



Huntsville Branch Newsletter

December 2013

Volume 4, Number 5

President's Letter: December 2013

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year



It is hard to believe that we are already to the end of 2013 and the holiday season is upon us! For many of us, this is indeed the Most Wonderful Time of the Year because we are

able to enjoy the festivities of the season through the food, music, and time with family and friends. For others of us, this time of year can be stressful as we try to manage the expectations of our family and friends; juggling gift buying and tight budgets; cooking, decorating, and cleaning for the holiday party; or perhaps feeling lonely without having loved ones nearby.

AAUW's Mission

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Whatever your feelings are about this time of the year, I hope you'll take a few moments to reflect on the successes of 2013 and start making plans for what you hope to accomplish in 2014! Our branch has certainly had some successes this past year! Here are just a few...

- Increased membership including several new student members in the branch
- Participation in great community events like the Alabama Science Fair, Tinsel Trail, Kite Festival, Galaxy of Lights, Walk for Midwives, and Concerts in the Park
- Receiving the Tech Trek grant to host a camp here in Huntsville for girls going into 8th grade
- Hosting great events and speakers like Dr. Esther Ngumbi and Lisa Maatz and the Breaking Through Barriers Luncheon with Dr. Debra Barnhardt (just to name a few)
- Reaching the endowment goal for Ellie Lienau's fund
- Attendance by many of our branch officers and members at the AAUW National convention

And we have so much to look forward to in 2014 including actually hosting our Tech Trek camp and also serving as host to the AAUW State Convention here in April. These are just a couple of the big activities that we will take on in 2014 in addition to our regular schedule of things like the Breaking Through Barriers luncheon which is so important to our fundraising efforts to send college women to NCCWSL.

I also hope you'll take some time to think about ways you might contribute to AAUW and our branch in the coming year. So many of you do so much already. We are still in need of more volunteers to take on the important tasks of the branch (see Marilyn's volunteer list below) and we are always in need of more resources to do the important work related to our mission of improving the lives of women and girls. Please consider a donation to the "Phantom Tea" as you finalize your end of year giving plans. These gifts will go directly to support our Tech Trek camp here in Huntsville and to send more college women to attend NCCWSL.

I wish each of you a very happy holiday season filled with all of the people and things you love and best wishes for a very Happy New Year!

**Dr. Regina Hyatt, Co-President
AAUW Huntsville Branch**

Also, please see the link below for the story that was published on al.com about Dr. Esther Ngumbi, her work and her visit to our AAUW branch:

http://www.al.com/living/index.ssf/2013/11/auburn_research_fellow_from_ke.html#incart_river_default

January Program – Women Entrepreneurs

Joy Agee, Program Co-Vice President

Please join us on **Saturday, January 11, 2013, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**, at **[Covenant Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 301 Drake Ave. SE, Huntsville, AL.](#)** **Ali Propst, Regional Manager for PNC Bank**, will share some fascinating data about the growth and impact of women owned businesses in our local economy. She will moderate a panel of local women who have started and run businesses. Whether we are looking at retailers, professionals, artists, service businesses, or defense contractors, we have lots of talent in our area. Join us for inspiring stories and useful tips. Invite your entrepreneurial friends.



Reservations are required by Thursday, January 9. Cost of the meal is **\$16**. The **menu for our January meeting** will be detailed in the Evite later this month – watch for it!

AAUW members are happy to pick up the cost of meals for students. Respond to the meeting Evite, contact **Lois Guendel** at lois.guendel@knology.net, or phone **(256) 880-8643**. This is AAUW's monthly program.

NOTE: We ask our members to remember that when you make a dinner reservation, you are reserving a meal. If you do NOT attend the meeting, and have not canceled your reservation prior to the day of the meeting, you have still reserved a meal, and so need to pay the Branch for that meal.

Membership

Sherry Anderson and Kenya Wallace, Membership Co-Vice Presidents

New Members

We welcome two new members who joined the Branch at the December meeting.



