

AAUW-Orange, Durham, Chatham Branch

From the President: Bea Keller

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I hope all of you have had a good summer and are looking forward to the colors and cool weather of fall. Our September meeting will be relevant—NC politics!

Perhaps the name Chris Jankowski means nothing to you but he is responsible for conceiving REDMAP—a strategic plan hatched prior to the 2010 election to flip state legislatures from Democratic to Republican. It stands for Redistricting Majority Project. The plan, termed “genius” by Rachel Maddow (MSNBC 3/2/15), was completely under the radar and caught the Democrats by surprise. Jankowski and his team, who are not legally allowed to have a relationship with the Republican National Committee, approached deep pockets (some undisclosed dark money) within the Republican base and in 90 days, raised 20 million dollars to be used particularly in “small” races, mostly in state legislatures outside the states that have a bipartisan or nonpartisan commission to determine voter districts. The Republican State Leadership Committee identified states where legislators control the maps and targeted legislative positions beginning with the Great Lakes States.

One million dollars in Michigan was sufficient to flip 20 seats to the Republican side. In all, they targeted 12-15 states mostly in the last 2 weeks of the election. According to Jankowski, they got the “most bang for their bucks” in Pennsylvania (MSNBC 3/2/15). These were not high profile races—most were obscure races. “The strategy worked. Before the 2010 election, the GOP had majorities in 36 state legislative bodies. Afterward, the party controlled 56, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.” (latino.foxnews.com 2014/03/31) (Every state except Nebraska has a bicameral legislature so presumably, there are 99 legislative bodies). Nationally, thanks to gerrymandering finesse, “Democrats held 816 fewer state legislature seats than they did before Obama was sworn in as president.” (Elizabeth Drew, The New York Review of Books, 8/18/2016)

After the 2010 election, Jankowski retained a team of redistricting experts. The RSLC hired GOP operative Tom Hofeller. Employing computer software called Maptitude, Hofeller and his team were able to compare “precinct-level returns from past elections to identify communities of interest” including “racial or ethnic enclaves that tend to have similar interests and vote as a bloc” (as advertised

by the makers of Maptitude). “Explicit racial gerrymandering is illegal under the 14th Amendment and the Voting Rights Act. So Hofeller used a proxy for race, redrawing boundaries by identifying the wards where President Obama received the highest returns in 2008. According to court documents, this approach ‘allowed black voters to be carved apart from their white neighbors and friends, on a block-by-block basis.’” (Rolling Stone, Nov. 21, 2013) Thus, while the popular Democratic vote exceeded the popular Republican vote, far fewer Democrats were elected. From the RSLC report we learn, “Pennsylvanians cast 83,000 more votes for Democratic U.S. House candidates . . . but elected a 13-5 Republican majority to represent them in Washington; Michiganders cast over 240,000 more votes for Democratic congressional candidates than Republicans but still elected a 9-5 Republican delegation to Congress.” (Rolling Stone) According to Rolling Stone, 100 Democratic voters would have to turn out for every 94 Republicans. One woman, one vote? Not even close.

It’s time to end gerrymandering. No party should be in charge of redistricting. The NC Coalition for Lobbying and Government

Mark Your Calendar*October 15, 2016,**Chapel Hill Library,**Room B, 10:30 AM**Futures Planning:**AAUW-ODC (Orange,**Durham and Chat-**ham) Counties**Moderators: Bea Keller,**Donna Wilson,**and Michele Hoyman.**—Donna Wilson, Vice**President, Programs*

September 17 Program: Ferrel Guillory “The Culture of Politics in North Carolina”

North Carolina politics—what a changed landscape!

We are honored that Ferrel Guillory, professor of the practice of journalism in the School of Media and Journalism at UNC-CH, will give us his perspective on NC politics.

He is founding director of the UNC Program on Public Life, which has worked to bring university scholarship to bear on the public agenda and leadership in North Carolina and the South. Guillory is a co-founder of EducationNC, a nonprofit organization, launched in January 2015, devoted to covering and

analyzing public education news in North Carolina.

Through MDC Inc. a Durham-based nonprofit, Guillory has co-authored eight *The State of the South* reports from 1996-2014. He also co-authored the book, *The Carolinas: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: An Exploration of Social and Economic Trends, 1924-1999* (Duke Press, 1999).

Before academia, Guillory spent more than 25 years as a newspaper and magazine journalist. During his time at *The News & Observer* in Raleigh, he was the newspaper’s state capital columnist, Washington correspondent and editorial page editor. He has contrib-

uted chapters to books on the politics of race in Louisiana, on economic transition in tobacco regions and on NC politics and government.

He will talk to AAUW about how North Carolina has become a purple state – how the two parties have distinct not overlapping coalitions, and how we need a recommitment to public education. This program will take place at 11 a.m. at the Chapel Hill Public Library in Room B. Social time will begin at 10:30.

