

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

## President's Message



I live with three young men. I refer to them as my boys. These sons of mine grew up knowing what a hard-working woman can do with her life; as they watched me take on leadership roles at work, earn my doctorate, care for them, and help my parents out. They also know how important women's rights are to me and take great joy in debating with me about it. Over the holidays one of my boys said, "Mom, just what rights do you want that you don't already have?" I was not at all prepared to respond. I was so embarrassed. Of course, I did not tell him that. We were at a family gathering with 10+ people in the room ranging from 7-78 years old so the conversation quickly moved on without much of a pause at all. Yet the fact remains, I did not have a good answer. One of my New Year resolutions will be to have a good and short answer. I will keep it short so people actually will listen. I need an elevator speech, as it is called today, as a response to that question. I don't have it ready yet-but I am working on it. How would you answer that question?

*Renee Freers*

## **Upcoming Events:**

~ January 17<sup>th</sup> ~ Pizza Ranch Fundraiser

~ January 25<sup>th</sup> ~ Branch Meeting via ZOOM, 6:30 pm Social Time/  
7:00 pm Meeting. Program:

~ February 8 ~ *The Woman Who Smashed Codes* by Jason Fagone,  
led by Kathy Keeton.

## **Program information for January 25<sup>th</sup>**

### **Sex trafficking in Independence, Missouri**

Independence police detectives Emily Knox and John Roach will give us the latest information concerning sex trafficking throughout Independence.

Detective John Roach has been employed by the Independence Police Department since September 10, 2002. He has been a detective for the Special Victims Unit since May 12, 2012.

Detective Emily Knox has been employed by the Independence Police Department since March 16, 2004. She has worked property and person crimes and Domestic Violence for several years prior to becoming a detective for the Special Victims Unit. She joined the Special Victims Unit in September 2016.

## **Membership Information**

This is a wonderful opportunity to invite guests to our Zoom program presented by Independence Police Detectives on Sex trafficking.

Send guest name and email address to Sue Raymond or Sue Shineman, so Sue S. will send an invite to let them "join the meeting". It's a good membership opportunity and good PR for AAUW Independence!!

Sue Raymond

## December 2021 AAUW Financial Report

### CHECKING ACCOUNT

<b>BALANCE ON HAND 11/30/2021</b>			<b>\$4849.48</b>
RECEIPTS			
12/10/2021	Deposit National \$16 x 1 member	16	
12/20/2021	Deposit Christmas Stockings Donations	870	
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b>\$886</b>	
12/20/2021	VISA-November Speaker SewPowerful	40	
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>		<b>\$40</b>	
<b>BALANCE ON HAND 12/31/2021</b>			<b>\$5695.48</b>

### SAVINGS ACCOUNT

<b>BALANCE ON HAND 11/30/2021</b>			<b>\$8339.38</b>
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$0.18	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		\$0.00	
<b>BALANCE ON HAND 12/31/2021</b>			<b>\$8339.56</b>

**TOTAL ASSETS 12/31/2021: Checking \$ 5695.48+ Savings \$8339.56 = \$14035.04**

### **Policies and Branch Bylaws Information** (The complete Policies and Bylaws Documents are attached to the newsletter email for members)

The Board unanimously approved the updated Policies - Standing Rules at the January 10, Board Meeting. (Policy updates do not require a vote of the membership.)

The purpose of these policies is to serve as a guide for practices which have been found, through the experience of past boards, to be effective. They include procedures and principles which are too detailed, or too subject to change, to be included in the Bylaws. These policies can be approved by the board. Vote by membership is not required. All policies are in accordance with, but subordinate to, the Bylaws of the State and National AAUW and are in addition to the State Policies.

The Board unanimously approved the updated Branch Bylaws at the January 10, Board Meeting. The Proposed Bylaws changes will be presented to the membership for final approval on January 25 at our regular Branch meeting.