Patricia Johnson, a former member and past President of our Branch, holds a BS degree in Business Management from Alabama A&M University.



Christie Parker holds a BA in Broadcast News from the University of South Alabama, a Graduate Certificate in Technical Writing/Public Affairs from the University of Alabama in Huntsville, and an MBA from Florida Institute of Technology.

Welcome back and welcome aboard to **Patricia** and **Christie**! We were delighted to see you at the meeting, and we look forward to a productive, rewarding association with both of you.

Half-Price Membership Coming in January

The annual half-price membership campaign begins on January 1st and continues through March 15th. Anyone who has never been a member previously (or has not been a member for at least 2 years) and holds an associate degree or higher can join the national and state organizations and the local branch for just \$37. Undergraduate students who opt for an E-affiliate membership at the national level through their eligible college or university can join the state and local branch for just \$12.50. This is a great opportunity to become a member at a reduced rate and to enjoy the benefits of membership through June 30th. For more information, contact **Sherry Anderson** or **Kenya Wallace, Membership VPs**, at aaumember@gmail.com or 256-895-8530.

Give a Grad a Gift



AAUW members can give recent college graduates a free, one-year AAUW national membership within two years of graduation, at no cost to you or them.

- Expose the grad to the power that comes from belonging to a national women-led organization of more than 170,000 members and supporters who believe in and advance equity and education for women and girls.
- Expand their networking opportunities through career development opportunities and community action projects.
- Keep them current on the events and people that affect their lives as they receive *Mission & Action*, *AAUW Outlook*, Action Network alerts, and more.
- Increase their buying power with access to member only discounts.

For details, see the AAUW national website at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/give-a-grad-a-gift/>, or contact **Sherry Anderson** or **Kenya Wallace, Membership VPs**, at aaumember@gmail.com or 256-895-8530.

New Member Orientation Coming This Spring

The semi-annual New Member Orientation will be conducted in the spring. It is free of charge and open to all members—those who are new and those who would like to get acquainted with them. Watch for upcoming announcements.

Funds

Amanda Jarrett and Sarah Ragan, AAUW Funds Co-Vice Presidents

Fall Fund Raisers

We have successfully completed the Belk fundraiser and we are in the middle of the Holiday Phantom Tea. Thanks again to all who purchased Belk tickets and to **Marilyn Robertson** and **Lajoy Johns** who worked during the event. We raised over \$250 in ticket sales, and are waiting to hear from Belk what our volunteers earned for their time. We will report on funds raised for the Holiday Phantom Tea in the January newsletter. Those who donated to the tea fundraiser will be receiving a receipt from AAUW National for tax purposes if their donation was at least \$25. Funds raised will be sent to AAUW to give additional funds to the Huntsville Tech Trek. We are so grateful for all of your donations and generosity. If anyone would still like to contribute to this fundraiser and your donation is received after the deadline (December 15), your donation would count for next year. We look forward to another successful Belk

sale in the spring and our annual Breaking Through Barriers Luncheon, which will be held March 7 at Valley Hills Country Club. More details to follow!

Recycling Project

It's time again to gather up old cell phones, ink cartridges, and any other electronic item or old jewelry. Remember, these items do not have to be in working condition! **A recycling bin will be available at the January meeting** to collect your items. We will be sending the items to be recycled, and we will actually earn money for them! There is **no cost to you or to the branch** for these efforts. We will use the money to help send our local college women to the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders! Thank you in advance for your contributions!

Collections so far this fall have totaled \$26.30. May not sound like much, but every little bit helps!



Recycling Fundraiser

SUPPORT OUR ORGANIZATION BY RECYCLING YOUR USED ELECTRONICS.

