



East Mesa Branch Newsletter

February, 2025

“February brings the promise of new beginnings and fresh starts” – Emily Maroutian

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT-From Janice Dill

Happy February! It was so good to see many of you, including visitors, at our February meeting. Thanks to Debbie Hansen, Bonnie Boyce-Williams and Sharon Phelps from the Northwest Valley branch for guiding us through the writing project, part of the “We Made History!” Project. I encourage you to take some time to continue to write your story. Women are powerful, and our stories are important. Our “Reminiscers” special interest writing group meets the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, 10:15 – 11:30 in the Anniversary Room, Rec 1. Contact Marje Perkins if interested. Our March meeting will be on Saturday, the 1st, and include a special presentation by Penny Boese – “Quilting in America”. The community is welcome and I encourage you to invite a friend– an opportunity to learn about the impact quilts have had on society, and a chance to introduce new women to AAUW. Our meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. in the Rec 1 ballroom, and the quilt presentation will get underway at 11:00 a.m.

If you have a quilt that you would like to display, please contact Mary Linnemann at (320) 492-9131 or mklinnemann16@gmail.com

Janice Dill, President, East Mesa Branch

History of Black History Month- Fun Facts:

1. Began in 1926 as Negro History Week by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, Harvard scholar.
2. In 1968 during the Kent State sit-ins, Black students protested the charges against students protesting the war. Black United Students staged a walk-out and President Gerald Ford eventually proclaimed extension of the Week into Black History Month.
3. Woodson taught that February honors Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, both born in February.
4. Theme changes yearly- in 2025, the theme is African Americans and Labor.
5. Civil rights leaders popularized Black History Month and made a point of teaching Black history.
6. Black History Month honors many prominent Black leaders from Harriet Tubman to Maya Angelou.
7. National organizations such as the Library of Congress, National Park Service and Smithsonian celebrate Black History Month though this will change during the current administration.
8. Black History Month is celebrated in Canada and the US and in October in the Netherlands, Ireland and the UK.
9. HBCUs celebrate all year on their college campuses.
10. Black History Month recognizes all African American experiences.

A Woman of History- from Sandra Lackore:

Florence Price was an African American composer, overlooked in her lifetime, but now recognized as a trailblazer-the first Black woman to have a symphony performed by a major US orchestra. Titled *Retrospection*, the organ music captures the introspection to contemplate beauty.