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## Cherokee Rose Newsletter

June 2014



### **Georgia AAUW Conference**

Greetings to all Georgia AAUW members. I hope you are all enjoying our early summer weather. On March 28-29, 2014 we had a wonderful Georgia AAUW State convention in Cartersville, GA. On Friday night, the Cartersville Branch hosted the conference attendees with a lovely wine and cheese reception at the Loft, one of Cartersville's downtown venues. In addition to lovely wine and nibbles, we listened to the Cartersville High School Jazz Quartet.

We were also able to meet Uzma Shah, a Cartersville elementary school teacher, who is a winner of the National AAUW STEM lesson plan competition. Ms. Shah was able to tell us about her science curriculum and how it is designed to keep middle and high school girl students interested in science and technology.

On Saturday we began our official convention. As co-presidents, we were thrilled to have over 44 Georgia AAUW members in attendance. That is the

best turnout we have had in 4 or 5 years, and we hope this will continue. It is the best way for the Georgia AAUW Board to meet with all the branches and see how we can best serve the branch needs throughout the state.

The highlights of our convention were a state-of-national AAUW presentation by national AAUW representative Roz Homer. We also had a demonstration of SALSA, the national AAUW database, and discussed how this can best be used help Georgia AAUW branches. We also had a public policy update from Deb Karvey. You can see the full details of her activities in the article in this issue. After lunch we had a presentation by AAUW student members from Georgia State and Valdosta State. We ended the day with our annual Business Meeting and the election of officers. However, you should know that our new co-presidents are Bea Piddock and Diane Sakmar. Welcome aboard Diane!

Before adjourning, we set the date of September 6, 2014 for our Georgia AAUW Fall Board meeting. It will be held at the Country Inn & Suites By Carlson, 4500 Circle 75 Parkway, Atlanta, GA, 30339. Remember, any GA AAUW member is welcome to attend this meeting. Have a happy and productive summer, and we'll see you in the fall.

Diane Witt

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## **Georgia AAUW 2014 Public Policy Update - Including Family Care Act (HB 290) Debrief and Strategic Planning Meeting**

With the help of Char Singleton, our Georgia AAUW State Organizer, we were able to realize initial efforts in coalition activism and apply greater visibility for our organization through those efforts. A lobby day was hosted by AAUW and other allies in March (Younger Women's Task Force of Atlanta, Georgia WAND, 9to5, Georgia LWV and other individuals.) After a brief training session the group proceeded to the capitol to speak to representatives about key issues of concern.

During the April debrief meeting, with our primary focus on the Family Care Act, Georgia AAUW along with other members of Georgia Job and Family Collaborative, celebrated our successful efforts in being recognized as a unified group to be taken seriously ... even if the bill did not make it out of rules committee. Our strategy to focus on key legislators to promote support of the bill proved to be a good strategy. GA AAUW will continue to work with collaborators towards the successful passage of the Family Care Act in our state.

In May, Andy McDonald, Managing Director of Berlin Rosen Public Affairs, led the group in an evaluation of successes and areas of improvement from the 2014 legislative session, as well as envisioning strategies unique to Georgia. Nationally, there has been more visibility about working families with some key cities and states passing paid sick day laws. In various national polls, there is a definite public trend supporting working family benefits of paid sick days. The public recognizes the strength in supporting working families while politicians seem not to keep in line with a large majority of their constituents. In Georgia, with primary run-offs coming up soon, the focus will identify key candidates in districts. An important talking point surfaced during this strategy session: If working families lose revenue to take time off without pay to care for family then it directly impacts their ability to put money back into the economy and local business community. Strategic attendance at candidate forums town halls, open houses and other events will bring the Family Care Act to the forefront for voters and candidates alike, while presenting the real face of working families' challenges.

On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, a White House Summit on Working Families will take place. AAUW will participate in this event as well as many other organizations. The US Department of Labor's Women's Bureau on April 10<sup>th</sup> hosted a Regional Forum on Working Families

at the King Center. This was one of 6 such conferences in major cities serving as a prelude to the White House Summit. An outstanding panel of 5 women put a real face on the challenges of working families.

Georgia AAUW Public Policy will be working on strategy training and grassroots organization that will be presented at the Fall Board Meeting. Georgia AAUW has also applied for an Impact Grant with a public policy focus on equal pay and human trafficking, with actions primarily focused on college campuses and local letters to the editor. There is lots of work to be done in preparation for the elections in November, so look for additional information to come about grassroots resources, actions and plans to help our members promote AAUW issues in Georgia. Together we can make it happen!

Debbie Karvey  
Georgia AAUW Public Policy Chair

### **Fall Board Meeting Reminder**

The Fall AAUW Georgia Board Meeting is set for September 6, 2014 at the Country Inn & Suites By Carlson, 4500 Circle 75 Parkway, Atlanta, GA, 30339. Georgia AAUW members are welcome to attend this meeting.

Deb Van Petten

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