

## AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH

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### Co-Presidents' Message



Greetings all,

Here we are in March, a time of renewal and new beginnings and celebrations. Daylight Savings Time begins March 13 and Spring begins March 20. For our Branch it is a time of renewal as we begin the labor-intensive progress toward our book sale. It was great to see so many of our members and Bethany, a service learning student, at our first sort energetically going about their tasks.

If you have not yet signed up to help in this effort, think about what you can do. Mollie Jewell's digital sign-up sheet for working at the sale can be found in an email with the subject "FC AAUW book sale 2022 Invite" that you should have received from her on February 22, at about 3:59pm. If you can't find your link, which contains your personal invitation to Signup Genius, email [MollieJewell2@gmail.com](mailto:MollieJewell2@gmail.com) to get a new one. There is also a spreadsheet to sign up for some related tasks, at [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fJcQ0RLGN6wWLRpDRE\\_QMld4cYa010VKNgUrxM6Ftx4/e/dit#gid=584340533](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fJcQ0RLGN6wWLRpDRE_QMld4cYa010VKNgUrxM6Ftx4/e/dit#gid=584340533).

On March 17, we can celebrate both St. Patrick's Day and the Jewish holiday of Purim; the next day is the Hindu holiday of Holi, which Wikipedia says is known as the "Festival of Spring" or the "Festival of Love." And all of March is Women's History month, a time to remember the many courageous acts of our bygone sisters. Check library event listings and events listed in the newspaper to see what you might enjoy seeing or participating in.

The Virginia assembly is still in session, so we should keep informed about issues relevant to our organization's mission. The weekly emails from your local delegate and state senator are one good place to start.

Before you come to the March business meeting, be sure to look over the report of the Nominating Committee. These are the people who will lead us into the future. Remember also to renew your membership, please; more info will follow.

Lastly, the first part of the Virginia State AAUW Convention will meet in person on Saturday, March 29, from 9:00 in the morning to 9:00 in the evening, in Harrisonburg. The theme of the meeting is "Going the Distance for Women and Girls."

As a society, we beginning to return to more normal times. Go proudly!!!!

Sharon Zackula and Elizabeth Kessel, Co-Presidents

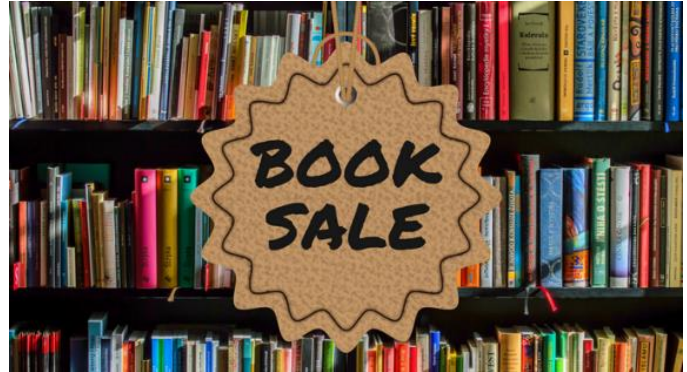
## Next Branch Zoom Meeting

The March business meeting will be on March 14 at 7:30pm on Zoom. It is important to attend so there is a quorum for voting purposes. Be sure to look over the report of the Nominating Committee. This year, we will be holding elections for the following board positions for a 2 year term: President, Vice President and Secretary. We will also vote on a budget. Of course we will have an updates on the book sale and Reclaim Our Vote postcards. See you on Zoom on March 14!

## Book Sale

From Dianne Bodeen:

These are suggested messages you can post on your local neighborhood digest or any other medium you have access to. I think you can post the first one almost any time to alert folks to both the sale and the request for donations. I would recommend you save the second message for the week of the sale—perhaps a little earlier, so that folks do not forget that it is taking place.



Post 1: The Falls Church branch of the AAUW is holding its book sale again April 29 and 30 at the F.C. Community Center after a year when they could not have the sale. Put it on your calendar, and if you have donations, you can take them to the bin in the Community Center or bring them to the Willston Multicultural Center (across 50 from Home Depot) on most Saturdays. The funds from this sale will help AAUW provide scholarships to senior women in local high schools. Check out the website at Falls Church Area AAUW.



