



Murfreesboro-AAUW Winter/Spring 2009 Newsletter

www.mtsu.edu/~aauw

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

President's Message. Happy New Year! In 2009 we may see some significant changes for AAUW, including opening membership to people who share our concerns for women and girls but who do not have college degrees. The proposal to broaden membership eligibility will be voted on at the national convention in St. Louis in June. The proposed new bylaws state, "Any individual or institution who supports the purpose and mission of AAUW may become a member of AAUW" (Article IV, Section 2a). The stated rationale for dropping the degree requirement is "Because AAUW focuses its mission on advancing equity, membership open to all who support the mission follows from that principle. Open membership provides an equal opportunity for all to join, but the unique mission and grassroots strength of AAUW do not change. As a cause-based organization, the effectiveness of AAUW relates to the commitment and passion of its members, not to any qualifications the members may have. One does not need educational credentials to work for women's education." Since I will be serving as a state delegate at the national convention, I have been thinking about the proposed bylaw changes, especially the change in membership requirements.

Right now (and at the risk of appearing elitist), I am against dropping the college degree as a membership requirement. Our common experiences as college women and men build unique bonds among AAUW members that run across gender, race, and class differences, and these bonds distinguish us from other organization promoting equity for women, such as NOW. I don't want AAUW to lose its uniqueness. I also wonder if the drop in AAUW membership in recent years is the real reason prompting the proposal for change. If so, instead of dropping the college degree, we should better promote AAUW membership among college students and extend student affiliate membership to graduate students. When women make up more than 50% of the college student population, we have a large pool to draw from, and I am not convinced we have done our best to reach these students as potential life-long AAUW members.

I say that my opinion on the question of membership requirements is my view "right now"—meaning it is subject to change. I would like to hear your opinions on dropping the college degree for AAUW membership requirements. Please email me at acantrell@comcast.net and let me know what YOU THINK. Also you may check out the proposed bylaws that will be voted on in June at <http://www.aauw.org/About/bylaws/index.cfm>. —Ayne Cantrell, President Murfreesboro-AAUW

Branch Winter/Spring Meetings and Programs. Murfreesboro-AAUW meets each month, September through May (excluding January), and always at 5-7 PM. Upcoming meetings are as follows:

- **FEBRUARY 12—Farm Bureau, 818 S. Church St.** Dinner, program, and business meeting. / Program: "License to Thrive: 35 Years of Title IX": A Documentary Film / Donation: Sugar or sugar substitutes for the Domestic Violence Program. **DON'T FORGET TO BRING BOOK DONATIONS FOR BOOK SALE.**
- **MARCH 5--Jackson Building, MTSU.** National Women's History Month reception, program, and business meeting. / Program: "Tennessee Women for the Vote: An Enactment of a Tennessee Women's Suffrage Rally, 1913." / Donation: Female products for the Domestic Violence Program. **DON'T FORGET TO BRING BOOK DONATIONS FOR THE BOOKE SALE.** (Some of you will remember that Murfreesboro-AAUW performed the suffrage skit at the state convention in 2007; the new cast includes AAUW members Elvira Casal, Maria Clayton, Monique Denney, Ann Funkhouser, and Kris Pruitt, and there will be hecklers in the house. Why not join in the fun: cheer the women and boo the hecklers! And if you are so inclined, come dressed in long skirts and hats--but costumes are not required.
- **APRIL 9—Farm Bureau, 818 S. Church St.** Dinner, program, and business meeting. / Program: "The Kurdish Women of Nashville, Tennessee." Speaker Mary Evins, Professor of History, MTSU History / Donation: Laundry supplies for the Domestic Violence Program.
- **MAY 28—Forest Oaks Clubhouse, 1002 East Northfield Blvd.** (Please note this date is the fourth Thursday in the month and a change from an earlier announcement.) Annual meeting to renew memberships and elect officers with a Potluck Dinner and Buffalo Auction / Donation: Children's underwear for the Domestic Violence Program.



