

AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH

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Co- Presidents' Message



Dear Members,

We hope you are well and looking forward to longer days and a shorter winter month.

What is happening with the ERA?

“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex,”

On January 27, President Biden called on Congress “to act immediately to pass a resolution recognizing ratification of the ERA.” But as Jesse Wegman explains in a recent New York Times article, the law regarding enactment of constitutional amendments is murky. To learn about the current legal and political obstacles to the Equal Rights Amendment, see:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/opinion/equal-rights-amendment-ratification.html> or the 1/30/22 print edition, Sunday Review, p.10. If you want to take a deep dive into whether various states’ acts of ratification of the ERA are valid, the two Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel opinions, *Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment* (Jan. 6, 2020) and *Effect of 2020 OLC Opinion on Possible Congressional Action Regarding Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment* (January 26, 2022), can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/olc/opinion/ratification-equal-rights-amendment> and <https://www.justice.gov/olc/file/1466036/download>.

Then contact your Senators and member of Congress!

Branch Meeting News

At our February branch meeting, we will have the opportunity to meet a newer member, April Riser, who will discuss the impact of remote learning, and other developments related to the pandemic to K-12 education.

In addition, the AAUW Falls Church Area nominating committee will be nominating persons for the offices of President, Vice President - Programs, and Secretary. Pam Martinov also needs help publishing the newsletters. (She is publishing a newsletter for 2 organizations right now!) Please say yes, if the Nominating Committee gives you a call and asks you to serve as an officer.

This year’s Book Sale — YES!

The successful December pop-up book sales at the Falls Church Community Center will be followed by our full-scale branch book sale on April 29-30! (Set-up is on April 28.) Book sorting will begin on February 26. There is pent-up demand to donate books to us, but we must use our space resources wisely. (Don’t accept books that you know are unsuitable-- textbooks, older travel books, moldy and yellowed books. If you do, throw them away in your recycling bin before bringing them to the Willston Center for sorting.)

Finally, thanks to Becky Gaul, Susan Conklin and Mollie Jewell for our January 2022 speaker, Roxanne Rucker, of the Reclaim Our Vote campaign, and to Pam Martinov for another great newsletter.

See you (virtually) on February 13, at 2:00 p.m.!

Sharon Zackula and Elizabeth Kessel
Co-Presidents

Next Branch Zoom Meeting

February Program - A teacher's perspective on COVID

Please join us at 2 pm on Sunday afternoon, February 13, via Zoom, to hear from new branch member, April Riser about the frontline challenges of education during COVID. April is currently teaching middle school in Alexandria while simultaneously working on her PhD in Learning, Instruction, & Innovation at Walden University. Come meet one of our newest members speak about education issues of continuing concern to all of us. See you soon via video. As usual, look for the Zoom invitation from Sharon a few days beforehand.



Recap of January Meeting-ROV

On January 9th, Roxanne Rucker, regional organizer for the Center for Common Ground (CCG), spoke to us so we could learn more about those 11,000 non-partisan postcards we've written since 2020.



The Center for Common Ground (CCG) is a (501c3) organization whose mission is to educate and mobilize underrepresented people to fully participate in our democracy. Reclaim or Vote (ROV) is a popular project of CCG. That's how those 11,000 postcards we wrote with friends and family in honor of Kitty Richardson fit in with AAUW's public policy priority to "support open and fair elections that are broadly accessible to all voters."

Reviewing ROV activities so far, Roxanne cited the following highlights:

In 2020 overall, ROV/CCG contacted 14 million voters via 9.4 M postcards, 2.9 M text messages, and 1.7 M phone calls. For the presidential election, in the summer of 2020, 3,000 volunteers across the DMV wrote post-cards, texted, and phone banked. Effectiveness? 70% of GA voters contacted – voted. Most voted early. (Such statistics are not available everywhere.)

