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**MARCH 2012**

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**MARCH MEETING**

Monday, March 26  
7:00 p.m.  
Grace Lutheran Church

**GIRLS = "STEM"**

*The March program will be an update and area report on STEM (science, technology, engineering, & math) for girls and women in Martin County. Guest speakers, Jenny Schwieger, Karen McConnell and Caroline Unke, will discuss the advances that are being made to attract women in the area to select a STEM program in higher education.*

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**HOSPITALITY: March 26<sup>th</sup>**

Wanda Johnson\*  
Erica Volkir  
Ruth Draut

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**HOSPITALITY: April 23**

MaryDon Kislingbury \*  
Donna Hillstad  
DeeAnn Helfritz

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**AREA CAREER EXPLORATION**

Char has sent out information on the Area Career Exploration Day scheduled for April 11 - if you can help that day, please let her know.

## BRANCH PROJECTS: Are you interested?

We have two new opportunities to get involved in the branch's activities: development of a *web site* for the branch and a project to provide a centralized and comprehensive *list of services available to women* and their children as they go through transitional times in their lives (eg loss of job, spouse, housing).

**Website:** We are looking to create a web site that keeps our members updated on local, state and national initiatives as well as contact information for us. AAUW provides the tools, so you don't need to be a computer Jedi knight to help. We need help with content and updating. Emily Lagerstrom, one of our newer members, has a graphic design background and has agreed to participate. ***We are gathering at my house (407 Budd Lake Dr ) on March 23 at 5-ish. Wine and cheese will be served*** so if you are even vaguely interested, the gathering is worth attending. If you can't join us that night, let me know and we will keep you updated on progress and future meeting times.

**List of Services for Women:** We have also had one meeting regarding this Women in Transition Resources project. For one, we need a name for this thing and two, we need a next meeting time. Wednesdays had been proposed, but this would appear to be a problem in Lent, so if this project appeals to you, please let Jo Moltzen and myself know a day and time that does work. We will try to come up with something that works for most people.

Working on projects is a great way to feel more connected to each other and can be a ton of fun. When I belonged in the late '80's, I did a project with Gretchen Bancks and Sharon Turner that makes me smile still.

Please join us!  
My best,  
Lael

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## AAUW POST GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

Submitted by Jo Moltzen

Applications for the AAUW Post Graduate Scholarship are due Wednesday, April 4, 2012. If you know a Martin County who wants to continue her studies for a graduate degree or who wants to do further undergraduate work, please pass on contact information to Jo Moltzen at [maryjomoltzen@gmail.com](mailto:maryjomoltzen@gmail.com) or 507/238-4703. Jo will also be asking for one more volunteer to serve on the selection committee, which will be meeting Thursday, April 12.

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## ***OFFICER ELECTIONS***

Several positions will be open for the coming 2-year cycle. If you are contacted, please give serious consideration to taking on one of the positions. Most are "co" positions, so you would be sharing the work with another! We need EVERYONE to step in when needed to keep our branch running smoothly! THANKS!

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## **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

If a new member joins after March 15, 2012, the full \$75.00 is paid taking the membership to June 30, 2013, in effect getting 15 months for 12. With the anonymous donor paying the non-tax deductible portion of the full membership fee, the new member will pay \$46.00 which is tax deductible to her.

Encourage people you know to join our branch with these fabulous membership fees! These anonymous donations are valid ONLY for the 2011-2012 membership year. Membership forms are available from Lael Luedtke, Membership VP (612-201-4781) or [Fairmontaauw@gmail.com](mailto:Fairmontaauw@gmail.com) or Judy Beckman, Treasurer (507-238-4902) or [jnbemb@frontiernet.net](mailto:jnbemb@frontiernet.net).

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## **MINNESOTA AAUW CONVENTION**

**April 27-29, Brainerd:** if you are interested in attending, contact Linda Paplinski or DeeAnn Helfritz.

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## **TOUR OF HOMES**

The Tour of Homes is coming up fast!! Some Committee Chairs have volunteered, but we will need help from EVERYONE! The TOH will be held on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup> – the fifth Saturday of the month.

TOH Co-Chairs:	Lael Luedtke, DeeAnn Helfritz, & Nancy Klemek
“House-Finders”:	Char Kahler, Sue Olson, [Melissa Roemer ?] – and ALL membership!
Art:	Char Kahler
House Descriptions:	Judy Beckman
Tickets:	_____
Publicity:	_____
Home Hostesses [4]:	Jo Moltzen _____

If you know of a great home, please talk to the owner – or contact the committee above and give them the details. If you would like to volunteer for one of the open positions, please contact Lael, DeeAnn or Nancy .

This is our major fundraising effort – proceeds fund our 2 scholarships. However, it requires the help of ALL members to make it a success!

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## Do You Know a College Student Who Could Use \$5,000-\$10,000?

The MN High Tech Foundation (MHTF) is awarding scholarships to MN undergraduate students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) disciplines. These awards include \$5,000 and \$10,000 awards and can include internship opportunities at MHTA member companies. Applications are open now by going to <http://www.mhta.org/application-period-opens-for-stem-scholarships/> and awards are made in November. Students who are Sophomores through Seniors in an accredited, MN based higher education institution may apply.

Two of AAUW's Biennial Action Priorities are:

--to increase support for programs that break through barriers for women and girls in STEM fields.

--Increase support for and access to higher education for women and disadvantaged populations

The possibilities are out there—share these with a woman you know who is pursuing an undergraduate degree in a STEM field or in STEM teaching.

## Writing Effective “Op Ed’s”

Most of us at sometime in our lives were fired up enough to want to write a letter to the editor but hesitated to do so. It is an effective means of having your voice “heard”. Second to the front page, the Opinion Editorials (Op Ed’s) are the most read portion of a newspaper. An AAUW webinar recently provided helpful guides for writing and getting Op Ed’s written and printed. Of course, they encouraged us to use these as a means of advocating for issues of importance to AAUW.

Op Ed’s should:

--relate to something in the news or something that the media failed to cover. ( Ex. Equal Pay Day on April 17<sup>th</sup>; AAUW research “Crossing the Line” on bullying; National Women’s History month, etc.)

--Be 500-700 words and focused on one issue or aspect of it rather than broad a range of issues

--Raise awareness about an issue with a passionate argument which can contain information from reputable sources. May include links to online resources for more in-depth information.

--Create a connection to the issue by sharing a personal story, some local impact or what makes it relevant to our community to grab the reader’s attention.

--End with a recommendation for action

Steps:

--Appeal to the editor to get published—be newsworthy, timely, relevant and not duplicative of other op ed’s (Ex. Make it dramatic like reporting that the Paycheck Fairness Act failed by just 3 votes)

--Appeal to reader in first sentences—you don’t have to appeal to everyone, focus on your audience.

--Hook the reader by using humor and presenting your issue in a unique way.

--Allow adequate time—Op Ed’s don’t always get printed right away and you don’t want the event, date or time to act on an issue to have passed—making it old news.

--Give at minimum your contact info and perhaps a sentence of bio on yourself. Speak as a member of AAUW but not on behalf of AAUW.

--Give media permission to use your Op Ed on their website, blogs, etc.

--Contact [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) on the web for templates and information on issues.

Submitted by Char Kahler, Public Policy

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