

# NEWSLETTER

## Fairbanks Branch

Fairbanks, Alaska



May 2015

Volume 2, Issue 6

### 2014 - 2015 OFFICERS

#### PRESIDENT

Ritchie Musick  
479-5336: ritchiemusick@gci.net

#### VICE PRESIDENT (PROGRAM)

Ellen Witcher  
456-4518:  
Margaret Van Flein margretv@gci.net

#### VICE PRESIDENT (MEMBERSHIP)

Carla Willetto  
cewilletto@alaska.edu

#### TREASURER

Vera Alexander  
vera.alexander1@gmail.com

#### SECRETARY

Margaret Soden  
479-6793: margaretdsoden@gmail.com

#### IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT

Aldean Kilbourn  
akilbourn@gci.net

#### NEWSLETTER

Pat Babcock  
pbabcock@acsalaska.net

#### WEB MANAGER

Gael Murakami  
murakami@mosquitonet.com

#### WEB SITE

<http://fairbanks-ak.aauw.net>



Great Horned Owl. Photo courtesy of Bernard Marschner

## “BUT WAIT, THERE’S MORE....”

Monday, May 18th

7:00 pm

Home of Margret VanFlein

924 Kellum St Apt 208

Phone 457-4671

Indeed there is more! You can tell us what you liked or didn't like about the year's programs and make suggestions for next year all while in Margret's comfortable home or in her balcony garden. Margret Van Flein, Ellen Witcher and Gayle Murakami have prepared a questionnaire asking about your AAUW participation and member experiences of this past year. Here is an opportunity to share YOUR voice and influence the direction our Branch is moving.

If you haven't already voted on the National AAUW 2015 Ballot Issues we will discuss those propositions to be voted on. We can also give you more information about the candidates running for National offices.

Our program will also include the latest information on the July 11th House Tour, ticket selling strategies and much more! Learn how we all can help. There are jobs for everyone!

When entering Margaret's building follow the directions to ring her room, and she will enable the unlocking mechanism on the door. Enter the door to the right for the elevator or bound up the stairs to the second floor. We hope to have a wonderful turnout for this important meeting.

## **AAUW NATIONAL ELECTION**

This is the first time that all members will be allowed to cast a vote for National Board members, Public Policy Program, and amendments to the By-Laws. In the past these votes were cast by our delegates at the National Convention where people running for office campaigned with vigor. Delegates received printed flyers, and numerous little “freebies” ranging from tape measures to bookmarks with names imprinted. Booths were available with information on issues.

Now we have one member-one vote. How will you know whom and what to choose? Your Outlook has information on all the candidates and explains all the issues. In addition, the candidates have been sending their campaign literature to the Branch Presidents, so Ritchie will bring all she has received to the May meeting.

One item is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT and needs your careful scrutiny. This is the change to the membership requirement. At present one must hold a degree from an accredited college or university in order to become a member of AAUW. It now includes Associate degrees as well as Bachelor and above. The big change is to open membership to anybody who supports our mission and no longer require a college or university degree. There are strong feelings on both sides of this debate. Some feel this is the best way in increase membership and participation, others feel that this is what makes our group unique and honors our accomplishments.

Read your Outlook for information on this issue as well as other By-Law changes. We will have a discussion on these at our May meeting. However you choose to vote, please vote!

### **HOW CAN YOU VOTE IN THE NATIONAL ELECTION?**

A voter guide is included in the most recent Spring/Summer 2015 Outlook Magazine. The back of the magazine has your Membership Number and an individual PIN highlighted in yellow to be used on-line. Note, this not the same as your password for use with the membership database system. Go to [www.aauw.org/resource/national-election](http://www.aauw.org/resource/national-election) and click on the VOTE button. If you prefer to vote with a paper ballot, call 800-326-2289 before May 8 and a ballot will be mailed to you and must be postmarked by May 26. On-line voting concludes at the National Convention June 19.

