



EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881

INDEPENDENCE BRANCH

Empowering women since 1940

Vol. 85 No. 6 February 2025

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

President's Message

February 2025

We are headed into a busy spring with many exciting events and opportunities for our branch. Please read the newsletter carefully for details and mark your calendars for upcoming events.

This year we are seeking members to serve as President, Program Vice-President, and Recording Secretary for the 2025-2027 term. Gail Metcalf Shartel has graciously agreed to continue as our awesome recording secretary. Thank you, Gail! I have agreed to stay on as Co-President for next year (2025-2026). We are looking for a Co-President to serve for the 2025-2027 term. She would serve as Co-President with me the first year, and then we would bring on another Co-President during the second year. An exciting development with our program planning for next year is that KC IBC (Inter Branch Council) is moving forward with plans to coordinate our programs and events next year. The idea is to have each branch within KC IBC be responsible for setting up a program to be presented jointly with the other branches. Kansas City, Parkville, KC Northland, Shawnee Mission, and Independence make up KC IBC. Hopefully, this will be a sharing of the program responsibility between the branches. It should help the Program VP's because 3-4 programs will be planned by the other branches. I have been a part of the planning stages this year and will continue as a mentor and contact for the new Program VP. It's an exciting time to get involved as Program VP as well as Co-President! This is a great opportunity to help our KC metro branches collaborate, help sustain our organization and expand our friendships.



Stronger together,
Karol

Upcoming Events:

- ~ February 22 ~ Legislative Briefing ~ 9 am-Noon (See p. 6)
- ~ February 25 ~ AAUW Independence Branch meeting – Englewood Arts presenting
- ~ March 8 ~ V's Ristorante Luncheon ~ 11:30 am (See pg. 3 for additional info)
- ~ March 24 ~ Pizza Ranch Fundraiser ~ 5-8 pm (see p. 5 for more information)
- ~ **March 24 ~ AAUW Board Meeting Canceled**
- ~ March 31 ~ Deadline for Woman of Achievement Nominations (See p. 7)
- ~ September 6 ~ Day of the Child Celebration (See p. 3 for more information)

Additional Events/Cancellations:

February 16 – March 16 ~ An art exhibit at Englewood Arts in honor of Black History month. Hopeful plan is to attend as a group. date tba. Please feel free to go on your own.

March 8 event for International Women's Day, to have been at FUMC - **canceled**

Two Social events in March

March 8. 11:30am. Meet at V's for an "After Holiday Celebration" - info requesting rsvp sent out via email. reply to Sue Raymond

March 29 Radium Girls at the Sermon Center. 7pm
Dinner at Brewer's Wrap House, 5:00 PM
See newsletter for details and a copy of the menu. Reservation needed.

April 22, 2025 Regular meeting. Student awards. Recipients of Scholarship award(s); each will give short presentation.

April Participation in City's Day of the Child **POSTPONED** to Sept

May 3, 2025

In lieu of Branch meeting, please join the State meeting via Zoom 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 PM

June 7, 2025 CELEBRATE the successful and rewarding AAUW year. Award - Woman of Achievement. Event at Café Verona. Guest presenter Cindy McClain.

Programs/Events ~ Sue Raymond, Program VP

I hope everyone is excited as I am that we can get together at **V's March 8 to have our candy bar fundraiser and enjoy our postponed December holiday fun time. I hope it meets with your approval** 😍

It is a Saturday at 11:30. I know not all will be able to attend; BUT **please let me know if you think you WILL attend.** I can adjust the reservation up to at least 25. It will be order from menu only, and no charge for the room, but gratuity added automatically of 20%.

Please let me know questions or comments, Sue Raymond raymonds12002@yahoo.com



V's Italiano Ristorante

10819 E. US Highway 40
Independence, MO 64055
(816) 353-1241

City of Independence “Day of the Child” Celebration

Bridget McCandless contacted Karol and asked Independence AAUW to participate in Independence’s “Day of the Child” celebration to be held at McCoy Park on Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 10:00-3:00. (This event was originally scheduled for April but has been changed to the date of September 6.) Bridget said they are planning a “day of imagination, artistry, and science across the age range.” They would like it to be an experiential day with children making their own pieces of art or participating in science demonstrations or experiments.

