

November 2012

Volume 3, Number 4

President's Letter: November 2012

In Gratitude...



Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

Melody Beattie, Author

AAUW's Mission

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

I'm often reminded that celebration is an important – and usually overlooked – part of everything we do in life. Celebrating the events, milestones, and accomplishments of life falls between the cracks unless we remember that it's not ok to just run on to the next thing, and that there is good reason to slow down and *be thankful* for what just passed.

From the perspective of women having control over their lives, I'm grateful for the numbers in the 113th US Congress: 20 women in the Senate and over 100 in the House: both record numbers. I know they won't all vote in the best interest of women, but I know that most of them will, and that gives me peace today.

My vision for tomorrow is that women number in our governing bodies like they number in our population. I'd be grateful for achieving that level of balance and equity.

And by the way, I'm grateful for the consequences that the anti-women legislation of 2012 had: I've met and bonded with so many strong, creative, bright women that I would never have met, or grown closer to, were it not for the (re-) fighting to protect women's rights. And I trust that when (yes, when) these legislative goodies come out again in 2013, we are more prepared and fully motivated to work against them.

Something I'd *be* grateful for: more women running for office in Alabama and the Southeast. The balance that I trust more women in elected positions would bring to the bodies that govern our everyday lives and the freedoms we enjoy would help to ensure those freedoms.

I'm grateful for our Branch Board of Directors for the work they've done over the years to build and strengthen our Branch. If you've missed meetings, it's time to reconnect: our programming has been top-notch, month after month, and if you missed our fall programs, you missed some great ones, including November's program: The Politics of Women's Health.

The December meeting promises more great programming and it's going to be a program with *surprises*! We have three individuals visiting from the National AAUW organization: Dr. Catherine Hill, Laura Stepp, and Cordy Galligan. Dr. Chris Gunter from HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology is

also scheduled to speak. Please don't miss this one - remember that there will be surprises.

So thank you for all you do and contribute towards making AAUW what it needs to be. Sometimes all one can manage is to show up – but that's critical, too, and what keeps us going.

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. President John F. Kennedy (1917 – 1963)

Cindi Branham, President AAUW Huntsville Branch

Tuesday, December 4 Meeting – Women and STEM Education

Joy Agee, Co-Diversity Chair

While women fill close to half of the jobs in the US, they hold less than 25 percent of jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Women hold a disproportionately low share of STEM undergraduate degrees. Women with STEM degrees are less likely than males to work in a STEM occupation and more likely to work in education or healthcare. The gender gap that exists for women in STEM is due to various factors including social and environmental factors shaping girls' achievements and interests in science; the college environment; and the biases regarding women's success in STEM.



Nationally, AAUW has been a leader in research on women's education, and in finding ways to encourage women and girls to pursue interests and careers in STEM. On Tuesday, December 4, our Branch meeting will focus on bridging the gender gap in STEM. Our keynote speaker will be **Dr. Catherine Hill, AAUW Director of Research**. Dr. Hill has authored several AAUW research reports including <u>Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and</u> <u>Mathematics</u> (2010) and <u>Where the Girls Are: The Facts About Gender Equity in</u> <u>Education</u> (2008). The focus of her talk will be "Making Research Matter: Advocacy for Girls and Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics." She will also provide an executive report summarizing the findings in the "Why So Few?" research document for our members and guests.

Dr. Chris Gunter, Director of Research Affairs at HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology, will provide a second talk. She is the owner of Girlscientist Consulting, which provides services in science editing, social media, and communications. Dr. Gunter will share her views and ideas on how to stimulate girls' interest in STEM.



We hope you will join us on **Tuesday, December 4, 6–8 p.m.**, at **Covenant Presbyterian Fellowship Hall**, <u>301 Drake Avenue SE, Huntsville, AL</u>. **Reservations are due by noon on Saturday, December 1**

to **Lois Guendel** at <u>lois.guendel@knology.net</u>, or phone **256-880-8643**. On the menu: risotto with mushrooms and peas; roasted chicken chunks; sautéed onions, zucchini and bell peppers with herbs; salad; cheesecake-marbled brownies; and iced tea. **The meal will cost \$16**. Please pay with cash or personal check. Members may choose to attend the program and skip the meal.