— Lisa Price

October 15 Meeting: Futures Planning for AAUW – Orange, Durham and Chatham Counties. Chapel Hill Library, Rm. B, 10:30 AM

AAUW-ODC (Orange, Durham and Chatham) Counties Program Planning for this year includes a special agenda for our October 15, 2016 meeting. Our meeting topic will be: **Futures Planning: AAUW-ODC Counties.**

At the August Board meeting, officers, recognizing our branch’s current status, in addition to present and fu-

ture outreach efforts to the community, decided to devote the October meeting to a strategic planning direction workshop and discussion about: 1} current status of AAUW-ODC; 2} future direction and goals of AAUW-ODC; 3} action plan and activities to achieve those goals.

Your attendance and active participation at this meeting are crucial and vital to identi-

fying strategies and implementation of activities to achieve those goals. Together we can make our branch viable and a contributory force in our community.

Workshop leaders are: Bea Keller, Donna Wilson and Michele Hoyman

— Donna M. Wilson, Vice President, Programs

Member of the Month: Suzanne Haff

Suzanne Haff's magnetic warmth and glowing smile open hearts and doors, and invite anyone to pull up a chair and talk. "My interests are really people and equity. I feel so fortunate to have been an adopted child who has led such a rich and fulfilling life. I have always wanted to pay back that gift that was given to me." A brief WWII romance begot Suzanne who became the center of her adoptive parents' lives in Newport News, Virginia. Her father died unexpectedly when she was 8 and her mother took over the family business—running a coal company (an all-male business) in the middle of winter.

Newport News was a shipbuilding blue collar town, but its strong Jewish community pushed for quality public schools. Suzanne was 10 when the Brown vs Board of Education decision was passed. Virginia Governor J. Lindsay Almond asked all school superintendents to close their schools but Newport News did not comply. However, there was much change and chaos in the schools at that time. "I didn't understand the prejudice at all—much to my parents' chagrin. I was raised Southern Baptist and that led me to support integration and equality as well." After high school, Suzanne chose Mary Washington. It was the women's division of the University of Virginia and was a liberal arts college. Because of her interest in the greater world and equity issues, she majored in Political Science and Economics. She taught American Government in a Fredericksburg high

school as a student teacher. She was told not to bring up Civil Rights; if a student asked a question, she could answer but not elaborate. "It was then that I knew I had to get out of the South."

Suzanne applied for a pre-foreign service internship with the State Department but women were eligible only for secretarial positions. Women in the Foreign Service, in their view, would find husbands, get married and have children; it was a waste of time and money to train them. It was time for plan B! From Martha Washington's Placement Office sprang another possibility—due to a teacher shortage, school systems from all over the country were actively recruiting. She accepted a contract with San Diego Unified School District to teach 4 classes of 12th grade government and monitor a study hall. The young, idealist teacher experienced a second shock; many of her students could not read on grade level and some had difficulties speaking English.

"Because of my interest in equity, I thought the only hope for our country was to be sure that everyone was literate and I realized I didn't want to teach Government and US History/Economics but to move into the field of literacy—which at that time on the high school level included Reading and English as a Second Language." Congress and President Johnson passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. "It was a heady time for idealism," Suzanne comments. Money was available to pay teachers to take education

classes and teach if school districts applied for grants. Suzanne moved to another school district south of San Diego and took classes at San Diego State and UCLA extension. Her classes were small, she had a teacher's assistant, she was changing the world and helping students get jobs or get into college with letters of recommendation "describing potential and not just achievement."

Teaching ESL is a win-win situation. The teacher learns about her students' cultures and guides her students to "understand the concepts that make our country special" as well as "teaching them a vital tool for success in America. I try to assess students informally as quickly as I can and then design lessons to develop their language and culture knowledge from where they are to as advanced as I can in the time I have with them." Suzanne wishes that she had joined the Peace Corps and then gone into teaching—she urges young people with similar interests to go that route.

Suzanne has served on the Planning Boards in Pasadena, CA and Chapel Hill. "I find it interesting to learn how decisions are made and do what small part I can to make the community where I live a better place for all its citizens." She has taught ESL classes to adult refugees from Vietnam. She currently serves as a resident advocate and visits adult care homes in Orange County, talking with residents and helping them when they need support emotionally, physically or materi-



Suzanne Haff

ally. Being chosen California Teacher of the Year in the 80's was an honor but the most life changing event was the opportunity to work with refugees from Vietnam.

Suzanne's husband Peter is a scientist, professor emeritus of the Duke School of the Environment. Her daughter is a biologist and lives in Canberra, Australia with her husband (also a biologist) and her two children. Her son is in transition from Los Angeles to New York City and is co-founder and Vice-President of Design for NationBuilder, a platform for community organizing. Suzanne best summarizes her remarkable life, "I cherish that opportunity to help those in need and to facilitate the successful transition of those students to wonderful citizens and friends. They taught me what life is really all about and how important connection and community are." An inspiration for all citizens everywhere! — Bea Keller

Welcome to Our

New Members

Hannah Andrews

Jeanne Decherd

Suzanne Haff

Rae Nicole Lundy.



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.