Post 2: (for later) Don't forget to put the AAUW book sale on your calendar for (next) Friday and Saturday, April 29 and 30, at the Falls Church Community Center. Hours are Friday: 9-9, Saturday: 9-4. Money raised by this sale helps the F.C. AAUW provide scholarships for senior women at three local high schools. You will find wonderful books on any subject at sale prices!

If you want to play around with either of these posts, feel free. In the meantime, come to the Willston center to help sort on most Saturdays, pick up your publicity packet from Dianne in Sleepy Hollow, Mollie in the Bailey's area or Mary in Arlington and spread the bookmarks and signs around.

## Public Policy

### Virginia General Assembly Update

The Virginia General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn on Saturday, March 12, and thus has less than two weeks to complete its work. The Senate and House of Delegates are now considering legislation passed by the other body. Before a bill can be sent to the Governor for his consideration and signature, it must pass both the House and Senate with identical language.

Viewed through the lens of AAUW-VA public policy priorities, the 2022 Legislative Session has been disappointing. As discussed in last month's *Flash*, we focused 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. Unfortunately, it appears that only one of the bills AAUW-VA supported was successful.



The paid sick days legislation introduced in the House (HB1160 and HB 997) did not get out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. The Senate bills (SB 352 and SB 624) both passed the Senate (SB 624 with bipartisan support). SB 352 was killed by House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee No. 2; SB 624 is pending in the House Energy and Commerce Committee, but it not expected to progress in the short time remaining in the Session.

Legislation prohibiting an employer from requiring a prospective employee to share her salary history and using that history to determine the employee's salary (SB 447) passed the Senate. In the House the bill was killed by House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee No. 2. There was no comparable bill introduced in the House.



**Salary  
History  
Ban**

The Paid Family and Medical Leave bill (SB 1) was continued to the 2023 Session by the



Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, but action to put it on the 2023 calendar must be taken during this Session or it will need to be reintroduced next year. The one bright note is the successful passage of legislation to establish paid family leave as a class of private insurance, which would allow employers to purchase protection against the cost incurred from offering a paid family leave benefit to its employees. Identical bills were introduced in the House (HB 1156) and the Senate (SB

15), and the final measure passed unanimously in both bodies. The next step is for the Governor to review and sign the measure into law. It is hoped that establishing this type of insurance will help change the culture so that Virginia businesses become more accepting of a paid family and medical leave programs as has happened in other states where such private insurance plans exist.

**NOTE:** A Public Policy Zoom meeting is planned for Wednesday, March 30, at 5 p.m. to review the outcomes of the 2022 General Assembly and make plans for future advocacy efforts. All interested AAUW-VA members are encouraged to attend. Watch your email for the link to the meeting.

## Op-Ed Education Funding in Virginia

This column first appeared in the *Virginian-Pilot and Daily Press*.

By Susan Burk and Denise Murden

**Susan Burk of Annandale and Denise Murden of Suffolk are the co-vice presidents for public policy of AAUW-Va. Email them at [aauwvpublicpolicy@gmail.com](mailto:aauwvpublicpolicy@gmail.com).**

Gov. Glenn Youngkin's announcement to allocate \$150 million to establish 20 new charter schools may not sound alarming, but a closer look reveals a plan that will reduce per-pupil state funding of public schools and is rooted in Virginia's segregationist history.

During the 2022 Virginia General Assembly session, 14 bills were introduced that would cut local public-school funding by redirecting it to charter schools and tax-free savings programs that enable wealthy parents to bypass the public school system at other taxpayers' expense. At a time when we should be looking to shore up our struggling public schools and help Virginia's families recover from the effects of a pandemic, the bills' supporters are instead focused on funneling taxpayers' money to profit-driven corporations that have been proven to run mediocre schools for an exclusive set of students.

Tuition vouchers have a long and racist history in Virginia that is familiar to the members of the American Association of University Women of Virginia (AAUW-VA). Establishment of the Virginia Division in 1925 was based on the founders' ardent belief that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to economic prosperity, college and career readiness, and gender equity. Most of the founding members were educators, one of the few professions open to women at the time.



From 1954-64, during Virginia's period of "Massive (and Passive) Resistance," AAUW-VA annually adopted a resolution that opposed Massive Resistance and fought against tuition grants for students in private, non-sectarian schools. Around the state, branch members regarded them as publicly funded "escape valves" for white families who wanted to enroll their children in "segregation academies."

