

Thanksgiving

AAUW-Chapel Hill Branch

From the President: Bea Keller

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In this season of Thanksgiving, having a roof over our heads is generally close to the top of the list of things for which we are grateful. However, for women, having a roof that we own to protect us from the elements was not always a given right. Marriage and property laws or *couverture*, from English common law, stipulated that a married woman did not have a separate legal existence from her husband. A married woman (or *feme covert*) was considered a dependent, and could not own property or control her own earnings except under very specific circumstances. *Couverture* merged husband and wife into a single person—that of the husband. *Femes soles* or single women could buy and sell real estate, accumulate personal property (called *personalty*), sue and be sued, write wills, serve as guardians or executors of estates.

Eight states which were originally controlled by France or Spain -- California, Idaho, Texas, Washington, Arizona, Louisiana, Nevada, and New Mexico -- followed European tradition in that each spouse owned half of the property acquired during marriage, except an inheritance, or a gift.

The husband was still considered the head of the household—thus he was able to manage and dispose of the property as he wished. Louisiana was the last state to give both husband and wife the right to manage communal property in 1979.

Habitat for Humanity's CEO, Jonathan Reckford (a native Chapel Hillian) sent an e-mail entitled "Owning land is a game-changer for women." Habitat's *Shelter Report 2016: Level the field: Ending gender inequality in land rights* is a study by Habitat which summarizes the effects of land ownership for women. In India, for example, 16% of women who do own land and a home reported psychological violence versus 84% of those who don't own land or a home. Land and home ownership made it less likely for women of India to incur physical violence—7% of the women who were owners of land and home experienced physical violence versus 49% of women who were not owners. The benefits of land and home ownership extend to women's families. In Nepal, if a mother owns land, her child is 50% less likely to be severely underweight than the child of a mother who owns no land. And in Brazil, where poor mothers rely on their children's wage earnings, owning land reduces child labor by 28%.

Enacting laws giving ownership rights to women is not the end of the problem. Women need a living wage, access to affordable education, and homes they can afford—both here and overseas. One-fifth of North Carolina's population either pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing or live in substandard conditions. Given that forty-one percent of single parent households are under the poverty level—of which the head of household is usually a woman—many NC families live in unstable housing situations, and the struggle to accumulate wealth and break the cycle of poverty is very difficult. Foundations that support housing the poor work hard to fill the need but public policy supporting fair wages and low-income housing programs are essential. Local elections do affect housing policies in our area. Be informed and vote!

To follow our excellent October STEM program, our next panel program concerns violence against women. We have three very talented and dedicated women who will speak on their own area of expertise. I hope to see all of you on Nov. 21 at the Chapel Hill Public Library in room A!



Mark Your**Calendars:***December 5, 10:00 AM**– 11:30 AM, Dr.**Christina Williams,**Duke University,**"Neuroplasticity: How**Food and Fitness**Boost Your Memory" at**Carol Woods**— Donna Wilson*

**November 21—Chapel Hill Public Library, Rm. A ,Coffee: 10 a.m.
Program: 10:30**

Domestic and Gun Violence Against Women

Speakers: Cordelia Heaney—COMPASS CTR., **Kelli Raker**, coordinator for violence prevention programs at UNC-CH, **Kate Douglas Torrey**—Impact of Gun Violence on Women

Every week, we read or hear of domestic violence that often takes the life of women and children. Our three speakers will give us an overview of what efforts are being made in our communities to combat domestic violence. Cordelia

Heaney is the new executive director of Compass Center since August. Prior to her arrival in Chapel Hill, Cordelia served as executive director for the Office on Women's Policy for the State of Louisiana, where she worked collaboratively with state and community partners to address the educational, health, social and economic well-being of women and girls in the state. She served on both the Louisiana Women's Policy and Research Commission and the Louisiana Domestic Violence Prevention Commission. She is a graduate of Barnard College with an MFA from New School University and an MBA from Tulane University.