Independence AAUW is planning to sponsor a hands-on STEM activity for elementary school age kids. Lois Domsch, Karen Johnson, Lisa Cox, Judy Tyson, and Karol Palmer have been brainstorming ideas for our STEM activity. The city will provide the table and chairs for our activity. In case of rain, the event will be held the next day, Sunday.



Program Goals/Revised and Updated for the Yearbook ~ Sue Raymond, VP Programs

2024-2025 Program Goals are to focus on Civic and Philanthropic Organizations; how AAUW goals and objectives are met by working with, and supporting joint efforts for the betterment of our community; its families, women and children to produce greater diversity and equality in Independence and its neighboring communities.

Regular meetings are held at First United Methodist Church the 4th Tuesday of months September through May. Alternate location and date are noted for the months December, March, and June.

Meeting, September 24, 2024. Program. Introduction game. Interactive brainstorm session sparked by MO State meeting. Budget approval. Potluck supper and fellowship. Invite guests.

Volunteer Opportunity

October 4, 2024 Mothers Refuge Gala at GEHA. Volunteers receive admission ticket and meal. Sign up to Volunteer with Sue Raymond

Meeting October 22, 2024. Program. Bridget McCandless, Independence City Council Member-at-Large will bring updates on the city's activities and future plans.

Meeting November 19, 2024. Program Hillcrest Traditional Housing.

A *Service in Action Opportunity* will be held at the Hillcrest location, date to be determined. AAUW members will volunteer in various projects as designated.

Service in Action December 14, 2024

– Mother's Refuge. 14400 E 42nd St, Independence, MO 64055. AAUW members will assist Mother's Refuge with their Holiday party.

Meeting January 28, 2025

Program. Persons from Independence ISD will speak on the ISD Academies: Arts & Education, Business, Industrial Technology, Public Service, S.T.E.M

Meeting February 25, 2025. Regular meeting location and time.

Presentation from Englewood Arts staff.

Social and Service Opportunity February.

Because of Black History Month - ***Karen E Griffin Exhibition, second floor Englewood Arts building. Exhibit open Feb 16 – Mar 16). Plan for those interested in visiting the exhibit as a group; maybe with tour guide? Meet for food and drink prior to visiting and view the exhibit together. Date and time TBA. Will be a good time to invite guests. If unable to attend as a group, please feel free to go on your own.***

~~International Women's Day, March 8 CANCELED~~

~~FUMC. 400 West Maple, Independence.~~

No regular March meeting.

TWO SOCIAL IN ACTION OPPORTUNITIES in March

March 8. 11:30am. Meet at V's for an "*After Holiday Celebration*" (since no party in December). Fundraiser opportunity and social time over lunch. Pot of Gold replaces the Christmas stocking full of Oversized Chocolate bars to exchange for a donation to AAUW. Reservation required.

March 29 Members will attend the City Theatre of Independence performance of Radium Girls at the Sermon Center. Meet for meal prior to the theatre at Brewer's Wrap House, 5:00 PM. Enter through Three Trails Brewing, Main St, Independence (price range from \$10-\$15).

See the newsletter for a copy of the menu. & updated theatre info. Showtime 7PM. *Great time to invite guests.* Reservations needed.

Meeting April 22, 2025

Regular meeting. Student awards. Recipients of Scholarship award(s); each will give short presentation.

Program Goals/Revised and Updated for the Yearbook (Continued)

Participation in City's Day of the Child POSTPONED to Sept 6

May 3, 2025

In lieu of Branch meeting, please join the State meeting via Zoom 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 PM

June 7, 2025 CELEBRATE the successful and rewarding AAUW year. Award - Woman of Achievement.

