

Atlanta Branch News

Co-President's Message: RESOLUTIONS

Mary Lynn Merkle

It's that time of year when we think about new goals and then resolve to work toward achieving them. Instead of saying "I should ----," we say "I will----." And sometimes we care enough about attaining that goal that it actually works.

This January I am making a resolution, and I'm hoping that you will join me. You see, at a recent board meeting a conversation began about growing our Atlanta Branch—not just in numbers (although that's important) but also in the depth and breadth of membership participation. So a committee composed of Co-president Blondie Chitunya-Wilson, Membership Vice-president Kay Collins, and Philanthropy Chair Cele Covatta have been working on creating a survey to discover what we're doing that works—and what changes might influence our members toward greater participation.

However, if the survey is going to fulfill its purpose, it will have to be completed by a majority of our members. It will, then, be invaluable this spring and summer as we make our programming and philanthropy plans for the 2018-2019 year.

The "Resolution" I am requesting from all of us is: (1) to watch on your computer (or in your mailbox) for a survey asking for your thoughts and interests, (2) complete the survey giving as much information as you can that will help the committee and the executive board make plans.

This is one Resolution that will not take a great deal of your time, but it may, indeed, have a lasting effect on the well being of Atlanta Branch of AAUW!

2017-2018 Leadership

Co-Presidents

Blondie Chitunya-Wilson

Mary Lynn Merkle

president@aauwatlanta.org

Program Vice Presidents

Betty Arden and Amira Saleh

programs@aauwatlanta.org

Membership Vice President

Kay Collins

membership@aauwatlanta.org

Board Secretary

Suzanne Mutic

secretary-board@aauwatlanta.org

Branch Meeting Secretaries

Susan Diffenderfer and Marcy Nader

secretary-meeting@aauwatlanta.org

Finance Officers

Alta Birdsong and Phyllis Miller

treasurer@aauwatlanta.org

College/University Relations

Betty Slater and Carol Allain

universityrelations@aauwatlanta.org

Diversity

Susan Diffenderfer

diversity@aauwatlanta.org

Historian

Wendy Venet

historian@aauwatlanta.org

Hospitality

Betty Arden

hospitality@aauwatlanta.org

Public Policy

Diana Witt

publicpolicy@aauwatlanta.org

Continued on pg. 2

AAUW Bookroom Reaches to Women in Lee Arrendale Prison

Madison Hoover

AAUW Atlanta's very own Bookroom has begun assisting women serving time at Lee Arrendale Prison. Virginia Dilkes, member of a prison ministry group at Lee Arrendale, and Betty Slater, our own Atlanta Branch member, both attend Peachtree Presbyterian Church. Through the connection they have established, the Bookroom is now providing books to these women to offer a recreational and productive way to get engaged with each other and with the ministry group Virginia services. Virginia said she was "pleasantly surprised with how much the inmates are becoming engaged with what the AAUW has offered their library," a true testament to the value of Betty and the Bookroom's work.

Sharon Bevis-Hoover, Bookroom Chair, has been in close contact with Virginia in order to receive the titles and author names in which the women are specifically interested. From the books and resources that the Bookroom receives from its many bookdrops, the Atlanta Branch has served these incarcerated women and benefitted their time spent at Lee Arrendale. Virginia has emphasized how well AAUW has affected the lives of these women in "a very positive way." Thank you Betty Slater, Sharon-Bevis Hoover, and the Atlanta Branch Bookroom for serving these women and leaving a lasting impact!



Pictured from left to right:
Judy Lambert,
Sharon Bevis-Hoover,
Virginia Dilkes, and Betty Slater

Leadership, continued

Public Relations

Sharon Bevis-Hoover
publicrelations@aauwatlanta.org

Scholarship

Wendy Venet
scholarship@aauwatlanta.org

Web Information

Terry Eshenour
webmaster@aauwatlanta.org

Contemporary Literature

Kay Collins
contemporaryliterature@aauw...atlanta.org

Travel Group

Betty Arden
travel@aauwatlanta.org

Advisory Board Chair

Kay Collins
advisory@aauwatlanta.org

Publications

Madison Hoover
publications@aauwatlanta.org

AAUW Funds

Dana Gordon
aauwfunds@aauwatlanta.org

Philanthropy Chair

Cele Covatta
philanthropy@aauwatlanta.org

Communications Chair

Ruth Yurchuck
communications@aauwatlanta.org

Bylaws Chair

Pat Bevis
bylaws@aauwatlanta.org



Meeting Our Members: Elizabeth (Betty) Arden

Mary Lynn Merkle

Betty has been a member of Atlanta Branch for 51 years. The amazing part of that longevity is that Betty remains a very active part of the leadership team. She is currently serving as Program Co-Vice president with Amira Saleh and as Hospitality chair. Many of you will concur that we've had informative and entertaining superb programs. Additionally, she has led the Travel Group for many years—providing "adventures" to places around Atlanta—always including lunch at new restaurants or old favorites. Long time members will remember the Couples Gourmet and the Bridge group, both of which Betty was an integral part.