Kelli Raker is the Coordinator for Violence Prevention Programs at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She works with students and staff to prevent sexual violence, interpersonal violence, and stalking. She helped create One Act, UNC's bystander education training program and now coordinates healthy relationship programs as well as Raise the Bar, an outreach and education initiatives to local bars on alcohol and drug facilitated sexual assault. Kelli has a Master of Arts degree in Higher Education and Student Affairs from The Ohio State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from The College of William and Mary in Women's Studies.

Since she retired in 2012, after 20 years as Director of UNC Press, Kate Douglas Torrey has spent her time volunteering for groups such as Planned Parenthood and the Orange County Literacy Council, helping consumers enroll in the ACA, advocating for progressive change and for

the prevention of gun violence. She is a member of the League of Women Voters as well as North Carolinians Against Gun Violence, Everytown for Gun Safety, and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense-NC.

We hope to see you at the Chapel Hill Library to gain more understanding about this very relevant topic.

— Bea Keller

Schwenning Scholarship Program, December 5, Carolina Room at Carol Woods

Neuroplasticity: How food and fitness boost your memory

You've probably heard the claims that nutrition and exercise influence brain health, but what is the science behind these claims? While it seems amazing to contemplate, there are particular nutrients and certain types of exercise that actually change the structure and function of the brain. Surprisingly, one of the regions of brain that is altered by both nutrition and exercise is a small curled structure called the hippocampus that is critical to forming new memories and important for mediating stress. Come and

learn a bit about the science of neuroplasticity, get some real-world tips on how to use exercise and nutrition to improve your brain, and discover just how important nutrition is during early development and how exercise can aid cognitive function in old age.

Dr. Christina L. Williams is a professor in Duke University's Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, where she studies how perinatal programming by hormones and nutrients, and adult fitness lead to lifelong changes in neural plas-

ticity, vulnerability/resilience to neural assault, and enhanced cognitive function. Dr. Williams currently serves as the Director of Duke's Undergraduate Neuroscience program, heads her Department's Graduate program in Systems and Integrative Neuroscience, and in 2011 she was awarded the David and Janet Vaughan Brooks Distinguished Teaching Award. She also is a senior Editor of the journal *Brain Research*.



Treasurer's Report

October 27, 2015

Balances

Checking:

\$3,223.06

Money Market

Checking: \$1,504.22

CD: \$6,051.14

Karen Piplani, Treasurer

Carrie Heath Schwenning Scholarship Annual Appeal

At our December meeting every year, we ask our members to donate to the Carrie Heath Schwenning Scholarship Fund. In 2011, members voted to increase the amount to \$1500 to help cover the rising cost of tuition. The Chapel Hill branch began this scholarship in 1928 to help a female graduate student at UNC-Chapel

Hill; at that time it was a loan of only \$100 a year. Money raised now will be for our scholarship for the 2014-15 school year. To make a tax-deductible donation, make the check payable to "UNC-Chapel Hill" and put the note "scholarship # 6725" in the memo field on your check. Give or mail your check to Karen Piplani, 1502 Halifax

Rd., Chapel Hill, NC, 27514-2728. We are very proud of this scholarship—it is rare for a branch to support its own scholarship—and we have continued the tradition of giving it to a female graduate student at UNC.

—Kay White



Sue Stutz

Sue Stutz: Member of the Month

New member Sue Stutz grew up on a farm in Northwest Ohio. She credits her parents with giving her a good religious foundation. Inspired by her father's trumpet playing, Sue became a French horn major and has a special love for brass and Early Music. After graduating from the Ohio State University in music education, she taught in the public schools. Sue developed and taught her own music program for young children. "The average preschooler retains nearly one hundred percent if presented at (his or her)

level and adults retain only one-third maximum comprehension. Preschoolers are like little sponges. Whether or not they go on to play an instrument is not important. What is important is to expose them so they can decide what they like or don't like."

