

AAUW NEWS OF NOTE

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Mission Statement: AAUW advances equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

Vision Statement: AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

HINGHAM AREA BRANCH DECEMBER 2007

CALENDAR

December 4, Tuesday	Book Group, 7:00 PM home of Carol Sullivan-Hanley discussion of "Three Cups of Tea"
December 6, Thursday	Writers Group 7:30 PM home of Kay Campbell
December 6, Thursday	Reception, 6:00-8:00 PM Thomas Crane Public Library, Quincy "Summer Dreams" the Art of Deanne Noiseux
December 9, Sunday	Holiday Brunch, noontime at Raffael's in Hull
January 8, Tuesday	Supper and Book Discussion 6:30 PM Allerton House, Hingham "A Thousand Splendid Suns"
January 17, Thursday	Declutter Bugs, 4:30 PM Panera's, Derby Street, Hingham
January 17, Thursday	Adventures in Dining, 6:30 PM Terra Brasili's 1506 Hancock St., Quincy
January 22, Tuesday	Board Meeting, 7:00 PM home of Ginny Giordano

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have been a busy branch so far this year with our meetings and our interest groups. We end 2007 with our Holiday Brunch at Raffael's in Hull. I hope you all can spare a few hours to join us on that Sunday. Please let Lynn Howard or Sandy Carle know if you are coming.

Our 2008 year begins with our "famous" supper and book discussion on January 8th at the Allerton House in Hingham. "A Thousand Splendid Suns" by Khaled Hosseini is the book that was chosen to read by Priscilla and Elaine. Even if you don't finish the book please try to come to this meeting. It is always a great time. As I

prepare for Thanksgiving at my house, I want to wish all of you a safe and happy holiday season.

Sheila Doherty

HOLIDAY BRUNCH

We are looking forward to a great holiday season! The Hingham Branch will start their festivities by gathering at Raffael's, 45 Hull Shore Drive in the Clarion Nantasket Beach Hotel, Hull for Sunday Brunch on December 9, 2007, at noontime. The cost is \$24.00 and includes omelet, carving (ham and roast beef), and waffle stations, salads, pasta, assorted breads and sweets. Coffee, tea, and juices are included.

Please let us know by Sunday, December 2, if you are coming. Reservations should be made by calling or e-mailing Sandy at 781-340-6281 (scarle12@aol.com) or Lynn at 781-812-1169 (lynnphoward82@comcast.net).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sandy Carle & Lynn Howard
Social Committee Co-chairs

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



Season's Greetings! As we approach this wondrous, joyous holiday season our thoughts turn toward family and friends. It is the time of year we like to remember our cherished ones with a gift. AAUW is a gift we give ourselves each year when we renew our membership. It is one way we help to nurture ourselves. By paying our dues we show our support of the AAUW mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research. We also join a network of like-minded individuals with whom we can interact socially and work beside to accomplish a common goal. In the process we get to acquire new skills or sharpen our talents whether it is by participating in a special interest group, a branch program, or volunteering for a leadership position or a small task. Each of us could enumerate the benefits we get by belonging to AAUW. Why not pass these benefits on to our friends, family, neighbors and colleagues by giving the gift of AAUW membership? AAUW offers membership from January 1 through June 30 for half-price. \$36 buys a membership in the Hingham Area Branch, but if your recipient lives elsewhere in the country, you can enroll her /him online (or through the membership brochure). In addition to sharing the benefits of AAUW with someone you love, you help to grow AAUW membership. As a recruiter your name will be listed in the Keys of the Future Hall of Fame and you will get a chance to win \$1500 toward expenses for the next AAUW Convention. Please let Hollie (781-749-6274, holliebagley@gmail.com) or Patricia (781-337-3375) know how many memberships you will be giving and we will supply you with enrollment brochures and gift cards. What an easy way to do your holiday shopping! As you know, AAUW membership is open to anyone (male or female) holding an Associate's degree or equivalent (think nursing) or higher from an accredited college or university. Think of the possibilities! Your recipients will thank you and we thank you!