- Cell Phones & Smart Phones
- Inkjet Cartridges
- Laptop Computers
- Netbook Computers
- iPads
- iPods
- Digital Cameras
- Gold, Silver & Platinum Jewelry

Quick facts

- All items will be data cleared.
- Items will be recycled properly – no landfills, incinerators or exports of e-waste.
- All items will be recycled by an R2, ISO 14001 & OHSAS 18001 Certified Facility

Proceeds will help us send local college women to the **National Conference for College Women Student Leaders!**

Contact Amanda Jarrett
apjarrett@gmail.com
919.610.6581

AAUW Huntsville Branch

Volunteer Opportunities

Marilyn Robertson, Volunteer Coordinator

Our needs are as follows:

- Galaxy of Lights: Marilyn Robertson** is the day captain and **Lorraine Mullin** co-captain for AAUW's night at [Galaxy of Lights on Saturday, December 28](#), and they need 20 volunteers! Working at Galaxy for drive-through nights is a wonderful experience. We all bring food to share (snacks, brownies, soup, chips & dip); we work in teams and shifts, taking care that our times outside are alternated with warm-up time inside; the people driving through appreciate our effort; and the fellowship with other workers is great. As for jobs: you could be counting receipts inside, collecting money and tickets at the booths outside (and by the way, the booths have heaters), directing traffic, counting cars, or acting as a courier. It is all fun. You can volunteer husbands, and children 16 and older. We gather **not later than 4:45 p.m.** in the Education Classroom of the Visitors Center at which time we receive instructions, work assignments, and shifts. The last car in line at 9 p.m. is admitted. How about making this AAUW opportunity a part of your family holiday tradition? Volunteers get to drive through Galaxy at no charge after their shift!



Call or email **Marilyn Robertson** (marilyn.robertson@knology.net, **256-536-2701**).

- Newsletter Assistant Editor:** We need someone to take over the newsletter. Although Karen intends to continue through May, she will be going to Boston in early February to help her daughter's family welcome a third child, so we'll need someone to publish our February and March newsletters.

That leaves only the January newsletter as an opportunity to work with Karen before she leaves. Contact **Karen** (256-864-3102 or rkrudiger@att.net) or **Patricia Smith** (smithpatricia73@yahoo.com).

3. **Chairs/Co-Chairs:** We are still in need of some chairs and co-chairs for various positions, including **Awards** (chair), **Public Policy** (co-chair), **Public Relations** (co-chair and/or committee members).
4. If you have not yet done so, please **complete our Time & Talents Inventory** at <http://tinyurl.com/timetalentaaaw>.

To volunteer or get more information, contact Marilyn Robertson at 256-536-2701 or Marilyn.robertson@knology.net.

Volunteers Needed for State Convention – April 4-6, 2014, Huntsville Marriott

The Branch Local Arrangements committee has begun working on plans for the AAUW state convention to be held in Huntsville April 4-6, 2014, at the Huntsville Marriott near Space & Rocket Center. We are particularly looking for volunteers to take on the following tasks

- Photography at the convention (Karen Rudiger cannot be there)
- Program design and layout (receive content by March 4, get ready for printing by March 28)
- Solicit door prizes (about 20 prizes by April 1)
- Collect and prepare goodie bags for participants (by April 1)
- Solicit sponsorships (underwrite breakfast, breaks, etc.)
- Invite women exhibitors/vendors (exhibitor sign-up by 3/21; we will charge an exhibitor fee of about \$75)

We will be seeking volunteers for many other tasks, so if there is something you've done for the state convention before and would like to do again, step right up!

Contact: **Rose Norman**, [256-539-0723](tel:256-539-0723), rose.norman@gmail.com or Dana Gideon, 256-604-8414, gideondana@yahoo.com.

Public Policy

Anna Blair, Public Policy Chair

Wanna Be a Rock Star?

Well, for starters, here's how you can be a real AAUW rocker – become a truly effective advocate.

See these how-tos of advocacy – one of our chief reasons for being members of AAUW. To be a more powerful advocate of issues you support, please go to www.aauw.org/article/how-to-be-an-aauw-advocacy-rock-star/ and learn how to:

- Build a phone tree
- Hold a meeting with your elected officials
- Work with the media

- Write a letter to the editor
- Write an op-ed
- Use social media for advocacy

Please read and heed. Select at least one activity to pursue on your own. Better still, please contact me if you want to lead or at least be part of a team to pursue these efforts.