### **OUR WONDERFUL SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON!**

Twenty five people gathered in the Building 2 Commons of Raven Landing for our annual scholarship luncheon and presentation. Accolades go to Pat Turner for setting this up and calling all our members. Our two scholarship recipients were introduced, and they described their pursuits in education.

Kristi Downing, recipient of the Nancy Johnson award, holds a degree in Theology. Having been working as a support staff in the public schools, Kristi has decided to seek a teaching degree. She will be working on her MA in Education.

Valeen “Niisha” Walsh, recipient of the Ann Rhian award, has spent eight years with Tanana Chiefs as a home visitor bringing early childhood development information to parents. She will major in Psychology

and plans to start a youth empowerment program with a focus on families that fall through the cracks.

We also enjoyed hearing of the work done by last year's scholarship winner, Megan Sassman. She will be receiving her BA from UAF this May in the field of Nutrition. She described her work with breast feeding mothers.



**A very nice Scholarship Luncheon**



Kristi Downing,  
Megan Sassman and  
Valeen "Niisha" Walsh.

## **A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS**

We thank Barbara VanFlein and her committee for selecting our scholarship winners. We also thank the following members whose financial contributions kept us from having to hold that garage sale to fully fund this year's program: Suzanne Black, Gael Murakami, Barbara Matthews, Margret VanFlein, Ritchie Musick, Carla Willetto, and Vera Alexander.

## **FAIRBANKS BRANCH WEBSITE**

Gael has modified the branch website <http://fairbanks-ak.aauw.net/> to make it more usable on hand-held devices, such as smart phones and tablets. She has posted photos of branch meetings and the scholarship winners. On the first page there is a link to a short uTube video promoting an AAUW membership PHOTO CONTEST. The current photo at the top of the site features a fairly cold-looking winter photo of downtown Fairbanks. Gael is asking if any members have a more cheerful summer time photo of Fairbanks that they would like to submit for our use.



Trumpeter Swans. Photo courtesy of Bernard Marschner

## BOOK GROUP

**Date:** May 11 (Monday), 1:30 pm  
**Title/Author:** Still Alice by Lisa Genova [fiction, 2009]  
**Location:** Home of Barb Matthews, 1377 McGrath Road, 457-3537

**Date:** June 8 (Monday), 1:30 pm  
**Title/Author:** Any book by or about Gloria Steinem  
She is scheduled to speak at UAF Summer Sessions on June 12  
her website: <http://www.gloriasteinem.com/>  
**Location:** Home of Margaret Soden, 3222 Anella Avenue, 479-6793

**Date:** July 13 (Monday), 1:30 pm  
**Title/Author:** The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins [fiction, 2015].

**Date:** August 10 (Monday), 1:30 pm  
**Title/Author:** In the Garden of Evening Mists, by Tan Twan Eng. [fiction, 2011]

**Date:** September 14 (Monday), 1:30 pm  
**Title/Author:** The Map Thief by Michael Blanding [non-fiction, 2014, paperback]  
**Date:** October 12 (Monday), 1:30 pm  
**Title/Author:** Being Mortal : Medicine and What Matters in the End  
by Atul Gawande [non-fiction 2014, paperback due out Sep 2015]

## WRITERS' GROUP

April 15 (Thursday) Pike's Landing

Aspiring writers, or all who like to jot down their thoughts, are welcome at the writers group which meets the third Thursday of every month. Bring something you wrote to share, either a few lines or a poem, essay, letter, or short story. Length is not important... nor is any level of proficiency. We like to eat and share! Call Rose Levno for further info (488- 7227).



Trumpeter Swans. Photo courtesy of Bernard Marschner

## HAVE YOU HEARD?

**Margret VanFlein** returned April 29th from her trip to California for the wedding of her friend's granddaughter. Carlyn was wed in Ben Lomond in the Big Sur Area. The setting was most magical being outdoors among beautiful redwood trees.