Presentation by Cindy McClain - "News and Happenings on the Square"

Location – Café Verona 3:00-5:00 PM. Advance tickets to be sold. Great time to invite guests and publicity opportunity for AAUW. **details forthcoming**

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Blue River CC Opportunities

Mar 27; 11:30 – 1:00PM Pay Equity

Apr 23; 11:30 – 1:00PM Denim Day – Sexual Assault Awareness

Missouri – Legislative Briefing via Zoom ~ February 22, 9 – noon. See attachment to newsletter.

Pizza Ranch Fundraiser ~ Joyce Gillespie, Chair

The Independence AAUW Branch is scheduled at the Pizza Ranch Monday, March 24, 5–8 pm.....

We will need seven or eight ladies for this exciting dining event...which benefits our scholarship opportunities and projects...

The Ranch dining area has been upgraded with bright colors, new tables, chairs and a much improved beverage station. It was fun to enjoy chicken, dressing and pizza at lunchtime today.

Build the Branch.....Work the Ranch...



Financial Information ~ Patt Braley, Financial Officer

January has had no real financial activity, just interest on savings and CDs. January and February will be combined for next month's report.



Action Alert!

2025 Virtual AAUW Missouri

Legislative Briefing

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2025

via Zoom: 9 am - 12 pm

Join with leaders from organizations with strong advocacy positions who are working to influence Missouri Legislative action.

The ***Legislative Briefing*** allows Missouri organizations with common missions to share their activities with others at this free public event. Leaders will briefly overview their organization and explain their main legislative priority, along with two bill numbers, titles, and authors they want us to monitor.

Participating Organizations

- AAUW Missouri
- Abortion Action MO
- Coalition of Labor Union Women
- Empower Missouri
- Jobs With Justice
- Justice for All
- League of Women Voters of Missouri
- Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Missouri Equity Education Partnership
- Missouri NEA
- Missouri Voter Protection Coalition
- Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America
- National Council of Jewish Women
- Planned Parenthood Great Rivers Action
- PROMO Missouri
- Respect Voters Coalition
- Right to Read Coalition
- Women's Voices Raised for Social Justice

Please join us as we strive to do what Ruth Bader Ginsburg suggests:

"Fight for things you care about but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89911952509?pwd=DNL3tqU1O6SUEfPHjYjvKbt5UbKZFI.1>

Meeting ID: 899 1195 2509 Passcode: 126137

For more information contact Karen Francis at 314.223.4235 or karenbitzafrancis@yahoo.com

Sponsored by the American Association of University Women of Missouri

Woman of Achievement Nominations

It's time to be thinking about our annual Woman of Achievement nominations. Women of Achievement have been honored by our branch since 1957. We are proud to recognize outstanding women in our community. Please find the nomination form attached to this email. The nomination form will also be attached to the February newsletter and can be found on our Independence AAUW website. Nominees do not have to be members of AAUW. Please fill out the nomination form and return it to Karol Palmer no later than March 31, 2025. The Woman of Achievement recipient will be honored at our end of the year celebration on June 7, 2025, at Café Verona from 3:00-5:00. The Woman of Achievement Guidelines for nomination include the following. More details can be found on the website.

- 1) Nominations are to be made by branch members.
- 2) Nominees must work or have worked, or volunteer or have volunteered in the Independence area.
- 3) Membership in AAUW is optional.

[Nomination Form](#)

Public Policy ~ February 2025 ~ Kelley Reetzke, Chair

Greetings! It's Superbowl Sunday, did we win?

There is certainly a lot going on in the realm of public policy these days. It is so important to stick to our mission of the uplifting women and girls and not get caught up in the other stuff.

Ask the Senate: Oppose McMahon's Nomination

A confirmation hearing for the nomination of Linda McMahon to Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education is expected next week. Ask your senators to thoroughly examine McMahon's record and intentions for the Department of Education.

Complete the Act Now form to ensure your message gets to your senators.

<https://aauw.quorum.us/campaign/105979/> .

