



Iowa Branch Connector
February, 2014

A Monthly Electronic Bulletin for AAUW Leaders in Iowa
The Value of Affiliation with AAUW: *By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.*

Welcome to this monthly electronic publication. You are invited to share this information with other members and branch leaders by forwarding it to them, or providing a hard copy.

Maxine Lampe, AAUW IA President 2012-2014

This month our guest editor is Dev Kiedaisch. Dev is from the Keokuk branch and is Co-Program Vice President:

Save the date—April 11-12! The Program Committee is very excited about the AAUW Iowa 2014 Spring Conference, **Blooming for a Century: Thriving in the Future**. We will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Des Moines Branch and recognizing the anniversaries of other branches with a parade of branches attired in clothes of the year their branches began.

Friday promises to be a fun and productive day. Everyone is invited to work from 1 to 3 PM on a service project, Move the Food, whose goal is to serve the hungry. Later that afternoon there will be a by-invitation-only reception for Legacy Circle members, past state presidents, and current branch presidents sponsored by AAUW National.

The evening will be a gala celebration at the historic Hoyt Sherman Place. Janet Heineke has organized an art show of AAUW Iowa members' works. That art will be on display along with a Des Moines historical display and tours of the mansion. We will be served an elegant dinner followed by recognitions and awards, the parade of branches, and a history of the Des Moines Branch.

Saturday our venue is Blank Park Zoo and has something for everyone. We are so pleased to have Rekha Basu as our keynote speaker. She is being co-sponsored by Dori Jansma Nationwide Insurance Agency in Des Moines and Nationwide Insurance. Rekha Basu is an award-winning writer and advocate. Her columns appear regularly in the Des Moines Register and are distributed nationally. She appears weekly on Rekha's Voice segment of KCWI-TV's Great Day and is the author of "Finding Her Voice," a compilation of columns on women's struggles and triumphs in the Midwest. Her global and multicultural perspective and passion for human rights and social justice fit perfectly with AAUW's mission.

There will be "Yoga with Mary Dennis" to start off the morning, "Meet Your Counterparts" for branch officers and committee chairs to discuss challenges and ideas with those from other branches and the state officer in that area, and a panel of women who will discuss global issues from different faith perspectives.

Shanna Benjamin, an AAUW fellow, will speak later in the morning. She is an associate professor of English at Grinnell College and has published on African American literature and black women's history. Shanna Benjamin has been in Keokuk twice to give programs on the biography she is writing about her graduate adviser and Norton Anthology of African American Literature co-editor, Nellie Y. McKay. The story is fascinating and she is an excellent presenter.

Middle school girls are competing during this month for the opportunity to present a speech, video, or work of art to us as the winner of the Trek competition. During lunch you will have the opportunity to hear about Latinas/Latinos al Exitos. This group, which works with school districts with high Latino enrollment to support their Latinas/Latinos students, has published a book about their successes.

Betsy McDowell, a national AAUW Board member will bring us news from our national organization. Also on the national level, we are fortunate to have Kristen Galles, a Legal Advocacy Funds (LAF) attorney, who will discuss the ways LAF helps women.

I always find such inspiration and outstanding ideas when I attend the annual state conference and meet the amazing women in AAUW Iowa. We've worked hard so that you will, too. Fill a car with you branch members and come to Des Moines in April to enjoy their company and many enriching experiences.