In 1965, the Supreme Court *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County* decision overturned Virginia's "freedom of choice" plans for localities and families who wanted to circumvent the desegregation requirements of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by choosing the schools their children would attend. Tuition grants weren't abolished until 1969.

In the *Green* case, the court asserted that local school boards had an "affirmative" duty to desegregate and that, in doing so, they could not place the burden on Black schoolchildren and parents. Today, some politicians seek to reverse those decisions and give some families "school choice" by placing public school funding burdens on the Virginia citizens who have the least ability to pay.

Just imagine what it would mean for our public schools if the energy devoted to giving every family a choice in their child's education through charter schools went to improving the system that already serves most of Virginia's families.

Much needs to be done, and nearly all of it requires more funding: better pay for teachers and staff, more program choices, better opportunities for students with disabilities, and addressing our schools' aging and crumbling infrastructure. These would mean more equitable opportunities for all of Virginia's students and families, not just for those with the ability to pay.

Parents already have “choice” about their public schools: They elect their local school board officials and have opportunities to speak out through a myriad of civic and advocacy organizations, such as AAUW-VA and the PTA. They can educate themselves about how our schools are funded and seek change through their elected representatives.

Our public schools bring neighborhoods and communities together, leading to a stronger and more prosperous commonwealth. Weakening them through cuts to state funding and redirection to profit-motivated charter schools is not the answer.

Let’s all choose to make Virginia’s public schools and communities better and stronger through more funding opportunities, not fewer.

## **ERA Ratification Update**

The AAUW-VA Co-Vice Presidents for Public Policy have asked Public Policy Branch Chairs to forward the following message to their members.



*In response to our members’ ongoing interest in the status of actions regarding ERA ratification and publishing to the U.S. Constitution, we would like to bring your attention to the following:*

*On February 18, Virginia’s new Attorney General, Jason Miyares, withdrew Virginia from an appeal seeking to compel the U.S. archivist to certify that Virginia, Illinois and Nevada had properly certified it. Details about this action can be found [here](#).*

*AAUW is a member organization of the ERA Coalition, which issued a press release in response to this action. The press release can be found [here](#). We urge you to check out the ERA Coalition website regularly and/or sign up for their updates to get the most current news. You can also register for their free virtual event on March 22 to commemorate 50 years since passage of the ERA. The ERA Coalition website is: <https://www.eracoalition.org/>.*

*Further, if you have not yet written to our U.S. Senators to let them know you want the ERA ratified, be sure to use AAUW’s Two-Minute Activist tool to do so right away. It takes just a minute or two to complete the form and send it. Do it here: <https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/era/>.*

*Thanks for all you do to advance equity for women and girls.*

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

## **Women’s History Walk**

Friends of the Women’s History Walk have asked that the Spring Calendar for “Walk” related events be shared with the Branch:

March 14 -- First City Council Meeting in March, which is Women’s History Month. Women’s History Walk Grand Marshals shall be announced along with a Proclamation in honor of Women’s History Walk

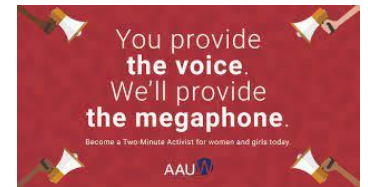
March 17 – Women’s History Commentary in the Falls Church News Press

May 1 – Walk scheduled from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Rain date May 22)

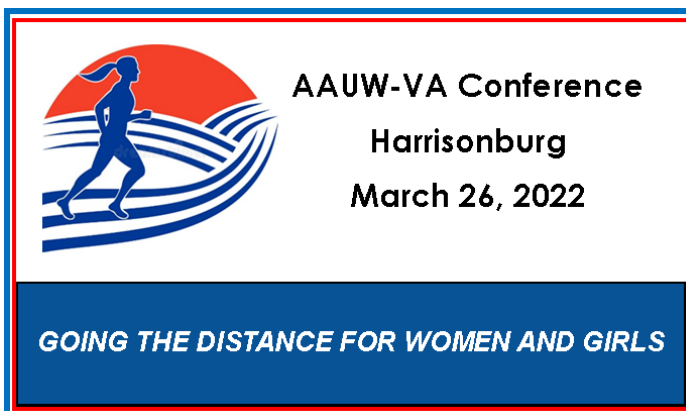
May 30 – Memorial Day Parade Float is a possibility!

