

State of the Branch Report, Annual meeting, May 12, 2015

I want to start by thanking everyone in the Branch for the amazing support you have given me these last months. Due to **you** our Branch has had another banner year.

Our new Branch model has created the 'collaboration and camaraderie' that is so important to AAUW.

The last issue of *AAUW California Perspective* has an article titled: *Time for your Semi-Annual Branch Check-Up*, which I found very interesting and perceptive. It also indicates what AAUW wants our Branch to do.

The article made me realize how much our new Branch structure, and the enthusiasm it has generated, has invigorated and grown our Branch.

The areas suggested for 'diagnostic tests' are Membership, Leadership, Programs, Communications, Outreach, Philanthropy, Youth, Public Policy and Strategic Planning.

I will briefly go through them all, although, as you will see they overlap somewhat.

Due to the outstanding leadership of our Branch members in each of these areas, **our Branch is in excellent health!**

Membership

Kay Odgers and Leann Roque have done great job. Our membership is stable, relatively large among CA Branches. We also have a very high percentage of renewals.

There has been an effort to engage and maximize experience of all members. Kay and Leann have also acted upon all of the membership promotion opportunities during the year.—such as the current 'Give a Grad a Gift'.

And they, along with Faith Morrow our dedicated treasurer, have dealt with all of the reports—personally have been amazed at the complicated reports that have to be produced for National.

Our other membership assets are our vibrant Interest Groups drawing in new members and dual members. This year alone our book groups, Great decisions groups, Coffee & Conversation, and Readers Theater, have persuaded several new members to join our Branch.

Thanks to our Interest Group Chairs and Mary Shackle our IG coordinator their excellent leadership and work.

Leadership

Here the question was how we are developing and mentoring leaders; and again the results are outstanding.

- All officers just elected are relatively new Branch members: Elayne, Kay and Leann, and Faith. I really thank Elayne for accepting the Chair position and Kay, Leann and Faith for continuing in their positions with all they have learned in the past year or so about all of the reporting that is necessary. And JoAnn for continuing her appointed position of Secretary.

- Providing leadership to the State and County. Our Branch now has two AAUW State Board Directors—Nancy and Susan; Kay who worked on the AAUW CA Leadership Day; and Marion Smith who is Co-Chair of LACIC.
- Leadership Development committee headed this year and last by Eileen and including Rowie and Dale, is to be commended for finding newer members to join committees and to chair Branch committees and step up to leadership.
- We are taking advantage of the leadership training offered by LACIC and CA AAUW.

Programs. Here the questions were: do we have both mission-based programs and social programs—And looking back over the year—again an outstanding record.

- **Mission based**
 - International Women’s Issues programs—Susan Negrete and her special project group.
 - Mount Saint Mary’s Status of Women and Girls in California. field trip: Nancy Rayner
 - AAUW International Fellowship recipient talk. Again Susan Negrete organized this program as a combination of a Council meeting program, an outreach program and an International Women’s issues program. The International fellow, Astrid Sanchez, is a law school professor from Columbia getting a second PhD in the U.S. She shared with us her PhD research on the effect of different types of legal systems on various crimes. She focused on violence against women, where the results were definitely counter-intuitive.
 - Tech Trek Celebration, though for campers and their parents, gives us excellent post-publicity on AAUW and the Tech Trek program.
 - Council meeting programs:
 - Pre- Election Public policy program, Nancy Mahr in Sept
 - AAUW Research: overview and discussion: Cordelia, Judy, Sherry in November
 - Pay Equity issue Elayne in January
- **Social**
 - Fall Fling –due to the work of Carol Torelli, and her committee including Kathleen Fitzgerald, Eileen Edelson and Susan Wallace.
 - Holiday Tea headed by Eileen Edelson
 - Coffee & Conversation, new IG coordinated by Dale Richards
 - Upcoming on July 13, *Read My Pins* by Margery Norris.
 - And then, of course, our interest groups: GD, Book discussions and Bridge provide a great deal of socialization for our members.

Communications. (Electronic communication; AAUW visibility and name recognition)

- CoastLines electronic delivery, Maria, Fran, Nancy Rayner
- e-blast , success Marion Smith; Nancy Rayner
- Website, Fran—increasing communications through website
- Event publicity increases AAUW visibility, Tech Trek, AAUW International Fellowship scholar

Outreach (co-sponsorships with other community groups and outreach to the community on AAUW issues)

- PVP Village was launched, incorporated in September and now independent organization with Sherry May as board president and Susan Wallace on the Board; and many Branch members are among the 50-plus volunteers working to move the Village forward.
- LWV Election forums co-sponsored with LWV
- International Women's Issues programs
- Readers Theater Programs. Jacky's plays presented to the public in several venues and now to the Exploring Science Girl Scouts this coming Sunday.
- Collaboration program: Program scheduled for next fall on Human Trafficking which will be a Chamber of Commerce, LWV and AAUW program. AAUW committee members: Susan Negrete, Elayne Nahman and Nancy Rayner (Nancy Mahr for LWV).

Philanthropy. Here the questions were, did we have local scholarships, did we donate to AAUW Funds; again our Branch is outstanding.

- Tech Trek. Fourteen scholarships totally funded by Branch members
- Marymount Project. Two NCWSL scholarships for the next 5 years.
- EF.
 - Donations from dues \$3.00 each year from all those who pay Branch dues.
 - Individual contributions to National through national mailings (\$2280.00).
 - Proceeds from scrip sales. (to be reviewed this next year)

Youth (how do we support youth in our community? We help every age group through:

- Exploring Science, Louise Chao and her daughter Aimee. With Maria Ashla and Cordelia, Eileen and Ruth. Program for 4th graders
- Tech Trek (Denise and Dale). Program for 8th Graders.
- Marymount (Judy Purvis and committee). Program for college students.

Public Policy. Here the issue is educating our members and the general public about issues in upcoming elections important to AAUW.

- Pre-election Branch update. Nancy Mahr gave a great presentation at our September Council meeting on AAUW
- Also, the LWV allowed us to co-sponsor the local Candidates' Forum and the Propositions Meetings. Several of our members volunteered to help with the meeting. I was able to help sort the questions from the audience at the Candidate's forum, which was a great experience; and Elayne presented some of the Propositions at other meetings.
- Equal Pay Day. Just last month Elayne wrote a letter to the editor which was published in both the Peninsula News and Daily Breeze informing the public about this concept.

Strategic Planning. How are we planning and adjusting for the future. We are way ahead of everyone else:

- New Branch model, begun 5 years ago, has set the course for the Branch growth and evolution. Maria and Sherry developed this excellent model for collaborative leadership.
- Model generates enthusiasm and ideas from bottom up; we have a wealth of ideas for programs, etc. and people who step up to manage the programs and projects and Interest Groups

- Through Sherry's presentations last year, our branch model is of interest at CA level. Kathleen Doty, current 2014-16 CA President often says 'just because we have always done it that way' is not a reason to do something.
- At the Branch planning retreat next June 30, the Branch will decide how to carry out our mission for next year and years to come.

Let me repeat

AAUW's mission: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

We must celebrate our Branch for all that has been accomplished.

And also, we must celebrate the tremendous amount of benefit to our community that has resulted from our Branch activities.