



## Grand Junction Branch Newsletter

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### What's in Our Air ???

For our October program AAUW will be collaborating with the League of Women Voters and the Citizens for Clean Air in presenting the Third Annual Public Forum on Air Quality in the Grand Valley! Refreshments to be provided!

Date: **October 5**

Time: 7-8:30 PM

Place: **Unitarian Universalist Church** *(the former library annex building)*  
536 Ouray Avenue, GJ

This will be an interactive event, allowing for audience engagement. Participants will be given a color code which corresponds to a certain table; moderators will then rotate among the tables at predetermined times, allowing everyone to participate in each topic discussion. Topics will be:

**Trash Burning** .....Moderator...Kristin Winn

*According to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, open trash burning is detrimental to public health, the environment and air quality. Results from Mesa County survey on open burning will be presented.*

**Air Quality Monitoring Project**....Moderator...Jerry Nelson, Ph.D.

*Thanks to a grant from Desert Ecology Analysis & Restoration, several air quality monitors have been placed throughout the Grand Valley to discover pollution sources. Results of the monitoring will be discussed.*

**Deer Creek Oil & Gas Waste Water Pits**.....Moderator...Resident from Whitewater

*Discussion of findings of the air quality monitors at the site, what has been done to alleviate the odor problem, the impact on residents, and possible future solutions.*

As we know, the air quality in the Grand Valley is not as pristine as it once was. This forum offers a chance for us to become better educated on the problems we all face as residents.

Plan to arrive early as last year's event was well-attended.

Written by Jane Fitzgerald, Peggy Rawlins & Karen Sjoberg

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**Branch President** Lori Wood 234-5674

**VP Program** Executive Board

**Secretary** Kathy Kain 242-1323

**VP Membership** Virginia Brown 201-0386

**Treasurer** Jane Fitzgerald 241-9684

**Newsletter Editor** Jane Fitzgerald

## *Message from Branch President Lori Wood*

For those of you that were not able to attend last month's meeting at Garfield's Restaurant, you missed a lovely time. Instead of a formal speaker, Directors and Members at Large for the Board delivered a smorgasbord of info bringing us up to date with the latest happenings with our organization nationally.

Some may not realize that we have a new Mission Statement after decades with the old one. National has also written a Value Promise, Vision & Diversity Statements and Strategic Plan. So that you don't have to go online to find this info – I know it's not easy for some – here they are for you...

**Mission:** AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

**Value Promise:** By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

**Vision Statement:** AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

**Diversity Statement:** 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.

### **OUR STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUSES ON FIVE MAIN GOALS:**

**GOAL 1:** AAUW's premier-quality member service, community engagement, and multichannel communications foster a growing, global community of members, supporters, students, and others who advance the AAUW mission.

**GOAL 2:** AAUW's powerful advocacy voice helps achieve educational and economic equity and civil rights for all women and girls.

**GOAL 3:** AAUW's expanding collaborative network uses mission-based programs and research to empower women with the tools, training, and support they need to become strong leaders and effective advocates for women and girls.

**GOAL 4:** AAUW's strategic philanthropic efforts support AAUW programs that provide women and girls with opportunities for a lifetime of success.

**GOAL 5:** AAUW's sustainable fiscal strategies and dedicated stewardship meet current and future needs, address challenges, and capitalize on opportunities.

The AAUW Strategic Plan is a national model. States and branches are encouraged to embrace the goals and strategies, build their own plans, and determine how they can contribute to our shared organizational success within the parameters of their own resources and communities

## Welcome New Members

Our Grand Junction Branch of AAUW is pleased to welcome new dual member **Amy Blackwell** who lives in Castle Rock but travels to Grand Junction for business twice a year. If she's in town when a branch meeting is afoot, she'll be there. Otherwise, please know that she's with you in spirit. Amy is AAUW Colorado president-elect and immediate past member of the AAUW Board of Directors. She owns and operates Blackwell Communications LLC, a company that provides STEM and healthcare marketing, communications, and research services. Latest business highlights: a brief stint of wildlife biology research in Antarctica and a video interview of chemistry Nobel Laureate Roald Hoffmann! Past business highlights: research delegations to South Africa, Cuba, and China. Governor Hickenlooper recently appointed Amy to the Colorado State Board of Licensed Professional Counselor Examiners -- one of six state mental health regulatory boards -- for which Blackwell serves as chair and public member. Amy is originally from rural Texas and has four college degrees. She earned an Associate in Arts from Craven Community College (New Bern, NC) and the following from the University of Houston (Houston, TX): BA in history, MA in history, and BS in biology. Hobbies: New York Times crosswords, voluminous nonfiction reading, hiking (have climbed 17 fourteeners), weightlifting, elliptical machine workouts, and painting (acrylics). She's married without kids and pets -- which is why Amy has time for all this stuff! Plus, her many plants thrive on neglect.

