

**Volume 32-Issue 7 March 2008**

**Grand Rapids, Minnesota**

**President: Jan Hill**

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*“May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face and the rain fall soft upon your fields – and until we meet again may God hold you in the palm of his hand”. A traditional Irish blessing.*

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#### **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Thanks to election year rhetoric we are being deluged with cries for **CHANGE**. How exciting to envision the possibility of a woman or African American as our next president. But not just politicians are crying change.

Our national office of AAUW is also involved in change. Over the past year, AAUW has taken bold steps and is moving in new directions. These planned changes are designed to keep the organization viable and relevant. The selection of Linda Hallman as the new executive director is important. Ms. Hallman brings a depth of experience in policy making at the national level. Another change is the recently launched AAUW online blog – [AAUW dialog](#). This is designed to provide an avenue for discussions on current news and events.

“Equal Pay Day” this year is celebrated on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is the day that women’s pay finally catches up to that of men. I use the word celebrate loosely as we are still working to fill the gap. Currently, for every dollar that a man earns, a woman earns only 0.75. This is certainly an area needing change.

Our state convention offers awards to “Women as Agents of Change”. Several branch members have come forward with great suggestions for nominations from our branch. If you have ideas for others, please submit names to me by the March meeting. Along with the names, include information on the candidate and why she is deserving of the award

Our nominating committee has been busy and quite successful in their quest for nominations for president, vice president-membership and secretary. The candidates will be announced at our March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting and additional nominations will also be welcomed at that time. Please feel free to submit more names for any of these offices. A “change” in the composition of our Board is always a plus with the infusion of new talent and ideas.

Remember: “Some people make things happen, some watch things happen, and some wonder at the end of their lives, “What happened?”

Very sincerely,

Jan M. Hill

#### **FROM THE TREASURER**

The 2008/2009 AAUW dues are \$66.00. If you pay your dues by the May meeting you will be eligible for the drawing of a free membership. You may pay your dues at the next meetings, or mail to Kathy Pliska. Dues must be received by 7-1-08 to be on the membership roles.

Our May dinner is on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at Ruttger's, 5:30 social and 6:00 dinner. The cost is \$18.00 and must be to Kathy Pliska by May 10<sup>th</sup>. You may pay for this at the March or April meeting or mail to Kathy Pliska by May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks so much.  
Kathy Pliska

## **BRANCH NEWS**

### **2007-2008 PROGRAMS**

All meetings are held at the Community Presbyterian Church unless otherwise indicated. The registration and social time begin at 5:30 PM, followed by dinner at 6 PM and program at 7 PM. These programs reflect the effort of the program committee to offer AAUW mission based programs several times a year. The committee always appreciates your comments and suggestions. *If you need a ride to any program, please let your caller know and one will be arranged for you.*

### **March 17<sup>th</sup> –One Shared World: What Are the Conditions that Help Women and Children**

#### **Thrive? General Meeting Program - Celebrating Women's History Month**

We are all part of Women's History Month! We are or have been active in professions and community work, which help women and children thrive. (Hopefully men can thrive also.) Women have always done so in any community all over the world in the past and

are active in planning for the future. Whether oppressed or in charge, poor or wealthy, educated or barely schooled women have and are striving to make a better world for children and other women.

When going through the membership book we find that almost 75% of us have been engaged in education. Others have been in the health professions, and many of you worked in other professions or jobs that enhance opportunities for others. Our membership is loaded with experience and expertise in making our world a better place. Some of us have "been there and done that" with community projects and have held active leadership positions in our professions. Most of us whether retired or working outside our homes want to make a difference but we are careful with our time and energy. We are powerful and our voices will be heard if we want them to be.

In our March meeting we will get better acquainted with each other and explore our ideas about barriers to thriving in our northern Minnesota. We will start with One Shared World from national AAUW and then focus on where we are now. We have a semi - structured program planned that should be fun and informative. The program committee has asked some of our members to highlight some programs and projects. You all will have an opportunity to learn from each other. We will have prizes and rewards and announcements and drama. See you on March 17, 2008 at 5:30 PM at Community Presbyterian Church.

Agents for Change - a DVD resource from AAUW entitled "The AAUW Roadmap" will be shown at 4:30 in the church library before the Monday meeting. You are urged and invited to come watch this piece and participate in the discussion after seeing parts of the DVD. It is especially important that we talk about "Because Equity is still an Issue" theme and talk about the value of an organization like AAUW in today's world. This will be a good start on our evening program. Also it will help us look at our program schedule and the interests of the members. If you have been following the AAUW national information you know that AAUW is in the midst of a strategic plan to change and focus AAUW on the needs and issues of equity and education for women.

Grand Rapids Branch of AAUW Summer Programs are unique in Minnesota. We have found that many of our members like summer activity and a chance to meet and visit with members who are gone part of the winter. The program committee needs help and would like some volunteers to help plan the three summer programs. We welcome suggestions for program themes and invitations or suggestions for locations. Talk to Jan Hill or Marilyn Rossman if you are interested.