ChitChat: Deanne Noiseux invites all of us to her art show, "Summer Dreams," at the Thomas Crane Public Library, 40 Washington Street, Quincy. Her paintings and art work will be on exhibit the entire month of December, but Deanne would be thrilled if we could attend the Opening Reception on Thursday, December 6th from 6 to 8 pm. Deanne writes, "I am excited to have a one person show at such a beautiful place. The library was renovated a few years ago with gorgeous results. The integrity of the original design was kept with user friendly additions created to blend with the old. I am a volunteer for the Literacy Volunteers of America. Their office is at the library and we all assist adults who wish to learn to read or to read effectively. My art work usually is about the ocean as I wish I had gills and could live in the sea. Fortunately I live in Scituate near the ocean. I hope to see you there." And if her announcement post card is any indication of her talent, we are in for a treat!

We wish you and yours joy, peace, health and prosperity in the coming year.

Hollie Bagley and Patricia McKay

PAMELA J. LINCOLN RECOGNITION AWARD

If you know a young woman who is an outstanding student and who has been involved in school and/or community service, she is a candidate for the Pamela J. Lincoln Recognition Award. This student may be a high school student (usually a senior) or a college student. Applications for this award are available now. To receive an application please contact Patricia McKay (781-337-3375) Applications are due by March 1, 2007.

PUBLIC POLICY *This is larger than usual but it would seem that Washington was busier than usual this past month. Much of the first page is simply devoted to issues that concern women immediately, which is why I organized it that way. Catherine Schindewolf*

Retirement Gap for Women

As Baby Boomers begin to file for Social Security benefits, *Women's eNews* ran an article about the gap in earnings and income women face when they retire. The article reiterates many things that AAUW has said for years – that women have less retirement income than men largely because of fewer years in the workforce, due to family responsibilities, and lower earnings when they are working, due to pay discrimination. Therefore, women have a greater dependency on Social Security, and education about the “retirement gap” may be a component to its solution. The Women’s Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER) and the Heinz Family Philanthropies published “What Women Need to Know about Retirement”, an online book with step-by-step instructions and advice for women planning their financial futures. The Women’s Bureau at the U.S. Department of Labor created Wi\$e Up, a curriculum of financial literacy, including teleconference calls and web seminars, geared towards helping younger women plan ahead.

As many women depend on Social Security as their primary source of retirement income, AAUW believes that any Social Security improvements must maintain guaranteed benefits and consider the inequity of pension benefits and retirement security for women. AAUW is firmly against privatizing all or part of the current Social Security program, since that would eliminate many of the guaranteed benefits women need and jeopardize important benefits to children, especially women and children of color. Social Security’s long-term solvency needs to be strengthened, not weakened through privatization.

U.S. Falls Further Behind in Global Gender Gap Study

According to a new report released by the World Economic Forum, the U.S. dropped 6 slots to rank 31st among 128 countries in terms of gender equity. The Global Gender Gap Report 2007 measures the size of the gender gap in four critical areas of inequality between men and women: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival. While the U.S. made gains in the political empowerment area, these were offset by larger gaps in the economic participation and opportunity area, causing the country’s ranking to decline from last year’s report. According to the report, the highest ranking country – Sweden – has closed a little over 80 percent of its gender gap.

What if Roe Fell?

What might happen to abortion rights in your state if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned? The Center for Reproductive Rights has taken a long look at the state laws around the country; they released last week a new report which lays out the actual legal consequences of reversing *Roe*. Their conclusion: as many as 30 states could pass legislation to restrict or altogether ban abortions if *Roe* is overturned. To date, fourteen states have already introduced immediate bans, designed to create a vehicle for the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe*, and four states have introduced bans-in-waiting, which lay the foundation now for abortion to be criminalized immediately after *Roe* is overturned. ***Find out what could happen in your state to the women in your family.***

Report Affirms Comprehensive Sex Ed Approach

This week, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy published a new report with important findings on sexual education programs. Groups who advocate for comprehensive sex education can find new support in this report, which explains that sex education programs that focus on both abstinence and contraception have a more positive effect on teenagers' sexual behavior than those programs that focus solely on abstaining from sex until marriage. This reaffirms efforts to decrease nationwide abstinence-only funds and encourage states to refuse those funds in favor of comprehensive programs in their schools. The report also examined a number of other programs conducted in and out of schools and found similar results; teens do not increase sexual activity as a result of contraception-availability programs or comprehensive education programs. The study evaluated 115 sex education programs for its conclusions.