With so many serious life-affecting issues being decided for us, we cannot do less than move and shake and rock our world to change it for the better for us all.

Read more at www.arisecitizens.org and www.cbpp.org

Take Action

To take action, go to: <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/>.

Even better, **volunteer** to work with Blair, who really needs some assistance with this position. Contact Blair at 256-520-0700 or annablairlaw@yahoo.com.

December Meeting Summary

Carolyn Lord and Joy Agee, Program Co-Vice Presidents

Our branch was fortunate to have a two-day visit with **Lisa Maatz** this month thanks to Devon Reynolds. Lisa met with state leaders, had tours of **Hudson Alpha** and the **Space and Rocket Center**, lunch at UAH, dinner at Commerce Kitchen, and lots of small meetings with various members. I know that there are several exciting plans in the works for next year as well as the State Convention in Huntsville next April.

Her program for us was very informational. She explained the differences between Senate and House cultures and operations. She talked about how important it was to work on the executive branch for implementation of laws. That is the main battlefield today, because there is organized strategy to obstruct implementation of passed legislation that the minority group doesn't like. She explained the "nuclear option" and what it may mean for the future.



Dinner at Commerce Kitchen with **Carol Joyce, Cindi Branham, Lisa Maatz, Anna Blair, Rose Norman, Mary Witherspoon, Ellie Lienau, Devon Reynolds, Beverly Watson, Dana Gideon, and Wanda Foster.**



Wanda Foster, State President; **Devon Reynolds**; Co-Branch Presidents **Regina Hyatt** and **Cindi Branham**; **Lisa Maatz**, AAUW Vice President for Government Relations; and **Joy Agee** and **Carolyn Lord**, Program Co-Vice Presidents.

One of the questions Lisa was asked was, "How did you get started?" She told of being an 8 year old in a crumbling school in Ohio where there were no privacy doors in the girls' restroom. She talked to the principal, got nowhere, and then decided to start a petition. She was successful – not just because of her petition (complete with hearts and Hello Kitty stickers) – but because when the principal talked to his secretary and her mother, they both told him he better get those doors. She learned the power of having a group behind you and persevering to get action.

One of the big takeaways was learning that AAUW members in DC, Virginia, and Maryland lobby on our behalf every Thursday. Lisa said that NO other organization has this kind of presence. This group can visit 70-80 congressional offices each week. They visit both parties and are welcomed in most offices. After hearing Lisa speak, the whole room signed up for [AAUW Action Alert/Two Minute Activist](#). We were encouraged to involve prospective members and friends in this also by forwarding these emails.



Lisa gave us her time when she planned to take a day off for her December 2 birthday. We signed a card for her and enjoyed a wonderful chocolate birthday cake provided by "What's for Dinner." Rose Norman led us in singing Happy Birthday. We also enjoyed two holiday carols sung acapella by **Kenisha Hill-Phillips**. **Dana Gideon** did another lovely job of providing table decorations. In addition, **Mary Witherspoon and husband Newell** brought and displayed items from the **Pal CraftAid Inc**. Sales of these handcrafted items support Palestinians whose lives are severely impacted by the occupation, such as the YWCAs of Palestine, Rawdat El Zuhur School in East Jerusalem, ATTA (Aid to the Aged), and Atfaluna School for the Deaf in Gaza.

News to Note

Congratulations

Amanda Jarrett, Funds Co-Vice President, and husband Phil are the proud parents of their first child. **Atticus Jackson Jarrett** was born November 17 at 6 lbs. 2oz., and 19.5".

Joy Agee has passed her doctoral qualifying exams. Way to go, Joy! We never doubted that you would.

Dana Windgate Gideon married **Spencer Minor** on November 12, 2013. Best Wishes, Dana!

