jongg lessons to our membership and our friends. Lessons are scheduled to begin on Thursday, April 20 and continue April 27<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

We will meet from 1-4 pm at the Izaak Walton Center and Reserve, 899 Jay Street. The donation of \$60 will be collected at the first class and will include the 2017 National Mah Jongg League card.



**The Long Red Line**  
**From Judy Fishburn**

February 14, 10–11:30 am  
 Elgin Community College  
 Jobe Student Lounge

Free Refreshments  
 Free Parking

Join AAUW to support the global movement – One Billion Rising – to stop rape and violence against women. We rise to show we are determined to create a new kind of

consciousness, one where violence will be resisted – until it is unthinkable.

Bring a red cloth, any length or material, any shade of red. The AAUW Knitting Group has been knitting a long red scarf – a scarf of different stitches – different shades of red - pieced together to show **SOLIDARITY AGAINST EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN**.



Becky Olson Bonnie Hill Muriel Fenzel Judy Fishburn Ali Wegner  
Standing - Elgin Knit Works Owner Betsy Kuhn

Please join us to learn – to participate – and to support this cause.

Please RSVP to Judy Fishburn if attending [Judyf@travelexinternational.com](mailto:Judyf@travelexinternational.com). Although you do not have to RSVP to attend, we would like to know ahead of time if you will be coming. We will have our Name Tags available so you can put them on when you arrive at Jobe Lounge.

## Elgin Area Women's History Month Brunch

**Leadership Lessons From A Military Trailblazer**  
March 18, 10-12:30 pm  
Elgin Community College's Business Center  
**From Barbara Evans**

The guest speaker at the 2017 Women's History Month Brunch will be U.S. Army Colonel Jill Morgenthau (ret.), who was the first female to command a battalion and brigade in the Demilitarized Zone along North Korea. Subsequently in the Army Reserves for 25 years, she conducted military intelligence, psychological and humanitarian operations as well as served in combat zones in Bosnia and Iraq. Upon her retirement, the Army awarded her the Legion of Merit for her lifelong leadership.



As Morgenthau has explained, her experiences in the military taught her that "successful leadership requires a fine balance of reason and emotion, distance and familiarity as well as hard

and soft power." That she has received many accolades for her motivational speeches on leadership is not surprising, for as Women's History Month Chairperson Julia McClendon explained, "She translates her unique experiences—ranging from a showdown with Saddam Hussein to saving an American engineer from a Soviet kidnapping—into universal lessons."

The cost is \$15/person. Reservations can be made online at [ywcaelgin.org/whb17](http://ywcaelgin.org/whb17), or by check payable to YWCA Elgin, 220 E. Chicago St., Elgin IL 60120. The reservation deadline is March 10. (See attached flier).

This event is sponsored by Altrusa International of Elgin, Elgin Area AAUW, Elgin Community College, League of Women Voters of the Elgin Area and YWCA Elgin.

## Knitting/Crocheting Group From Becky Olson

The newly formed Knitting/Crocheting Group decided to make their first year a productive one by knitting hats for a local non-profit organization. Boasting a variety of colors and designs the hats included berets, ski caps, beanies, both for males and females, for the wide range of clients at the Elgin location of the Association for Individual Development (A.I.D.).



Kathleen Turnquist Wendy Bialek Juanita Brook

"Our clients will benefit greatly from this donation since many have limited family members and in some cases none at all," said Wendy Bialek, A.I.D. Business Services Specialist. "For over 55 years, A.I.D. has empowered people with physical, developmental, intellectual and mental health challenges, to enjoy lives of dignity and purpose," she added.

## Weekend Women's Marches From Jeanne Hebeisen

On Saturday, tons of people across the world (mostly women - total numbers vary), led by hundreds of thousands who

overwhelmed the nation's capital, protested on the first full day of President Trump's tenure.

