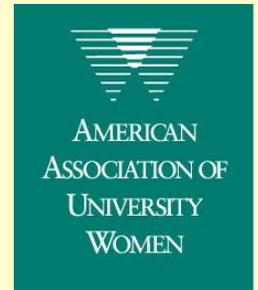


AAUW Initiative

Monmouth, Illinois
April 2008



Celebrating 83 Years of AAUW in Monmouth!

President's Report

Ronda Willhardt

"I wonder if anyone else has an ear so tuned and sharpened as I have, to detect the music, not of the spheres, but of earth, subtleties of major and minor chords that the wind strikes upon the tree branches. Have you ever heard the earth breathe?" -- Kate Chopin

I hope you have had a chance to notice the buds on the trees, take in the greening of the grass, hear birds chirping, and take a breath of spring air. On April 21, make another pause in your busy life to come and enjoy our branch's last program for this school



year. It will be on pay equity and, as AAUW states, it is still an issue.

Though the Equal Pay Act was signed in 1963, the wage gap has been closing very slowly. In 1996, Equal Pay Day was established by the National Committee on Pay Equity to illustrate how much longer women have to work into the next year to earn what men made in the previous year. Our program is timely in that the next Equal Pay Day is Tuesday, April 22.

Regardless of pay, women are a strong presence in the U.S. labor force. Women represented 46% of the force in 2006 and many women hold more than one job. In fact, in 2003 half of all the multiple job holders were women and they currently make up 75% of part-time workers. Part-time jobs often require irregular hours, do not include benefits and have salaries below the minimum wage.

Even with these job factors, women take on additional responsibilities. They are more likely to be in volunteer leadership roles than men. Over 3/4 of caregivers to older family members are women. Care giving frequently requires a reduction of work hours, use of personal leave time, and a loss of career opportunities.

But women are taking matters into their own hands. Female entrepreneurship is growing at twice the national average with 1 in every 11 adult U.S. women running a business including those that are home-based and part-time employment. These women business owners have more gender equity in their workforce and are more likely to offer flex time and other benefits beyond wages to their employees. Additionally, if the power of money is in its spending, not its earning, as the theory states, women are major players, responsible for over 80% of all consumer purchases.

Regardless of changes still to be made, women do have many shifts and opportunities springing up — just mind the gap.

"The beautiful spring came; and when Nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also." -- Harriet Ann Jacobs

Inside this issue

April Program	page 2
Membership Report	page 2
Treasurer's Report.....	page 2
¡Adelante! Book Group	page 3
WITASWAN.....	page 3
Essay Contest Winners	page 3
Pay Equity	page 3
Civic Orchestra Performance	page 4
Action Network	page 4
AAUW-IL State News	page 5

April Program on “Pay Equity”

Lila Blum

Our April 21 program will feature a presentation on a timely topic, “Pay Equity,” which will take place on the eve of national Equal Pay Day. Dr. Polly Radosh, Professor and Chair of the Women’s Studies Department at Western Illinois University, will provide an in depth look at this issue. Starting with a short history of the pay equity issue, her presentation will include the current issues facing working women and working parents, a comparison between the U.S. and other similar industrialized nations, and a discussion of policies that have worked in Europe for reducing gender inequities in pay. Polly has used AAUW research in her far-reaching study of wage disparity.

In 2007 Polly was selected to give the WIU Distinguished Faculty Lecture in which she explored the impact of colonial oppression on gender and women’s roles in Ireland. She received a bachelor’s degree in sociology from the State University of New York at Geneseo in 1976, a master’s degree in sociology from Southern Illinois University in 1978 and a doctorate in 1983. At Western she has taught numerous sociology and women’s studies courses, including introduction to women’s studies, criminology, gender roles, women and war, women and crime, and the sociology of women and Black women.



Her numerous awards include the Provost’s Award for Excellence in Multicultural Teaching in 2005. She has received several grants, among which was the funding for the “Women of Western Centennial Photographic Exhibit” which documented women’s achievements and contributions to the university during the first 100 years of its history.

Please join us on April 21 to learn more about pay equity and its importance to women’s economic security. And remember, guests are most welcome!

Membership Report

Marilyn Van Ausdall

We’re very excited to have Susan Twomey as an official new member of our branch! You read about Susan, our new Buchanan Center director, in last month’s newsletter. Now you can add her information to your program booklet. Susan lives at 1112 E. Broadway in Monmouth. Her phone number is 847-385-8616. Susan began her studies at Monmouth College, and then transferred after two years to the University of Northern Colorado, where she received her BFA degree. She later received her teacher certification from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Welcome, Susan!

Check out AAUW’s new blog – AAUW DIALOG (AAUW Discussion Information Advocacy Log). The blog may be accessed by clicking on the link on the left-hand side of the homepage at aauw.org. This would be a good site to share with potential members as the wide range of topics covered by those posting on the blog will give the potential members a wealth of information regarding issues of importance to AAUW members.

