### *AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH*

### Volume 75, Number 12

### December 1, 2024

# presidents’ message

This is certainly a busy time of the year. I hope your Thanksgiving has been enjoyable. On December 2 Maddy White, Rep. Gerry Connolly's District Director will give us a preview of issues that impact families in the next Congress.  This is earlier than our usual date for a December meeting, but is when Mr. Connelly could originally do it.  Our holiday party is going to be on Sunday, January 5th (note date change), not December.

Also, if you are looking for self-help before the new year, National AAUW has set up some empowering webinars for this fall.  There are still some left in December, designed specifically for women, to enhance our career and financial skills and set us up for success in the new year.  If you are interested, the schedule for Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative webinars can be found [here](https://q76y71yn.r.us-east-1.awstrack.me/L0/https:%2F%2Fpolo.feathr.co%2Fv1%2Fanalytics%2Fcrumb%3Fflvr=email_link_click%26t_id=66f709b19c42ef2c2cc8d379%26a_id=65734c4cc2af09d70dd06d37%26e_id=6632a9cbe22370d5d353cfdf%26cpn_id=66f709b19c42ef2c2cc8d378%26per_id=66f6b2e385735b893acda36e%26email_addr=mary.youman@verizon.net%26rdr=https%253A%252F%252Fwww.aauw.org%252Fresources%252Fprograms%252Fwomens-economic-empowerment-initiative%252F/2/010001933020582b-6ac0bea3-50ee-4fab-9f6e-7e0848e42a69-000000/Od6-WXwMw5sXkoT1x8PWFLinqxE=400).

Congratulations go to AAUW’s CEO, Gloria L. Blackwell who is a 2024 winner of the TIAW (The International Alliance for Women) World of Difference Award, which recognizes those whose efforts have advanced the economic empowerment of women locally, regionally, or worldwide.  Under Gloria Blackwell's stewardship, AAUW remains a powerful force for gender equity, driving critical research, advocacy, and programs that create meaningful change. This award is a testament to her tireless dedication and the transformative impact AAUW is making on women across the U.S. and that includes us!

***Anne Baxter, Mary Youman***

***Co-Presidents***

***AAUW Falls Church Area Branch***

# programs and save the date

**November Program Recap**

A person in a grey jacket

Description automatically generatedOur Falls Church Branch sponsored a spirited and passionate discussion led by Executive Director, Barfonce Baldwin of Homestretch, VA at our November 10th meeting.   The non-profit organization located in Falls Church City works to solve homelessness for families by addressing its root causes.   As Ms. Baldwin reminded us, that unless we address those causes, including poverty, lack of education and in many cases, a cycle of abuse, then that family will fail.  Homestretch has an amazing record of success and has assisted over 2000 families since its beginning in 1990.

The AAUW Falls Branch has chosen to sponsor Homestretch during the holiday season and will provide a collection box on January 5 at our Holiday Party. Check out the website at: www.homestretchva.org.

  If you choose to donate to Homestretch, some suggestions are:

* A tax-deductible financial donation.
* Amazon Wish list found on website.
* Gift Cards (Target, CVS, Giant, Harris Teeter, Aldi).
* Shampoo, soap, feminine products, toothbrushes, including kids, toothpaste, body lotion, and any
* thing that would be helpful to women.

**December 2 Post-Election Zoom Conversation with Rep. Gerry Connolly**

Due to his recent illness, Congressman Gerald Connolly will be unable to deliver his zoom presentation to our AAUW Northern Virginia branches on December 2 at 5:00 pm. We are fortunate that Maddy White, Rep. Connolly's District Director, has agreed to address us for the zoom meeting. Ms. White staffed Rep. Connolly for his last AAUW meeting, so she is familiar with the interests of AAUW. Ms. White will give an update on the election results and then take questions from the audience.

 If you have not already registered for the December 2nd Zoom, you may do so at <https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IbHEq8JMTUmEPCp1MxPquQ>

If you're considering taking a more active role, also save Thursday morning, December 5th, for a morning information session on participating in the AAUW Capitol Hill Lobby Corps.  Contact Becky Gaul ([beckygaul@verizon.net](mailto:beckygaul@verizon.net)) for details on this in-person session to be held at AAUW DC Headquarters, easily reachable by Metro.