In 2021 ROV participated in efforts to counter voter suppression. AAUW-FC participated in AZ efforts. While states passed more restrictive legislation, still many bills failed. ROV/CCG also established the local Democracy Centers by partnering with community-based organizations. Activities included training on local elections/policies, identifying pressing issues, and connecting to local government. There are now 11 centers with a goal 40 across the southern states.

In 2022, ROV will focus on infrequent voters, getting them to exercise their "voting muscles." The effort will start next week for March primaries in 12 Texas counties. Postcards should be mailed by Feb 14, followed by phone banking and texting later. Other activities will include opening more Democracy centers and a Webinar series featuring officials and members of Congress.

Roxanne also responded to our many questions.

Q: Do you work only with Black organizations?

A. CCG/ROV works with both Black and other underrepresented groups. Most work partners with local organizations who are able to access lists of underrepresented voters. Targeting reflects the local partners' interests and the information they can get, so targets vary. Partners include Mi Familia Vota (Hispanic), NAACP state and city branches, and others.

Q: What are 2-3 impactful activities planned for 2022? Answer:

- Phone banking (more effective than post carding) and post carding
- Contact congress people and Senators about federal voting standards
- CCG Director Andrea Miller's webinar on emerging issues/topics.

Q: Describe training for phone banking.

A: Training happens 2 times per week, including "national guidance session," training on using phone bank tools and script, plus other training on Youtube.

Q: Budget for On Common Ground? Sources of income?

A: Private grants, foundations, philanthropists with a significant share from individual donations. Need help Let ROV know of any grant-raising institutions.

Q: What are voter registration suppression/barriers?

A: A primary concern is purging previously registered people from registration rolls. While not a problem in places like Arlington County, access to registration information can be an issue. Many smaller areas have poor websites. Also voter ID requirements and, during pandemic ID agencies/DMV may be closed or slower.

Book Sale?

BE PART OF HISTORY!!

Yes, the Falls Church AAUW Branch will indeed hold an April book sale, but it will in all likelihood be our last. So, here are very preliminary details; we ask you to watch for further messages as to just how we are going to pull it off, with the goal of raising a really substantial sum for our scholarship fund. The scholarship committee has done its best to see that graduating girls have received some help from us the last two years, but the funds have clearly been restricted by the absence of our book sale.



So: here goes!

Date: April 28 (set up day) to April 30 (celebration day!) At the usual place: Falls Church Community Center. We'll give you the exact hours as we establish them.

Sorting begins again on Saturday, February 26 at Willston Multicultural Center (directly across Arlington Blvd from Home Depot). We ask that you be there at 9:00, if possible, as our plan is to start receiving donations at 10, stopping near noon for donations, and as soon after as we can for you, our workers. These donation hours will be more limited than in the past, as we still have limited storage and need to sort carefully.

Contingent on agreement from Willston, we will sort on March 5, March 12, March 26, and April 2 and April 9. We will hold April 23 for finishing up at Willston. We will also have a large bin at the Community Center, but we hope to close donations there by April 9.

As in the past, husbands are really welcome during sorting days and set up day. We will be storing many books off site, and for loading those into a couple of cars and making that move to Public Storage would be a lot easier with the help of some men.

In the absence of a planning luncheon, which we might still be able to schedule, we will need your help to get the word out about both the sale and the donations—probably on reverse sides of our usual book marks, as well as signs you can help us distribute. The Farmers' Market may be our best pickup place for publicity materials—we'll let you know when we figure that out. We will also need you to indicate what jobs you can take on before and during the sale and at what times. That signup opportunity will definitely come to you in the next FLASH message.

We are excited about being back in the business again. Our December sales showed a lot of enthusiasm among Market visitors, and we hope they are just a start to all the folks we can get to buy our wonderful books. Our prices will be a little higher this year, which we hope will augment our earnings significantly.

Sarah John and Dianne Bodeen are leading this year's sale and are eagerly looking forward to having as many members as possible work with us. Watch for more information from us.

Questions? Please contact: Dianne at Bodeendvatverizon.net; or Sarah at sarahjohn2857atgmail.com.

