



January 2011 Newsletter

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

WILLMAR BRANCH MEETING

Bethel Lutheran Church

Monday, January 17, 2011

6:45 pm – Coffee and Treats

7:00 pm – Program

The next Willmar Branch AAUW meeting will be held on Monday, January 17th, 2011 at Bethel Lutheran Church. At 6:45 we will have coffee and treats followed by a program at 7:00pm. This month's program will be given by Rebecca Waggoner the Anti-Violence Program Director from OutFront Minnesota. OutFront Minnesota is a Minneapolis based organization that provides programs and services to the GLBT and allied community programs on public policy, anti-violence, legal and education/training. Brave the cold and join us for a meeting you won't want to miss!)

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FROM THE CO- PRESIDENT...

Letter from a Co-President...Jeanette Carlson wishes to share the following:

We're #15 doesn't cut it in today's global economy! The latest global rankings of high school test scores---which show the United States at No. 15 or worse in the key categories and Shanghai at No. 1 across the board---stunned many Americans. Some educators and politicians called it a "Sputnik moment," comparable to when Russia launched the first satellite in 1957.

Hardly. While Shanghai's appearance at the top might have been a stunner, America's mediocre showing was no surprise. What matters most is not that a city in China made such a stellar debut in the rankings, but that U.S. students were average in reading and science, and even weaker in math.

Average doesn't keep you competitive in the world economy, nor does it help you hang on to superpower status for very long. Many unemployed Americans can't fill the technical jobs at companies such as Google and Intel. And if U.S. schools don't produce students with those skills, the jobs will continue to sit empty or will find takers from other countries.

So what's the secret of success for top-ranked Shanghai, Finland, and Canada? It's not much of a secret, really. Their educational systems are built on common-sense approaches that too often are alien concepts in the USA:

A national, standardized curriculum - students are taught the same subjects, in the same order, using the same course materials. That allows teachers and students to build on knowledge gained in earlier grades. In the U.S., even teachers in the same schools---let alone those in different districts or

states---might not teach the same lessons to students in the same grade. That means some students are taught the same material repeatedly while others get left behind. Because schools here are controlled by states and localities, a national curriculum probably is a non-starter. But uniform core standards are not.

Excellent teachers - in the top-ranked nations, the best and the brightest are attracted to education programs at top-flight universities. Teachers are well-paid. School systems in the U.S. increasingly recognize the importance of good teachers, but they still haven't found consistent ways to attract them, train them, and keep them. In many districts, layoffs and promotions are determined by seniority, not by merit. Teacher evaluations are largely meaningless.

The encouraging news is that the U.S. is taking some baby steps forward. The No Child Left Behind law added accountability but let each state set its own benchmarks. Now, a project to adopt a common "staircase" of English and math skills is gaining momentum. More than 40 states have signed on.

Meanwhile, the volunteer Teach for America program is funneling some of the nation's brightest college graduates into troubled urban schools. The best charter schools are scoring remarkable successes.

Three successive U.S. presidents have committed massive efforts to improve education. Unless those involved start embracing reforms instead of resisting them, the next international rankings, due in 2013, are likely to show the U.S. even further behind.

(USA Today, December 15, 2010)

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to member Kim Boysen. Her father passed away recently.

WHY SO FEW? WOMEN IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATH (STEM)

***Dr. Andresse St. Rose
Research Associate, American
Association of University Women
Washington D.C***

Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

In an era when women are increasingly prominent in medicine, law and business, why are there so few women scientists and engineers? A new research report by AAUW presents compelling evidence that can help to explain this puzzle. In-depth yet accessible profiles of eight key research findings that point to environmental and social barriers – including stereotypes, gender bias and the climate of science and engineering departments in colleges and universities – that continue to block women's participation and progress in science, technology, engineering, and math.

***Thursday, January 20, 2011,
7:00 pm
St Paul Branch of AAUW
990 Summit Ave, St Paul, MN 55105***

*Free and Open to the Public
but reservations requested by Tues, Jan 18, 2011*

Doors open at 6:30 pm

*For more information
contact Karen Kirkwood at karenskirkwood@cs.com
or (952) 891-2876*

MEMBERS WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO HOST/PROVIDE REFRESHMENTS:

January: Carla Buzzeo/Raeanna Gislason

February: Kathy Vruwink and ?