Breaking Through Barriers – Diversity

Nothing that I can do will change the structure of the universe. But maybe, by raising my voice I can help the greatest of all causes - goodwill among men and peace on earth.

Albert Einstein (1879 -1955) was a German-born theoretical physicist who developed the general theory of relativity.

Tinsel Trail

Dr. Regina Hyatt, Co-President



Thanks to **Dana Gideon, Lajoy Johns** and **Dr. Regina Hyatt** for braving the cold to decorate our AAUW tree sponsored by **Representative Mike Ball** for the Tinsel Trail. And thanks for bringing great people with you to help as well!



Why Tech Trek is Important

Dr. Rhonda Gaede, Camp Director



Tech Trek is a science and math camp for girls

Girls and women are underrepresented in STEM fields and this camp gives girls a chance to begin a successful path toward college and entering the STEM workforce.

Tech Trek has a successful track record

Girls who attend Tech Trek are more likely to enroll in science and math courses in high school – and they credit Tech Trek for sparking their interest.

Tech Trek fulfills AAUW's mission and reflects the results of our research

In a 2010 AAUW research report, "Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math," AAUW presented the most compelling and well-researched information available on women and girls in STEM fields.

Tech Trek is our way of "putting our money where our mouth is."

Widening the STEM pipeline benefits women, STEM industries, and the American economy.

The science and technology workforce in this country is aging, while the demand for talent keeps increasing.

Our planning committee of myself, Regina Hyatt – Assistant Camp Director, Joy Agee – Student & Family Coordinator, Cindi Branham – Volunteer Coordinator, Jennifer English – Fundraising Coordinator, Kenya Wallace – Social Media Coordinator, and Molly Johnson – Marketing Coordinator, continue to work on this project. We are currently working to find a curriculum coordinator for the camp and have reached out to middle school principals in the North Alabama area. We will be contacting middle school science and math teachers next. You can help us spread the word about Tech Trek to your friends, neighbors, and colleagues so that we can identify candidate girls for the camp.

If you are interested in joining our committee, there is always room for one more. Please contact me,

Rhonda Gaede, at gaeder@uah.edu, or 256-824-6573 for further information.

If you would like to make a contribution to Tech Trek AL as a part of your year-end giving, simply visit <http://bit.ly/GivetoTechTrek>.

Hilary Clinton Announces New Project

Cindi Branham, Co-President

Recently, **Hilary Clinton** went before a large audience—the more than 7,000 who had gathered in Philadelphia for the 10th annual Pennsylvania Conference on Women—and added clarity as to what she intends to do about empowering women across the planet.

She is launching a project through the newly renamed [Bill, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton Foundation](#) that is modeled on the work her husband, the former president, has done through the global initiative. It seeks to harness and direct private resources toward measuring the progress, or lack of it, that women have made, and to “bring abuses out of the shadows and raise global consciousness.”

It also now has an official name: “[No Ceilings: The Full Participation Project](#).”



Ellie Lienau and Tawana Townsend

Panoply News – **Panoply Arts Festival** is scheduled for **April 25-27, 2014**. But there are some interim deadlines that are important. Individuals and groups that want to perform must submit an application by Friday, January 10, 2014. These applications will be reviewed by a committee. This year for the first time applications are being accepted from artists for “Arts in Action” to appear in demon-

stration tents located throughout the festival. The deadline for these is also January 10, 2014. The guidelines as well as the application for each of these can be found on The Arts Council website (www.artshuntsville.org).

It was announced at the last Arts Council meeting that at the moment the Huntsville City Schools and the Madison County Schools (not Madison City Schools) are not excusing absences for students that are involved in performing for arts groups activities. So these students would not be allowed to make up any work missed. Absences are excused for school field trips. Contact The Arts Council at 256-519-2787 or tac@artshuntsville.org if you would like to join a task force to work on this.

