

AAUW FALLS CHURCH FLASH

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MAY 2, 2025

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Spring has arrived with fragrant scents of flowers and trees in the air and many AAUW activities!

We had wonderful speakers at the March AAUW VA convention including Congresswoman Jennifer McLellan and Alexandria Mayor Alyia Gaskins. Now AAUW members, your voice is needed to elect officers and amend bylaws and priorities at the national and state levels to further women's progress. The opening and closing dates for voting and other details are listed in the following pages.

VOTE! WE NEED YOUR INPUT!!



The branch board approved expanding our traditional program planning meeting in June to an all-branch planning meeting for 2025-26 on June 8, 2025. In order to prepare for the meeting, the Board members will engage in a strategic planning session at the May 19 Board meeting. Four ad hoc committees were formed to prepare for this Board meeting. Individual members were appointed as chair of a committee. They are:

1. Financial Development Committee: Chair Aida Loomis
2. Scholarship Committee: Chair Mollie Jewell
3. Membership Committee: Chair Dianne Bodeen
4. AAUW Priorities Committee: Co-Chairs Bunny Jarrett & Mary Ellen Gannon

We need your input before the June meeting. At the May Board meeting we'll be developing a list of priorities for your review in a survey. The survey will be sent out in late May to rank which priorities you want to work on during program year 2025-2026. More to come on this effort later!

Hope to see many of you at our annual festive, joyful Scholarship Awards meeting on May 18 at 2:30 pm at Mary Styles Riley Library.

***Mary Youman and Anne Baxter, Co-Presidents
AAUW Falls Church Area Branch***

We are only as strong as our membership. If we want to make a difference and have an impact on policies that are important to us, we cannot let up on building our branch. Please help by inviting a friend to come to a program or an AAUW movie or book group. Consider asking a friend to join AAUW. Explain to your friends the many aspects of AAUW and the positive contributions of AAUW to the community, the state, and the nation.

BRANCH SCHOLARSHIP MEETING MARY RILEY STYLES LIBRARY SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2:30 PM

Scholarship Meeting May 18 at 2:30 at Mary Riley Styles Public Library

Our next branch meeting is the annual Scholarship Awards ceremony at the Mary Riley Styles Public Library, 120 N Virginia Avenue in Falls Church. We will be awarding scholarships to nine amazing young women. Come meet them and celebrate their achievement.

The students are:

Renee Agyemang
Genesis Barrezueta
Katherine Bille
Belinda Lopez
Maryam Naizi
Betzy (Mari) Romero-Mendez
Zainab Shahzadi
Laura Stoker
Fey Jamie Zurita-Sejas



SAVE THE DATE BRANCH PLANNING MEETING SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 2:30 PM

Amid growing attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion it was proposed and approved at the March Board meeting to create a committee to develop a framework within which to strategically plan the 2025-2026 year. Following a strategic planning session of the Board on May 19, you can look for further news. This June 8 planning meeting is an important one in which we hope you will all participate to help the branch address the challenges of the year ahead.



PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES

Virginia General Assembly

The Virginia General Assembly reconvened for a one-day session on April 2 to review the vetoes and amendments made by the Governor to the Budget and legislation they had sent to him. Unfortunately, the legislators were unable to override any the Governor's vetoes. The General Assembly accepted some of his amendments to the Budget and legislation but rejected most of them. The Budget and the bills are now awaiting the Governor's action on changes made by the General Assembly. Although the General Assembly did adjourn, the Senate did not adjourn sine die, so legislators can come back into session without the Governor calling them if they need to address economic and other issues caused by actions taken by the President.

The next Lobby Day is May 8. In June Lobby Corps is considering a June 12 Lobby Day and inviting National Board Members and interested new people to participate. If this occurs, there probably will be a Zoom training the prior Thursday (June 5). For questions and more information about Lobby Corps, contact Becky Gaul, beckygaul@verizon.net.

The AAUW-VA Public Policy Vice President, Diane Schrier, is planning to have voter guides prepared for all the candidates in the House of Delegates election in November. If you're interested in participating email her at diane.schrier@gmail.com

YOUR VOTE NEEDED

Vote by May 13 in AAUW 2025 National Election



It's now time to vote in the **AAUW Election 2025**. The election ends on **May 13, 2025, at 5:00 pm ET**. Check your email for links and your unique ballot access.

Vote Now: AAUW of VA - 2025 Election



You are invited to vote in the AAUW of Virginia 2025 Election. [Check your email!](#)

The voting deadline is **May 20, 2025, 12:45 pm** Eastern Time (US & Canada).

We are using an online election system to tabulate our votes. You have been assigned a **unique access key** which can only be used to vote once, and your voting choices will remain anonymous. **Do not forward this email. Do not reply to this email to vote, as your vote will not be registered.**

If you have election questions, feedback or want to be removed from future ballot lists, please email Sandra Lawrence at sandyaauw@juno.com.

To vote, visit:

<https://secure.electionbuddy.com/CHBP-BTSQ-FR5M-5ZKG/>

Or copy and paste the link into your web browser.