Call your senator! Here is the contact information:

Senator Josh Hawley ~ 1- 202-224-6154

Senator Eric Schmitt ~ 1-202-224-5721

Topics:

Vote Yes to support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls.

- With focus on strengthening and vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education

Vote yes to achieve economic security for all women.

- With focus on pay equity and fairness in compensation and benefits.
 - **This item is coming up for vote soon.**

Public Policy ~ February 2025 (Continued...) ~ Kelley Reetzke, Chair

Vote yes to guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society

- With focus on passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Follow this link for more details regarding AAUW's Biennial Action Priorities.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/aauw-public-policy-priorities/> I have also attached a copy of the **AAUW Public Policy Priorities** document.

Public Policy Priorities – Click the link for Additional Information from AAUW!!

Stay strong my sisters.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley Reetzke

AAUW Independence Branch Board January 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jane Campbell, Lisa Cox, Lois Domsch, Karol Palmer, Gail Metcalf Schartel, Sue Raymond, Sue Shineman

Karol called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE: Karol reported that she, Sue Shineman and Gail Metcalf Schartel met with Carol Brown before the holidays to discuss scholarship funds. Originally, the committee suggested that funds in the Barbara Leabo memorial fund be used to give out \$1,000 scholarships to a senior at each of the three high schools. And to use money from the Independence School District School Foundation (ISD) to give an additional three students \$1,000 scholarships, one from each high school, and continue to spend down the \$13,500 in the foundation over the next 4 years. The Board members present discussed pros and cons of accepting both of those proposals. After much discussion on the status of the ISD funds and how Barbara Leabo might have had a greater interest in the students at Blue River Community College, the Board presented the following two motions to be considered at the January Branch meeting. In addition, it was noted that the ISD funds no longer earn interest and a plan to use those funds has to be submitted by October 1st each year.

Motion 1: Establish a Barbara Leabo Memorial Scholarship and award one \$500 scholarship for 2025 to a student at Blue River Community College.

Motion 2: Award one \$1,000 scholarship from the ISD funds to a student selected from applications submitted by the three high schools.

In the future, three \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded annually from the ISD funds until \$500 remains in the account. The ISD account will then be retained in case people decide to donate to it. The initial Barbara Leabo Memorial Scholarship will be awarded from the Branch's operating funds with future monies from fund raising and the initial \$3,000 in donations for Barbara Leabo be held in certificates of deposit. The group acknowledged that the Independence School District administers the high school scholarship after the Branch designates a recipient or recipients. The group also discussed the fact that because the Barbara Leabo Memorial Scholarship specifies gender as a criteria, it cannot be included as part of the Metropolitan Community College's financial aid website. Information about the scholarship can be posted on the community bulletin board inside the Blue River Community College dining area and applications will be distributed when AAUW members are on site. Details of the requirements for the Leabo scholarship will be established by the Scholarship Committee and presented to the Branch at a later date.

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF THE CHILD: Karol received a letter from Councilwoman Dr. Bridget McCandless asking the Independence Branch participate in the first Independence Day of the Child on April 26, 2025 in McCoy Park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The group discussed issues included in the limited number of members available to

AAUW Independence Branch Board January 14, 2025 Meeting Minutes (Continued)

volunteer, weather issues, set-up issues for tables, etc. It was suggested hosting a table for creating art or other participant-involved activities. Another way to participate was to work with a cake walk, providing cakes or helping to run the cake walk. The Board decided that hosting a STEM-related activity would be possible. Information about AAUW will also be provided.

NOMINATIONS: Karol noted that candidates for President, Program Vice-President and Recording Secretary were needed. Gail Metcalf Schartel indicated she was willing to serve as Recording Secretary. Karol suggested that going forward a co-presidency would be a way to get others interested in the position of president. She proposed the current president remain in place to aid the newly elected president.

PROGRAMS: The City Theatre of Independence is presenting *Radium Girls* March 28-30 at the Sermon Center. It was suggested that attending the play could be considered in place of a March meeting. It was agreed that those interested would meet for dinner prior to the 7 p.m. play on Saturday, March 29th.