Public Policy

Virginia General Assembly Update

The 2022 Session of the Virginia General Assembly convened on January 12 and will meet for 60 days, adjourning on March 12. Crossover, when the bills passed by the House of Delegates are sent to the Senate for consideration and those passed by the Senate are sent to the House of Delegates for consideration, will occur on February 15. A bill must pass both the House and Senate with the exact same language before it is sent to the Governor for his consideration.

AAUW-VA is currently focusing on bills in three areas which directly address the needs of women and their families — paid sick leave, salary history ban, and paid family and medical leave. Here are the bills areas AAUW is currently supporting and their status.

Paid Sick Days: AAUW is supporting two House bills and two Senate bills, all of which would require employers to provide paid sick days to their employees. They differ on whom the bill covers.

HB 1160 and **SB 352** cover health care providers, grocery store workers and home health workers who provide agency-directed serves. (Last year legislation was passed that covered home health workers who provide consumer-directed services – Medicaid.)

HB 997 and **SB 624** provide a slight expansion on last year's legislation and cover only home health workers who provide agency-directed serves. The House bills are in the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittee 4, which has not scheduled action on them. The Senate bills are in the Senate Commerce and Labor Subcommittee on Labor and Employment, which has scheduled them for consideration on January 31.

The logo features the word "PAID" in large, bold, red, distressed-style capital letters. Below it, the words "SICK DAYS" are written in a smaller, bold, purple font with a white outline and a slight shadow effect.

Salary History Ban: **SB 447** would prohibit an employer from requiring that a prospective employee provide her salary history so that the employer could use that in determining the employee's salary. This bill is an essential step in closing the gender pay gap. The bill is in the Senate Commerce and Labor Subcommittee on Labor and Employment and is on the Subcommittee's agenda for January 31.



In response to a question, the Senator stated that the mood in Richmond was “difficult” and feels that not much legislation would be passed by the General Assembly this year. She remarked that the Democratic Caucus has made the determination to act as a firewall against attempts to roll back the progressive legislation passed in the preceding two years. In her view, one bright spot of possible bipartisan action could be passage of SB 15 and SB1156, which were discussed above.

Advocacy in a Time of Social Distancing



You can make your views heard about important issues facing women today without leaving your home by becoming an AAUW Action Network Two-Minute Activist. If you have not already done so, join today; just click on the following link: <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/#> and fill out the form. As a Two-Minute Activist, you will receive e-mail notices when your advocacy is most needed. You'll be provided with sample letters and talking points you can use to

call or send messages to Members of Congress, your state legislators and other government officials or to write a Letter to the Editor of your local newspaper. With your help, the Action Network can continue to boost AAUW's influence on Capitol Hill and in statehouses across the nation.

New Member- Clare O'Sheel

Clare grew up on Long Island in New York state, graduating from West Hempstead HS in 1963. She received her BA in English degree from The College of Notre Dame of Maryland in 1967, and began her career as a public health educator. She continued in that role for two years, until the birth of her first daughter.

While raising her two daughters, first on Long Island and later in Reston, VA, she was active with the PTA and Girl Scouts, AAUW, and was a volunteer docent at the Smithsonian's National Museum of at

She and her family lived for two years in Mexico City in the late '70s where she began a return to the workplace working as a columnist with the Mexico City News. Upon return to the DC area she was hired as a reporter for the Reston Connection newspaper. From there she began a career in public relations and marketing, working at GW Medical Center, the Washington Hospital Center and Georgetown University Medical Center. She and her husband, Michael, moved to Tryon, NC in 1997 after his retirement from the federal government. She continued her career there in public relations with the American Heart Association, later accepting a position in Waukesha, WI as VP for marketing and corporate communications. She retired from this position in 2010 and returned to Tryon where she served on the board of the Upstairs Artspace gallery and became the "Sunday Librarian" and newsletter editor for the private Lanier Library.