## Two-Minute Activist

You can make your views heard about important issues facing women today 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.



## 2022 AAUW OF VIRGINIA STATE CONFERENCE



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE 2022 AAUW OF VIRGINIA STATE CONFERENCE WHICH WILL BE CONVENED IN TWO PARTS.**

**Part 1 will be held on Saturday, March 26, 2022, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,** as an in-person event at the Hotel Madison and Shenandoah Valley Conference Center on the James Madison University campus in Harrisonburg. You will hear from and be able to question informed and inspiring speakers on AAUW mission-related topics that

support the theme of *Going the Distance for Women and Girls*. The conclusion of the program will provide an opportunity for the four state Districts to convene and elect representatives to the State Board for 2022-2024.

Details regarding speakers and hotel registration for Friday night may be found in the [2022 Conference Brochure](#).

**Part 2** of the conference, the **AAUW-VA Annual Business Meeting**, will be held **virtually via Zoom on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** – the starting time TBD.

**Part 1** The AAUW-VA State Board is pleased to announce that because operating budget costs were lower between March 2020 and now, due to the pandemic, we are returning some of the unspent funds to members in the form of a **lower conference registration fee, which includes morning beverages and lunch. The registration deadline is March 11.**

AAUW of Virginia Members	\$25.00 until March 4 (\$30 March 5 -11)
Students	\$30.00*
Other Non-AAUW of Virginia Attendees	\$35.00

\*Branches may consider sponsoring the attendance of students from college/university partners they interface with.

***REGISTER ONLINE [HERE](#) FOR PART I***

For those who want to register using "snail mail," please use the form following the Harrisonburg tourism information in [the 2022 Conference Brochure](#).

## Movies, anyone?

### Let's Go to the Movies Virtually!

Wednesday March 23 at 7:00 PM

As we leave February and African American History Month, I start to think about March and Women's History Month and of course movies. Women in movies.... older women in movies... women's friendships in movies. **Cloudburst** our March film checks all three boxes. **Cloudburst** stars academy award winners Olympia Dukakis (**Moonstruck**) and Brenda Fricker (**My Left Foot**) as two women in their seventies living in a small Maine town who have been a couple for 31 years. To determine their own future, the couple heads to Canada to get married so that no one can legally split them up.



Same sex marriage has been legal in the United States since the 2015 Supreme Court decision. Will court decisions or laws regarding same sex marriage change or be weakened in the future? As Stella (Olympia Dukakis' character) says, "Don't live for the here and now...You live for the future-the one you imagine. If you have a perfect day-you hold on to it!"

**Cloudburst** can be watched on Netflix Streaming. Join the group on zoom on Wednesday, March 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

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

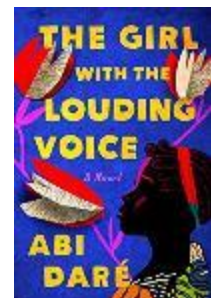


Set in post-apartheid South Africa, J. M. Coetzee's searing novel tells the story of David Lurie, a twice divorced, 52-year-old professor of communications and Romantic Poetry at Cape Technical University. Lurie believes he has created a comfortable, if somewhat passionless, life for himself. He lives within his financial and emotional means. Though his position at the university has been reduced, he teaches his classes dutifully; and while age has diminished his attractiveness, weekly visits to a prostitute satisfy his sexual needs. He considers himself happy. However, when Lurie seduces one of his students, he sets in motion a chain of events that will shatter his complacency and leave him utterly disgraced.

### 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

March 14	7:30pm	Branch meeting via Zoom
March 15	7:30pm	Book Club via Zoom
March 12 & 26	9:00am	Book sorting at Willston Center
March 23	7:00pm	Movie Group via Zoom
March 26	9:30am-5:00pm	AAUW State Convention- Harrisonburg
March 28	7:00pm	Board Meeting via Zoom
April 2, 9 & 23	9:00am	Tentative - Book sorting at Willston Center
April 28	TBA	Book Sale Set up
April 29	9am-9pm	Book Sale
April 30	9am-4pm	Book Sale
April 30	TBD	AAUW VA Annual Business Meeting- Zoom
May 1	11am-2pm	FC Women's History March

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.