If you're not already signed up as an AAUW Two-Minute Activist, signup now**:**[**Become an AAUW Two-Minute Activist!**](https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/)

**Falls Church Tree Fest December 6 & 7**

Two glasses of champagne with streamers

Description automatically generatedWe will be participating in the annual Falls Church Festival of Trees sponsored by the Village Preservation and Improvement Society (VPIS) to raise funds for local nonprofits. The auction will take place Friday, December 6 from 5 pm until Saturday, December 7, 9 pm. at Ireland of the Four Provinces.

**Holiday Party to Welcome in the New Year January 5, 2:00 – 4:00 PM**

Save the date, bring your spouse or significant other, wear your finery, and enjoy each other’s company.

We are grateful that Sharon Zackula, and husband, Jeff Rogers have offered their lovely home in which to gather and celebrate a new year of success for our branch.  As soon as our plans are finalized, we will be sending out a separate RSVP and a “sign-up genius” for culinary contributions (finger foods, hors d’oeuvres, a bottle of wine or non-alcoholic beverage suggested).

Parking will be tight, so we encourage carpools.  Instructions and directions will be sent to our membership in a separate flyer.

Thankyou,

Bunny and Mary Ellen

# public policy

**Virginia General Assembly Activity**

On Wednesday, November 13, the House of Delegates’ Committee on Elections and Privileges passed three resolutions proposing amendments to the Virginia Constitution.  The first amendment would enshrine in the Virginia Constitution the fundamental right to reproductive freedom for Virginians; the second automatically restores voting rights to individuals convicted of a felony upon their release from incarceration; the third repeals the ban on same-sex marriage in the Virginia Constitution, now defunct due to the Supreme Court decision in 2015 legalizing same-sex marriage.

The House Committee vote is just the first step in the process of amending the Virginia Constitution.  Any proposed Constitutional Amendment must be passed by both the House and the Senate in identical form in two Sessions of the General Assembly with an intervening election between the two Sessions before it can be placed on the ballot for consideration by Virginia voters.

**A flag with a blue background

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**AAUW-VA Lobby Day**

Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 16, AAUW-VA’s 2025 Lobby Day.  Join AAUW members from across Virginia as they meet with their legislators to discuss issues and policies important to women and their families and to request their support for legislation related to those issues and policies.  Additionally, there will be a reception the prior evening (Wednesday, January 15) at which AAUW members can speak with each other and with legislators and their staff in a less formal setting.  AAUW-VA has secured a block of room at the Hampton Inn and Suites in downtown Richmond near the Capitol for those who wish to spend the night of January 15 in Richmond.  To make reservations at the AAUW-VA reduced rate of $157 plus a 2% mandatory tourism fee and applicable taxes, go to [https://group.hamptoninn.com/78zjxv](https://group.hamptoninn.com/78zjxv.).  If you plan to attend Lobby Day and/or the reception, please email the AAUW-VA Vice-President for Public Policy ([diane.schrier@gmail.com](mailto:diane.schrier@gmail.com)) as she will be sending out additional information about the reception and Lobby Day activities as they become available.  In the meantime, reserve your hotel room at the Hampton Inn before the rooms at the reduced price sell out.

**Lobby Corps Training**

AAUW members in the Washington, DC metropolitan area are invited to attend Lobby Corps Training on Thursday. December 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 pm at the AAUW office,1310 L Street NW, Washington, DC, Suite 1000.  At the training participants will learn about the upcoming 119th Congress, what to expect, and how to prepare to take action.  To register, go to <https://my.aauw.org/event-information?id=a0lQr0000010a4XIAQ>.  Contact Becky Gaul ([beckygaul@verizon.net](mailto:beckygaul@verizon.net)) if you have questions.

