

## AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH

Volume 70, Number 9

October 1, 2020



### Co- Presidents' Message



Dear All,

Fall is here! We began September with a very interesting presentation by author Eliza Nellums discussing her novel, *All Things Bright and Gone*. The branch had a special opportunity to not only discuss the book but to ask questions of a successful writer. She was very informative and open about the writing and publishing practice. Would-be authors, you missed your chance!

One of the most important elections, the November 3, 2020 election, is just 30 days away. Your vote matters.

For important information, a little repetition is a good thing. If you need to update your voter registration or if you want to get an absentee ballot so that you don't have to wait in lines this November, go to <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation> and click on whichever task you want to accomplish.

October 13, 5 p.m. - the deadline to register to vote or update your registration (in person or receipt by mail).

October 13, 11:59 p.m. - the deadline to register to vote or update registration (online).

If you want an absentee ballot, request it right away so that you can get your ballot in time to fill it out and return it well before Election Day. You no longer need a special reason for requesting an absentee ballot.

As an organization, we are working to encourage maximum participation in this year's election and ameliorate the effect of actions intended to suppress voter turnout. These efforts are consistent with two of AAUW's public policy priorities: to increase voter turnout and to promote diversity and inclusion. Mollie Jewell is coordinating the final round of a postcard writing campaign organized nationally by the Reclaim Our Vote Campaign to increase voter registration and encourage voter turnout. Our branch and friends and family have written an astonishing 5060 postcards working with ROV. Each person volunteering makes a difference. More details within.

October 12 Program on Redistricting Reform in VA and Proposed Constitutional Amendment. Our October 12, 2020 FC Branch program features a speaker from FAIRMAPS VA and The League of Women Voters – Falls Church. Both speakers have been involved in a multi-year, citizen-led effort to reform the VA redistricting process that occurs every 10 years and will occur in 2021. They will discuss a proposed amendment to the VA Constitution to establish a non-partisan redistricting commission, led by citizens, and procedural safeguards, including transparency, all of which are intended to curtail gerrymandering. The proposed amendment will be on the ballot this November. **AAUW of VA and The League of Women Voters support the adoption of the ballot referendum that, if approved, would amend the VA Constitution to establish the non-partisan redistricting commission.**

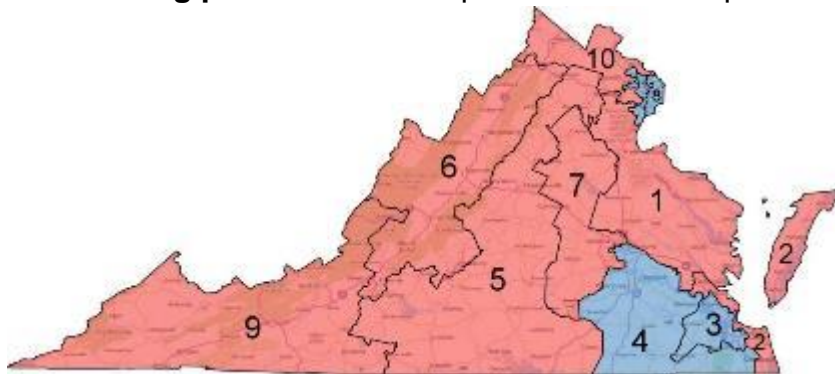
Gerrymandering, which is the practice of creating or re-drawing electoral districts based upon politically- and racially-based goals, has been one way in which political parties frustrate the intent of the Voting Rights Act, to make every individual's vote count. Too often, electoral district boundaries have been drawn by politicians to make each district a safe seat for one party, or the other, drawing the map to keep themselves in power and diminishing the power of voters to determine who will represent them in their government. **We encourage you to learn more about this ballot issue by attending our October (Online) meeting. A ZOOM invitation will be emailed to you around noon on October 11, the day before the meeting.**

A second postcard writing campaign led by Bunny Jarrett in coordination with the League of Women Voters provides important information to inform voters about this proposed Constitutional amendment. Our branch wrote and mailed 250 postcards providing education to Falls Church area voters about this ballot issue.