Sue was an active member of Scioto Ridge United Methodist Church in Hilliard, Ohio for 30 years and was president of the West Ohio Conference United Methodist Women. Sue found working with the homeless and unemployed on the south side of Columbus, Ohio, particularly moving. Sue is married to Al

Stutz, a fellow French horn player, who taught computer science at the Ohio State University before retiring. A daughter and twin grandchildren brought them to Chapel Hill almost two and one-half years ago. She continues her involvement in her church community; Sue and Al belong to Epworth United Methodist Church in Durham. When not playing with grandchildren, Sue enjoys being outdoors, exploring North Carolina and making new friends. She particularly enjoys hiking and gardening.

— Bea Keller

Website News

Remember if you have questions about our next meeting or need to check on the book club's selection, please check our web page: <http://chapelhill-nc.aauw.net>. If you want to check our archive of past newsletters in our "members only" section, remember the password is the word "dogwood" in lower case letters.

Erratum

At our Sept. 17 meeting with Dr. Joyner, Mary Kolek, our very capable recording secretary was not able to attend. She was moderating a LWVODC forum in Chatham County. Two kind members offered to take notes (one had to leave early) and I interpreted their notes. Unfortunately, I misinterpreted the notes when I said that free black men could vote in N.C. until 1857. Our sharp eyed historian, Norma Taylor Mitchell, caught the mistake and sent the following note. Thank

you, Norma! I have changed our minutes to reflect the correct date.

"There is one significant historical mistake in the account of Dr. Joyner's speech at our Sept. meeting. On page 2, the account says free black men could vote in N. C. until 1857 when the Supreme Court rendered the Dred Scott decision. Free black men in North Carolina were disfranchised in 1835 by a constitutional convention, as they were also in Tennessee. My source is SLAVES WITHOUT MASTERS: THE FREE NEGRO IN THE AN-

TEBELLUM SOUTH by Ira Berlin, 1974, 190. Other similar sources would also carry this fact. In general, the condition of slaves and free blacks of both sexes in the south worsened in the mid-1830s because of the Nat Turner Rebellion in Virginia in 1831, the development of radical white abolitionism in the north led by William Lloyd Garrison, editor of THE LIBERATOR, etc. Although I wasn't taking notes on or recording Dr. Joyner's speech, I am almost positive that he said 1835, not 1857. I think it's important to correct this error." —Bea Keller

Chapel Hill AAUW Minutes, October 17, 2015

The meeting, which was dedicated to the topic of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) was opened by President Bea Keller, at 10:15. Approximately 40 members and their guests attended this session which was held at the Chapel Hill Public Library.

President Keller introduced Pam Stephens, chair of the STEM planning committee, which to date has also included Mary Kolek and Michelle Hoyman.

Pam Stephens introduced the topic for the meeting, Engaging Girls in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Fields: Perspectives from Educators and Scientists. She reviewed statistics from the AAUW's Solving the Equation report, noting that while women are the majority in terms of population in the US, they continue to be underrepresented in the STEM fields and, in fields such as engineering, alarmingly so. The reasons are many and complex and the panel, made up of both educators and scientists, had been invited to share their experiences and insights and to suggest ways that the local AAUW chapters might help.

Mary Kolek assumed the podium as moderator of the panel discussion. Prior to introducing the five distinguished scholars and leaders in the field of STEM education she welcomed the young students in the audience who were in attendance with

their families, noting that AAUW is pleased to host members of the public at their educational meetings each of which is dedicated to a topic of importance to girls, women and the community at large. She introduced members of the panel who included:

Sarah E. Council, Ph.D., Post-doctoral Fellow, Center for Science, Math and Science Education, NC Central University and the Nature Research Center at NC Museum of Natural Sciences and President of the local chapter of Graduate Women in Science. GWIS is a community of women scientists from the area who organize and staff events ranging from K-12 outreach to professional development and networking socials.