Various organizations will have displays concerning women in STEM **beginning at 5:00**. Invited organizations include <u>HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology Educational Outreach</u>, <u>Project Lead the</u> <u>Way</u>, <u>Seed to Plate Mobile Ethic Garden</u>, the <u>UAH chapters of Women in Science & Engineering (WISE)</u>, and <u>Minority Graduate Student Association</u>.

Welcome To the New AAUW Huntsville Branch Website!

Beverly Watson, Branch Secretary and Webmaster



The **AAUW Huntsville Branch's** new Web site address is <u>http://huntsville-al.aauw.net/</u>. Powered by AAUW National's Site Resources, the Huntsville Branch shares the same look and feel of other AAUW branches across the Unites States, while allowing us to customize our content.

The banner, prominently displayed at the top of each page, announces AAUW's logo, our Branch name, and a photo of downtown Huntsville. Navigation is directly below the banner and on the right side of each Web page. Site Resources controls the content on the right side of each page, which includes up-to-date Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds. These feeds can provide you with the latest buzz at AAUW National. At the local level, the Huntsville Branch controls content in the menu below the banner. Tabs consist of the Home, About Us, Activities, Calendar, Join Us, Contact Us, and News pages and are explained below.

Home: Visiting the Web site will default to the Home page, which provides all visitors with an overview of AAUW and states AAUW's Mission and Value Promise.

About Us: The About Us page tells the history of the Huntsville Branch. Under the About Us tab are links to the Board, Branch Notables, and Bylaws pages.

Activities: The Activities page spotlights the activities that Huntsville Branch members enjoy, like Lunch.com, Great Decisions, and Morning Bridge. Contact information for each of these interests is listed.

Calendar: The Calendar provides the dates, places, locations, and contact information for program meetings and other events in the Branch calendar. AAUW Huntsville Program meetings are held from September through May.

Join Us: The Join Us page explains the price of dues and how they are broken into National, State,

and Branch costs. The price for a Student Affiliate is also listed.

Contact Us: The Contact Us page allows members to contact our current Branch President and the VP of Membership.

News: The News page is the newest tab in the Web site, which we hope to fill. Currently, Huntsville Branch newsletters have found a home on this page. If you've missed an email edition, visit this page and get your copy.

AAUW Huntsville Branch Website: <u>http://huntsville-al.aauw.net/</u>

Galaxy of Lights

Marilyn Robertson, Volunteer Coordinator



Marilyn Robertson is the day captain and **Lorraine Mullin** co-captain for AAUW's night at <u>Galaxy of Lights</u> **on Friday, December 28**, and they still need volunteers – at least 4 to 6 more! Working at Galaxy for drive-through nights is a wonderful experience – here's how it works:

We all bring food to share (snacks, brownies, soup, chips & dip); we take care that your 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. **Marilyn Robertson** (<u>marilyn.robertson@knology.net</u>, **256-536-2701**) awaits your call. More volunteers are needed due to the new entrance at the Space and Rocket Center and other changes. More traffic controllers are needed this year than in the past.

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!

How Can You Get Involved in Other Branch Activities?

Marilyn Robertson, Volunteer Coordinator

Madison Library Holiday Wreath



Thanks go out to **new member Devon Reynolds** who has offered to decorate our Branch holiday wreath. The wreath will be placed in the Madison Library on December 3. Devon has asked for any AAUW items that we could pull together to decorate the wreath. What do you have that you could lend?

Contact Devon at <u>devonreynolds@knology.net</u>.