Murfreesboro-AAUW Continues to Grow. At fifty-six strong, Murfreesboro-AAUW continues to grow its membership. How has the branch done it? Primarily by members asking others to join. Sometimes it takes more than one invitation, but once prospective new members attend a meeting, it is rare that they do not join. New members are persuaded to join by AAUW's mission; then, too, they observe that the Murfreesboro branch is full of dedicated and fun-loving women. Also to boost membership, the branch has taken advantage of national AAUW campaigns that offer discounted membership dues. The next availability of one-half price dues for new members will be at the May meeting. *Pictured here are four of Murfreesboro-AAUW's newest members who attended the December holiday meeting (left to right): Sheila Umayam, Hilary Stallings, Jean Anne Rogers, and Justyna Kostkowska.*

Annual Book Sale News. The 15th Annual AAUW Book Sale in support of the Ruth Houston Scholarship for MTSU students will be held Monday/Tuesday, March 30-31, in the MTSU Keathley University Center in front of Phillips Bookstore. Our Branch has partnered with the MTSU Residential Honor Society students who will help us with storing, pricing, and moving boxes of books in preparation for the sale. In the meantime, we are collecting book donations of all kinds including video tapes, audio books, CDs, and DVDs. In past sales, children's books, cookbooks, popular fiction, and non-fiction have been especially good sellers. And our student customers often buy used textbooks. If you would like to drop off book donations on campus, you can do so at the Walker Library just inside the main entrance. You may also call or email Ann Funkhouser at 898-2538 or afunkhou@mtsu.edu to arrange for a curbside book pickup at the library. If you would like books picked up at a different location, call or email Cathy Crabtree at 867-3963 or cathy_crabtree@yahoo.com. Cathy will pick up books on Fridays only. Please continue to be generous with your donations, time, and hard work this year to make our sale a success. More than ever, our scholarship students need all the financial support we can provide!—*Jan Leone, contributor.*

Branch Supports Education Foundation and Legal Advocacy Fund.

Branch members celebrated women's creativity and raised over \$350 for the Education Foundation and Legal Advocacy Fund at our September meeting. The auction featured arts, crafts, and special food items made by women, including many of our own talented members, their family members, and friends. Many thanks to everyone who contributed auction items and to everyone who bid on them as well!

AAUW has made some major changes in the Legal Advocacy Fund, which is now under the umbrella of the Education Foundation. The LAF has expanded its mission to support "strategic cases with precedent-setting potential" for gender equity in any workplace, not just in higher education. AAUW members are invited to recommend cases. The LAF's new criteria and the procedures for reviewing and accepting cases for LAF support are available at the AAUW web site:

http://www.aauw.org/member_center/briefings/upload/NewLAFCaseSupport.doc.

The Educational Foundation (EF) plays a vital role in supporting gender equity for women and girls through its fellowships and grants, special awards, and research.

Under the fellowships and grants component, the EF provides American and International fellowships as well as grants supporting career development and community action. Under research, the EF designs and supports national research projects regarding the issue of gender equity. The Foundation writes, publishes, and disseminates research reports on gender equity. The EF also supports a University Scholar-in-Residence each year to conduct gender equity research. One of the fundraising activities conducted by the Murfreesboro Branch of AAUW is the annual Buffalo Auction held at the December meeting when members donate items and then purchase tickets for the opportunity to win items. More information about the Educational Foundation may be found on the AAUW web site:

<http://www.aauw.org/education/index.cfm>.—*Mary Hoffschwelle and Melanie Spence, contributors.*



Mary Hoffschwelle at the Silent Auction



Taking Applications for Ruth Houston Memorial Scholarship. The Murfreesboro Branch of the American Association of University Women is taking applications for the Ruth Houston Memorial Scholarship. Our branch will award a \$1,000 scholarship each semester—Fall 2009 and Spring 2010—to the MTSU undergraduate student who best demonstrates academic promise and financial need. To be eligible for consideration, applicants must have successfully completed their freshman year at MTSU. Returning adult students, in particular, are encouraged to apply. The scholarship is renewable each semester as long as full-time status and a 2.5 GPA are maintained. **The**

deadline for applications is March 15, 2009, with an anticipated announcement of the recipient at our April meeting. Please encourage interested and qualified candidates to apply. Applicants must submit one original and two copies of the following to **Dr. Tanya M. Peres, Chair, Ruth Houston Scholarship Committee, MTSU P.O. Box 10:**

1. Name, address, telephone number, email address
2. Copy of college transcript(s)
3. Two letters of reference from referees acquainted with applicant's academic or professional work
4. An essay of no more than 1,000 words describing (1) the applicant's professional goals and the manner in which the scholarship will contribute to the applicant's success and (2) the applicant's financial need. The essay should be type-written or computer-generated.

EQUAL PAY DAY—April 28. Murfreesboro-AAUW will again partner with MTSU's June Anderson Women's Center, President's Commission on the Status of Women, and Women's Studies; and the Murfreesboro Business and Professional Women to recognize April 28, 2009, as Equal Pay Day. Plans call for an informational booth on the KUC knoll and a workshop teaching women job negotiating skills.