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**April 21<sup>st</sup> –Autism and the education response to special needs.** Speaker is to be announced.

**May 19<sup>th</sup> – Earl Currie: Great Train Trips and other train stories.** Meeting will be at Ruttger's.

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## **COMMITTEES**

### **EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

Interim chair Karen Wennen has raffle tickets for the state organization “get away”. First prize is a weekend at Cragun’s, with cash prizes for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize. Tickets are \$5 each. Karen will be selling the tickets at the March and April meetings. The drawings will be

held at the State convention in St. Paul on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Also available for sale will be chances on a night at the Sawmill Inn with a hospitality basket. Proceeds from that sale will go to support our ICC scholarship. Those chances will be \$2 each or 3 for \$5.

## **INTEREST GROUPS**

Note: All interest groups are open to any member subject only to meeting location considerations. Any member can start an interest group keeping in mind that such groups should be relevant to the mission and program objectives of AAUW. If you have an idea for a new group, contact President Jan Hill or Program Vice-President Marilyn Rossman for assistance in getting started and recruiting members.

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### **CREATIVE ART**

The group meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 9 A.M. at the home of Margaret Morris. It is open to new members. Bring your own lunch.

### **MONDAY MORNING LITERATURE GROUP**

The group meets on the first Monday of the month (unless a holiday intervenes) at 10:30 A.M. Please call the hostess if you cannot attend.

**March 3, 2008** — Book selection is The Echo Maker by Richard Powers. Hostess is Audrey Erdman, co hostess is Betty Marshall. Meet at 10 AM at K Mart/ Bank parking lot.

**April 7, 2008** – Book selection is Pillars of the Earth. Hostess is Betty Akre, co hostess is Shirley Bennett.

**LITERATURE GROUP 2** - Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month (unless a holiday causes a change) at 10:30 A.M. at the Grand Rapids Public Library. Listed below are the books selected through May. The group disbands for the summer and resumes in September.

**March 12, 2008** – The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon

**April 9, 2008** – The Passion of Artemisia by Susan Vreeland

**May 14, 2008** – My Antonia by Willa Cather

**September 10, 2008** – Einstein by Walter Isaacson

### **BRIDGE**

The group meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at 9:30 AM.

**March 24, 2008** –Hostess is Mary Singsank

**April 28, 2008** – Hostess is Eva Waller

### **SPECIAL INTERESTS GROUP**

The group meets on the second Monday of the month at 4:30 pm. For information about the Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, call Marney Smith for information.

### **WALKING GROUP**

While walking and talking the group settles many world problems and shares good information. Walks take about 1.5 hours. Barb Popkin serves as the group's message center and organizer. Beginning in November walks will be on Saturday afternoons starting at 2 PM. The usual meeting place is the parking lot back of Christ Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids. Those interested should contact Barb to make sure that they are on the email list or phone list. Barb can be reached at either 326-6691 or [barbpopkin@mchsi.com](mailto:barbpopkin@mchsi.com). Check in weekly for the walk locations.

### **PUBLIC POLICY**

The Public Policy Interest Group has decided to focus attention on and discuss the following topics during the coming year. Topic specific books will provide the focus for the policy discussion. Meetings are held in the KAXE Meeting Room from 4 pm to 5 pm on the following dates:

**March 20 – Topic:** A better understanding of Islam and its place in the world.

Suggested books include In the Shadow of the Prophet by Milton Viorst and No God but God by Reza Aslam.

**April 17 – Topic:** The end of poverty. Suggested books include The End of Poverty by Jeffrey Sachs and The Working Poor by David Shipler.

Please plan to join the group for these interesting and timely discussions.

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY – MARCH**

4 – Jan Hill

8 – Kathy Pliska

19 – Joyce Chalupsky

20 - Betty Akre

### **OTHER NEWS**

From our February Speaker Suzanne Koeplinger:

Good afternoon everyone;

I just wanted you to know we have a bill introduced in the House – HF

3196 – asking for two things: change in state statute that requires the Human Trafficking Task Force to include research into trafficking of American Indians in MN in their annual report to the legislature, and funding to allow us to conduct the research on the scope of the problem. I am being told by EVERYONE there that there is NO money and now I hear we don't have a Senate bill because there is a general tendency to lump all trafficking bills into immigration and so there is political hesitancy on this. Of course I needn't tell you we are not an immigration issue, far from it, so I am pushing back on this in hopes of at least getting hearing.

So, if you can, please ask your networks to call their legislators and tell them you want HF 3196 to be considered. I am realistic and don't expect they will fund us, but I won't stop asking until someone gives me an unequivocal NO.

Thanks for all your help and support.  
Suzanne Koepplinger  
Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center  
[www.miwrc.org](http://www.miwrc.org)

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ASSOCIATION WEBSITE URL – <http://www.aauw.org>  
AAUW MINNESOTA WEBSITE – [www.aauwmn.org](http://www.aauwmn.org)

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***Please note that there are no minutes available for publication with this issue. There are computer problems with the secretary's computer.***