Born in Raleigh, North Carolina Betty graduated from University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill with a major in Comparative Religion. After graduation she moved to Atlanta where she held several secretarial positions including one at Coca-Cola. She married Joe Arden in 1965, and they had one son, Sam.

Betty lives in East Cobb now as does her son Sam with his wife Tiffani and children. Joe passed away in 1999. Betty has good memories of those last years when they enjoyed several European and Asian trips together. Although there is a Cobb County AAUW Branch, Betty has maintained her membership with Atlanta Branch. Lucky us!

As long as Betty has lived here, she has supported the Atlanta arts. She has been a long term member of Alliance Theater Advocates and currently serves as Telephone Chair. In fact, one year she was given the Ginny Award as Volunteer of the Year. Some may remember when the old Fox Theater was scheduled for demolition. The "Save the Fox" movement was born, and Betty was part of that, serving as Secretary for the Speakers' Bureau. Those who have been to the Fox are certainly celebrating the success of that movement.

In addition to all those AAUW responsibilities Betty loves Contract Bridge and is currently playing in three groups including co-chairing the bridge group at her church, St. James United Methodist.

No matter how busy she is, there is always time for her three grandchildren—8 year old twins Grant and Caroline and Charlotte who is six.

When asked what she most enjoys about membership in Atlanta Branch she said that it was the long standing friendships she has developed and the intellectual stimulation. How fortunate we are to often be the recipients of that friendship and intellectual stimulation from Betty!



Contemporary Literature

Kay Collins

The January meeting will be Monday, the 8th, 10:30 AM at the home of Mary Hanson. The book to be discussed is "The Invention of Wings" by Sue Monk Kidd. All are welcome. Contact Kay Collins with questions.

Our Holiday Celebration

Mary Lynn Merkle

Sunday afternoon, December 3rd, found us once again enjoying the hospitality of Darwin and Mary Womack. The delicacies provided by the Womacks and the executive board were delicious.

Dana Gordon, our AAUW Funds chair, planned the program that highlighted the announcement of our 2017 Named Grant Honorees. Those honored were: (1) Pat Bevis for helping us discover some amazing ways in which to spend our philanthropy funds, (2) Bea Meyer for her commitment to the teachers and students at Dresden Elementary School, (3) & (4) Alta Birdsong and Phyllis Miller who have perfected a partnership in handling the complicated co-treasurers position for Atlanta Branch, (5) Catherine Hafer, an AAUW friend who has served long hours for many years toward the success of our annual Bookfair, and (6) Barbara Bennett for her energies devoted to the Bookfair, especially in the Bookroom.

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National fellowship recipient Rachel Aigen with College/University Representative Betty Slater.

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A special guest was Rachel Aigen, an AAUW Fellowship recipient. She is a graduate student at Georgia Institute of Technology studying medical devices. She shared with us that event though she is a Fellow, she knew very little about the organization; so she came to find out more about AAUW. After hearing about what Atlanta Branch is doing and participating in our afternoon activities and conversations, she was very impressed.

The Silent Auction was lots of fun and raised about \$425. for the Legal Advocacy Fund. All in all, it was a great Celebration! Thank you Huiping for the lovely photographs.



Three of our Named Grant Honorees: Alta Birdsong, Bea Meyer, and Pat Bevis

Our program planner for this meeting AAUW Funds chair Dana Gordon and our host Darwin Womack.



Travel Group

Betty Arden

The AAUW Travel Group will meet at 10 am on January 11th at the Ansley Mall Kroger Store to carpool to the studios of WSB Television - Channel 2 at 1601 W. Peachtree St., Atlanta.

The group will enjoy a guided, behind-the-scenes tour of the studios, as well as learning WSB-TV's history in Atlanta. Cost of tour -- \$15.00 by cash or check.

Recognition for the Atlanta Women for Equality in the NYT

Ingrid Reinhard

The New York Times Magazine of 12/10/17 ran an excellent article: *The Takedown of Title IX* by Kathryn Joyce, delineating the fight over federal rules on campus sexual assault. The author featured the work of Atlanta Women for Equality in this struggle.

Our AAUW Atlanta branch recently approved a grant to support AWE in this important work. It made me proud to be a member of our branch.

Table of Contents

Co-President's Message	Pg. 1
Bookroom Helps Women of Lee Arrendale	Pg. 2
Meeting Betty Arden	Pg. 3
Contemporary Literature	Pg. 4
Our Holiday Celebration	Pg. 4-5
Travel Group	Pg. 6
Recognition for AWE in the NYT	Pg. 6

Calendar

Contemporary Literature	1/8
Travel Group	1/11
February Meeting	2/3

Our February 3rd luncheon meeting will be held at 11:00 a.m. at St. James United Methodist Church at 4400 Peachtree Dunwoody Road, Atlanta. A Planned Parenthood representative will present the program.

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