Stay safe and vote,  
Sharon Zackula and Elizabeth Kessel

## Timely Topic for October Branch Zoom Meeting

Are you ready to vote on the proposed **Virginia Constitutional Amendment regarding the redistricting process?** We're pleased to have representatives from both FairMaps Virginia and



League of Women Voters Falls Church join us via Zoom on October 12 at 7:30 pm. AAUW of Virginia endorses a YES vote on Amendment 1 to end Partisan Gerrymandering. See <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/>. If you'd like more information to review before the meeting, here are the FairMaps and LWV links - <https://fairmapsva.org/whats-on-the-ballot/>. and <https://lwv-va.org/redistricting/>.

plus an opposing view - <https://arlingtondemocrats.org/votenoon1/>.

As usual, Sharon will send the Zoom invitation link shortly before the meeting. You may share the Zoom invitation with non-member friends interested in learning more about this important issue.

**Please plan to join us!!!!** Becky & Susan, Program Co-chairs

## AAUW Dues



**A SNOOPY THANK YOU** to all our Falls Church members, who renewed their membership in our branch! This was just over a 93% renewal rate. That's amazing in an unpredictable year!! Also, most of you renewed on line by credit card, which make our jobs easier.

Shannon LaBarbera, Membership  
Anne Baxter, Treasurer

## Falls Church AAUW Postcard Campaign Update – 5060 Written

Mary Youman and I have just finished assembling the latest round of postcards for our Get-Out-the-Vote initiative in honor of Kitty Richardson. With these, FC AAUW members and friends have written **5060** postcards. Twenty members participated in writing cards, and recruited 9 additional friends (and family) to help out!

**What has FC AAUW accomplished? 5060 postcards written!** We are writing postcard via the Reclaim Our Vote (ROV) Campaign. We started by supporting the North Carolina NAACP in asking voters to pledge to vote. Then we asked voters in Florida (Hillsboro County / Tampa and Orange County (Orlando) to vote in the primary and fill-in the census. In Texas, we urged voters to vote early in Hidalgo County (Ft Worth / El Paso) and Laredo. We also asked inactive voters in Lowndes County, GA to reactivate their status and vote early or by mail. Now we are asking voters in Seminole County, Florida to vote and vote early.



**ROV nationwide campaign 6 million postcards.** And here are some amazing statistics from ROV, the umbrella organization we are partnering with.

- Distributed 6,277,476 postcard addresses. Yes, 6 million postcards! And we helped!
- Made 504,194 phone calls
- Of the voters contacted for the Georgia primary, 57,610 of the voters voted, and of those, just about 45% were first time or infrequent voters.

**Background.** As you remember, we are writing postcards to get out the vote and fight voter suppression through the Reclaim Our Vote (ROV) campaign. FC AAUW has partnered with ROV to honor the memory of Kitty Richardson, an active civil rights supporter and our diversity chair, who passed away this winter. And the postcards also support the AAUW priority of increasing voter turnout.

This postcard writing campaign is a project of the Center for Common Ground of Virginia, a registered non-partisan 501 (c)3 organization. National partners include NAACP, Black Voters Matter, Mi Familia Vote, VoteRiders and DemLabs.

## Public Policy

With November's elections already proving to be among the most, if not *the* most, momentous of our lifetimes, AAUW-VA wants to ensure that our members are aware of several voting-related issues. We encourage you to inform yourselves and others in your community:

### ***Deadlines and Voting Instructions***

***Registering to vote/updating your registration:*** **October 13** is the last day to register to vote or update your registration. If you've moved or had a name change, your registration must be updated. See the following document with this and other deadlines and links to more information.

***Absentee voting by mail:*** Virginia does *not* have voting by mail but for November's election, is allowing all registered voters to apply to vote absentee by mail. In "vote-by-mail" states, ballots are mailed to registered voters. In Virginia, registered voters must apply to have a ballot mailed to them. **October 23** is the deadline to apply for your ballot.

**Witness requirement for an absentee ballot:** The witness requirement for voting using an absentee ballot **has been suspended** for this election. No witness is required. Disregard the witness signature line on Envelope B when completing your absentee ballot.

**Completing an absentee ballot:** Before mailing or dropping off your completed ballot, be sure to place it in Envelope B, provide all the required information on the outside of it, sign your name where requested, and seal the envelope. Again, the witness signature line does not have to be completed. Make sure to place Envelope B in the return envelope addressed to your Registrar's office and seal it. Even if you decide to drop off your ballot at your Registrar's office or place it in a ballot drop box instead of mailing it, Envelope B must be placed in the return envelope, which must be sealed.



