

2009 AAUW State Convention
By Liz Reilly, AAUW Arizona State Program Vice President

As it turned out, the theme of the 2009 AAUW Arizona Convention, “Today’s Choices: Tomorrow’s Challenges” was apt. Despite extremely high winds and a change in venue, eighty members from around the state attended a barbeque dinner at the Chaparral Center in Sun City Grand on Friday evening, April 3.

Branch President Judy Hodgins, Convention Chair Ann Mitchell and AAUW AZ Program VP Elizabeth Rielly welcomed guests. Linda D. Hallman, CAE, AAUW Executive Director, Mayor Lyn Truitt of Surprise, Dr. Gail Pletnick, Superintendent of the Dysart Unified School District, Dr. Todd Aakhus of Rio Salado College, and staff members Linda Streeter and Josh Swartz of DUSD were recognized.

On Saturday April 4, amid displays and colorfully decorated baskets to benefit the Educational Foundation, the Northwest Valley convention crew received over one hundred and twenty five AAUW members to the 63rd AAUW AZ Annual Convention. The Dysart High School JROTC presented a flag salute after which Barbara Neubert, State President, Ann Mitchell, and Dr. Pletnick welcomed attendees.

In her opening address AAUW Executive Director Hallman discussed recent AAUW activities in Washington DC including her attendance at the signing of the Lilly Ledbetter Act at the Obama White House. She spoke about the proposed Association Bylaws changes and led a spirited Q and A session about some of the controversial provisions.

The remainder of the morning was focused on four well-received breakout sessions. Members chose from among the following: “The Border: Crisis Point for Women and Girls,” presented by Sharon Chamberlin, a co-leader of the Green Valley Border Issues Interest Group; a panel discussion on “Membership, Communication and Marketing” led by Dorie Roepke, AAUW AZ Membership VP and panelists Dr. Joye Kohl, Northwest Valley, Dr. Adelaida Severson, and Jim Dean of DUSD, and a financial workshop, especially designed for Treasurers and Finance Officers presented by Gail Garrison, Green Valley, and Sara Wolters of Prescott, AAUW AZ Treasurer and Finance Chair respectively. A power point presentation, by International Educational Foundation recipient Dilyana Pavlova, attracted an enthusiastic audience.

The 100th anniversary of the Tucson Branch was celebrated at lunch by a musical skit. Ms. Hallman, formerly a soloist with the U.S. Army Band, led an impromptu chorus of *Happy Birthday*. Four past AAUW AZ Presidents were recognized by current President Neubert. Elizabeth Rielly, announced the retirement of the Agitator Award and presented the first annual Lifesaver Award to Shirley Talley, West Valley.

Pat Zajicek, Chair, Community Action Grants announced the award of two \$500 grants for 2009-2010 to Northwest Valley and Prescott. \$200 CAG’s were awarded to Casas Adobes, Glendale, Sun City, Tucson and West Valley.

At the Annual Business Meeting Shirley Talley, West Valley, was elected as Membership Vice President and Dede Agosta, Scottsdale, was elected as Recording Secretary, each for two-year terms. There were no nominees for the office of President-Elect. According to the bylaws, that office will remain vacant for one year. Nominating Committee members for 2009-2010 were elected as follows: Patricia Zajicek, West Valley, chair, and Carolyn Maxon, Phoenix; Edi

Taylor-Richards, Prescott, Elizabeth Rielly, Northwest Valley and Dorie Roepke, Scottsdale, members. Mary Shenefield, Prescott, a past president, installed the new officers.

After a lengthy discussion convention delegates voted against providing voting instructions to delegates to the Association Convention in St. Louis in June 2009. At the close of the Business Meeting President Neubert held a caucus of members who plan to attend the convention.

Kudos to Ann Mitchell and her hard-working committee members for making this meeting successful.

Elizabeth Rielly, AAUW AZ Program VP