We also are pleased to welcome **Gwen Brown**. She was born in Hayward Wisconsin, but lived in Colorado and in Arizona during her early childhood. Her family moved back to Western Colorado when she was 10 and she has lived here since. Gwen is married (26 years), has one son who is also married and currently has two grandchildren. She earned her bachelor's degree in Sociology-emphasis in Criminology with a minor in Psychology from Mesa State College (now Colorado Mesa University). In her employment, Gwen has worked with children and families in many different aspects over several years. She has worked with adolescents in direct care settings, in child welfare, in the criminal justice system and currently Gwen works as a case manager/service coordinator for MDS (Strive) Early Interventions program. Gwen enjoys spending time with her family camping, hiking, archery and motorsports. Gwen and her mom, with whom she is very close, enjoy the hobby of quilting together.

## And Another New Member

**Rebecca (Becky) Zlebnik** is a native Grand Junctionite. Her family, the Talarico's, were early settlers of the Grand Valley, operating coal mines in the Bookcliffs and an amethyst mine. After graduating from Grand Junction High, Becky earned an Associate Degree in Nursing from Mesa State College. For awhile Becky worked for hospitals in Louisiana, but eventually returned to Grand Junction to work at the Veteran's Administration Hospital for 10 years, and then at St. Marys Hospital for 28 years. She recently retired after completing 41 years of employment as a nurse.

Becky met her husband Dale at the VA Hospital where he was employed as a pharmacist. They have one son Aaron, who is 26 years old and recently engaged to be married. Becky is a foster mom to two cats and a turtle she has had for many years, as well as two Schnauzers who originally belonged to her son. Recently she added an older Jack Russell terrier, who is prone to sudden fainting spells.

Becky enjoys collecting art, making crocheted animals and cooking. She is an avid reader especially of *The Christian Science Monitor* and science fiction, as well as non-fiction. She keeps up on technological advances by reading *Wired* magazine. She listens to National Public Radio, and rarely misses *Prairie Home Companion*.

Add to your yearbook:

**BROWN, Gwen**

565 Peachwood Drive, GJ 81504

BA, Mesa State College, Sociology

433-8198 (h) 644-1587 (w) [43gwenbrown@gmail.com](mailto:43gwenbrown@gmail.com)

**ZLEBNIK, Rebecca (Becky) (Dale)**

2328 Eagle Point Court, GJ 81507

AS, Mesa State College, Nursing

242-0918

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Former AAUW member (who hopefully will rejoin) Mugsy Pearson invites us to a **Poetry Reading** at Barnes & Noble on Saturday, October 10, from 2:00-3:00PM. She and Ruth Michels will be reading their free verse original poetry in honor of Educators Week. At one time, Mugsy led an AAUW Writers Special Interest Group.

## Special Interest Group News

### Culture Club



The AAUW Culture Club is a loosely organized effort to inform interested members about movies, music and other cultural events in the Grand Valley. It is also a way to find others to attend these events with. If you are interested in these activities, email Anita Pisciotte [anitap@bresnan.net](mailto:anitap@bresnan.net) or call Virginia Gibson at 242-7422.

Upcoming live performances of the Metropolitan Opera may be seen at Regal Cinemas: October 3 *Il Trovatore*, October 17 *Otello*, and October 31 *Tannhauser*. Ticket prices are Adult \$24, Senior \$22 and Child \$18.

### Coffee & Chat



This informal group meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month at 9:30 AM to try to solve world/local problems through fun discussions. This month we will meet at Java Junction on October 24. Java Junction is located on the back side of Teller Arms Shopping Center, across from the VA Hospital.

### The Jane Quimby Book Club



The Jane Quimby Book Club will meet on Friday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:30 AM at the American Lutheran Church which is located at 631 26-1/2 Road in Grand Junction.