Drop Out Rates for Girls is High, Consequences are Higher

The National Women's Law Center released a new report showing that one in four teenaged girls is dropping out of high school, and that the numbers are worse for young women of color. When Girls Drop Out, We All Fail also finds that the economic consequences for women who drop out are particularly troubling, since women have higher unemployment and lower wages than men who do not graduate from high school. The report does include recommendations for reducing girls' drop out rates, including improving access to career and technical education for young women and ensuring the required Title IX coordinators and anti-discrimination policies are in place to help young women concerned about sex discrimination.

Family Life Key in Determining Achievement Gaps

The gaps in critical home conditions and experiences of young children mirror the achievement gaps that begin early in life and persist through high school, according to results from a new study conducted by the Education Testing Service. The study's researchers examined the factors - including family and home experiences - that influence early childhood learning. One finding showed that children with mothers with higher education levels were more likely to have a parent read to them daily than their counterparts who had mothers with lower educational levels. In addition, by age four, children of professional families hear 35 million more words than children of parents on welfare. According to Paul Barton, who co-authored *The Family: America's Smallest School*, "factors like single-parent families, parents reading to children, hours spent watching television and school absences, when combined, account for about two-thirds of the large differences among states in National Assessment of Educational Progress reading scores." The study suggests that in order to improve student learning and reduce the achievement gap, education reform efforts must go beyond the public policy arena and help to assure home and community environments that aid in their educational development.

Girls See Themselves as Leaders Now, But Not Later in Life

The Girl Scout Research Institute recently released *Exploring Girls' Leadership*, their latest research review of the current literature from the youth development and youth leadership fields. Interestingly, the report found that while a majority of girls view themselves as leaders today—at home, at school, and in after-school activities—only slightly more than a third of girls (36 percent) are interested in being a leader when they get older. The report notes that girls also need help in overcoming barriers to their development as leaders, both at their current stages in life as well as in their visions for their future.

Women and Interdisciplinary Sciences

Inside Higher Ed recently ran an article examining the link between the push by universities and federal agencies to expand interdisciplinary programs to further research and programs that work to engage more women and minorities in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. While their

studies admittedly sought to raise more questions than provide answers, they examined the assumption that “women may have a stronger preference or predisposition for interdisciplinary over disciplinary work as compared to their male colleagues,” which could change the way some programs seek to engage women in the sciences. The authors of the study, Diana Rhoten and Stephanie Pfirman, are co-chairs of a workshop at Columbia University in November on “Women, Minorities, and Interdisciplinarity: Transforming the Research Enterprise.”

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Attorney General Confirmed

The Senate confirmed (53-40) former District Judge Michael Mukasey as the 81st U.S. Attorney General. Mr. Mukasey’s nomination received initial bipartisan support, but his confirmation did not go as smoothly as was originally thought. The Center for American Progress Action Fund released an article on Mr. Mukasey, including information on his past rulings and reactions to his nomination.

Bill Introduced to Combat Rising Birth Control Costs

As reported in the July 13 edition of *Washington Update*, deficit reduction legislation passed by Congress in 2005 ended the practice of many pharmaceutical companies charging campus clinics only nominal prices for birth control. The result has been a sharp rise in the cost of birth control dispensed by college campus health centers and clinics serving low-income women, forcing many women to choose between reliable birth control and other necessities. In November, Representatives Joseph Crowley (D-NY) and Nita Lowey (D-NY) introduced the Prevention Through Affordable Access Act (H.R. 4054) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to restore and protect access to Medicaid discount drug prices for university-based and safety-net clinics. The bill has over 110 cosponsors in the House.