**Vera Alexander** attended the annual Explorers Club dinner in New York City which is a very special event, quite formal, with lots of celebrities and glitter. This year, she invited her daughter, Elizabeth, and son, Graham, to accompany her. Elizabeth arrived in New York safely from the UK, but Graham and Vera became stuck in Seattle airport, due to the cancellation of their morning flight to Newark. Vera was able to get a red-eye flight via Dallas/Fort Worth, but Graham had to spend the week-end in Seattle and vicinity. There were no other flights available. The spring break rush was on. He actually had a good time visiting friends and revisiting old stomping grounds. Vera missed all kinds of Saturday events, but arrived, after flying all night, just in time for the dinner. Elizabeth found a friend in New York who could, on short notice, find a tux and use their extra ticket. This year, instead of being held in the Waldorf Astoria, dinner was under the giant blue whale in the American Museum of Natural History. The event was wonderful, with exotic cocktails and appetizers, a multi-course dinner, and presentations which included awarding the main Explorers Medal to Neil DeGrassi Tyson who gave a great talk. The next morning, Sunday, Vera and Elizabeth did not go to the brunch and annual meeting at the Explorers Club house, but snuck off for a massage and a really fine New York Sunday brunch. In the afternoon they went to see a Broadway Play, "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder." Then, they flew back home on Monday.

**Carla Willetto** had another big curling adventure last month. She thought curling heaven was in North Dakota... but it's actually in Edmonton, Alberta! Her daughter's team was one of 3 American women's teams selected to participate in the Optimists U18 International Curling Championships. They rubbed elbows with lots of Canadian teams and 2 teams from Japan. The competition was stiff, and the girls represented Alaska very well - they came out 7th overall and were the top ranked American women's team. Best of all, they met some famous curling idols (Olympians and World champs) during a developmental clinic. Anne actually fell down the stairs while ogling one of her heroes. Carla's just glad that Anne's enamored of curling gods instead of Justin Beiber!



---

# THE SOURDOUGH POT

---

News Of The North That Has Been Around Awhile

By Joanie Skilbred of Women's Igloo No. 8

---

Fairbanks Daily Times  
October 2, 1906

## DOME CREEK HAS A WOMAN WHO RUNS HOIST ON CLAIM

Out on Dome creek there is a devoted little woman who is a heroine in the eyes of the miner out there, and, perhaps, one could search all the world for another one of her sex.

Mrs. F. A. Hammer, on 4 above on dome creek has the distinction, and a worthy one it is, of being the only woman engineer in the country. Not that she has to be, but it just so happens that Mr. and Mrs. Hammer are well mated. To tell the truth, they still love each other—although married a number of years—a rare occurrence. And it is Mrs. Hammer's proudest moment when she can go into the engine room and run the hoist in order to relieve her husband in case he has duties which call him away for the time being.



Mary Louise Hammers

# 209 Pioneer Women of Alaska

*Photo courtesy of Pioneer Museum*

At first Mr. Hammer protested against his wife going around the greasy machin-

ery but she wanted to learn, and he enjoyed to do anything that would please her. Then she asked to run the hoist while he was present. He stood back and looked at her, proud that she was no frail little thing that would scream at the toot of a whistle.

One day he was called away and began looking for a man to run the hoist. She volunteered to do the work. He smiled, kissed her and said that he would never have her do such work but she was a woman—and won. He felt a little squeamish after he had gone, but the men in the drift came up pleased to know, they said, that he had an engineer that understood his business. They were told it was Mrs. Hammer who was the engineer.

It is little wonder then that the boys on the creek take off their hats in the highest respect to the little woman who has such ability and yet who is so much a lady. And it is little wonder that Mr. Hammer cannot be found away from home only when necessary.

Mrs. Hammer can manage the claim as well as her husband and makes as good an engineer as some men with parchments to which are attached the signatures of the boiler inspectors.