**Mailing/dropping off your ballot:** Due to concerns about the ability of the U.S. Postal Service to deliver ballots on time, voters are encouraged to mail their ballot early or personally deliver it to a designated drop box at their Registrar's office or a satellite site. Drop-off locations can be found under "Your Polling Places" on <https://www.vote411.org/>, sponsored by the League of Women voters and which also provides a wealth of other information, including what is on your ballot and upcoming debates and forums in your area. A postage-paid envelope is provided with the absentee ballot for voters who wish to return it by mail, place it in a drop box, or return it to their

Registrar's office.

**In-person early voting:** Registered voters may vote early in-person at their registrar's office through **October 31**. Check with your local registrar for hours of operation. If you request an absentee ballot, but decide you want to vote in-person instead, you must bring and relinquish the mailed ballot to the Registrar's office or, on **November 3**, at your polling site before you will be able to vote.

### **Referendum on Virginia Constitutional Amendment**

**Proposed Virginia Constitutional Amendment on redistricting:** In addition to national and local elections, Virginia's ballot includes a proposed amendment (Amendment 1 on the ballot) that would change the process of how voting districts are drawn. As previously announced, AAUW-VA has officially endorsed the [FairMapsVa campaign](#), which advocates a "yes" vote on the Amendment. As a non-partisan organization, AAUW-VA closely followed and supported the decade-long efforts to establish a process that would end the partisan gerrymandering made possible by Virginia's current Constitutional requirement that voting districts are drawn by the Virginia General Assembly and the Governor. Along with other organizations and individuals, AAUW-VA has carefully assessed the proposed Amendment and objections to it, and concluded that, while not ideal, it provides a fair, citizen-led, transparent, and bipartisan process with historic civil rights protections. Amending the Virginia Constitution is a lengthy process, as these efforts have proven, and redistricting will occur in 2021 and then not again for 10 years. This is the last best chance to end partisan gerrymandering for at least the next 10 years. We encourage AAUW-VA members to educate themselves and others about this important vote. If you want to do more, check out [the FairMapsVA volunteer toolkit](#). Taking just one action can help get this passed!

As always, your AAUW-VA is here to help with your local efforts to Get Out the Vote. Feel free to call on either or both of us if you have questions or need assistance.

"When women vote, they change the conversation."

*Denise Murden, Susan Burk* **Co-VPs for Public Policy, AAUW-VA**





## Important Dates for the November 3, 2020 Election

Ongoing (See deadline below)	<a href="#">Register to vote</a>
Ongoing	<a href="#">Check and, if necessary, update registration information</a>
Ongoing (see deadline below)	<a href="#">Apply to vote absentee by mail</a>
September 18	Requested absentee ballots begin to be mailed from registrar
September 18	<a href="#">Early in-person voting begins</a>
ASAP (see deadlines below)	Mail or hand deliver completed absentee ballot to registrar
October 13, 5 p.m.	Deadline to register to vote or update registration (in person or receipt by mail)
October 13, 11:59 p.m.	Deadline to register to vote or update registration (online)
October 23, 5 p.m.	Deadline to apply to vote absentee by mail
October 31, 5 p.m.	Deadline for early in-person voting at <a href="#">your local registrar</a>
November 3	Deadline for postmark on absentee ballot submitted by mail
November 3, 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.	<a href="#">Election Day Voting at assigned polling places</a>
November 3, 7 p.m.	Deadline for receipt of absentee ballot delivered in person
November 6, 12 p.m.	Deadline for receipt of absentee ballot mailed to registrar

## From the League of Women Voters



### **Learn About the Candidates for a Seat on the Falls Church City Council:**

On September 23, the Falls Church League of Women Voters and the Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) hosted a Candidate Forum featuring all three candidates for the one

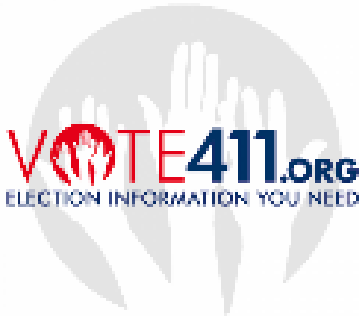
open seat on the Falls Church City Council: Debbie Hiscott, Joshua Shokoor, and Simone Pass Tucker. The candidates responded to a wide range of questions on topics including their experience and preparation for the Council position, their priorities, affordable housing, zoning laws, schools, sustainability, the budget, and making the city accessible for individuals with disabilities.