AAUW Utah Helps Defeat Voucher Law

Representing a victory for public schools, more than 60 percent of voting Utah residents rejected private school vouchers in a referendum. The law was rejected by a 25 point margin and lost in every county in the state, including the populous Salt Lake area, where it was defeated by a two to one margin. According to the Salt Lake Tribune, the law originally passed by a single vote in the state legislature, but Utahans for Public Schools gathered 124,000 signatures to force it into a voter referendum. The law would have created the nation’s broadest voucher program because it would have had no income ceiling – making vouchers available to all students, not just those from low-income families. The National School Boards Association noted that the outcome in Utah “marks the 11th time in 11 referenda in recent decades that voters decisively rejected school vouchers or tuition tax credits.” Similar voucher programs were defeated in Michigan and California by ballot initiatives in 2000.

Congress Overrides President Bush’s Veto for First Time

The House and Senate both voted to override a presidential veto for the first time since President Bush took office nearly seven years ago, with both chambers showing overwhelming bipartisan support for the legislation. The House voted (361-51) to override the president’s veto of the Water Resource Development Act, and the Senate followed suit (79-14). Both chambers easily cleared the two-thirds majority that is required to enact a law over the president’s objection.

HEA Leapfrogs NCLB in the House

House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Representative George Miller (D-CA) introduced the College Opportunity and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137), a bill to reauthorize and reform the Higher Education Act. Congressional Quarterly reported that Chairman Miller confirmed that he intended to move forward on the Higher Education Act reauthorization bill after recent negotiations on the No Child Left Behind Act reauthorization stalled. The Senate passed (95-0) its version of the HEA renewal (S. 1642) in July. The White House has expressed “grave concerns” with the bill, but stopped short of a veto threat.

AAUW submitted a letter to Representative Miller and Representative Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX), chairman of the Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness, outlining our priorities for the reauthorization. One of AAUW’s recommendations included in the draft legislation of the bill is the creation of Patsy Mink Fellowship program, intended to help diversify the higher education professoriate. Appropriately named in honor of former Congresswoman Patsy Mink (D-HI), a primary force behind the passage of Title IX, the fellowships would be targeted at minorities and women pursuing a doctorate or terminal degree, and would include a service requirement to teach at an institution or higher education after graduation. AAUW’s other recommendations for the legislation include expanding SMART Grant eligibility, funding for a consortium on gender and racial equity, funding for loans to less than half-time students, diversifying the professoriate, expanding the definition of hate crimes on campuses. Read more about AAUW’s commitment to and recommendations for the Higher Education Act, the cornerstone of the federal government’s commitment to post-secondary education.

Education Department Publishes Final Regulations for SMART Grants

U.S. Department of Education published its final regulations to carry out the Academic Competitiveness Grant and the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant programs. According to Inside Higher Ed, the final rules adopted few of the many changes that have been requested by college officials over the first year of the programs. Designed to encourage more students from low-income families to enter science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, the government’s two newest student grant programs have not been as effective as many had hoped. As reported by the Education Department, nearly \$430 million in funds from the two programs were awarded to roughly 360,000 students in FY07 - \$233 million to 300,000 students in Academic Competitiveness Grants, and about \$196 million to nearly 61,000 students in SMART Grants - far short of the \$790 million that Congress appropriated for the programs. The department hopes to double the number of recipients of the two grant programs by FY10. As reported, the Senate included language in the Higher Education Amendments (S. 1642) and the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (H.R. 2669), passed in July, to address some of the concerns that many have with the SMART Grant program.

ACTION: In addition to other recommendations for reforming the No Child Left Behind Act, AAUW supports the inclusion of science as a required area of assessment under the Act's measurement of adequate yearly progress (AYP). *AAUW believes that this change will provide valuable data about student aptitude in science and will help identify opportunities to improve student achievement in this critical area. This will also ensure that student achievement in science is measured in a way that allows the data to be disaggregated and analyzed by sex. Adding science to AYP ensures that it will be an integral part of the curriculum, alongside math and reading, and that children will be exposed to a subject that is likely to influence their future academic and career aspirations.*

House Fails to Override Labor-HHS-Education Veto

The House failed by just a few votes (277-141) to garner the two-thirds majority needed to override a veto issued by President Bush earlier on the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill (H.R. 3043) for FY08. This narrow vote was made even narrower because seven Democrats did not vote. Check the roll call online for this vote to see whether your member of Congress voted.