College/University Update

Molly Johnson, College/University Liaison

The College / University Relations team continues to work on planning our student leadership conference for April. We are feeling very excited and energized! Some of us had the pleasure of enjoying a lunch meeting and discussion with Lisa Maatz, where we soon found ourselves in the middle of a wonderful discussion about feminism, generational patterns regarding combining marriage and motherhood with career, and related themes. We hope to continue these conversations at our leadership conference and at the State Convention!

UAH Women's Studies has also been contacted by a local film maker who is preparing a documentary on rape culture; he and his partners are bringing Kori Cioca, the US Coast Guard whose story formed the center of "The Invisible War," to Huntsville in January and would like for her to speak at UAH. We are

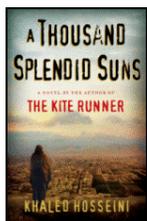
still firming up details, and I look forward to inviting AAUW members to the event!

I am also enjoying working on the AAUW-UAH team that is planning the Tech Trek camp for rising eighth grade girls, to be held at UAH next summer. It is very exciting to be working towards an event that promises to be life-changing for so many young girls.

Study Groups

iAdelante! Book of the Month Club

Patricia Smith, Public Relations



iAdelante! Book of the Month Club will meet at the **Huntsville Madison County Main Library, Meeting Room D (upstairs) on Thursday, December 19, at 5:45 p.m.** We'll be reviewing the December selection, ***A Thousand Splendid Suns***, by **Khaled Hosseini Robson**. Born a generation apart and with very different ideas about love and family, Mariam and Laila are two women brought jarringly together by war, by loss, and by fate. As they endure the escalating dangers around them — in their home as well as in the streets of Kabul — they come to form a bond that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other, and that will ultimately alter the course not just of their own lives but of the next generation. A stunning accomplishment, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a haunting, heartbreaking, compelling story of an unforgiving time, an unlikely friendship, and an indestructible love.

For more information, contact Patricia Smith at smithpatricia73@yahoo.com or Karen Rudiger at rkrudiger@att.net. Join us! <http://www.aauw.org/resource/adelante-book-list/>

iAdelante! Book Review

Patricia Smith

Ride the Wind: The Story of Cynthia Ann Parker and the Last Days of the Comanche by Lucia St. Clair Robson.

The book is based on a true story. Cynthia Ann Parker was abducted from her family in 1836 at age 9, adopted by the Comanche, and lived for 24 years among them forgetting her white ways. She married an Indian Chief of the Noconi tribe. She was the mother of three, among them Quanah Parker, who was the last free Comanche War Chief. She was “rescued” but never was integrated back into the society of her blood relatives.

This book gives a balanced view of the Indians and their culture. It was interesting to learn of their survival on the Plains. Although popular history creates the notion that the pioneers were in constant danger of extermination by the Indians, in early Texas history that was not always the case. Pioneers were annoyed by Indian raids. The Indians valued the American settlers’ horses as they were superior to the Spanish stock. In 1822, there were only 45,000 Indians in the area from the Rio Grande to the Red River and of these only 30,000 were Comanche. They roamed as far as the Missouri River and only a part of the total population was in Texas at any one time. Therefore, there was only about one Indian for every 67 settlers.

After the Texas revolution and with the increasing encroachment of white settlers, the Comanche, realizing that their way of life was threatened, became more hostile. This was the time period outlined

in the book.

Personally, this book was very interesting. Prior to 1836, my forefather David Burkett got land grants from the Mexican government. His first grant was listed in November of 1831 and the largest grant in May of 1832. As I read the book, I imagined David, his family of six and their life in Gonzales, Texas. A historical marker to David Burkett can be found on FM 146 near East City Limits at Kerr Creek, Gonzales, Texas which reads "**David Burkett** - Progressive patriot and citizen soldier in Texas war for independence. A member of Green Dewitt's Colony. Came to Texas with his family, 1830. Served as a guard for women and children fleeing Gonzales before the approach of Santa Anna, 1836. Is buried on his 4,428-acre land grant extending south from this site."