In the organizers' words: "The Women's March on Washington is a women-led movement bringing together people of all genders, ages, races, cultures, political affiliations and backgrounds in our nation's capital ... to affirm our shared humanity and pronounce our bold message of resistance and self-determination."

It started with people responding to a Facebook event page created by retired Hawaii attorney Teresa Shook on election night. Initially criticized for failing to include any women of color as organizers, the team was then diversified to include Tamika Mallory, an African-American civil rights activist and former executive director of the National Action Network; Linda Sarsour, a Muslim who heads the Arab American Association of New York; and Carmen Perez, a Latina activist who is executive director of Harry Belafonte's Gathering for Justice.

Our local event was not merely a Women's March but an inclusive "Elgin Standing Alone." It was co-sponsored by the YWCA Elgin Advocacy Committee and the Elgin Human Relations Commission.



Portion of the walkers

Our "walk" took us around the Hemmens. Before and after it were speeches by Rabbi Margaret Frisch Klein of the Congregation Kneseth Israel, Mayor David Kaptain, Circuit Judge John Dalton, School District U-46 board member Traci O'Neal Ellis (who presented one of our branch programs last year) and State Senator Cristina Castro. It ended with all singing John Lennon's "Imagine." As one of its participants, I can say I am still living in the "high" of it all.

**Following are the remarks of 2 of our branch's members who were in Washington on Saturday. The article of the third one there, Anna Moeller, will be in the March newsletter.**

#### **From Linda Youngren**

On Friday, January 20, at 10 pm, with signs and pink knit pussy hats, we boarded a bus at Hilton Head High School headed for Washington. We soon learned we were part of a South Carolina caravan, rolling through the dark foggy night carrying six busloads of women to march in Washington. At 8 am Saturday, the buses dropped us at a suburban Metro station, 7 stops from the D.C. rally site. It was immediately apparent that the march would be massive, as the lines to enter the station stretched across the street. It took one hour to get through the station, buy a ticket and board a train. The usual 22 minute ride took another hour, stopping at platforms full of hundreds of people trying to get on the train. We were so squished together that I found myself wearing the dog hairs from the coat of the man next to me. When we arrived at the rally, the enormous number of people, estimated at 500,000, was incredible and thrilling. Once we found a spot near a Jumbotron, we literally could not move for the four hours of speeches due to the density of the crowd. We developed camaraderie with those around us, cheering the speakers, who represented great diversity and many causes. The signs were amazing, cleverly covering every conceivable issue. And the huge number of young people was encouraging. We were inspired by the breadth of the solidarity, depth of commitment to equality and inclusion, and desire to protect the dignity of every human being. What comes next? It is up to us.

#### **From Sue Schulz**

It was truly an inspiring, motivating and impactful event. I drove with a friend to the march, and even before getting there we met so many on the road. Somehow, we could identify who we were, even without wearing our pussy hats, by honking and waving to each other as we passed each other on the highway. Bathroom breaks became rallying points as we waited in line.

This was my first time in DC I've never before been in such a large crowd of people. The positive, nurturing, powerful energy of all these women (and men) was quite empowering. It was even more enlightening to see how many more marches there were across our nation and across all the continents. I don't know if they will have any impact in the fight against the myriad of issues that are facing us, but I do know that they are important to sustain those of us who will take up these battles. It is important for us to stay connected and united, and it is important for others to see how many of us feel that issues like healthcare, protection of vulnerable people, discrimination and assault against women, equal access to education and employment are worth fighting for.

We have put a marker in history, and it has been led by women. The big message was get organized and get active: there is a lot that is at risk. Much has already been fought for

and won, but the struggle is to keep it. AAUW is one of many wonderful organizations that will take up these struggles. I hope that members of our branch get inspired by what happened this past weekend and get involved with what we can do locally and nationally. We are AAUW representatives standing for women's rights. Many are looking to join groups that will take up these struggles. This is our opportunity to build our branch and build our legacy.