Please review these prior to the meeting. Contact Sue Shineman with any questions. [sueshineman46@gmail.com](mailto:sueshineman46@gmail.com) or 816-365-1180

## **AAUW Independence Branch December 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Pat Bounds, Jane Campbell, Patty Chadwick, Lisa Cox, Lois Domsch, Renee Freers, Joyce Gillespie, Jan Keeler, Kathy Kelley, Barbara Leabo, Melissa Morawitz, Sue Raymond, Kelley Reetzke, Sue Shineman, Judy Tucker, Judy Tyson, Courtney Yount-McGinnis

Speaker: Courtney Yount-McGinnis

Renee called the meeting to order and stated that one of our goals is to grow in the area of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). In her experience we are constantly learning new information about DEI which helps us to grow as people. She called on Pat Bounds to speak about the Candy bar fundraiser. Pat explained that members could choose a stocking from the wreath, remove the candy bar, and replace it with a check made out to AAUW. This money goes to our branch. This fundraiser is being done in lieu of the book sale. Jolene made the stockings. Renee interjected that while on the subject of checks, the deadline for the Century Club is December. She asked members to make a note in the memo specifying choice of fund. It was mentioned that this can be completed online as well.

Renee asked the members for announcements. It was mentioned that Ruby Smith's husband, Bill, and Gail Metcalf-Schartel's sister, Tracy, passed away. Members were notified via email. Renee wished members in attendance Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and to enjoy whatever seasonal traditions they might have. She stated that the Board Meeting would not be on January 4, as previously announced, but it would be at the church. She said Board members would be notified when it was officially scheduled. The branch meeting in January would be on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Courtney Yount-McGinnis was introduced as the speaker. She is a member of our branch and co-chair of the DEI committee. Courtney grew up in Blue Springs. Her mom was a social worker and her dad was a teacher in the Hickman Mills District. She started her own non-profit called the Equity Action Collective. Today Courtney is calling attention to different traditions in different cultures. In a world where differences are put at the forefront, so many things are the same across cultures. When the word Diversity is heard, specific things come to mind such as race, gender and disability. Additionally, we are all very diverse, we grew up in different times and situations. While at Stephens College, Courtney met her first Jewish person, they became friends, and had a real conversation about the religion. Her friend had recently lost her mother, and with Hanukkah approaching, Courtney decided to make the holiday happen for this person. She started researching, got a menorah, latkes kugel, and planned dreidl games. Although she stated she probably didn't do everything right, it was meaningful to her friend and she achieved the goal of learning something outside of herself.

Fast forward, after a few moves, to Philadelphia. Courtney made lots of Italian friends...REALLY Italian, she emphasized. It was a totally different holiday experience, celebrating the Feast of the Seven Fishes on Christmas Eve. Traditionally this is a day of fasting celebrated with a grand meal featuring 7 seafood dishes, but Courtney remembers they had ham, turkey and every kind of pasta dish imaginable. It looked and tasted different than other

## **AAUW Independence Branch December 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes (cont'd)**

“Italian food”. Courtney stated when she thinks of Christmas she thinks of garlic and a baking smell.

Courtney shared many experiences and traditions. From India she learned of Diwali. This is a festival lasting 5 days that celebrates the triumph of lightness over dark. It happens in December and signals the end of harvest, a change in seasons, and symbolizes the light that exists in ourselves and home. Buddhists also celebrate this holiday. Jane Campbell was able to visit India and was there during Diwali. She said there were lights everywhere and they were told it was celebrating the triumph of good over evil. Courtney went on to mention Winter Solstice, a Hopi religious ceremony celebrating the shortest day of the year, or the longest night. The tribal chief welcomes the kachinas, there is ritual dancing, singing, and storytelling. Another tradition is the Hamsa, or hand of God. It is a symbol used in many cultures, tracing to pre-Christianity. In relationship to Judaism, it protects against the evil eye and is a symbol of good fortune. Courtney stated that the message in all these symbols and celebrations is to bring lightness and to strike out darkness. She emphasized there will always be lightness and darkness in the world, we just have to find the light...

Renee asked for any additional announcements. Joyce Gillespie mentioned that the Bingham-Waggoner Home, the 1859 Jail, and the Vaile Mansion are looking for volunteers. If members are interested they should contact the establishment of interest.

Following the meeting members enjoyed a Christmas potluck luncheon. The branch members provided the food. A special thank you to Jane Campbell and Pat Bounds for setting up the area for the luncheon.