Tinsel Trail

The Downtown Forty-Seven will be presenting its second annual **Tinsel Trail** during the month of December. This is a display of live decorated Christmas trees in Big Spring Park. This year the trees will be near the <u>Huntsville Museum of Art</u>. The AAUW Huntsville Branch has expressed an interest in decorating a tree. But in order to do this, we need someone to take charge of this project and others willing to help decorate the tree. Please let **Cindi Branham** (<u>cindi@netfocusmarketing.com</u>) know if you can help with this activity.

Recycling Project

The AAUW Huntsville Branch Board has voted to try a recycling project to raise money for AAUW Funds. Things such as old cell phones and used printer cartridges can be turned in for money. We need someone willing to collect the items and mail them to the company (perhaps two or three people could work together on this effort). Please contact **Ellie Lienau** at <u>elienau@yahoo.com</u> to find out more about it or if you will be able to help.

Other Ways to Make a Difference

- Help plan a program
- Recruit members
- Help set up signs, set up the meeting room, clean up afterward
- Offer transportation to members who don't drive at night
- Help set up the audio/visual in the meeting room each month

- Shadow an officer and train for that position
- Help coordinate volunteers for events in which AAUW Huntsville Branch participates
- Patricia Smith has agreed to be our Marketing Director, organizing publicity with Wanda Foster's guidance. Thanks, Patricia!
- Serve on the Marketing Committee. Need someone to mail newsletters to our few members who do not have online access, in addition to other media-related activities (i.e., publicity for our Cocktails and Convos

networking events, as well as our Breaking Through Barriers Luncheon)

- Get printed copies of the newsletters made and distributed to members without email or computer access
- Let a board member know you are interested in becoming more involved!

Membership

Member dues are **\$74**: \$49 for national, \$10 for state, and \$15 for branch. Student affiliation is **\$29.50**. Your dues can be paid by check made out to **AAUW** and sent to **Sherry Anderson** at **101 Steeplechurch Court, Huntsville, AL, 35806-4072**. Questions? Call **256-895-8530**, or email **Sherry** at <u>aauwmember@gmail.com</u>.

Cocktails and Convos

The Huntsville Branch of the American Association of University Women will soon announce a date for its fourth **Cocktails and Convos** women's networking event. These "after work" events are a great opportunity for members and potential members to mix and mingle. Great food and drink is "Dutch Treat" and reasonably priced. Just show up and join us in an evening of socializing and fun, with a short presentation on a current topic. Past topics have included Pay Equity and Voting Rights.

Look for our next event after the holidays. For more information, phone 256-895-8530 or email inquiries to <u>aauwmember@gmail.com</u>.

Funds

Ellie Lienau and Amanda Jarrett, AAUW Funds Co-Vice Presidents

By now you should have received your invitation to the **Holiday Phantom Tea**. Special thanks to **Anna Blair, Cindi Branham, Ellie Lienau, Mabry Miller, Marilyn Robertson, Karen Rudiger**, and **Patricia Smith**, who met one afternoon at **Marilyn Robertson's** to put the invitations together. Thanks to all of you that have already made a donation. Our dream would be for all Branch members to give to this, no matter how small the donation. However, we will be happy if we can get half of our members to contribute. Also it is not too late to send an invitation to others. Just send the names and addresses to Amanda Jarrett (apjarrett@qmail.com).

The funds collected will be sent to the Association to support the AAUW Funds. These need to be sent by the end of the year, so we have set a **deadline of December 15**.

The **Belk Charity Sale** netted the Branch \$355 from the ticket sales. A big thank you to **Sherry Anderson** and **Ellie Lienau** who worked at Belk during the sale so the Branch additionally would receive a share of the profits from the tickets sold on the day of the event.

November Meeting Highlights

Amanda Jarrett, Funds Vice President

Our November meeting focus was the Politics of Women's Health. We heard from three outstanding speakers.