March: Potluck Dinner

April: Louise Thoma/Bernice Grabber-Tintes

May: Annual Dinner Meeting

THANKS!

Thanks to Bonnie Pehrson and Marion Nordin for decorating the AAUW tree at the Historical Society!

And thanks to all who contributed gifts for the girls at the group home. The staff tells me often how much our efforts on behalf of the girls are appreciated.

Dee

Rosenbrook

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Winona Branch will host the MN AAUW convention **April 29-May 1, 2011**. They offer a visit to a Marine Art Museum and a bike path for walking besides all the excellent speakers/workshops typical at the state convention. Attending a convention really gets one into the spirit of AAUW!

National AAUW Convention: June 16-19, 2011 in Washington, DC.

Go to aauw.org for more information. Best prices are offered by registering in December.

WILLMAR AAUW BRANCH MEETING

November 15, 2010, 6:45 p.m.

Co-President Jeanette Carlson welcomed guests and members to the 534th meeting of Willmar Branch AAUW at Bethel Lutheran Church. Guests were Linda Mathiasen, Mallory Vogel and the girls/counselors from the Prairie Lakes Youth Program.

Carla Buzzeo, Co-VP Program, introduced our speaker, Cathy Keuseman. Cathy is an Agri-Business and Renewable Energy Specialist with the Willmar and Kandiyohi County Economic Development Commission. Cathy serves on a number of committees, works on projects and task forces and organizes bio-business forums. The EDC's goals are to commercialize renewable resources, recruit and revitalize membership and tie all projects to initiatives. The ammonia project plans to produce ammonia locally utilizing corn stalks for the needed energy. The Kandiyohi County Landfill Task Force is considering

converting waste to energy by burning it.

The business meeting was called to order by Jeanette Carlson at 7:50.

The secretary's minutes were approved as printed. Treasurer Louise Thoma reported a checking balance of \$1117.70 which included \$398.86 for the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) and \$1272.61 in savings. The report was accepted subject to financial review.

Membership:

Dee Rosenbrook, Co-VP Membership, announced that Linda Mathiasen became the 44th branch member.

Program:

Carol Esbjornson will present a Tribute to Eleanor Roosevelt for the program on December 20th at 6:45 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. Members are asked to bring treats to share and prizes for Bingo. Everyone will be reminded of the Holiday Party via the Telephone Tree.

Funds Contributions:

There was a consensus to increase the LAF donation to \$400 from \$398.86. A motion was made by Betty Schneider, seconded by Marion Nordin and carried to allocate the Educational Funds with \$1000 to National AAUW Funds, \$500 for a Ridgewater College student and \$100 to the Civic Scholarship Fund. A motion was made by Vicki Melbye, seconded by Bonnie Pehrson and carried to honor Dee Rosenbrook as the Named Gift Honoree for our \$1000 national contribution.

Board Reports:

Historian Marion Nordin said Kim Boysen, TRiO Advisor at Ridgewater College, was quoted in a newspaper article--"A Starting Point"-- about a grant for under-represented students. The Newsletter deadline for articles is January 1. Julia Janssen, Public Policy, urged members to contact state legislators in support of Minnesota C.A.F.E. (Constitutional Amendment for Equality). The amendment is a change to our state constitution that would read: "Equality under the law shall not be abridged or denied on account of gender."

Other:

Jennifer Gibson and Sally Kerfeld, Director of Admissions at Ridgewater College, have been invited to the Prairie Lakes Youth Program on November 18th to give the girls information about attending college. There is an opportunity to teach the English language to immigrants at the Coalition for African Community Services. Anyone interested in serving on the Women's Coalition Board can contact Toni Sing at Bremer Bank. On Friday, November 19th, at 1:00 p.m. assistance would be appreciated to set up the Christmas tree at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Jones, Secretary

AAUW Value Promise

By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through

NEW ADDRESS

Bernice Grabber-Tintes

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Willmar, MN 56201

Phone # - 320-262-5025

educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance

