

AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH

Volume 71, Number 2

February 2, 2021



Co- Presidents' Message



Dear Members:

A very big thank you to Kristan McMahon, former AAUW-FC branch president, now President, Robert Jackson Center, Jamestown, NY, who joined us at our branch meeting on Sunday January 10. The branch discussed the Electoral College and the transfer of presidential power, after listening to a discussion between Kristan and elections expert and law professor Edward Foley, Ohio State University. Thanks to Becky Gaul and Susan Conklin for arranging this very topical and interesting program.



Honored Persons. As of December 30, 2020, members of AAUW – FC made individual charitable contributions of over \$2600 to AAUW national. As a result, we are able to officially honor 5 members for their contributions this year. See the article within about this year's honorees.



February Meeting. Becky and Susan have invited Sara Fitzgerald, local author and activist, to speak to us on Sunday, Feb. 14, 2021 at 2:00p.m. Sara is the author of several books, both non-fiction and fiction. She will speak to us regarding her book, *Conquering Heroines*, which chronicles a pivotal period in the history of the women's movement and the University of Michigan, and illustrates the power of grassroots activism. Sara is also president of The League of Women Voters – FC.

Nominating Committee. At our March 8, 2021 branch meeting, the branch will elect a new Treasurer and Membership – VP. The branch also needs a webmaster to maintain our website up to date. The Nominating Committee is Shannon LaBarbera, (chair as Membership-VP), Bunny Jarrett and Martha Trunk.

If you are interested in serving as Treasurer, Membership-VP or Webmaster, please call or email a member of the Nominating Committee. Currently, the Board is aware of two volunteers for these offices but would very much welcome additional persons for consideration. Also, please consider volunteering to serve as the branch's webmaster.

AAUW – VA State Conference. Consider registering for the AAUW-VA state conference. It is free! The state officers have put together a vibrant program. You will learn about several initiatives in which AAUW is involved. More detailed information, including registration information, is set forth within.

AAUW Proposed Bylaw Change. This spring AAUW members will vote on proposed changes recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would eliminate the degree requirement for membership.

The rationale for the change is found at AAUW's website. The AAUW Board feels very strongly that while the degree requirement made perfect sense at AAUW's inception, this requirement is now

counter to AAUW's mission. The long-standing requirement creates a barrier to women who do not hold a college degree and limits AAUW's ability to build the capacity needed to increase AAUW's impact as an organization. By eliminating this requirement, AAUW can become a more diverse and inclusive organization, better aligned with the needs of women today. Further, AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet if AAUW excludes those without a college degree, AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls. In the AAUW Board's view, eliminating the degree requirement is the right thing to do.



Now through February 5, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time, you can comment on the proposed changes. <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/2021-comment-bylaws/> Please send any [comments](#) to let the Board know of your thoughts on this proposal. All submitted comments or proposed changes will be reviewed by AAUW's staff and the AAUW Governance Committee. Voting will open Debate on open membership will take place in national town halls and state and branch meetings this spring.

Voting will open on April 7, 2021 and close May 17, 2021 5:00 PM ET. More information is contained in a separate article within.

We look forward to seeing you at the February meeting on Zoom.
Sharon Zackula and Elizabeth Kessel
Co-Presidents

February Branch Zoom Meeting

Join our February Program



On Sunday, February 14th at 2 pm, local author Sara Fitzgerald will speak to us about the experiences described in her book, *Conquering Heroines, How Women Fought Sex Bias at Michigan and Paved the Way for Title IX*. (Sara previously spoke to us in October, as FC League of Women Voters coordinator for the redistricting Constitutional Amendment.) *Conquering Heroines* details a pivotal period in the women's movement as the U Michigan complaint became the breakthrough for sex discrimination settlements. Sara is a former Washington Post editor and served as the first woman editor-in-chief of the U Michigan Daily. While her book is available at One More Page Books and on Amazon, we're sure you will find her presentation relevant for AAUW and personally interesting. Members of FC LWV may also join our Zoom session. Hope to see you there!

Save these dates for the AAUW State Convention!

Hello Everyone:

Because of the continuing pandemic we made the decision to change the 2021 state conference, which includes the annual business meeting, from an in-person event to a virtual event using Zoom. Social distancing, by nature, places some limits on what we can do during the conference. However, as we demonstrated during the virtual Summer Leadership Meeting, virtual meetings also enable us to bring in extraordinary speakers from anyplace in the world and allow more members to attend!

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!**

We are planning an exciting program around the **theme “Women Make the Difference!** and will be releasing details as they become available.