Sue Shineman said that the International Women's Day program scheduled for March 8, 2025 is cancelled because of multiple conflicts with First United Methodist Church. Because there was no Christmas program in December, it was decided a luncheon at V's with the theme Pot of Gold would be held on March 8th starting at 11:30. Sue Raymond will make arrangements and she and Patty Chadwick will work on something akin to the candy bars in stockings to raise money for scholarships would be arranged.

The notion of sharing program ideas and collaborating with other branches to include them in our programming and our branch participating in theirs, either live or by recording presentations, and sharing them or participating via Zoom was discussed.

Karol reminded everyone to check the dates to remember in the January newsletter. She announced that Women of Achievement nominations are due by March 31, 2025. Lisa said that she would link the application to Independence AAUW website as well. Lisa also announced that items for the February newsletter should be given to her by February 8.

Karol announced that she received word that the Independence Branch of AAUW received 4 of 5 Stars in the AAUW National Five Star Program. The four stars earned were: Public Policy and Advocacy; Governance and Sustainability; Programming; and Communications and External Relations. The one missed star was Advancement.

Sue Shineman discussed issues proposed by National including raising dues annually by \$5 for each of the next five years. She asked that everyone read an email she sent on Saturday, January 11 with the Subject Line: 3 IMPORTANT NOTICES in this email - AAUW MO. She said it was important to respond to National about the issues. She said that she was not in favor of the idea of raising dues as all chapters blame the cost of dues for the decline in membership. She said she preferred a campaign to have everyone make a donation of \$18.81 in addition to their dues commemorating the year AAUW was founded or an annual gift of \$184 to commemorate the number of years AAUW has existed instead of raising dues. She supports changing the by-laws and the proposed public policy priority issues for 2025-2027. She again asked that everyone respond via the links she included to let National know their feelings on the issues.

Sue Shineman said that she is reaching out to all Missouri chapters to focus on advocating for change to prepare for the midterm elections.

The meeting ended at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Metcalf Schartel

AAUW Independence Branch January 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Patty Chadwick, Lisa Cox, Lois Domsch, Karen Johnson, Kathy Kelley, Karol Palmer, Sue Raymond, Kelley Reetzke, Gail Metcalf Schartel, Sue Shineman, Judy Tyson Guest: Laurie Cadwell

Karol Palmer called the meeting to order at seven o'clock and welcomed all. She asked Patty Chadwick to introduce the evening's speaker. Patty introduced Laurie Cadwell, the AVID Director and Academy Coordinator for the Independence School District.

Ms. Cadwell indicated she had been with the Independence School District for over 30 years but had taken on her current role within the past five years. She explained the genesis of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) and Academic Core curricula. In the elementary schools, academic behaviors and higher-level thinking skills are emphasized and reinforced at a young age. Middle school students officially become a part of AVID in sixth grade and begin looking careers, using the Cornell Note Taking System and exploring college preparedness. Students utilize a binder system to assist with keeping track of assignments and utilizing note taking strategies daily. All students in sixth grade visit the University of Central Missouri campus to introduce them to what a college campus looks like. By eighth grade, students have been introduced to the various academic core curricula offered to students throughout high school.

The Academies System was brought to the attention of the Independence Board of Education in 2013 and approved in 2014 with input from local business leaders. All high school students in Independence select an Academy with a career focus aligned with what they intend to pursue as a career. Freshmen focus on core curricula and learn more about the options to follow from five broad areas: STEM, Business, Arts & Education, Public Service and Industrial tracks. The program officially started in 2018. Ms. Cadwell reviewed the various career tracks within each Academy and noted that the district provides transportation for students to the school with facilities for each of the Academies, including travel to sites outside the district for capstone experiences.

