



The *INITIATIVE*

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN—ROCKFORD AREA BRANCH

Website: rockfordarea-il.aauw.net

September, 2015

Branch Events 2015-16

Tuesday, November 17

6:00 pm Ciao Bella

Dr. Mary Weaks-Baxter, *In Search of the Real*

Atticus: Harper Lee's Novel Go Tell A Watchman

Saturday, December 5

11:00 am – 2:00 pm, Franchesco's

**Holiday Luncheon & Silent Auction benefitting
EF/LAF**

Music by Johnny Boehlefeld, Baritone

Saturday, January 11

6:00 pm with LWV at YWCA

Film and Discussion: *Selma: Bridge to the Ballot*

Saturday, January 30

Networking Luncheon, Deerfield Embassy Suites,

Saturday, February 20

**11:00 am, 2nd Congregational/1st Presbyterian
Church, Potluck luncheon.**

Dr. Ramona Cornea, *Exploring the Rockford*

Connection to Transylvania, the Land of Dracula

Saturday, March 26

10:00 pm, Stockholm Inn

**Dr. Stephanie Quinn, *Women in Ancient Greece and
Rome***

Wednesday, April 30

6:00 pm, Greenfire Wine Room

Marsha Ackerman, moderator, *Why Join AAUW?*

Friday & Saturday, April 29 & 30

**AAUW-IL Convention at Roosevelt University,
Schaumburg Campus**

Saturday, May 21

11:00 am, Forest Hills CC

Annual Meeting, Presentation of Scholarships

**Keynote: Dr. Belinda Wholeben, Interim VP and
Provost, Rockford University**

**Guests are welcome at all events. Let's invite
more interesting and active women to our events.**

We've all heard the expression *Think Globally, Act Locally*. In the coming weeks, AAUW Rockford Area Branch members will have the opportunity to participate in two projects which will benefit families here at the local level and also women nationally and internationally.

Firstly, please read page 3 for a report and request to help refugees in Rockford. The International Affairs Interest Group has done a great job learning about and making a plan to help displaced women and children.

Thank you, Sheryl Hall, Jean Herro and the IA committee, for your leadership in this area.

Secondly, our Holiday Luncheon and Silent Auction are coming up on Dec. 5. We use this opportunity to raise funds for the AAUW National Foundations—EF and LAF.

For our new members, EF (the Education Foundation), provides nearly \$4 million in funding each year to women scholars and community projects that benefit women and girls.

LAF (the Legal Aid Fund) works to challenge sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace.

Our Silent Auction monies will be designated by the board in December, benefitting EF/LAF and our local programming.

Please use the donation agreement on page 6 to bring an item for the auction and then come and enjoy the fun. The program will be given by Johnny Boehlefeld, opera baritone and son of member Sharon Boehlefeld. You will receive a separate mailing about the luncheon.

Congratulations to Donnette Tinsley and Faye Marcus for securing an *Elect Her* grant for Rockford U.

Meet our five newest members on page 4. We now have 70 members.

I hope to see you on Nov. 17 and Happy Thanksgiving!

Barbara Simon, President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

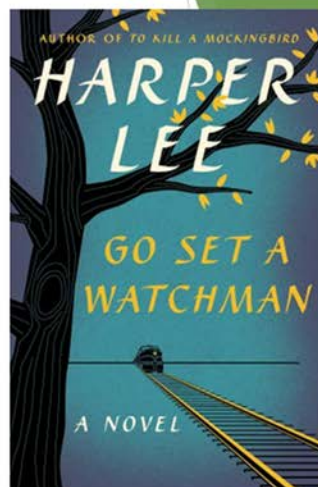
PLEASE COME FOR THE NEXT
ROCKFORD AREA BRANCH EVENT!



*In Search of the Real Atticus:
Harper Lee's Novel Go Set a Watchman*

Dr. Mary Weaks-Baxter

Hazel Koch Professor of English, Rockford University



Tuesday, November 17 at 6pm
Ciao Bella Ristorante
6500 E. Riverside Blvd, Loves Park

Our speaker for the evening is Dr. Mary Weaks-Baxter, Hazel Koch Professor of English at Rockford University, author of Reclaiming the American Farmer: The Reinvention of a Regional Mythology in Twentieth-Century Southern Writing and co-author of We Are a College at War: Women Working for Victory in World War II.