# reclaim our vote postcards

**With the election over, what’s next for our postcard writers?**

Last Tuesday night, I viewed The Worker's Circle webinar, **Power to the People**.  Andrea Miller (Center for Common Ground/ROV) is one of the panelists.  ROV has partnered with the Worker’s Circle. The recording of the discussion “Where do we go from Here?” is at this [link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgywFQay9gc).  I urge you to watch it…for hope and actionable ideas!

**A group of people in circle

Description automatically generated**Thinking about the webinar morning, my major take aways are

·   “real harm to real people” – one we already know

·       State and local levels are where we should concentrate

·       Judges, judges, judges – write/pressure your Senator to finish confirmation of nominated judges

·       Publish the ERA – urge Biden to reclaim his legacy!

By the way, those post cards?  They did work! -- in rural Alabama, the rural black belt of NC, and in Virginia.  And FC AAUW and friends contributed 6,200 for the general election and 3,100 for the primary.

Next up: the election for Wisconsin Supreme Court primary (Feb 2025) and Virginia general elections.  I’m sure we will be writing cards for those!

And here’s the link for the webinar, once again: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgywFQay9gc>

# movies and books

**Let’s Go to the Movies**

**Holiday Movies**  
  
***A Real Pain***  
  
The movie industry is not disappointing us this holiday season.  Last week “A Real Pain” opened to a four-star review.  “A Real Pain” is a comedy about the places people put their most unimaginable sorrows.  It’s a buddy movie—actually, a variant therefore, a cousin movie.  It stars Jessie Eisenberg, who wrote and directed, and Kieran Culkin, who slips the shade of Roman Roy and comes into his own as a Puck for our times, damaged, defeated and somehow defiant.  Washington Post claimed it s one of the very best movies of the year.  The cousins are David (Eisenberg) and Benji (Culkin), respectively industrious ant and slacker grasshopper, and they are on a Holocaust tour in Poland.  David is a married Brooklynite, with a loving wife and an adopted son.  He has a respectable job selling ads on the internet.  Benji has spent much of the past few years getting high in his mother’s. Basement.  
  
The two are taking the tour to honor their late grandmother, who escaped the Nazis during World War II and whose childhood home they intend to spend their last day visiting.  The cousins aren’t alone in their sojourn but are part of a package tour led by an agreeable somber young British historian (Will Sharpe), who takes the small group through the Jewish quarters and Holocaust of various Polish towns and memorials before the Majdanek concentration camp.  Among other things, the movie is a comedy of discomfort because Benji is both fully alive in the moment and incredibly hard to take.

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***Wicked***  
  
Wicked turns out to be “Wicked Part One”.  **Two hours and 40 minutes** of movie gets you only to the end of the hit Broadway musical’s Act 1, and the intermission is scheduled to last until this time next year.  Heads-up No 2:  the flying monkeys are even more terrifying in the second movie.  This is not a movie for children.   Given all these caveats, the film version of the stage version is about as good as musical adaptations get and more lavish.   
  
In the center of this madly spinning circus are two women, alpha and omega, green and blond, kind and shunned vs self -absorbed and pop-u-lar.  After a prologue showing how the young Elphaba (Karis Musongole)--the future Wicked Witch of the West—was ostracized by her father for being the product of her mother’s affair with a nameless cad, the movie moves ahead several years to a now grown Elphaba (Cynthia Erivo) at Shia Academy accompanying her wheelchair-using younger sister Nessarose (Marissa Bode)  
  
An immediate rivalry with the school’s self-styled queen bee, Glinda Upland (Ariana Grande-Butera).   The two are forced to become roommates by soccer instructor who sees in Elphaba’s raw magical powers and so the story takes off.  I suggest a notebook to take notes.   
  
Given all the above — Wicked has great reviews.

Let Susan know if you would like to see either or both movies and you can discuss scheduling. Contact Susan at [sconklin00@gmail.com](mailto:sconklin00@gmail.com).

**Virtual Movie Club**

**No meeting in December**

Why do we watch films?  What do we watch? Some say that we watch movies for entertainment, shared social experiences, and escape. Recently, for me, watching movies has been a stress reliever. So, what did I watch? I will admit I have seen FIVE different versions of Emma. I guess sometimes watching an old familiar movie makes you feel safe. Yet I started wondering if my visual viewing is in a baby boomer, educated and female bubble?  What if we watched something to make us feel a little uncomfortable.... okay really uncomfortable and learn too?