Hannah Ellis, President of <u>Alabama Birth Coalition</u>, spoke about Alabama's Maternity Care Crisis and why Alabama needs midwives now. The following are just a few of the startling facts presented by Hannah:

- Alabama's infant mortality ranking is 49, which means 48 other states are doing a better job than we are and the U.S. infant mortality rate is higher than those in most other developed countries!
- Every state that licenses Certified Professional Midwives has BETTER infant mortality stats than Alabama does.
- Between the years 2009-2011, 1,516 babies died in Alabama.
- 36 of Alabama's 67 counties have NO obstetric care.

Alabama mothers should have the right to choose how and with whom they birth. Her body, her baby, her birth! Find out more at <u>http://www.alabamabirthcoalition.org/</u>.



Barbara Buchanan, **CEO of** <u>Planned Parenthood of Alabama</u>, highlighted the basics of Planned Parenthood services and how they are vital to our state. She discussed reproductive rights and the political climate related to these rights. Some of her main points were:

- Virtually all women use birth control. It's a form of preventive healthcare as well as an economic issue. Birth control is also an individual decision.
- The typical woman spends five years pregnant, or trying to get pregnant, and 30 years trying not to get pregnant. This is a common sense issue for women.
- Alabama kids deserve age appropriate, medically accurate, and evidence-based sexual health education.
- It is important that abortion remain a safe and legal medical procedure for a woman to consider, if and when she needs it.
- Women don't turn to politicians for advice about mammograms, prenatal care, or cancer treatments. Politicians should not be involved in a woman's personal medical decisions about her pregnancy.

The bottom line is that a woman, not politicians, should make the informed decisions when it comes to her own pregnancy.

Editor's Note: The book Barbara mentioned in her presentation is <u>The Means of Reproduction: Sex</u>, http://huntsville-al.aauw.net/



Power, and the Future of the World by Michelle Goldberg.



Dr. Pippa Abston, Huntsville pediatrician and **author** of <u>Who is My</u> <u>Neighbor? A Christian Response to Health Care Reform</u> shared why women need to speak up for new rules. She has witnessed many uninsured families in her practice and stated that as of July 2012, an estimated 53 million Americans are uninsured. Because of the Affordable Care Act this number could possibly lower to 30 million by the year 2014. She said we can't settle for this – we need to keep working to make it better. She urged the audience to embrace the following "new rules":

- Quit treating health care like shoes. Say no to "Bubba's Budget Hearts"!
- Don't get stuck defending legislation that doesn't work for partisan reasons. We can do better!
- Fully license Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Midwives, Psychologists, Counselors, Social Workers, and Physical Therapists. Enough with the turf wars!
- Fully fund all medical training and require unrestricted acceptance of public and military insurance as a condition of state licensure.

Dr. Abston believes that Improved Expanded Medicare for All is the only evidence-based treatment for our sick system. Learn more by following Dr. Abston on her blog: <u>http://pippaabston.wordpress.com/</u>.

We hope those that attended learned a great deal and enjoyed the thought-provoking dialogue about these issues!

In this month of giving thanks, we wish to also acknowledge Kendall East's very moving reflection about Alice Paul and other protestors, who were imprisoned in 1917 for picketing for women's suffrage. Her hunger strike, the brutal treatment she and others received to secure our right to vote – we must never forget the great debt we owe these women.



Kendall East gave a moving reflection about Alice Paul.



Thank you, Kay Eastin, for the beautiful Fall décor.



Mardy Stevens, former AAUW of Oregon President and AAUW Leadership Corps Liaison spoke about the <u>AAUW Leadership</u> <u>Corps</u>. Mardy is a dual member of our Branch



New members Hannah Ellis, Kenya Wallace, Devon Reynolds, and renewing member Melissa Dutton, who is Mardy's niece. Not pictured is new member Amy Shadoin.

Additional pictures are available on Facebook (requires logging on) at https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/aauwhuntsville/?fref=ts and will also be available soon on our new Branch website: http://huntsville/?fref=ts and will also be available soon on our new Branch website: http://huntsville/?fref=ts and will also be available soon on our new Branch website: http://huntsville/?fref=ts

News to Note

Condolences to longtime member Louise Heidish, whose husband Bill passed away November 6.