DID YOU REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

We are all busy these days and we want to remind our members to sign up. Thank you to all who have renewed their membership. Here is our latest list of those who have already paid their AAUW dues for the 2016-2017 season:

Shirley Ahmed

Jeanne P. Decherd

Marie Moorefield Fleischer

Linda Foreman

Ruth Freed

Suzanne Haff

Donna Hammersly

Vickey Healey

Caywood Hendricks

Margaret Herring

Jan Holland

Michelle Hoyman

Amy Jeroloman

Marie Keller

Dona Jean Koeberl

Mary Monroe Kolek

Norma Mitchell

Alice Parsons

Karen Piplani

Brenda Rogers

Suzanne Smalley

Pamela Stephens

Laurie Tepper

Anne Whisnant

Donna Wilson

Carol Zellen

There are two ways to renew your membership if you still

need to do so.

You can go online and conveniently pay with a credit card. You will need your AAUW member number in order to do so.

You can also pay by check. Just mail your \$70.00 check to:

Karen Piplani

1502 Halifax Road

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

If you have any questions about the process, please contact me or Karen.

Shirley Ahmed, Membership Chair, Tel. # 919 240 7199

Good Morning Book Club

The September 1 meeting of Good Morning Book Club will be in the home of Dona Koeberl, 2749 McDonald, Durham, NC 27705-5715, phone 919-403-6643. We will discuss the book *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* by Bryan Stevenson. This book tells the story of Alabama justice gone wrong, racism, juvenile justice failure and successes in redeeming some of these wrongs.

The October 6 Good Morning Book Club will meet in the home of Morita Rapoza, Apart-

ment 275, Croasdale Farm Parkway, Durham, NC 27705, phone 919-384-2096. We will discuss the book *Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario. This book is a true account of the dangerous journey of 15-year-old Enrique from Central America to the United States.

Other books which were chosen for discussion this year are: *Truman* by David McCullough lead by Kay Iris; *The All Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion* by Fannie Flagg lead by Shirley Ahmed; *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi lead by Annette Jurgelski; *The*

Marriage of Opposites by Alice Hoffman lead by Carol Zellen

Two more books will be read and discussed in the 2016-2017 Good Morning Book Club year.

In September there will be a sign up sheet for the remaining months in the Good Morning Book Club.

—Dona Koeberl

AAUW-Orange, Durham, & Chatham Counties Programs and Speakers: 2016-2017

The Program Planning Committee members (Donna Wilson (Chair), Bea Keller, Vickie Healy, Lisa Price, and Pam Stephens), are continuing to update and confirm speakers and topics for this coming year. Please note the updated information that follows for AAUW -ODC meetings through December 2016 only. As more information is confirmed for meetings scheduled for January through the remainder of our 2017 meeting schedule, there will be newsletter updates.

The meetings scheduled for Saturdays at the Chapel Hill Library will begin at 10:30 AM (social time) with the business meeting beginning at 11:00

AM. Meetings will conclude at 12:30 PM. The meeting scheduled for the Durham Library (downtown) also begins at 10:30 AM (social time) with the business meeting following at 11:00 AM.

Program Dates – Mark Your Calendars

September 17, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM Ferrel Guillory, “Culture of Politics in North Carolina” Chapel Hill Public Library, Room B

October 15, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM Moderators: Bea Keller, Donna Wilson and Michele Hoyman. “Futures Planning: AAUW - ODC” Chapel Hill Library, Room B

November 19, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. Keith Harris Topic: “Chocolate Production & Consumption: Entrepreneurial and Health Issues Related to Women” Chapel Hill Library, Room A

December 3, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. Dr. Tanya Shields, “Women Plantation Owners” Durham Library (downtown, room TBD)

We look forward to seeing everyone at this year’s meetings and know that you will enjoy the diverse and excellent array of topics and speakers we have identified!

—Donna M. Wilson, Vice President, Programming



Treasurer's Report

8/24/2016

Checking : \$1,928.74

M.M.Savings: \$1,504.36

C.D.:

\$5,561.57

Submitted by Karen Piplani

Treasurer

Presidents Message (continued from page 1)

Reform proposes that we adopt the Iowa model. The following information is taken directly from their site. Plans are drawn by a non-partisan group and submitted to the legislature for an up or down vote. No political affiliation, previous election results, or addresses of the incumbents can be used. Redistricting plans are criteria-driven based on clear, measurable criteria including: population equality, contiguity, unity of counties and cities, and compactness. Redistricting is on a set sched-

ule. The first plan is submitted to the Legislature by April 1st. Public hearings are held after which lawmakers have 3 days to bring the plan forward for a vote. If lawmakers reject the plan- the staff has 35 days to bring forward a second plan. After the first plan is submitted, a series of public hearings is held in every region of the state with a report compiled and then presented to the legislature. This plan saves money – no legislative session has ever been lengthened, no primary election schedule delayed or lawsuit filed in Iowa due to a redistricting plan submitted by

its non-partisan legislative staff. In addition, Richard Vinroot, former mayor of Charlotte (R) and Charles Meeker, former mayor of Raleigh (D) are proposing an amendment to the NC Constitution to outlaw gerrymandering. If we all raise our voices and take up our pens, we can save our democracy.

I hope to see you Saturday, September 17 in Room B at the Chapel Hill Library. We will start our social time at 10:30 and our program at 11.