A person sitting on a paper plane

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So how do I begin to feel uncomfortable?  With baby steps. My list for this December begins with Netflix's **Australia Unmasked**with Miriam Margolyes. She travels to try and understand what the "FAIR GO" means in Australia and how it is playing out in the diverse lives of Australians. Next, I plan to watch Scott Galloway's Ted Talk **How the US is Destroying Young People's Future.**Professor Galloway discusses everything from how the culture can help produce healthier men to how youth in politics can change the world. Next, dare I say, I plan to step into the world of Joe Rogan. According to Spotify, Joe Rogan is by far the most popular podcast on Spotify with 14.5 million followers, What's the attraction?  I will find out on Netflix with at least three possible choices. So, why do you watch films and what do you watch?

How do you plan to burst your bubble?

**A book cover of a book

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**Book Club**

Members have signed out their copy of ***Sisters in Law****:* ***How Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg went to the Supreme Court & Changed the World*** by Linda Hirshman.

Our **FIRST** discussion is on December 10 at 7:30 pm by Zoom**.** You’ll receive the Zoom invitation the weekend before the meeting from our branch Zoom account, listed under Linda Lawrence.

We still have a few copies available if you want to join us.  If you have any questions, contact Anne Baxter ([vabaxter@verizon.net](mailto:vabaxter@verizon.net)).

Books must be returned to Anne Baxter by December 10.

Mary Styles Riley has many selections to choose from.  Check out the possible books at their website:

<https://catalog.fallschurchva.gov/catalog/?st=F85881DA27741E51BF21E3F8D8565FA4>

# fundraising news

**November Pop-up Booksale**

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Thank you to the many who helped with the November 23rd POP UP Book Sale at the Falls Church Community Center Portico. Whether you donated, stored, or priced books your efforts made this sale possible and a success. Special thanks to the McLean branch who lent us a few of their squares which allowed us to process credit card sales. And a really loud shout out to members, Sharon, Mary Ellen, Bunny, Clare and Sarah who helped on the day of the sale. Though it was a crisp autumn day the sunshine and the smiles warmed us all.

With nearly 100% unsold books from the spring sale the preliminary estimate is the branch earned $640.47. We still have several boxes of quality books left. Some will go to McKays used bookstore and we will see how many they will purchase for cash or coupons. There are also boxes of first editions and signed books and we are deciding what to do with those.  And of course, we will hold on to the antiquarian and special books we have acquired over the years,

Every time we have a book sale or any fundraiser, I always come away having learned something new. This time, one of the positive outcomes was that we had a number of books from Clare's Corner, Antiquarian/Special section that sold. I think this was the first time we had SPECIALS for sale during a POP UP.  Buyers really had the opportunity to appreciate the uniqueness and specialness of old and rare books.

As always, I am filled with gratitude to this branch and your willingness to serve the branch and the community.

Aida

A christmas tree with ornaments

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**Festival of Trees**

Once again, we will participate in the holiday tree auction sponsored by the Village Preservation and Improvement Society at Ireland of the Four Provinces, locally known as the 4Ps. The auction will be held Friday night, December 6 and all-day Saturday, December 7. The theme for our tree this year is **“Dream Tree” celebrating 75 years of AAUW Falls Church helping to make local young women’s college dreams come true**.

We hope you will come to support not only our branch, but all the local nonprofits that participate in this fun event that celebrates not only the good works of local nonprofits, but the creativity of its members. *It’s not official yet but stay tuned for a possible group dinner on Saturday evening!*

# Calendar

December 2, Branch Zoom Meeting 5 pm, Congressman Gerry Connelly on 2024 election results with other No. VA. AAUW branches

December 5, Tentative date for Lobby Corps Training

December 6 &7, Falls Church Festival of Trees, Ireland of the Four Provinces

December 10, Book Group, ***Sisters in Law*,** O’Connor & Ginsburg, Zoom, 7:30 pm