Please consider joining us. I would not have read this book or even known about it if I had not been a part of iAdelante!.

Great Decisions

Great Decisions does **NOT** meet in December. Our January meeting will be **Monday, January 13, 7 p.m.** **Patricia Smith** will lead the discussion of **Chapter 3, "NATO."** Everyone is invited. This is a good time to join the group because we will be purchasing new books for use beginning in February. Contact Mary at 256-881-6540 or witherspoon8@comcast.net for more information.

Bridge Group

On the **third Thursday, September to May, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.**, the AAUW Bridge Group meets. We can use **substitutes** for bridge in addition to **more members**. Right now, though we do have enough participants to fill two tables, but it is sometimes cancelled because not enough players can come. We do not expect seasoned players, but if you have had some practice, want to improve, and enjoy a happy social event, please contact **Lorraine Mullin** (lorm@knology.net, **256-772-2549**) for more information.

Lunch.com

Lunch.com meets **every Friday at 12:30 p.m.**, unless the email notice says otherwise. All members are welcome. Just respond to the weekly email so **Lorraine Mullin** can advise the restaurant how many guests to expect. Not getting the notice? Contact Lorraine at lorm@knology.net or **256-772-2549** (h) or **235-683-5530** (c).



Lorraine Mullin, Peggy East, and Cindi Branham



Anna Blair and Dotty Little



Rebecca Harbor Jones, Ellie Lienau, and Marilyn Robertson

December

Lunch.com Schedule

20 [Pan e Vino Pizzeria, 300 Church Street](#)

27 [Papou's Greek Cuisine, 110 Southside Square](#)

January

3 [Grille 29 Huntsville, 445 Providence Main](#)

10 [Phil Sandoval's, 6125 University Drive](#)

17 [Sitar Indian Cuisine, 420 Jordan Lane NW](#)

24 [Wintzell's Oyster House, 5100 Sanderson Street NW](#)

31 [Ol' Heidelberg Café, 6125 University Drive NW](#)

AAUW of Alabama

Wanda Foster, State President

It was so good to spend time with Lisa Maatz during her visit to the Huntsville Branch, and I know she was touched by the warmth and generosity the branch showed her, especially in celebrating her birthday. Several of us at the state level were able to meet with her and make some tentative future plans for the state. If we are lucky, Lisa will also be attending the state convention here in Huntsville, April 4-6, at the Marriott, as may Lilly Ledbetter. Lisa is passionate about social justice, funny and down to earth, and I think those of us who attended the December dinner meeting and heard her talk about Congress got a fresh perspective on how government works. It was her first trip to Alabama, she had a good time, and we are all grateful to her.

For those of you who have not read the 2013-15 Public Policy Program, which was updated during the June 2013 national convention in New Orleans, I suggest you find it on line and read it (<http://www.aauw.org/resource/public-policy-program-brochure/>). I have thought since I first read it that it is one of the best statements of social justice I have ever seen. Broadly, it supports "a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, and diversity"; aims "to achieve economic self-sufficiency for all women"; and seeks to guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse society." Members can make suggestions for change, and members—present at the convention or not—can vote on the proposed changes.

Arise just sent out a letter warning members that it's rumored (and I've also heard it through a state legislator) that the state legislature is going to try to hold an intense, shortened legislative session with three-day weeks; they want no controversy; and they're going to try to finish early so they can start campaigning for the June elections. It certainly sounds like another year of their pushing bills through. In light of this, we're going to have to keep up the pressure to fight bad bills (of which I am sure there will be many) and to push to get bills like pay equity through. Remember that Lilly Ledbetter is with us in fighting for pay equity, and the legislature DOESN'T WANT CONTROVERSY. On this and our other issues, we've got to make our voices heard. AAUW of Alabama will be looking into setting up a state notification of pending legislation, much like the national Two-Minute Activist.