A Blast from the Past! Recognize the woman on the right in this picture? That's former AAUW-Murfreesboro President Leola Fouts in 1972. She is presenting a door prize to Cora R. Vaughn at a branch "Card and Game Party." The *DNJ* article in which the picture appeared notes, "The Murfreesboro Branch was one of the four original branches of AAUW in Tennessee. It was organized in October 1913." Recently, Leola handed over a scrapbook of AAUW-Murfreesboro memorabilia to the branch. The scrapbook will be stored with other branch historical documents already at the Gore Center, MTSU.

Fall 2008 Highlights. In **October** branch members Monique Denney, recipient of the 2008 AAUW-TN NCCWSL Scholarship, and Reyna L. Gordon, recipient of the 2007-2008 AAUW American Fellowship for Doctoral Students, made presentations at the branch meeting. Monique spoke about her experiences at the student leadership in Washington, DC, and Reyna summarized her dissertation research, *Behavioral and Neural Correlates of Song Prosody and Intelligibility*. Both women expressed their appreciation to AAUW for its support. [Monique (L) and Reyna (R) are pictured at the right.] In **November** several members of the branch met with representatives of the Murfreesboro League of Women Voters and discussed shared programs and concerns. On election day, branch members participated in the first Unity Election Party hosted by Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority at MTSU.



AAUW-TN State Convention, UT Martin—March 27-28

AAUW National Convention, St. Louis—June 25-28

Contact Ayne Cantrell if you are thinking about attending either (or both) of these conventions.



Special Thanks! AAUW-Murfreesboro is successful because of the women who volunteer to serve as officers and in many, many other ways. Here are just two of Murfreesboro's finest volunteers: Karen Claud (L) who is the Public Policy Committee Chair and Mattie Butler (R) who is the Calling Committee chair. Karen keeps us abreast of women's issues; Mattie phones members without email and reminds them of branch meetings and activities. *Thanks to you both!*

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From special project participants to dinner hostesses—at the May meeting the branch will recognize all volunteers for 2008-2009. Last year volunteers were treated with AAUW pins and gift cards to use at branch dinners.

**NCCWSL Scholarships**—AAUW-Tennessee invites branch nominations of undergraduate college and university students for scholarships to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) to be held June 4-6, 2009, University of Maryland, College Park. If you know of a worthy candidate for our branch to nominate, please contact Ayne Cantrell for more information. **DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS:** March 12, 2009.

**2008-2009 Officers:** Ayne Cantrell, President & Web site Contact // 893-1786 ([acantrell@comcast.net](mailto:acantrell@comcast.net)) ~ Nancy Rupprecht, Vice President for Programs // ([rupprec@mtsu.edu](mailto:rupprec@mtsu.edu)) ~ Cathy Crabtree, Vice President for Membership // 867-3963 ([cathy\\_crabtree@yahoo.com](mailto:cathy_crabtree@yahoo.com)) ~ Samantha Cantrell, Treasurer // 494-8751 ([scantrell@mtsu.edu](mailto:scantrell@mtsu.edu)) ~ Ann Funkhouser, Recording Secretary // 785-2167 ([afunkhou@mtsu.edu](mailto:afunkhou@mtsu.edu)) ~ Kris Pruitt, Corresponding Secretary // 985-2519 ([cwdurham@msn.com](mailto:cwdurham@msn.com)) ~ Jan Leone, College and University Relations // 898-1718 ([jmleone@mtsu.edu](mailto:jmleone@mtsu.edu)) ~ Mary Hoffschwelle, Legal Advocacy Fund // 896-5074 ([hoffsch@mtsu.edu](mailto:hoffsch@mtsu.edu)) ~ Melanie Spence, Educational Foundation // 418-5878 ([meliscrfree@comcast.net](mailto:meliscrfree@comcast.net)) ~ Yuan-ling Chao, Diversity // 893-2711 ([ycho@mtsu.edu](mailto:ycho@mtsu.edu)) ~ Karen Claud, Public Policy // [karenclaud@hotmail.com](mailto:karenclaud@hotmail.com) ~ Myra Norman, EYH/GRITS Representative // 896-7303 ([mnorman@mtsu.edu](mailto:mnorman@mtsu.edu)) ~ Mattie Butler, Telephone Caller (893-2419)

*In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.*