In the meantime, please mark the conference dates on your calendars: **March 13-15, 2021. On Saturday, March 13, our sessions will be from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 pm. On Sunday, March 14, and Monday, March 15, we will be in session from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day.**

Regards,
Leslie Tourigny
703-307-8227
[ltourigny at gmail.com](mailto:ltourigny@gmail.com)

AAUW – FC HONORS FIVE MEMBERS

This year (by December 30, 2020) members of AAUW–FC donated over \$2600 to AAUW national. As a result, we are able to officially honor 5 members for their contributions to AAUW this year.

This year we honor Dianne Bodeen, Sarah John, Mollie Jewell, Pam Martinov and Mary Youman.

- Dianne and Sarah, the AAUW-FC branch honors and thanks you for your many contributions to the branch, including working so diligently to prepare for a book sale and remaining as co-chairmen of the book sale for a second year. Both of you also should be recognized for your flexibility and adaptability in the face of the frequent changes of course you have been forced to make as we wait out the vaccination process and try to re-schedule (again) the important book sale fundraiser!
- Mollie, the AAUW-FC branch honors and thanks you for your many contributions to the branch, including organizing and chairing the timely Get Out the Vote (GOTV) initiative, which allowed branch members to participate meaningfully, despite COVID, in the nationwide effort to promote voter registration and full participation in our country’s elections. The branch also thanks you for serving as Secretary.
- Pam, the AAUW-FC branch honors and thanks you for your many contributions to the branch, including producing an excellent and innovative newsletter each month, providing, particularly in 2020-2021, an essential link among members. Your work has been foundational in keeping our branch connections alive.
- Mary, the AAUW-FC branch honors and thanks you for your many contributions to the branch, including serving as Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, developing the innovative Scholarship Awards ceremony for the May 2020 scholarship recipients so that each could be recognized individually with family present, and providing valuable logistical and other support in the GOTV initiative.



The contributions of these members will be recognized in the AAUW – VA state conference materials, as well as by AAUW national. The Board hopes you have an opportunity to express your appreciation of their volunteer spirit and work on behalf of the branch.

Proposal to eliminate the degree requirement for AAUW membership

A Statement from the AAUW Racial and Social Justice Working Group

As members of this working group, we are passionate about ensuring that AAUW become more diverse and inclusive. Eliminating the educational requirement for membership is an essential step toward that goal: If we are truly committed to advancing equity for all, we need to become more equitable ourselves. While the requirement may have made sense early in our history, by today's standards it is perceived as elitist, exclusionary and out of touch. To remain relevant, every organization must evolve. It is essential that we send a loud and clear message that we welcome all who share our values and goals — regardless of whether or not they hold a college degree. Education remains a top priority for AAUW, of course, and we continue to advocate for opening doors to schooling, training and career opportunities to advance economic security for women and girls. But we will be better positioned to do our work by welcoming a more diverse membership, not turning people away. We urge you to initiate robust discussion about this proposal within your branch and state organizations. Please share your comments with this working group and with the national Board. And we encourage you to weigh in on this important proposal by casting your vote this spring.

Julia Brown, Board Chair, Malinda Gaul, Board Vice Chair, Joanna Amberger, Former National Board Member, Sandy Bernard, Former National Board President, Joe Bertolino, National Board Member, Patricia Fae Ho, Former National Board Chair, Lisette Garcia, Inclusion & Equity Committee Chair, Carolyn Garfein, Former National Board President, Elizabeth Haynes, National Board Member, Karen Kirkwood, National Board Member, Dot McLane, Former National Board Member, Nancy Rustad, Former National Board President, Ruth Sweetser, Former National Board President

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls. Since our founding in 1881, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day — educational, social, economic, and political.



Key Talking Points

- The reasons we should drop the education requirement are simply:
 - Because it is the right thing to do
 - Because it is in keeping with our mission to advance gender equity
- AAUW needs to include members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to meet our mission of advancing gender equity and society's needs today.
- Simply put, this is about inclusion. AAUW's vision is Equity for All. Our membership practices should align with this vision.
- The educational requirement is counterproductive to recruiting diverse members as well as younger members.

- There are many paths to education beyond colleges and universities. As important as the P12 and four-year college system is, education comes in many forms, including Career Technical Education, on-the-job training, and similar education routes.
- Those who do not have degrees can be strong advocates for our mission.
- We are an organization that promotes equity, yet we do not treat non-degree individuals as equal. This is simply unacceptable.
- Times have changed. Younger feminists care about our mission but don't join us because they see us as an exclusionary or elitist organization, one that hasn't evolved into modern thinking about equity and inclusion.
- Corporations and foundations prefer to work with and/or fund organizations that adhere to their diversity, inclusion, and equity policies and practices. We lose out on dollars that could help us move forward with our mission and vision which puts a bigger burden on our members to contribute to AAUW.

