



THE INITIATIVE

American Association of University Women—Rockford Area Branch
September 2011

CALENDAR 2011-2012

**Sat., Dec. 3, 9:30 am-1
pm**

*Holiday Brunch and Fund
Raiser for EF/LAF
Rock Valley College
Children's Choir
Leah Baskin, Director
@
Wesley Towne Center*

**Sat., Feb 11, 11to 2
Valentine**

*Potluck and Chocolate
Auction.
Member Andrea Wright
will talk about her
participation in a
humanitarian mission to
Haiti.
2nd Congregational
Church*

March (TBA)

*Women in History Awards
Ceremony
At Rockford College*

April 21 11am

**Lunch and Lecture at
Rockford Art Museum**
*Lynn Fischer-Carlson,
RVC professor will speak
about women artists in the
permanent collection*

May (TBA)

Annual meeting

President Christine Haeggquist

The October General Membership Meeting was a success! Thank you to all members who attended "A night to Celebrate Women in Healthcare". The panelists talked about why they chose their specialty and encouraged young women to consider entering their field. There were a lot of words of wisdom!

The panel of healthcare specialists consisted of:

- ❖ Mary Ann Abate, Rosecrance/Janet Wattles.
- ❖ Dr. Diane Boone, Rockford Health Systems
- ❖ Sharon Garcia, Winnebago County Health Dept
- ❖ Ellyn Rose de Jesus, University of Illinois. College of Medicine.
- ❖ Dr. Kathleen Kelly, Swedish American Hospital
- ❖ Dr. Lisa Malone, Crusader Clinic
- ❖ Dr. Elizabeth Mendeloff,, University of Illinois College of Medicine
- ❖ Dr. Jamie Milos, Private Practice Dentistry
- ❖ Leta Steward, OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center

A donation was made in the panelist's names to the National Alliance on Mental illness.

I hope to you on December 3rd at our Holiday Event

Program VPs Donna Joy and Faye Marcus

The Rock Valley children's Choir will present "Songs for All Seasons" at the December 3rd brunch. The performance will showcase not only the product (the songs), but also the process (the training necessary for young singers to bring a concert to the state. Leah Baskin, the choir's director, will show us how "every child is born for singing" and how singing brings connection and community to all our lives (all without the Internet and Facebook!)

The League of Women Voters will also be joining us for the delicious brunch and program and we will all participate in the auction and white Elephant sale.

Make your reservation by November 28 by sending a \$16 check to: Joan Stehulak 5719 Skinner Road, Stillman Valley, IL 61084. (Make check to AAUW)

Please bring auction items by 9:15. Thank you for your donations!

AAUW FALL ADVENTURES by Faye Marcus

This fall, several Rockford Area Branch members took advantage of two beautiful fall days and traveled west and south of Rockford.



On Sept. 17, Janet Beger, Sheryl Hall, Judy Jolly, Faye Marcus, Donna Joy and Christina Kamer journeyed to Cedarville, the birthplace of Jane Addams. We joined 40+ other AAUW-IL members and toured the Cedarville Historical Society Museum which has a wonderful exhibit of Jane's life in Cedarville. Jim Bade and Paul Fry provided us with more insight into her life and that of her family's life in the area. Mr. Fry had been a pall bearer at her funeral in 1935.

We enjoyed a wonderful lunch and birthday cake to celebrate the 151st birthday of Jane Addams. Then we travelled a short distance to her gravesite where we placed a wreath on her grave and sang "America the Beautiful" which was also sung at her funeral.



On Sat., Oct. 29, Barbara Simon, Faye Marcus, Christine Haeggquist and Joan Stehulak drove to the beautiful Stronghold Conference Center in Oregon, IL. This was AAUW-IL's annual Fall Conference. Here we met 60 other AAUW-IL members from many corners of Illinois.

We heard two very interesting speakers: **Dr. Barbara Burrell**, professor of Political Science at NIU, gave a talk entitled "A Woman's Place is in the House...and the Senate." She spoke about the challenges of fundraising and the effect on personal and family life on women who choose to run for elected office from local offices to the White House. She encourages women to run for public office as having women officials affects the way women's issues are viewed in state legislatures and in Congress. During the last decade, the numbers of women running for public office has decreased.

Tara Caldara, Assistant Director and Tech Trainer for the Zion-Benton (IL) Public Library, led us through a training on social media and the importance in gaining new members and keeping our members in the "know"

about our activities. Remember we have a web site and face book page: www.aauw-il.org/rockford and facebook.com/aauw. Check them out.

Note: Our web site now has a link from "Events" that takes you to the flyer about the Dec. 3 Brunch and Auction.

Also—"Women In My History" materials can now be obtained by going to "Projects" on the web site and then linking to the pages needed to participate. Now we will not have to send out paper copies to schools.



By Judy Schultz

Thanks to all the branch members who sold Bergner's Community Days booklets for \$5.00 each and to those who sold booklets at Bergner's on Oct. 10th, Nov. 11th and 12th. We now have raised \$730.00 for our scholarship fund! Thanks to all who helped by buying booklets, selling booklets and promoting the event.

Seventeen members purchased 5 booklets and sold them or gave them to friends/family. Special thanks to those who sold booklets at Bergner's: Jane McAfee, Joan Bailey-Murray and her super-salesman friend, John, Jean Beranek, Barbara Ellingson, Christine Haeggquist, Judy Jolly, Jackie Shair, Mary Thompson, Liz Walgren, Jean Herro, Barbara Simon and Judy Schultz. They sold 48 booklets totaling \$240.00. The scholarship committee is working on the requirements for receiving a scholarship and will soon have a report.