Recently, the House and Senate both passed the \$606 billion conference legislation, which includes funding for the Department of Education. The Washington Post reported that while President Bush has vetoed five bills this year, this is his first veto of one of the twelve appropriations bill that keeps the government running. *See the Coalition on Human Needs' website for a full comparison of the president's proposal, the House proposal, and the Senate proposal for FY08 and the actual FY07 budget.*

HEA Reauthorization Bill Passes House Committee

After considering more than 30 amendments during a mark-up session that spanned Wednesday and Thursday, the House Education and Labor Committee passed (44-0) the College Opportunity and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137), a bill to reauthorize and reform the Higher Education Act. *Congressional Quarterly* reported that the bill is likely to go to the full House soon after Congress' Thanksgiving break. The Senate passed (95-0) its version of the HEA renewal (S. 1642) in July. *Inside Higher Ed* takes a closer look at some of the amendments offered and the reactions to the legislation.

Thanks to the hard work of AAUW members and coalition partners, we are pleased to announce that the House version of the bill addresses many of the priorities that AAUW has been working on for years to make the dream of a higher education a reality for more women. One of AAUW's recommendations included in the bill is the creation of the Patsy Mink Graduate Fellowship program, mentioned above. Other AAUW recommendations included in the bill include expanding SMART and Pell grant eligibility, studying gender and racial equity among senior faculty at colleges and universities, examining gender and other biases present in standardized tests that colleges and universities use in admissions, expanding the population of qualified individuals – particularly women and minorities – in STEM fields, expanding the definition of hate crimes on campuses, and increasing the support for campus child care programs.

Head Start Reauthorization Clears Congress, Heads to White House

The House and Senate both passed (381-36, 95-0) conference legislation (H.R. 1439, H Rept. 110-439) reauthorizing Head Start for five years. According to *Congressional Quarterly*, this is the first reauthorization of the early childhood development program for low-income preschoolers in almost ten years. The last reauthorization of the program was enacted in 1998 and expired at the end of FY03. Annual appropriation bills have kept it alive since then. Since its launch in 1965, the program has served more than 24 million children, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. This legislation will expand eligibility to families slightly above the federal poverty level. *The bill does not include a provision sought by the White House to allow religious groups participating in Head Start to discriminate against the staff they hire and fire by considering their religion; AAUW opposed this provision.*

Senate Doesn't Allow the DREAM to Move Forward

The Senate failed to gather enough votes to move forward with the **Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act (S.2205)**. The cloture vote on the bill failed (52-44), needing 60 votes to limit debate and allow for a final floor vote on the legislation, which would provide a path to permanent residency for college students and military personnel under 30 who came to the country illegally as children. The bill had been paired down from earlier versions, and while it no longer repealed a federal law interpreted by many as prohibiting the extension of in-state tuition to undocumented students, it did give undocumented students access to federal loans and work study programs. First introduced in 2001, the DREAM Act has now stalled in several sessions of Congress.

While AAUW does not have a position on overall immigration reform, AAUW does support higher education provisions similar to the DREAM Act. According to *Inside Higher Ed*, it's estimated that about 65,000 undocumented students graduate each year, and only 5 to 10 percent of these students attend college due to lack

of access. An editorial in the New York Times argues that the DREAM Act “rejects [the] unacceptable waste of young talent” and changes our current system, which “ignores their aspirations” of students “yearning to educate themselves.”

UNIQUELY AAUW

Sign Up Your Friends and AAUW Colleagues for Action Network!

To mobilize AAUW members to be constituent advocates, AAUW has created the Action Network, an e-mail alert system that anyone with an e-mail address can subscribe to. Anyone can sign up for Action Network, AAUW members and nonmembers alike. It is an excellent way to introduce potential members to AAUW’s advocacy. You can also print out flyers online. Use flyers to sign up friends, family and co-workers to the AAUW Action Network. These flyers are great to use at branch events, community events, etc.