Key dates:

Comment Period: January 11 – February 5, 2021 via this link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSYB5YS>. The voting Period will be from April 7 – May 17, 2021.

How to vote: All eligible voters are encouraged to vote online. A link to voting (as well as many reminders) will be sent via email to all eligible voters beginning on April 7, 2021. All voters without a valid email on file with the national office will be sent a reminder via snail mail. Paper ballots can be requested from connect at aauw.org on or before April 16, 2021. Paper ballots must be postmarked by April 30, 2021.

SEND A YOUNG WOMEN TO COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY



YES, Falls Church AAUW members along with Peabody family and friends have generously responded to our call for donations to our Local Scholarship Fund. As the newsletter goes to press, we have received **\$5,537!!** Pat yourselves on the back! Let's see if we can reach **\$6,000**. Any amount will help us reach that **GOAL** or even exceed it.

We are accepting donations of whatever amount you can send until March 1, 2021. At that time we can let our Scholarship Selection Committee know what amount they can award to the young women at Falls Church High School, George Mason High School, and Justice High School.

Please make your check payable to Falls Church AAUW and note Local Scholarship Fund on the check. Mail it to Anne Baxter at 3440S. Jefferson St., Apt. 527, Falls Church, VA 22041-3124.

If you have any questions, contact Anne at vabaxter@verizon.net or 703-969-6743. **Thanks for your support!**

Public Policy

Update on Virginia General Assembly



The Virginia General Assembly convened for its 2021 legislative session on January 13 and is scheduled to adjourn on February 11. The session opened with the introduction of several bills supported by AAUW. In the Senate, Senator Boysko introduced the Virginia Equal Pay Act, SB1228, and SB 1330, which requires the Virginia Employment Commission to establish and administer a paid family and medical leave program. Unfortunately, both of these bills were “passed by indefinitely” by the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, which means they will not be considered in this legislative session.

In the House, the news is a bit more positive. Delegate Guzman’s bill (HB 2137), which requires employers to provide sick days to essential workers who work an average of 20 hours per week or 90 hours per month, and Delegate Ayala’s bill (HB 2016), which is essentially identical to SB 1330, were both reported out of the House Commerce and Labor Committee and are now awaiting consideration by the House Appropriations Committee. If one or both of these bills pass the House of Delegates, they could be forwarded to the Senate for consideration. If that occurs, AAUW/VA will launch a telephone call/email campaign and your assistance will be needed. Watch your email for updates on these bills.

ERA

You’ll recall that just over a year ago, Virginia became the 38th and final state needed to ratify the ERA. However, the original legislation required that the amendment be ratified by three-fourths of the states within ten years. Because the original legislation was passed in 1972 and Virginia did not ratify the ERA until 2020, this stipulation was not met. Congress has now taken an important bipartisan step to remove that requirement. On January 21, U.S. Senators Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and Ben Cardin (D-Maryland) introduced S.J.Res. 1, which removes the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment. On the same day, Representatives Jackie Speier (D-California) and Tom Reed (R-New York) introduced the companion bill H.J.Res 17. The House bill currently has 220 cosponsors.



Also of interest-



Oscar winner Julia Reichert’s documentary on the women’s labor movement of the 1970s and 1980s, “9 to 5: The Story of a Movement,” is a great film. The movement inspired a song by Dolly Parton and a film with Jane Fonda. Elizabeth saw Reichert’s documentary at the Cleveland Museum of Art in 2019. If you have a chance, check out Reichert’s other films also, which we recommend. It will be shown on

PBS or the PBS Video App starting on Monday, February 1, 2021, at 10 p.m. (9 p.m. Central).

Arlington Branch

Racial Equity and Equality in Arlington

If you were able to join us for our January 23rd meeting, you had a valuable opportunity to begin the work of engaging in important, relevant, and powerful discussions on diversity, inclusion and belonging. Part Two of this work will be provided on Saturday, February 20th at 10:30 am. Krysta Jones, a powerful advocate for racial equity and women's voices and new Arlington branch member, will continue to guide us in understanding the issues and our own roles



in moving forward as individuals and as an organization! You are welcome to attend even if you were not able to join the first part of the program in January! Please contact Carol Dabbs at [presarlvaauw at gmail.com](mailto:presarlvaauw@gmail.com) if you are interested.

McLean Area Branch

The McLean Area Branch AAUW will have its February Branch Meeting on Saturday, February 6, 2021 from 10:00 am - Noon via Zoom. The meeting is topic is "A Guide to Navigating the Pandemic" with Michele A. Romano, M.D.