Thanks to Huntsville's City Council for allocating \$100,000 to the Arts Council that can be used for grants to arts organizations. AAUW Huntsville Branch is a member of the Arts Council.

Public Policy

By Kendall East, Public Policy Chair

We did it! Women got out and voted. And, we have hit another historical mile marker. For the first time, women's health was a major frontline issue in the presidential campaigns and in the 2012 election. Even better stated, it was the deciding factor. The issue of women's health helped shape how we looked at each candidate. We finally gained a huge voice telling Congress that we won't take it anymore. Congress and legislators around the country should heed our message.

Even with the reelection of a President who supports us, we still have a lot of work to do. We must push forward for the future of women. President Barack Obama has vowed to implement the Affordable Care Act, which will provide millions of women with preventative care. Planned Parenthood also played a big role in this election. I know from my own personal experience that I don't know what I would have done if it weren't for Planned Parenthood a few years ago. Due to my lack of insurance at the time, I would never have been able to have the procedure I needed. I can't imagine other young women not being provided the care they desperately need. These women will now have the chance to have access to needed health care.

With this election, we also had a record number of women coming into the 2013 Senate, including the first-ever openly lesbian senator, Tammy Baldwin. Americans are finally beginning to understand the need for fairness, especially with women making up a large percentage of the heads of their households. When women do better, everyone does better. (*Editor's note: In this year's election, 11 women were newly elected to the U.S. Senate, bringing the total number of women in the Senate to 20. Of those 20, 60% are former Girl Scouts. 18 women were newly elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and 59 incumbents were returned to office, bringing the total number of women in the House to 77.)*

Now that we have finally been heard, let's keep moving forward. Make sure your effort isn't like the 4th of July – just once a year.

AAUW Dialog Online

See the suggestions for the To-Do List AAUW is compiling for the President and Congress at <u>http://blog-aauw.org/</u>.

Two-Minute Activist

Numbers Don't Lie! Go to <u>http://capwiz.com/aauw/issues/alert/?alertid=61860756</u> to find out what you can do to support Need for Fair Pay Legislation.

AAUW-Sponsored Exhibit

"Every Four Years: Presidential Campaigns and the Press" exhibit at the Newseum in Washington D.C. opened back in February of this year. Timely during an election year, the exhibit is open through Inauguration Day 2013.

Alabama and the Presidency

Have you been by the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library to see the display <u>"Alabama and the Presidency?"</u> The exhibit is open through Inauguration Day 2013.

What a Woman!

Do you know who **Senator Vivian Davis Figures** is? She is the first woman minority leader of the Alabama Senate AND, she is making history for Alabama women. Find out more about her here:

http://timesdaily.com/stories/Figures-to-make-Alabama-history,198946

AAUW College/University Update

Regina Hyatt, AAUW College/University Representative

I have the pleasure of also serving on the C/U Relations Committee for national AAUW We recently completed our quarterly committee phone call where we received updates on AAUW activities and ways to support our college/university partners. Below is a list of great resources, particularly for those working at colleges/universities in our area. A "Graduating to a Pay Gap" watch party was held on November 15 at the UAHuntsville University Center which included live-streaming of a panel of experts including Lisa Maatz, AAUW's Director of Public Policy and Government Relations, and Mark Kantrowitz, who is an expert on college debt.