Erin Denniston, M.Ed., District STEM Coordinator, Orange County Schools. Erin is a 20+ year veteran teacher whose areas of expertise are Children's Engineering, instructional planning, project-based-learning, instructional technology and curriculum design. In her current role she is facilitating the growth of integrated STEM project-based teaching and learning throughout the K-8 schools while helping to support science education at the high school level.

Amanda J. Hartness, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent Academic Services & Instructional Support Division Chatham County Schools. Dr. Hartness, a former principal of the year, is

well-known as an advocate for equity in education and has devoted her research in the area of closing achievement gaps. One of her first publications in 1997, Gender Equity "Challenging Gender Bias in Fifth Grade" (reference under Amanda Crisp), was featured in Educational Leadership Magazine.

Holly Menninger, Ph.D., Director of Public Science, College of Sciences, NC State University and Students Discover Program. Dr. Holly Menninger became the first Director of Public Science for the College of Sciences at NCSU in 2014, overseeing initiatives designed to build science literacy beyond the NC State campus. She is also involved with NCSU's Students Discover Program, which partners early career scientists at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences with middle school teachers to develop curriculum.

Julia L. Stevens, Ph.D. is a Post-doctoral Fellow, Genomics and Microbiology Lab, NC Museum of Natural Sciences and a Visiting Scientist, Dept. of Applied Ecology, NCSU. Dr. Stevens is a microbial ecologist and molecular biologist. Besides her research pursuits, she is very active in science outreach through Citizen Science programs at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences, popular science writing, and public speaking. She is a scientist mentor in the Students Discover project, working with middle school science and math teachers to develop high-quality

Good Morning Book Club

November 5:

Discussion of *The Faith*

Club: A Muslim a

Christian, a Jew by

Ranya Idliby at

Annette Jurgelski's

house, 3211 Oak

Knob Court, Hillsboro,

919-644-0280,

jurge00111@gmail.co

m—Dona Koeberl



October Minutes (continued)



programs/careers?

What resources or conditions would enhance the engagement and academic / career success of girls in STEM fields?

Highlights from panel discussion include: Getting girls excited about STEM and engaged in STEM related subjects and problem solving early on is critical to ensure girls do not fall victim to stereotypes and limiting expectations and experiences. Research and experiences reveal that by early elementary school and certainly by grade 4 the gender gap begins to show itself in preferences and in how adults respond to and teach students about science, technology, engineering and math. Bias can be subtle but is pervasive and takes a toll in terms of choices for study and careers. Examples were discussed including how toys and topics are organized, presented and chosen for children; classroom behaviors that quell girls participation in STEM; and lack of exposure to role models in careers and leadership roles in STEM.

All agreed on the importance of exposing girls to a variety of topics and role models that include STEM through school and other activities such as museum visits, science centers and choice of books and other media. Several panelists spoke of how learning about and being exposed to people in science based careers and activities when they were young- a bat

researcher, a dentist, robotics and coding – opened up horizons and pathways.

Learning that engages students' wonder and curiosity and which focuses on exploration, experimentation and applying content knowledge to actually produce solutions and products (maker movement) are more effective in educating girls than traditional curricular and instructional models. Speakers advocated parents and teachers promote "what if?" explorations and thinking; that they encourage curiosity and acknowledge that making mistakes as you explore is part of STEM learning and innovation: many women scientists can remember such experiences and the hook of the "aha" moment when growing up.

Teachers need professional development not only in STEM content but also how students learn science- it is not about rote memorization but developing to a deep understanding of concepts and relationships that can be applied to in robust ways to complex problems. This is best fostered through hands on, minds on learning. Programs such as Discover that connect STEM professionals, university faculty and K-12 teachers are promising models. Students benefit from schools that engage curriculum leaders and coaches to provide ongoing professional training for teachers- especially at elementary and MS where teachers often teach multiple

subjects and are not experts in STEM related fields.