- **Watch the Forum:** A recording of the Forum is posted on the VPIS website. Click here to view the Forum: [Forum Recording](#)
- **Read the Candidates' Answers to Questions:** The VPIS website also includes detailed written answers by the candidates to a series of questions about City issues. Read the Candidates' responses by clicking here: [Candidate Questionnaire](#)

**Yard Signs Promoting Voting:** Get your very own yard sign to show your support for our local League of Women Voters and your enthusiasm for the upcoming election. The signs contain a QR code and website information to take your neighbors to VOTE411, the League's one stop shop for all election-related information. At VOTE411 the public can register to vote, request an absentee ballot, learn what's on the ballot, and learn where and how to vote. To get a sign to display in your yard, please send in a donation for at least \$20 and provide your Falls Church address so that we can

deliver the sign to your house. To make the donation, you may send a check, made payable to League of Women Voters Falls Church Education Fund, to Nadyne Hick, 6606 Gordon Ave, Falls Church VA 22046. Alternatively, you may make your contribution through the donation button on our website: [Donate Here](#). Or, you can Venmo LWWFC Vice President Sabeena Rajpal at @Sabeena-Rajpal.

Questions? Contact Annie Rhodes-Kline ([anne.rhodes@gmail.com](mailto:anne.rhodes@gmail.com)) or Kitty O'Hara ([kjohara@verizon.net](mailto:kjohara@verizon.net)), co-chairs of the Voter Services Committee.



**Listen to the League's Conversation with Letty Hardi:** On September 13, the League held a very informative conversation with Falls Church City Council Member Letty Hardi. She addressed a wide range of topics including the impact of the pandemic on Falls Church, efforts to promote racial justice in our community, affordable housing, zoning, the City's budget and a review that is underway of data and any complaints concerning the use of force by local police. You may watch the entire program by clicking here: [Letty Hardi Talk](#) and entering the passcode zk2wc#KL.

**Get Ready to Vote, and Pass the Word to Your Friends and Neighbors, too!** The Falls Church League has prepared an excellent one-page summary of how to register and vote this Fall. It is available in English and Spanish. Be sure to check this out and pass it along to all your friends and neighbors to be sure that everyone is ready to vote. To access these one-page guides, go to our website at: [One-Page Guides](#)

**Vote411 Face Masks!** Face masks promoting Vote411 are available from the Virginia State League website for \$10. What a great way to get the word out to your neighbors while protecting everyone's health. Click here: [Face Masks](#)



**Facebook Users:** Sara Fitzgerald shares a tip for those of you who are active on Facebook. You can add a "Facebook frame" around your profile photo to show that you support the Constitutional Amendment to create a redistricting commission. Follow these steps: (1) Click on the camera icon on your FB profile photo; (2) Click on "Add frame;" (3) Search for LWVVA; (4) Choose the frame you'd like to add to your photo. The Virginia League supports approval of constitutional amendment #1 on the ballot.

## Other Programs of Interest to Our Members:



**How the Suffragists Invented Washington Activism:** Lucinda Robb and Rebecca Boggs Roberts will be discussing their book "The Suffragist Playbook." The Zoom program, hosted by Smithsonian Associates, is Tuesday, Oct. 6 at 6:45 pm. Cost is \$20 for Smithsonian Associate members, \$25 for non-members, \$15 for students. For more information and to register, go to: [Smithsonian Associates](#)

### Virginia State League - Racism and Redistricting:

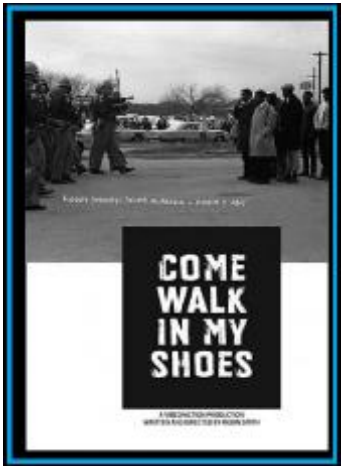
On October 8, the League of Women Voters of the United States, along with the Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia Leagues, will host a discussion on the triple threat posed to our democracy by systemic racism, rigged maps, and the resulting distortion of our elections. For more information and to register go to: [Eventbrite](#)

**Expanding Democracy: The 19th Amendment and Voting Rights Today:** In commemoration of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, the John F. Kennedy Library will host a free virtual conference exploring the history of the suffrage movement and how efforts to broaden voting rights have evolved over time. Featured speakers include Molly Ball, Susan Page and Nancy Cordes, to name just a few. The program will be held on October 27 and 28. For more information go to: [JFK Library Programs](#)



## Movies, anyone?

Let's Go to the Movies Virtually!