In this season of giving, you may want to consider contributing to AAUW for its many innovative programs. I want to suggest particularly that you consider contributing to the Tech Trek program that will be held at UAHuntsville in the summer. Because so many gifts marketed to girls promote stereotyped, objectified images, national AAUW also has a holiday gift guide for girls

(<http://www.aauw.org/2013/11/05/gift-guide-for-girls/>), including, dare I say it, Barbie Computer Engineer.

I'm very proud of being a member of the Huntsville Branch, and there are so many people in the Huntsville Branch I admire and love. To you all I want to say, The very best to you in this Season of Light, and a prosperous, abundant New Year. And with all the want, worry, and injustice in this city, county, state, nation, and world of ours, I pray for social justice and something resembling a true level playing field. Thank you each for all you do to make it so. You inspire me.

Program Year Overview

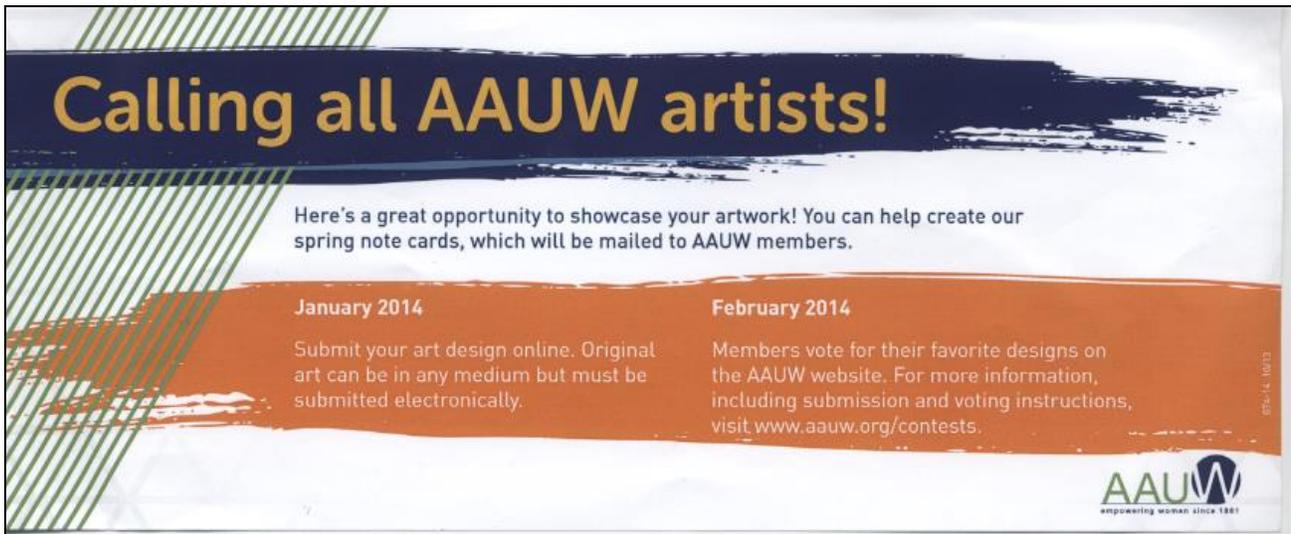
Tuesday, February 4, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Impact of Arts on Local Economy
Friday, March 7, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Breaking Through Barriers Luncheon
*Tuesday, April 8, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Girls of the Atomic City
Tuesday, May 6, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Women's Health Month: What You Should Know About Cardiovascular Disease

*Denotes Program Dates May Be Switched

Hold the Date

April 4, 2014	Student Seminars
April 4-6, 2014	State AAUW Convention in Huntsville

Announcements



Calling all AAUW artists!

Here's a great opportunity to showcase your artwork! You can help create our spring note cards, which will be mailed to AAUW members.

<p>January 2014</p> <p>Submit your art design online. Original art can be in any medium but must be submitted electronically.</p>	<p>February 2014</p> <p>Members vote for their favorite designs on the AAUW website. For more information, including submission and voting instructions, visit www.aauw.org/contests.</p>
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