Several panelists discussed a "growth mindset" (vs a fixed mindset) as critical to encouraging and keeping girls engaged in STEM especially as it becomes more advanced and complex. The Carol Dweck book *Mindset* and on line resources that explain these principles and approaches was referenced and recommended. The idea of failure as an important part of growth and persistence being more powerful than perfection when pursuing questions in STEM was discussed.

Many practical tips for how parents and the community can support girls learning and career exploration were offered including:

Adult role models and mentors are powerful influencers, STEM volunteers at schools, museums, scouting and camps are needed. Career days, maker fairs, museums and the annual multi-site NC Science Fair are all in need of participants and supporters. The Orange County schools hosts an annual STEM Career Expo Day (this year on April 22) and seeks professionals to share their stories with students and engage students (and teachers) in interactive lessons. Especially needed are speakers in computer/ engineering, medicine and applied mathematics.

October Meeting Minutes (continued)

Community support for local, county and state budgets that adequately resource STEM education is essential; our students and our communities can be world class contributors if all students are exposed to possibilities and opportunities and educated in robust ways. The panelists talked about the need for more funding and voter participation and also cited public private partnerships that build capacity by providing materials, mentors and events (ex. RTP 20/20 Biogen/GSK support museum labs and resources that engage students and teachers.)

Parents can access libraries and other community and on line resources to provide family fun (and learning.) Back yard field trips and kitchen experiments and free coding on line events were mentioned as simple ways to get children involved; include girls in what are traditionally thought of as “boy” interests!

The Community Colleges were lauded as great resources for those interested in STEM careers. In addition the universities in the Triangle offer strong programs that offer young women both traditional and unique pathways to science, engineering, technology based careers- as an audience member pointed out medical research, bio-tech and applied mathematics abound in this area. Our panelists were celebrated as examples of women who benefited from mentors and access to STEM pathways. They encouraged the girls in the audience to understand the connections between all the subjects- including math and literacy- and urged them to be bold in the pursuit of interests and mentors.

Encouraging girls to become engaged in coding and mathematics at

an early age and to pursue these activities and studies was noted by parents and reinforced by the panel.

The panel and audience discussed how to make STEM seem more accessible. Breaking stereotypes is important if STEM careers are going to appeal to and be inclusive of all. Science is cool and allows people to improve the lives of others. There are ways to informally connect with professionals who share interests. For example, there are monthly “social” meetings for those interested in STEM including Carolina Science Café, Top O’ the Hill restaurant in Chapel Hill; Periodic Table (Durham); and in Raleigh at Museum of Natural Sciences.

The panel discussion concluded with Michelle Hoyman thanking our speakers and presenting them with a small token of our appreciation for their willingness to participate and share their passion, insights and experiences. We were especially grateful to Dr. Council and Stevens for making arrangements to serve on the panel on short notice; their commitment to the topic at hand was evident in their enthusiastic acceptance of our invitation. The committee will meet to discuss follow up, including creating a spot on our webpage to list STEM resources like the many cited by our panel.

Bea Keller then went on to cover additional agenda items:

The next AAUW meeting is Nov. 21 in this same room. We will be co-sponsoring it with the League of Orange, Chatham and Durham. Donna Wilson, program chair, indicated the topic is Violence Against Women. Additional details about this and upcoming program topics is available in our program brochure.

Available in print and on line.

The book club is scheduled to meet at Annette Jurgelski’s house, Nov. 5 to discuss [The Faith Club](#).

Ruth Freed, chair of our hospitality committee, asked for volunteers to provide refreshments at our upcoming meetings. Only one person has signed up for November and more help is needed.

Michele Hoyman welcomed as a guest, Nancy Shoemaker. Nancy started the Tarheel Branch, a virtual branch of AAUW, and is a practicing STEM contributor in that she is IT guru for AAUW NC.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.

Submitted by Mary Monroe Kolek, Recording Secretary

Contributors: Bea Keller and Pam Stephens