***A calendar with a cartoon gnomes and pencils

Description automatically generated***December 20, Articles Due to Clare for Newsletter

January 5, 2025, Branch Meeting, New Year’s Celebration, Sharon Zackula’s, 2-4pm

January 15 & 16, VA Lobby Day - Richmond

January 27, Board Meeting

January 29, Articles due to Clare for Newsletter

March 27 -29, AAUW VA State Conference in Alexandria (host, Northern District)

# in other news

**A note of thanks from Pranisa Larson of Graham Road Elementary School**

*A child watering plants in a garden

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*Last Friday, our GRES 1st graders (my daughter Luna included!) had the opportunity to visit the Botanical Gardens, funded by dollars raised at the bake sale! I was able to be a chaperone and it was really such an amazing experience for the kids. They have this great classroom with really engaging educators. I learned so many facts about the living museum that I never knew, even though I've been there as a regular tourist a million times!  
  
I thought you might want to share these pictures with all the AAUW people who volunteered their time and ovens to make our event such a great success! Who knows, maybe because of you all, a future botanist was born!  
  
Thanks again for all the support.*

**A group of people standing next to a table with food

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**AAUW will stay focused on our mission**

I write to you today with conviction and resolve, even though for the second time, our country has decided it wasn’t ready to have a highly qualified woman hold our nation’s highest office. I am grateful for everyone who stood up and used their voices for the rights of women and girls, and for the significant wins across states on key issues. To anyone feeling uncertainty about what lies ahead — know that you are not alone.

It is AAUW’s commitment to gender equity that allows me to write to you today with this clear-eyed promise: We will persist.

AAUW has been preparing for this scenario, and we will share more as we prepare policy priorities for the 119th Congress. Here’s the bottom line: Our strength comes from our collective voice, and together we will continue the work to support women’s education and economic empowerment.

Thank you for standing with us.

**National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)**

I’m writing to share some news about the (NCCWSL.  For 39 years, AAUW has had the honor of bringing thousands of college women to the Washington, DC area for leadership training, inspiration, and networking at NCCWSL. Hosting NCCWSL comes at a high cost, but the financial support has not risen to meet the challenge. Ultimately NCCWSL costs are unsustainable for the health and long-term viability of AAUW.

That’s why I’m heartened to share that NCCWSL is not going away. Beginning in 2025, NCCWSL will be organized and administered by *NASPA – Student* *Affairs Administrators in Higher Education*. We encourage your branch to continue to promote NCCWSL to college women in your local communities. AAUW will have a presence at the conference, as a speaker, exhibitor, presenter and promotional supporter. What will change is the administrative, financial and programmatic oversight and planning — NASPA will be responsible for the planning and execution of the conference moving forward. Registration, as an example, will be made available via NASPA’s website and registration platform rather than through AAUW.

The decision to make this change was carefully considered and we see many benefits to this new arrangement. We are very proud of NCCWSL’s 39-year legacy and have provided more information on this transition on our [website](https://click.everyaction.com/k/96356681/509732745/145992494?nvep=ew0KICAiVGVuYW50VXJpIjogIm5ncHZhbjovL3Zhbi9FQS9FQTAwNS8xLzc2OTU1IiwNCiAgIkRpc3RyaWJ1dGlvblVuaXF1ZUlkIjogImI1Y2ZhNTVkLThmOTgtZWYxMS04OGNlLTAwMGQzYTk4ZmE2YiIsDQogICJFbWFpbEFkZHJlc3MiOiAidmFiYXh0ZXJAdmVyaXpvbi5uZXQiDQp9&hmac=N3xNDPH0m083DBD6PNaCNXvNQYrlxvUpmtNOKyHGOfU=&emci=b2617db0-c097-ef11-88ce-000d3a98fa6b&emdi=b5cfa55d-8f98-ef11-88ce-000d3a98fa6b&ceid=909551).   AAUW will continue focusing on sustainability in our fight for women’s and girls’ equity. Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission of uplifting women and girls.

Shannon Wolfe, AAUW Managing Director & Chief of Staff

***A picture containing text, clipart

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***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 based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.***