Plan ahead for May: AAUW is offering a special “Mother’s Day event” next month. You may honor one or more of the women in your life with the gift of AAUW membership. A gift recipient’s membership in AAUW under this program will run through June 30, 2009, for only \$24.50, rather than the normal Association dues of \$49. If they wish to be branch members, state dues of \$10 and branch dues of \$9 would be added to the \$24.50. I think this would be a perfect time for me to bring my two daughters on board with AAUW. If you have special women in your life you would like to honor with the gift of AAUW membership next month, see me for more information.



Hope to see you on the 21st!

Treasurer’s Report

Shirley Daddona

Dues for 2008-2009

I will collect dues at the May meeting. The total is \$68.00 (\$49 Association, \$10 State, and \$9 Branch).

¡Adelante! Book Group

Amy Zesbaugh

Please bring book ideas to the April branch meeting. We'll meet briefly after the business meeting to choose three books for fall. If you can't attend, please email me your suggestions.

For those who enjoyed reading *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* in book group last year, you may want to watch Lifetime television's version this weekend (repeats will be shown throughout the week). The movie stars Gretchen Mol, Dermot Mulroney and Emily Watson.



WITASWAN Film Group

Donna Sproston

The Monmouth Swans will meet on Tuesday, April 29 at 7 p.m. at the home of Nancy Buban. Join us as we watch *Normal*. The film was produced by HBO Films and was a 2003 Sundance Film Festival selection. Jane Anderson, the film's writer and director adapted her own play, *Looking for Normal*.



The film is about a midwestern factory worker who stuns his wife of 25 years by saying he wishes to undergo gender transition and sex reassignment surgery. Tom Wilkinson and Jessica Lange star.

AAUW Essay Contest Winners

Nancy Buban

Our recent essay contest for National Women's History Month was a success. Warren County sixth graders were asked to select exceptional women in history from all walks of life. Each essay focused on one woman's significant contribution to society and why the contribution was important to the student's life. We received 83 essays from Lincoln Intermediate and United schools. First, second, and third place winners received a Susan B.

Anthony commemorative coin. The three honorable mention winners received pens.

The awards went to: first place, Carolyn King (Clara Barton), second place, Nathan Daw (Florence Nightingale), third place, Michael Sedam (Rosa Parks); and the honorable mentions went to Jobany Flores (Rosa Parks), Mallory Tharp (Helen Keller), and Tara Klein (Beverly Sills).

I'd like to thank my fellow judges, Donna Sproston and Amy Zesbaugh, for reading the essays, and Ronda Willhardt and Amy for presenting the awards to the winners.



From left to right: Michael Sedam, Tara Klein, Mallory Tharp, Nathan Daw, Jobany Flores and Carolyn King.

Pay Equity: A Simple Matter of Fairness

Joan Larsen

The American Association of University Women has long fought to end wage discrimination. As early as 1922, AAUW called for a repeal of salary restrictions in the Woman's Bureau. In 1955, we supported a bill requiring "equal pay for work of comparable value requiring comparable skills." In 1963, Congress enacted the Equal Pay Act. It was a version of the 1955 bill. In 2008, AAUW continues to be committed to supporting "fairness in compensation, equitable access and advancement in employment, and vigorous enforcement of employment nondiscrimination statutes."

Even when men and women with the same levels of educational achievement are compared, a pay gap continues. The pay gap is a pervasive issue — affecting women in all walks of life, regardless of marital or familial status. Inequity in pay is not

limited to one career or demographic. Pay inequity affects women of all ages, races and education levels.

Some examples of pay inequity occupations include women marketing and sales managers, women physicians and surgeons, women securities, commodities and financial services sales agents. Women with a college education earn considerably more than women without this credential, but women continue to earn less than men with similar educational backgrounds.

AAUW believes that equal pay for equal work is a simple matter of justice for women. Wage discrimination impacts the economic security of families today and directly affects retirement security as women look down the road. But despite the Equal Pay Act and many improvements in women's economic status over the past 40 years, wage discrimination still persists and is attributable in part to the Equal Pay Act's limited scope:

- Ⓒ It fails to provide equal pay for jobs that are comparable but not identical.
- Ⓒ It fails to cover wage discrimination based on race (although Title VII of the 1964 civil rights acts addresses this issue).
- Ⓒ It fails to cover part-time or contingent workers.
- Ⓒ It fails to allow groups of workers to file class action suits (again, Title VII does allow for this action; however, its statute of limitations has a much shorter timeframe than that of the Equal Pay Act).

Although enforcement of the Equal Pay Act as well as other civil rights laws have helped to narrow the wage gap, significant disparities remain which need to be addressed. AAUW strongly supports initiatives that seek to close the persistent and sizable wage gaps between men and women, and minorities as well.

Many years of family-friendly legislation in action, including the Equal Pay Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Pregnancy Discrimination Act and policies such as flex time and telecommuting have increased options to create a win-win situation for women and their employers, yet wage discrimination persists. AAUW is engaged in grassroots action to educate the public about what

they can do to address the wage gap. We will continue to advocate within Congress and the administration to ensure that current equal pay laws are enforced and to urge that appropriate measures to more thoroughly address the wage gap be passed.