Dr. Michele A. Romano, a Board-Certified Family Physician, was in private clinical practice from 1987 until her retirement in 2015. Dr. Romano was also an Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Population Health at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Richmond, Virginia, during this period. She also served as the Chairman of the Department of Family Medicine and a member of the Medical Executive Committee at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital in Northern Virginia. Dr Romano was a Registered Nurse for 12 years prior to medical school with a specialty in critical care. She opened the first Critical Care



Unit in the interior of Alaska in Fairbanks in 1969 and served as its first Head Nurse. She then supervised the Critical Care Units at Retreat Hospital in Richmond, VA for six years. Dr Romano was regularly named as a Top Doc by *Washingtonian* magazine. Dr. Romano has served on the Board of Trustees of the Medical College of Virginia Foundation, on the VCU Board of Visitors, and the VCU Health System Board. She is a member of the American Academy of Family Practice. She received her RN at Trumbull Memorial Hospital in Warren, Ohio; BA in Biology at the University of Tennessee; and MD at VCU.

Please go to- <http://mclean-va.aauw.net> to indicate your interest in participating, so that a Zoom link can be sent to interested attendees.

Mount Vernon Branch News

The Mount Vernon Branch with the Sherwood Library will present HISTORY IN OUR MIDST. Learn about Historical Collections in Alexandria and Gum Springs, Mt. Vernon on February 25, 2021 at 4 p.m. via Zoom.

Register at <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7314837>

Reston-Herndon AAUW

February 26 at 4:00 pm – Dr. Sherri Burr, Professor of Law at the University of New Mexico will be our speaker. Dr. Burr has an impressive background. She is the Dickason Chair in Law and Regents Professor Emerita at the University of New Mexico School of Law, received her education at Mount Holyoke College, Princeton University and the Yale Law School. The author of 26 other books, Burr lectures on her research related to Free Blacks and created the art exhibition "400 Years of Freedom, Restriction and Survival."



For more information about her you can go to: <https://lawschool.unm.edu/faculty/burr/index.html>

Her talk will focus on the challenges of being a woman in pre-civil war Virginia. In addition, she has written a Pulitzer Prize nominated book Complicated Lives Free Blacks in Virginia 1619-1865. She indicated that the discussion would be more engaging if we read her book in advance. To that end, Janine has purchased two copies of the book. It is only 141 pages so we are assuming a quick read. If you are interested in reading the book before the meeting, you can order the book on Amazon or can contact Janine or Roberta ([shermanrs at aol.com](mailto:shermanrs@aol.com)) to be placed on a list and as people finish reading the book, it will be passed along to the next individual on the list. Once those of you who want to read the book have finished it and the discussion is over, we will donate one copy to the South Lakes High School Library and one to the Reston Regional Library. This should be a wonderful talk.

Vienna Branch News

Peggy's Picks -Guest Speaker Peggy Bercher, Fiction Selector Fairfax County Public Library Tuesday, February 9, 7 p.m.



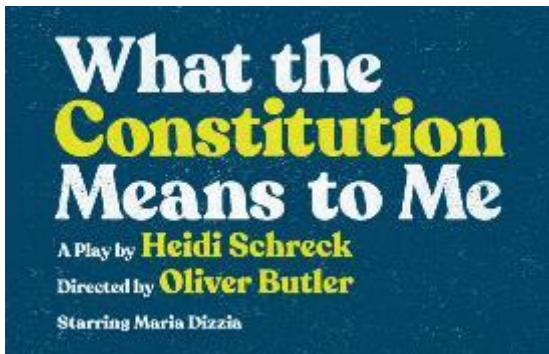
Peggy Bercher, the adult fiction selector for the Fairfax County Public Library loves adult fiction. With 23 branches that's a lot of books! Find out how she makes her choices and how you can see what's coming soon to the library.

Email AAUW, Vienna-Area Branch for a meeting code if you are interested in attending:

[Viennaauw at gmail.com](mailto:Viennaauw@gmail.com)

Please put February Program in the subject line.

Movies, anyone?



In February, the film group returns to the United States to watch and discuss **What the Constitution Means to Me**. Written by and starring Heidi Schreck the film-play, addresses themes such as women's rights, immigration, domestic abuse and the history of the United States. The play was nominated for a Tony and Pulitzer for best play. It was the winner of the Obie Award, Off-Broadway Alliance Award and New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play. It is sure to spur interesting conversation and debate.