Please email or call Regina Potts at rp226@aol.com or [815-654-9877](tel:815-654-9877), by Nov. 12 for a reservation.

AAUW INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, by Sheryl Hall

Current members of the International Affairs Committee in our Branch are Cathy Riplinger, Regina Potts, Kathe Heyer, Jean Herro, Sheryl Hall, Marsha Ackerman, Barbara Simon and Faye Marcus. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Sheryl Hall at 815.636.8567 or sa_design@comcast.net and we'll put you on the group email list for upcoming meetings.

Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program Wish List

Our committee plus several Branch members had lunch in September with Janet Biljeskovic, Director of the Refugee Resettlement Program for Catholic Charities, to find out how the refugee situation is playing out in our own community. Janet oversees resettlement of refugees from around the world into our region through the United Nations. Within the last several months, families have come from Burma (Myanmar), Congo, Iran and Syria. Most of these families and individuals will have already spent several years in refugee camps in other foreign countries going through the process before arriving in Rockford.

Catholic Charities is the only refugee resettlement agency in our region. Even though Janet's program operates with funding from the federal government, the actual needs of her clients are barely met, especially given the fact that most of them come from regions that never experience winter.

Janet indicated in her talk with us that the Rockford program has been cited for its overwhelming success in placing working age individuals in job positions within the first nine months of resettlement.

So with cold weather fast approaching and many young families with school-age children and babies, we developed a "wish list" that will aid displaced women and children.

Please see the list of non-clothing donations in the column to the right. If you wish to help, drop off your items at these two days and times.

Wednesday, Nov. 11th, 8am to 7pm

Sheryl Hall's home, 6171 Muirfield Lane, Rockford, IL
Please call ahead if you can to 815-298-9194

Tuesday, Nov. 17th, AAUW Branch Meeting, 6pm to 8pm

Ciao Bella, 6500 E. Riverside Blvd., Rockford

The International Affairs Interest Group is hoping to collect as many new (or gently used items where appropriate) as possible in support of the Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program. As a member of our Branch, we hope you will be able to help us in this effort.

Thank you in advance for your help on this project!
REFUGEE WISH LIST

Items for all ages:

Board games, puzzles, Lego type blocks
School backpacks
School supplies
All grades and ages
Pots and pans
Whole set and a large pot
Cleaning supplies
All-purpose spray
Toilet bowl cleaner and/or brush
Ajax powder
Dishwashing liquid
Clothing detergent
Broom and/or mop
Sponges
Bucket
Trash bags (all sizes)
Hygiene items
Toilet paper
Paper towels
Feminine napkins
Toothpaste (adult and/or children)
Toothbrush (children's ONLY)
Razors and/or shaving cream
Deodorant
Body lotion
Soap bars
Shampoo
Baby items
Playpen
Blankets
Bathtub
Baby shampoo and wash
Baby lotion
Diapers
Baby wipes
Drying rack
Blankets, thick (any size welcome since most refugees are facing first time winter)

November 2015 Initiative, pg. 3

PUBLIC POLICY by Faye Marcus

SAVE the Date! April 2, 2016. You are invited to attend a wonderful workshop- **ELECT HER**- at Rockford University.

What is **Elect Her**? It is the only program in the country that encourages and trains college women to run for student government. It is collaboration between AAUW and Running Start that addresses the need to expand the pipeline of women candidates and to decrease the long standing political gender gap.

FYI: Only 19% of all political offices in our country are held by women!

ELECT HER is a 4-5 hour workshop in which campus administrators, students, and local AAUW members collaborate with AAUW and Running Start staff to host a training on a local college campus. In 2015 and 2016 fifty campuses selected by national will host a workshop. And our college/ university partner -Rockford University- is one of them! R U was awarded a grant from AAUW. Students will practice hands on campaign skills, hear from inspiring local speakers and discuss research on women in government. The program is facilitated by a trained professional sent by AAUW.