Charter Oak State College Program Wins AAUW Award

Program helps women earn their college degrees while supporting their children
New Britain, CT – The American Association of University Women Legal Advocacy Fund granted the Women in Transition program of Charter Oak State College in New Britain, Connecticut, the 2007 Progress in Equity Award for its work in advancing educational opportunities for women in a critically underserved population. The Women in Transition (WIT) program provides higher education opportunities for low-income, underemployed single mothers to earn their college degrees through online courses, which allow them the freedom to work and care for their children while minimizing travel costs. Through this program, participants have become not only strong, empowered individuals but also role models for their children. The program will receive \$5,000 from AAUW and will use the award to fund the technology needs of its students. The Progress in Equity Award recognizes college and university programs that promote equity for women. Now in its 20th year, the award has provided \$111,700 to 40 schools and programs across the country. Merle Harris, president of Charter Oak, said, “We are pleased that a unique program that has helped low-income, single mothers earn a college degree and achieve self-sufficiency has received this recognition.” Coincidentally, AAUW members were instrumental in the founding of Charter Oak State College. Many years ago, members of the Naugatuck (CT) Branch contributed to an AAUW of Connecticut booklet for nontraditional female students on how to return to college. The branch members saw a great need for institutions to accommodate such students and undertook an intensive lobbying effort in the state legislature. In 1973, the school’s charter was authorized.

Fellowships and Grants Directory Online

The directory of 2007-08 AAUW Fellowship and Grant Recipients is now available on the AAUW website. The directory highlights the recipients of the Foundation's five fellowship and grant programs--253 individuals who will receive \$4.1 million in funding during the current academic year. Click on the following link to view the outstanding women pursuing their educational goals, engaged in cutting-edge research and implementing community projects to strengthen opportunities for women and girls.
http://www.aauw.org/fga/fellows_directory/index.cfm

AAUW WINTER CONFERENCE

Hi everyone,

I'm eager to spread the word about the February State conference in Lowell --especially important is the news below-- please announce at your meetings and include in your newsletters! And definitely plan on coming--we have a group of exciting speakers! More details later! Thanks, Liz Markson, AAUW-MA VP for Program

AAUW-MA WINTER CONFERENCE

CHALLENGES IN A NEW LAND: IMMIGRATION, WOMEN, AND THEIR FAMILIES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2 9 a.m.-1-p.m.

University of Massachusetts, Lowell, Alumni Lounge

We are all excited about our inspiring Winter Conference! To be held in Alumni Lounge at University of Massachusetts, Lowell (UML). AAUW MA is especially delighted to have the Center for Women and Work at UML and the Lowell YWCA as co-sponsors for this vital topic! Lowell, with its large and vibrant immigrant community and rich history of 'mill girls', provides the ideal site for us to find out more about women and their families from all over the world and their coming to America lives and experiences.

Building on the national interest and controversy about immigration law and immigration policies, our Winter Conference takes an up-close look at immigration, women, and their families in the United States. We will hear about current immigration law, and discuss the complexities and challenges faced by women from the many nations that are coming to the United States. Education, jobs, work and family, health--these are just a few of the topics. We shall also look at what we can discover about the immigrant experience from literature.

The day will be topped off by opportunities to explore the many ethnic restaurants in Lowell and to tour the numerous historical sites of this lively and stimulating city. Your program materials will give you a list of options for the afternoon!

Watch the BAYSTATER for more information, registration, and directions or contact Liz Markson at hezikih@bu.edu for updates.

ART SHOW

You are all invited to the opening reception for "Summer Dreams", my art show that will be held on December 6, 2007, from 6 to 8 PM, at the Thomas Crane Public Library on Hancock Street in Quincy, telephone (617) 376-1300. I am excited to have a one person show at such a beautiful place. The library was renovated a few years ago with gorgeous results. The integrity of the original design was kept with user friendly additions created to blend with the old. I am a volunteer for the Literacy Volunteers of America whose office is at the library, and we all assist adults who wish to learn to read or to read more effectively. My art work usually is about the ocean, as I wish I had gills and could live in the sea. Fortunately I live in Scituate near the ocean. I hope to see you there.

Deanne Noiseux