To that end, AAUW continues to promote pay equity ... because **equity is still an issue.**

Monmouth Civic Orchestra Performance

Shirley Daddona

The Monmouth Civic Orchestra will perform on May 3 at 7 p.m. at First Lutheran Church in Monmouth.



According to conductor Donna Hauge, the concert will feature music from the Renaissance and early baroque periods. If you can't attend the concert, contributions are always welcome. Send tax-deductible donations to P.O. Box 355, Monmouth, IL 61462.

AAUW Releases Newly Revised Community Action Guide to Mobilize Women Voters AAUW Action Network

"This is the most critical election in a generation, and AAUW is committed to ensuring that women's voices are heard at the polls. Making this valuable how-to manual available free on our website is a critical part of our voter education campaign."

-- Lisa Maatz, AAUW Director of Public Policy and Government Relations

The American Association of University Women has released a second edition of its well-received publication, *Woman-to-Woman Voter Turnout: A Manual for Community-Based Campaigns to Mobilize Women to Vote*. Thanks to critical donor support, this new tool is now available free online to both AAUW members and coalition partners who are making plans to activate women voters across the country this fall.



"This is the most critical election in a generation, and AAUW is committed to ensuring that women's voices are heard at the polls," said Lisa Maatz, AAUW Director of Public Policy and Government Relations. "Making this valuable how-to manual available free on our website is a critical part of our voter education campaign."

AAUW's *Woman-to-Woman Voter Turnout* guides advocates step-by-step through planning a campaign, which includes recruiting volunteers, working with publicly available voter registration files to identify drop-off women voters in their community, and contacting those women through canvassing and phone banking. In addition to the manual, other online tools include nonpartisan voter guide templates, e-cards, position papers, and AAUW's *Congressional Voting Record* for the 110th Congress, First Session.

"With approximately 100,000 bipartisan members and more than 1,000 branches, AAUW has the community connections to have a positive effect on the turnout of women voters," said Maatz. "The Woman-to-Woman program also stresses the value of continued outreach to drop-off women voters throughout the year, as well as the importance of educating women about policy issues important to them through public forums, candidate nights, and other community activities."

The methods detailed in the *Woman-to-Woman Voter Turnout* manual were successfully used by AAUW branches and states in the 2006 midterm election to reach out to women in their communities. "AAUW expects this resource to be the centerpiece of its ongoing member-led voter education campaign and a catalyst for long-term efforts to increase voter turnout among women nationwide," said Maatz.

Take Action!

Visit AAUW's Voter Education Campaign Website at www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue_advocacy/voter_ed/index.cfm to download a copy of the *Woman-to-Woman Voter Turnout* manual.

Visit the AAUW website at www.aauw.org or the AAUW Online Newsroom at www.aauw.org/newsroom to get the latest news from AAUW.

AAUW-IL State News

Nancy K. Daugherty



Greetings AAUW Members, The AAUW-IL, Inc. Convention is coming soon. I know many of you are promoting it among your branch members and encouraging them to attend. The registration information and forms are on the www.aauw-il.org website, and you should have the *Link* by now.

I received a call recently from Gerry Oberman, the AAUW Regional Liaison for the National Girls Collaborative Project in the Great Lakes Region. The goals for that project are to increase the number of girls entering science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) career fields. Her role is to facilitate connections, and to promote and support this national project. Last month, I had asked that you add your branch information if conferences for girls were being held. Now more effort is needed to add information about all organizations that sponsor these events. There may be schools, community groups, colleges and other groups who hold these events also. Their information needs to be added also in order to help them network more strongly and share information with each other. If you know of these types of groups, please help this cause by adding their information so that Illinois has a more accurate listing of the contact information available to help promote these efforts. Gerry is planning to attend our State Convention and will have materials for those interested. Let's help her make this project a big success and help the organizations have the information needed to collaborate and network more easily.

A successful **International Women's Day** event was held in Chicago on March 7 with the Urban League Club of Chicago and many other groups.

As a subscriber to several women's e-mail communications, I encourage you to stay current through these sources. Keeping one's eyes and ears open and our antennae out keeps us more in tune with the pulse of today. Several universities have these sources.

Reminder: your officer forms will not go to me this year. They should be sent to Linda Henning Cohen as she starts her term of office on July 1, 2008.

Hope to see most of you at our State Convention on May 2 and 3 in Naperville.

Branch Dates to Remember

Branch Meeting: April 21, 7 p.m., Faith United Social Hall, Monmouth.

WITASWAN: April 29, 7 p.m., Nancy Buban's home.

Mission Statement: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

Vision Statement: AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

Association website: www.aauw.org

AAUW-Illinois website:

www.aauw-il.org

Monmouth Branch website:

<http://department.monm.edu/aauw/>

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