AAUW RESEARCH

On Nov. 8, AAUW released its newest groundbreaking research: "Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School." This is considered to be the most comprehensive, nationally representative research conducted in the past 10 years on sexual harassment in middle and high schools. This research is a call to action to parents, students and teachers. Included in the report are practices and policies for how teachers, parents and community groups can help change the school climate.

Register at **SCHNUCKS** for a card that will benefit three charities of your choice when you shop. **E-SCRIPT** gives 5% of your purchase to **AAUW** and/or other charitable groups. It's easy—just go to www.escrip.com. Now that the Hilander stores are Schnucks, the card would be good at all the locations. It's an easy way to benefit AAUW.

The **Book Beat** book group will meet on Jan. 17 at 12:45 at the home of Barbara Simon. Ruth Siegfried will review "**the Triple Agent,**" by Jobi Warrick, the story of Rockford native Elizabeth Hanson, who worked and was killed in Afghanistan. New members are welcome. Please call the hostess if you plan to attend.

YEARBOOK CORRECTIONS:

*Please check your information in the yearbook and let Barbara Simon know if changes are needed. We would like to communicate with you by email if possible but if you need paper copies of announcements, please let her know.

Email for Christine Haeggquist:
chaeggquis@aol.com

Email for Claire McIntyre:
Claire.f.mcintyre@gmail.com

Email for Jackie Shair:
jackieantiques@comcast.net

Email for Ruth Siegfried:
ruthbwrite1@juno.com

Email for Karen Weedman:
kjweed@sbcglobal.net

Andrea Wight: add *Life Member*

MY TRIP TO CUBA by Faye Marcus

For one week in October I joined 16 participants on a Road Scholar (Elder Hostel) trip to Cuba. The purpose of the trip, besides that of traveling through Cuba, was to deliver over the counter medical supplies to NGO's in Cuba. How was road Scholar qualified to travel to Cuba? The foundation is issued a license by the United States Department of the Treasury to organize humanitarian missions of volunteers who are willing to deliver much needed supplies to the Cuban people. We delivered supplies to rural and urban Cuban communities. The participants from all over the U.S. met in Miami and boarded a charter flight to Havana.

Apart from delivering these supplies, we had classes many mornings with very interesting people telling us about the history, culture and people of a country that is inaccessible to most of us in the U.S. We were able to speak quite openly with English speaking Cuban citizens about U.S-Cuban relations, living conditions in Cuba, and the role of the arts in Cuba today. Our guide was a wonderful English speaking Cuban woman who was able to tell us a great deal of the history and current situations in Cuba.

Cuba is a beautiful country with wonderful, friendly and spontaneous people. Much of the architecture in Old Havana is crumbling; however there are pockets of renovations occurring. The economy has been problematic especially since the early '90's, but there seems to be some improvement on the way. We stayed at beautiful hotels, ate at very nice restaurants, visited an artist's home as well as a private home near a closed sugar mill and were treated to several cultural events—Spanish comedic operetta, a dance recital and an acappella choir. We saw beautiful art work in locally owned art galleries and in the beautiful Cuban Art Museum. And no—you cannot bring Cuban cigars, rum or coffee into the U.S. We were told not to even try—they will be confiscated by Immigration authorities.

I would encourage our travelling AAUW members to visit Cuba. Check our Road Scholar for more information about these humanitarian missions.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

THREE WOMEN SHARE NOBEL PRIZE FOR PEACE.

This was a headline in our local paper and in other newspapers this past October. Of the 3 women who shared the prize, two are from Liberia: Liberian peace activist, Leymah Gbowee and Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Both of these women were featured in the film "Pray the Devil Back to Hell". Our Rockford Branch and Rockford College co-sponsored the viewing of this film in March 2011 during Women's History month.

This is the type of activity that the International Affairs Interest Group has been involved in. We are planning to begin our IA activities again after the first of the year. AAUW is encouraging branches to become involved in the Human Trafficking issue. While this is an international issue, it is also a local issue. More information will be coming your way about this important interest group. If you have not participated before, we are looking forward to new participants. Look for emails.

GET OUT THE VOTE IN 2012!

Public Policy is gearing up again. 2012 is a very important election year. Are you ready? AAUW is ready. AAUW-IL is one of 15 states that have been awarded an Impact Grant. This Impact Grant's primary goals are to make a state-wide effort to register new voters and to increase voter turnout (especially among women) in the Illinois Primary Election on March 20 and the General Election on November 6, 2012.

Why are we particularly targeting women? Many issues in these elections will be important to women and to the issues that are AAUW public policy issues. Among them are: women's right to choose, access to contraception, health care, education, and social security.

Are you registered to vote? Do you vote in primary elections? Do you vote in general elections? Are your friends, neighbors, relatives, co-workers registered to vote and do they vote in elections?

How can you help? You can become a deputy registrar by working with other local groups such as the League of Women Voters to help register voters at various locations.

Become an educated voter. Our Rockford Branch will be co-sponsoring election forums during the months of January and February prior to the Primary Election on March 20. Please attend and become educated about the issues. Not only do we need "registered voters"; we need "educated voters". And of course "Get Out and Vote **EVERY** vote is important. **YOUR** vote is important.

As an Impact Grant awardee, members of AAUW-IL (you) will be able to receive training on voter education and get out the vote activities. These trainings will be provided by the AAUW Action Fund. Please save the dates: April 27-28, AAUW-IL State Convention which will be in the Chicago suburbs.

Remember: **THE POWER OF ONE VOTE!**