Anita Pisciotte will present "The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-Year-Old Boy with Autism" by Naoki Higashida as told to David Mitchell. This brief but compelling book is written in the words of an autistic 13 year old.

"Readers should not assume that *The Reason I Jump* is just another book for the crowded autism shelf. . . . This is an intimate book, one that brings readers right into an autistic mind. By listening to this voice, we can understand its echoes."

Peggy Rawlins will hostess.

## Looking Ahead - NEXT MONTH'S Program Meeting

Topic: "Help for Learning Disabilities".  
Speaker: AAUW member Dr. Jeannie Dunn  
When: **Saturday, November 7**  
Where: Garfield's Off Broadway Restaurant  
Time: 11:30 AM



### Shop with Scrip

Have you ordered Scrip cards recently? You can really support our branch activities by purchasing gift cards at [www.shopwithscrip](http://www.shopwithscrip). And just think, you do not have to worry about identify theft if you pay for purchases with one of these gift cards.

You just pay the usual value of the gift card, but the nice thing is that our AAUW branch then receives a kick-back percentage of the cost varying from 2% to 11%. As an example, if you ordered a \$50 gift card, you would send our AAUW branch the \$50. Later the Scrip Company takes the money from our branch checking account, less the rebate percentage, and mails the card to Marilyn who then gives you your gift card with the full \$50 available on it. Orders received by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month, will be available at the next AAUW General Program Meeting.

More than 600 companies have gift cards available. Examples are Cabela's (3%), Lowe's (4%), Home Depot (4%), Wal-Mart (2.5%), Amazon.com (3%), and Barnes & Noble (9%). There are cards for groceries, restaurants, travel, almost anything you could use.

You can order on line by setting up an account. If you need help with instructions, contact Marilyn Zimmerman at [mz812@earthlink.net](mailto:mz812@earthlink.net) or calling 314-7482. She can also order for you.

#### League of Women Voters News

LWV's next meeting will be on November 9 starting at 6:30 PM at Unitarian Universalist Church of the Grand Valley, 536 Ouray, GJ. Topic will be ***Does Slavery Still Exist?*** Members of Western Slope Against Trafficking, representing the community, governmental agencies and nonprofits, will discuss the existence of human trafficking, and the many forms it may take, in our community and in Colorado. League meetings are open to the public.



## SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

This fall communities around the state and country hold school board elections. While many of us no longer have children in our local schools, we should still be concerned about school board elections as members of AAUW.

One of AAUW's Public Policy Priorities is:

“To support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, and diversity.”

In assessing candidates running for the local school board you will want to know where they stand on issues that AAUW supports.

AAUW Advocates:

- Adequate and equitable funding for quality public education for all students.
- Opposition to the use of public funds for nonpublic elementary and secondary education and to charter schools that do not adhere to the same civil rights and accountability standards as required of other public schools.
- Protection of programs that meet the needs of girls and women in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, including strong promotion of STEM education and sex education.
- Vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education.
- Increased support for and access to affordable higher education for women and disadvantaged populations.
- Increased support for programs that break through barriers for women and girls in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields.

Be sure you make your voice heard by voting in upcoming school board elections. You should also encourage others to vote and in particular encourage young voters to be sure they are registered to vote and to vote.

written by Marilyn Zimmerman

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### Yearbook Correction

Page 2, Wednesday, March 2 meeting –

Speaker on “Women’s History” will now be  
Dr. Erica Jackson, Assistant Professor of History, CMU.



# THANK YOU

July 28, 2015

Dear Selection Committee,

Thank you so much for the Mary Rait/Mary Jewell Willsea Endowed Grants Fund that I have been awarded. This is a great honor to be selected, and I am very excited to put this scholarship to work.

It is such an honor to collaborate with others who value the empowerment of women. Thank you for championing the personal and professional dreams of nontraditional female students. Additionally, financing college is quite a challenge, and I am especially grateful for how much this valuable opportunity helps me financially.

Thank you for supporting my educational pursuits and my future career in social work! You are providing a large stepping stone in my path to higher education, and the funds that you have reserved for me will make a world of difference. I hope that someday I will be able to give back by assisting future students just as you are assisting me.

Sincerely,

*Renee Cameron*

Renee Cameron