What the Constitution Means to Me can be viewed on Amazon Prime. The group will meet virtually to discuss the film on Wednesday, February 10th at 7:00 PM. All are invited to join us. **No ticket required**. For more details, call or text Aida Loomis at 703 966 8050.

The film group is in the process of nominating and selecting films to watch and discuss starting in March. Feel free to pass along any suggestions

Book Club News

The book group meets virtually for the foreseeable future on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 P.M. You can find the schedule of upcoming meetings in the newsletter, on the events calendar on our branch website as well as an email sent out to the branch. All are welcome to attend whether or not you've read the book. A Zoom meeting invitation is sent out to all members the day before the meeting. Below is our schedule for Winter/Spring 2021.

Next up Feb. 16th 2021:

The Education of an Idealist: A Memoir

Samantha Power

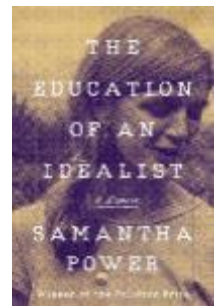
Pulitzer Prize winner Samantha Power, widely known as a relentless advocate for promoting human rights, has been heralded by President Barack Obama as one of America's "foremost thinkers on foreign policy." 592 pages

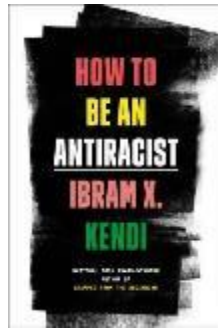
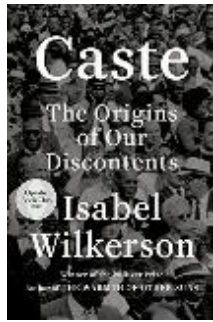
On the Docket:

MARCH 16, 2021: Diversity: "The Origins of Our Discontents" by Isabel Wilkerson, 496 pages

APRIL 20, 2021: Diversity: "How to Be an Antiracist" by Ibram X. Kendi, 305 pages

MAY 18, 2021: Contemporary Fiction: "The Vanishing Half" by Brit Bennett, 343 pages





Please join us for great discussions, whether or not you've read the book.
Polly Rosenstein for FC AAUW book Group

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Until February 5		Comment period on Proposed AAUW By-Laws Change
February 6	10:00am	McLean Area Branch meeting
February 9	7:00pm	Vienna Branch meeting
February 10	7:00pm	Movie Group Zoom Meeting
February 14	2:00pm	Falls Church Branch Meeting via Zoom
February 16	7:30pm	Book Club Zoom Meeting
February 20	10:30am	Arlington Branch meeting
February 25	4:00pm	Mount Vernon Branch meeting
February 26	4:00pm	Reston-Herndon Branch meeting
March 1		Deadline for donation to FC AAUW Scholarship Fund
March 8	7:30pm	Falls Church Branch Meeting via Zoom
March 13-15		Virginia AAUW Conference
April 7 – May 17		Voting on AAUW's Proposed By-Laws Change

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.





Sherwood Regional Library

Presenting

HISTORY IN OUR MIDST

**Learn about Historical Collections in Alexandria
and Gum Springs, Mt. Vernon February 25, 2021 4
p.m. Zoom**

Register <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7314837>

Registration closes February 24.



AUDREY DAVIS, Director, **Alexandria Black History Museum** and **RON CHASE**, Director, **Gum Springs Museum** in Mt. Vernon, will share information about the collections in their respective museums.

Audrey P. Davis is Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum in Alexandria, Virginia. Ms. Davis is a past President of the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM) and is one of the founders and the Director of *Virginia Africana Associates Inc.: The Network of Museum, History and Preservation Professionals*. Ms. Davis is currently Vice President of the Alexandria Historical Society, a board member for: Living Legends of Alexandria, Preservation Virginia and for the National Women's History Museum.

Ronald L. Chase Is Founder/Director of the Gum Springs Museum and President of the Historical Society, one of only two African American Historical Societies in Fairfax County Virginia. Gum Springs is historically the oldest African American community in

Fairfax County. He is the managing editor of the publication, *History In Motion*, distributed throughout the nation, and he has written and presented articles to area historical societies. He is a graduate of The Virginia Commonwealth University (BFA).



Peggy's Picks

**Guest Speaker Peggy Bercher, Fiction Selector Fairfax County
Public Library Tuesday, February 9, 7 p.m.**

Peggy Bercher, the adult fiction selector for the Fairfax County Public Library loves adult fiction. With 23 branches that's a lot of books! Find out how she makes her choices and how you can see what's coming soon to the library.

Email AAUW, Vienna-Area Branch for a meeting code if you are interested in attending:

Viennaaaauw at gmail.com

Please put February Program in the subject line.