For October, the movie group will be discussing the 2007 award-winning documentary film, **Come Walk In MY Shoes**. The film follows the Honorable John Lewis on an emotional pilgrimage to the churches, parks and bridges where young people played a pivotal role in the struggle for equality and voting rights. At each location, Lewis reflects on his experiences and provides a forum for others to help us understand what happened, and why it happened.

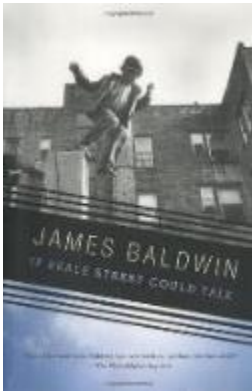
**Come Walk In MY Shoes** can be watched through the Vimeo link, <https://vimeo.com/435206616/5ad8eac440>. The group will meet virtually to discuss the film on Wednesday October 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. All are invited to join us. **No ticket required**. For more details, call Aida Loomis at 703 966 8050.

Coming Soon to AAUW FC: November 11<sup>th</sup> **The Old Guard**.

## Book Club News

Future Meetings (Zoom invitation will be sent to everyone just prior to the meeting date)

Tuesday October 20, 7:30 PM Zoom Meeting



Classic Selection:

***If Beale Street Could Talk*** by James Baldwin

In this honest and stunning novel, James Baldwin has given America a moving story of love in the face of injustice. Told through the eyes of Tish, a nineteen-year-old girl, in love with Fonny, a young sculptor who is the father of her child, Baldwin's story mixes the sweet and the sad. 197 pages

Tuesday November 17 7:30 PM Zoom Meeting:

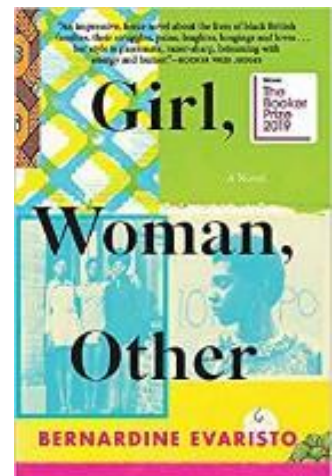
Book by a Foreign Author Selection: ***Girl, Woman, Other*** by Bernardine Evaristo Joint Winner of the Man Booker Prize 2019

Teeming with life and crackling with energy — a love song to modern Britain and black womanhood.

***Girl, Woman, Other*** follows the lives and struggles of twelve very different characters. Mostly women, black and British, they tell the stories of their families, friends and lovers, across the country and through the years. 453 pages.

In a couple of weeks we will be taking nominations for book selections from everyone in the chapter for the following categories: Memoir/biography, Contemporary Fiction (written in 2015 or later), Diversity/inclusion/social justice, and Classic by a Foreign Author,

Stay tuned!



Polly Rosenstein for FC AAUW Book Group





## AAUW Northern District Virtual Meeting

**October 17, 2020**

**10 am – 12 noon**

### **What's My Privilege - Identifying and Using Various Privileges for Good**

The goal of this workshop is to provide attendees a deeper and broader understanding of racism and its effect on our society.



**Speaker: Alicia Jones McLeod**

Executive Director, Challenging Racism

#### **REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**

Please email Sandra Lawrence at [sandyaauw@iuno.com](mailto:sandyaauw@iuno.com) or Sara Anderson at [sfpaaauw6382@aol.com](mailto:sfpaaauw6382@aol.com) by Oct 15 to register. Include your branch and any branch position.

You will then receive the Zoom login information.

**Ms. Jones McLeod comes to Challenging Racism from the Ellicott City Partnership where she led a “Main Street” organization responsible for marketing the area as a destination for shopping and dining. Prior to that she founded the Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce, which continues to raise the profile of black-owned businesses. Her tenure at each of her employers has been marked by the implementation of innovative ideas designed to raise the organization’s profile and draw new supporters to the work.**

After this interactive workshop there will be updates from AAUW of VA board members. We also have time set aside for branches to highlight upcoming programs and how they are dealing with social distancing.

If you have questions please let Sandy or Sara know. Hope to see you there.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 12	7:30pm	Falls Church Branch Meeting via Zoom
October 14	7:00pm	Movie Group Zoom Meeting
October 17	10:00am	Northern District Virtual Meeting
October 20	7:30pm	Book Club Zoom Meeting

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.