Want to read the report for yourself? Go to <u>http://www.aauw.org/graduatetoapaygap/</u>

Want to see a breakdown of the differences by state and county? Go to

http://www.slate.com/articles/news and politics/map of the week/2012/10/gender income inequalit y maps by county and by state.html





College/University Partner Member Program

http://www.aauw.org/about/join/colleges/index.cfm

C/U Recruitment and Retention Program in a Box (PIAB)

http://www.aauw.org/member center/programs/upload/CUpartners PIAB.pdf

Campus Connections

http://www.aauw.org/learn/publications/campus/

Study Groups

Great Decisions

Great Decisions, a study group on U.S. foreign policy, meets at **7 p.m. on the second Monday of each month** from September through May, *except in December*. Meetings are held at the home of **Mary Witherspoon, 5713 Criner Road**. Members take turns leading the discussion based on a book put out by the <u>Foreign Policy Association</u>. Visitors are always welcome.

Bridge Group

The Bridge Group meets **September through May** on the **third Thursday** of each month at **9 a.m.**, **usually ending by noon**. Contact **Lorraine Mullin** at <u>lorrm@knology.net</u> or call **256-772-2549** (h) or **235-683-5530** (c) if you are interested in joining the group as a permanent player or as a substitute.

Lunch.com

All members are welcome at Lunch.com. 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 <u>lorrm@knology.net</u> or **256-772-2549** (h) or **235-683-5530** (c).

November

23	Tazikis Greek, 4855 Whitesburg Dr. South
30	Limestone Bay Trading Company, 24950 Old Hwy 20, Mooresville
December	
7	Café Berlin, 964 Airport Rd

14 Po Boy Factory, 815 Andrew Jackson Way

Hold the Date



* *DATE CHANGE: March 1, 2013 – Breaking Through Barriers Luncheon* *



June 9–12, 2013 - 2013 AAUW National Convention

The national convention will be held in New Orleans, LA, at the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel. Laissez les bon temps rouler!



The 2012 Project Update: Don't Get Mad – Get Elected!

The 2012 Project Alabama encourages women to run for office. The team is led by **Audrey Salgado** and includes members from across the state. Huntsville AAUW member, **Carol Joyce**, is one of two members from Huntsville. Next steps: recruit and train women to run for office in 2014.

See how women fared in the House and Senate at http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/elections/candidates_2012

<u>.php#ak</u>

As a result of redistricting at the state level, Alabama will be able to take advantage of the national dynamics of 2012 in 2014. Team members attended the <u>Women's Public Leadership Summit</u>, Thursday, September 13, 2012, in Atlanta. Speakers will share research and messages for the fall election which will help us prepare for 2014.

For more information, contact Carol Joyce at carol2012project@gmail.com.

<u>The 2012 Project</u> is a nonpartisan national project of the prestigious <u>Center for American Women and</u> <u>Politics (CAWP)</u> that identifies and engages accomplished women over 45 who have not previously been active in politics.

Want to know more? Visit The 2012 Project website at <u>www.the2012project.us</u>. Ready to get involved? Contact <u>info@the2012project.us</u> or 1-650-326-2216.

140 Voices for a Better Alabama

Purpose: To recruit one citizen for each of the 105 House Districts and 35 Senate Districts to be a voice for constitutional reform and educate citizens in their respective districts on how the state constitution impacts them in their daily lives.

www.bringitbackhome.org



AAUW 2012 National Convention Resources

Valuable resources and updates are available at <u>http://convention.aauw.org/live.aspx</u>, including videos and handout materials – many related to your area of responsibility within the Huntsville Branch.

The Playground has moved!

In fact, it's not even called the Playground anymore: It's People Power Unlimited.

Valuable Personal and Volunteer-Related Content at Cynthia D' Amour's Site. Register for live sessions or listen to archives:

http://www.peoplepowerunlimited.com/free-webinars/

You can register for the newsletter and learn of upcoming Webinars on this page.

You are STRONGLY encouraged to check out the resources on this site to assist you with your Branch responsibilities! All free to AAUW members. You'll find segments that will help in specific areas of responsibility as well as many general topics. Note that you may have to sign up for the site to access

the recordings, which play over your computer.

Breaking Through Barriers – Diversity

Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.

Henry Ward Beecher (1813 – 1887), Congregationalist clergyman, social reformer, abolitionist, and speaker