Michael passed away in 2009 and she has recently returned to the DC area to be near her daughters and five grandchildren. She is an avid needle worker and has become a member of the board of the DC chapter of the Embroidery Guild of America. A passionate reader and library supporter, she is waiting to be called as a volunteer at the Mary Riley Styles Library in Falls Church.

As a former member of AAUW, Clare is particularly interested in the political activity of the Falls Church Chapter and hopes to contribute her career experience to these efforts while making new friends.

Alexandria Branch / Mount Vernon Branch News

LITTLE THEATER OF ALEXANDRIA 600 Wolfe St, Alexandria, VA

Together with the Mt Vernon Branch, the Alexandria Branch AAUW will hold its annual fundraising event at the Little Theater of Alexander (LTA). The music, book, and story for “*Bright Star*” were written by Steve Martin, acclaimed actor, comedian and musician, and Edie Bricknell. Contact Susan Werner for tickets: Susan.werner1atverizon.net, or 703-270-5378 to let her know how many tickets you want. Tickets are \$35.00 each. (A check made out to Alexandria Branch AAUW or exact amount of cash required.)



Mail check to Susan Werner, 7444 Spring Village Dr., #318, Springfield, VA 22150. All sales are final.

Arlington Branch



In these challenging times, we have decided to change our program schedule and add a branch meeting on **Saturday, February 19th at 1 pm via zoom.**

We'd love to have you all join us on the 19th for an informal, fun, one-hour chat on this engaging topic – “What’s Getting You Through COVID?!”

We invite folks to share books you have loved, Netflix or other places where you have found great movies, exercises or other activities you’ve enjoyed and other survival tips!!! We will

send out the zoom link during the week prior to February 19th for your convenience. Contact: President. Carol Dabbs presarlvaauwatgmail.com

McLean Area Branch / Fairfax Branch

“You Need a Schoolhouse, the Remarkable Story of Julius Rosenwald”

In Honor of Black History Month

Saturday, February 12, 2022, 10 a.m. to Noon

Zoom Meeting: Documentary Viewing and Discussion with Author

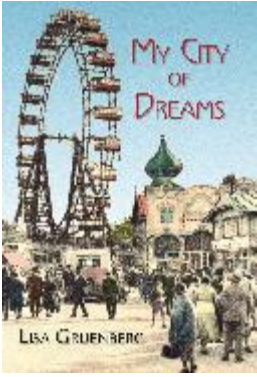


Julius Rosenwald was a successful business man who headed Sears Roebuck & Co during its early years. He was also a philanthropist and worked in collaboration with Booker T. Washington to build over 5,000 schools for African-American children during the 1920’s and 30’s. Our virtual program will feature the film [Rosenwald, the Remarkable Story of a Jewish Partnership with African American Communities](#), a 90-minute documentary written and directed by Aviva Kemper.

Following the film, Stephanie Deutsch, author of [You Need a Schoolhouse: Booker T. Washington, Julius Rosenwald and the Building of Schools for the Segregated South](#), will discuss and answer questions about Rosenwald, her book and the film. Stephanie Deutsch’s husband is the great-grandson of Julius Rosenwald.

This fascinating program is presented by the AAUW McLean Area Branch with the Fairfax City Branch as co-sponsor. Look for the Zoom link about a day before the program. Please add this program to your calendar. If you have questions, please contact Dottie Joslin, j.joslin3atverizon.net

Mount Vernon Branch



In collaboration with Sherwood Regional Library AAUW Mt. Vernon Branch Presents Author Talk with Lisa Gruenberg Saturday, February 12, 10:30 a.m. Join us for a for a virtual reading and discussion of Lisa's memoir, *My City of Dreams*, a Holocaust tale, but also very much the modern-day story of the relationship between a daughter and her father, about how trauma travels down through the generations, and how we find meaning in our lives. The event is free and open to the public. Registration is required:

<https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/8504791>

A Zoom link will be sent to registrants.