Ms. Cadwell then answered questions from those present. Topics included

- The Made in Independence storefront on the Square is now housed within the Independence Arts and Technology building on Main Street. It is still student run by students and has kiosks during Friday lunch hours in the high schools.
- Elementary and Middle School girls in technology have events in each year and summer camps in STEM are held.
- The costs for seniors to take dual credit courses are covered in part by the students and supplemented by the Independence School Foundation. The group asked whether the Branch could assist with those costs.

Ms. Cadwell was thanked for her presentation.

At 8:10 p.m. Karol called the business meeting to order.

The first order of business was to recap information from the Scholarship Committee which was considered by the Board during their January meeting. Gail Metcalf Schartel presented two motions on behalf of the Scholarship Committee for consideration:

Motion 1: Establish a Barbara Leabo Memorial Scholarship and award one \$500 scholarship for 2025 to a student at Blue River Community College.

Motion 2: Award one \$1,000 scholarship from the ISD funds to a student selected from applications submitted by the three high schools.

After a brief discussion, the motions were approved unanimously.

Karol asked for volunteers to serve on a nomination committee. Three positions are open: President, Vice President for Programming and Recording Secretary. She said that Gail had volunteered to continue as Recording Secretary. She also said that she would consider staying on as a Co-President to assist with a transition to a new president. Lois Domsch and Sue Raymond volunteered to assist with seeking candidates.

AAUW Independence Branch January 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes (Continued)

Nominations for Woman of Achievement are due by March 31st and the application will be on the Branch website once updated by Lisa.

The original plan to celebrate International Women's Day Celebration was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts with First United Methodist Church. In place of that celebration, the Board suggested holding a (order and pay on your own) luncheon at V's Italiano Ristorante at 11:30 on March 8, 2025. During the luncheon, a 'Pot o' Gold' candy bar fundraiser would be held in lieu of the Christmas stocking fundraiser from the past. This activity is in place of a March meeting.

A second March outing will be held on March 29. Those interested will meet at 5 p.m. at Brewer's Wrap House located within Three Trails Brewing on the Square followed by seeing 'Radium Girls' at the City Theatre of Independence in the Sermon Center.

Councilperson Bridget McCandless contacted Karol about the Branch participating in Independence's 'Day of the Child' on April 26 from 10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Those present discussed possible STEM related activities that could be offered at the event.

Sue Raymond distributed information about upcoming programs and said that she would distribute a more organized one in the future. She said the February meeting will be a presentation by someone from the Englewood Arts community; the April meeting would include the presentation of the scholarship winner; and the June 7th gathering will be held at Café Verona from 3:00-5:00 p.m. celebrating the year and hearing a presentation by Cindy McClain. Members are encouraged to invite friends to this presentation.

The group was reminded to:

- consider joining the February 22 National Legislative Zoom meeting; attending the state meeting on May 3rd via Zoom from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; and
- making comments on the proposed change in national dues by January 29th.

Karol announced that the Independence Branch of AAUW received 4 of 5 Stars in the National 5 Star Program.

Lisa Cox asked that items for the next newsletter be sent to her by February 8th.

Gail Metcalf Schartel said that she and Sue Shineman had been to Blue River Community College to discuss upcoming events. On March 27th, a Wednesday, from 11:30 – 1:00 p.m. AAUW will be at Blue River for Pay Equity Day with a game and prizes. On April 23 from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. AAUW will be on campus for Denim Day/Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Any member interested in attending is encouraged to participate in these visits. While on campus, applications for the Barbara Leabo Memorial Scholarship will be available.

Karol noted that she and Gail had provided refreshments for the evening. She asked for volunteers to bring refreshments for February. Patty Chadwick and Kelley Reetzke agreed to be hostesses in February.

Karol said that the Kansas City and Shawnee Mission branches were hosting a luncheon at Kingswood with a speaker from Park University on February 8th. Registration is required by January 30th and cost is \$18.

Sue Shineman won the evening's door prize from Karen Johnson.

Sue Raymond said that a Black History Month exhibit would open at the Englewood Arts Institute on February 16.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Metcalf Schartel