In 2014 and 2015, 76 % of the women students who participated won their campus election; 12% more students said that they would seek political office; and 99 % of the participants would recommend **Elect Her** to a friend.

Faye Marcus and Donnette Tinsley are representing Rockford Area AAUW on the planning committee for Rockford University. Donnette is the Director of the Jane Addams Center for Civic Engagement at RU.

Students from other local colleges will also be invited to attend. We are hoping to get at least 50 students to be part of **Elect Her**.

We are very excited to be part of this project- the only one in Illinois. As a member of AAUW, you are invited to attend. Mark your calendars. **Saturday, April 2- 10-2:30.** More information will be coming your way.

(Note: **Thank you** to Faye and Donnette who applied to national to do this and who will now write a grant application to AAUW-IL for additional funding).

AAUW—breaking through barriers for women and girls.

NEW MEMBERS

At our September meeting, four guests (including our guest speaker) joined. They are:

Dr. Jane Gottlick is a professor of International Relations and Comparative Politics at UW-Whitewater. She enjoys reading, theatre, friends and all things Russian.

Maggie Hellems-May is a retired educator who lives in Rockton, IL and owns an antiques/gift shop there.

Cynthia Nelson lives in DeKalb, IL and spoke to us about the girls' schools in Tanzania.

Patricia Pekarsky is a retired educator from Rockton, IL. She spends some winter months on the Gulf Coast in Diamondhead MS. She enjoys politics, reading and Mah Jongg.

Also joining is:

Patricia Sievert (Pati) is Director of STEM Outreach at NIU. Patricia lives in Dekalb and has also been a speaker for the Rockford Branch about STEM.

As the **Initiative** goes onto our web site, I will send their contact information to everyone in an email.

Welcome to our newest members!



SCHNUCKS BENEFITS CARDS

AAUW Rockford has been benefitting for several years from our members having designated AAUW when shopping at Schnucks. We have paid for our brochures and other non-budgeted expenses this way.

Our Schnucks income has decreased a little so we hope that you all will check to see that you have designated AAUW and are using your Schnucks card when shopping.

It's not a credit card. Rather, it is just a tab that you keep on your key ring that says that AAUW will get credit when you shop. You just show your tab at check-out. We get a small percentage of all that members spend. **AND**, you can get cheaper gas at Schnucks when you accumulate amounts.

Please get on the Schnucks AAUW list by emailing Joan Stehulak, stehulak@juno.com or call her at 815-520-3194. She will get the tabs for you.

You can also sign up with Joan at the Nov. 17th dinner and Dec. 5 luncheon or at the Schnucks stores.

Thanks very much!



SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee met in September and recommended that in 2016, our two Branch awards be increased to \$1000.00 each. The Board affirmed.

The committee will present the AAUW Scholarship materials at two local scholarship fairs in November and December.



LET'S DO FRIDAY LUNCH will meet on Friday, Dec. 18. Place is TBA.

Everyone is welcome for lunch and conversation!



BOOKBEAT INTEREST GROUP

Nov. 17—*Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee.

The Bookbeat group will not meet in the afternoon on Nov.17 but will participate in the event that evening at Ciao Bella.

Books for January through have not been chosen yet.

New members may join **Bookbeat** at any time by calling the hostess or chairperson Carole Newcomer.



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY
WOMEN, ROCKFORD AREA BRANCH

AAUW DONATION AGREEMENT

The American Association of University Women advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, research and philanthropy. The organization was founded in 1881 and the Rockford Area Branch in 1929. Our vision is to continue to develop a diverse, involved membership committed to this mission statement.

If you would like to donate a silent auction item for our Dec.5, 2015 event, we will acknowledge your business in our program.

Funds raised will be used for the AAUW philanthropies EF and LAF and branch activities.

BUSINESS NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

DESCRIPTION AND VALUE OF ITEM _____

Signature of Donor _____

Signature of AAUW Member _____

Thank you for your donation!