Springfield-Annandale Branch

February Meeting – Changed to League of Women Voters – Virtual Irene McGhee, Ann Sauberman, Co-Vice Presidents for Programs. Due to our inability to safely meet in larger public venues because of COVID precautions, we are adjusting our February meeting. The February 17, 7:00 P.M. Zoom meeting will feature representatives from the League of Women's Voters (LWV)/Fairfax, Adina van Breda, Registrar, and Pat Fege, Co-President. "Navigating Voter Registration and What's New" locally and in the state will be on the agenda. Bring your questions and concerns about voting now and in the future. This meeting will be recorded. For more information contact them using: <https://sprann-va.aauw.net/contact/>



Vienna Branch News



The Art of Travel Saturday, February 12, 2022 2:00 PM doors open 2:15 PM, program begins Patrick Henry Library- 428 Maple Avenue E., Vienna. Joyce Turk is a pastelist who has traveled extensively. She has had a career in international livestock science that has taken her around the world many times, from the jungles of Borneo to the Himalayas, from African Savannah to the altiplano of South America. She always takes her art supplies wherever she goes. The result is a portfolio of beautiful paintings of animals, people, and landscapes. She will share her work with us and tell us about her travel adventures. She is a member of The Vienna Arts Society and will also tell us about the work of this organization. ****Please note: Masks are required inside all Fairfax County facilities. Because the library limits attendance to 30 at meetings, please contact us beforehand if you plan to attend. Write the word "Program" in the Subject line. ****Please pre-register starting January 15 at the following link:****

<https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/8527049>

Movies, anyone?

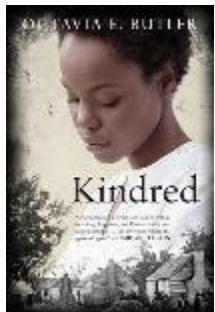


February is African American History Month. February is also the month the film group will be watching and discussing the movie ***Passing*** based on the Nella Larsen novel of the same name. The title refers to African Americans whose skin color is light enough to be perceived as white and are referred to as "passing." The movie centers around two women, Claire a Black woman passing as white and Irene a former high school friend who lives in Harlem. After several years their paths cross when Claire spots Irene who on a hot steamy day decides to try her hand at fooling the customers at an upscale white eating establishment. From there the stage is set and the "passing" story begins. ***Passing*** stars academy award nominee Ruth Negga (Loving) and Tessa Thompson under the direction of Rachel Hall.

Passing can be watched on Netflix Streaming. Join the group on zoom on Wednesday, February 23rd at 7:00 PM. Please call or text Aida at 703 966 8050 if you are interested in joining any of our film discussion evenings. All are welcome!

Book Club News

February 15-Science Fiction- *Kindred* by Octavia Butler



The first science fiction written by a black woman, *Kindred* has become a cornerstone of black American literature. This combination of slave memoir, fantasy, and historical fiction is a novel of rich literary complexity. Having just celebrated her 26th birthday in 1976 California, Dana, an African-American woman, is suddenly and inexplicably wrenched through time into antebellum Maryland. After saving a drowning white boy there, she finds herself staring into the barrel of a shotgun and is transported back to the present just in time to save her life. During numerous such time-defying episodes with the same young man, she realizes the challenge she's been given.

March 15- Book by a Nobel Prize Winner- *Disgrace* by J.M. Coetzee

April 19-Historical Fiction- *The Paris Library* by Janet Skeslien Charles

May 17: Book by an African writer -*The Girl with the Louding Voice* by Abi Dare



Zoom for our book discussions on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 P.M.

Polly Rosenstein for FC AAUW book group

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 13	2:00pm	Branch meeting via Zoom- April Riser
February 15	7:30pm	Book Club via Zoom- <i>Kindred</i>
February 28	7:00pm	FC AAUW Board Meeting
February 23	7:00pm	Movie Group via Zoom- <i>Passing</i>
February 26	9:00am	Book sorting at Willston Center
March 5, 12 & 26	9:00am	Tentative- Book sorting at Willston Center
April 2, 9 & 23	9:00am	Tentative - Book sorting at Willston Center
April 28-30		Book Sale Set up and Sale

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.