You can also visit <https://secure.electionbuddy.com/ballot/> and **enter the unique code in your email.**

GET OUT THE VOTE POSTCARD INITIATIVE

Thank you to all who have signed up to write GOTV postcards to Black voters in Prince William County. Wow, we are off to a great start in 2026! Postcarding for the VA primaries is now wrapping up; cards should be mailed by May 30. Meanwhile, **ROV analysis show that our postcards increase voter turnout by 7%!**



For the statistics, **we wrote 1,180 postcards for VA primaries and have written 30,258 since we started!** Next up will probably be the general election in VA.

For more background, I recommend this short (1:32) clip from The View about the impactful work of the Center for Common Ground (aka get-out-the-vote postcarding) and celebrating Andrea Miller, Founding Board Member of the Center for Common Ground. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Uatj428Krk>. Questions? Contact Mollie Jewell, MollieJewell2@gmail.com

Will there be more? Yes!

Last round of postcard writing for VA primaries

One more round of postcarding before the Virginia primaries! If your fingers aren't too tired, I think there's enough time left - these cards need to out the door by May 30. And there will be more opportunities for Virginia primaries and general elections upcoming. Meanwhile, the Center for Common Ground/ROV postcards is urging action at the state and local levels.

To sign up contact Mollie by noon Tuesday, May 6 with the number of cards (multiples of 20), and stamps (\$.56 each), and one of the following pickup locations:

- Mollie Jewell's (3715 Tollgate Terr, 22041. Off Columbia Pike between Bailey's crossroads and Annandale)
- Mary Youman's (4419 N 18 St. Arlington, near Ballston)

Rationale for postcards: Our audience is registered Black voters who did not vote in 2023 elections, to urge voting in VA's primaries for Lt. Gov, AG, and (for some), House of Delegates. Primary voters are much more likely to vote in General Elections. Our script must remain nonpartisan, as we are a 501(c)3 nonprofit.

Questions? Contact Mollie Jewell, MollieJewell2@gmail.com

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Graham Road Elementary School --Title 1 School

Interested in giving back to our community and help level the playing field in education? Let me suggest volunteering at Graham Road Elementary School (GRES). Volunteers may work on an ad hoc basis or recurrent basis, whatever is convenient.

Help is needed in the following areas:

- Assistance in the school library
- Helping at the book fair
- Weekend food packing
- Sorting clothing in the “clothing boutique”
- Donating new or gently used children’s clothing
- Helping the PTA with their activities such as Teacher Appreciation Week and Fall Festival
- Helping with special events or as requested
- Mentoring a student (generally one-half hour per week)
- Sponsoring and chaperoning school field trips <https://grahamroads.fcps.edu/features/air-space-museum>

Fairfax County Public School requires volunteers who interact with students to undergo a background and fingerprint check. Mentors attend a virtual training session (2 to 3 hours). Volunteering for PTA activities generally requires no background check.

More information is found at <https://www.fcps.edu/get-involved/volunteer-process>. Please feel free to contact me for more information or questions, anitasbooth@gmail.com

If you are ready to apply, please follow the steps below.

1. Complete Form HR-3 <https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/hr3.pdf>. The location is Graham Road Elementary School, 2831 Graham Road, Falls Church 22042

Please return the form to me, preferably in person. For your protection, I will personally carry the form to the admin assistant or to the principal for processing since it may contain your SSN.

If you wish to email the form to me, **do not enter your SSN**.

Once the **HR-3 form** has been processed, each volunteer will receive a series of emails containing the links to 2 online portals:

- Portal 1: Online profile and questions related to previous court involvement.
- Portal 2: Onboarding (background check forms)

If the application indicates *pending*, the applicant (not FCPS) must provide additional information. Please complete these tasks expeditiously. Incomplete applications are timed out within 14 days, requiring the applicant to restart the entire process. If you experience any difficulty during the process, please contact me so either Sue or I can troubleshoot the application.

2. Once onboarding has been processed, volunteers will receive an automated email to schedule a fingerprinting appointment at the FCPS office in Merrifield. There is ample parking, and the process takes minutes to complete.

3. Graham Road will notify me when you are cleared and will send your badge directly to the school. Either Sue Christie or I will contact you and advise you of opportunities as they arise.

Thank you for your interest and support.

Anita Booth and Sue Christie

MOVIES & BOOKS

Let's Go to the Movies

Mark your calendars for “The Legend of Ochi” on **May 6**. A movie that will speak to your inner child. The Washington Post writer, Ty Burr said “Ochi evoked in me the rapture I haven’t felt since ‘Beasts of the Southern Wild’ in 2012. It is written and directed by Isaiah Saxon.

“The Legend of Ochi” seems to speak to adventurous children and any grown-up who has been one. It takes place in an otherworldly Eastern Europe, on an island with one foot in the Middle Ages and the other in 1970’s Soviet entropy, with dusty supermarkets and boxy cars that don’t run. For generations, the island’s humans have waged an on-again/off-again battle with creatures that live in the mountains, big-eared hominids that split off from Homo sapiens sometime after gorillas but before the Neanderthals. They prey on livestock and unlucky travelers, and a man like Maxim has dedicated his life to hunting them down. Maxim is played by Willem Dafoe with his threadbare macho bravado. The main character is Maxim’s daughter Yuri (Helena Zengel), an unenthusiastic enlistee in his army of little boy monster hunters. Blue-eyed, flaxen haired and defiantly un-girlish, Yuri mopes around the movie until she discovers a newborn Ochi in one of her father’s traps and vows to return it to its mother. The creature resembles Baby Yoda and is adorably fierce. There’s quite a bit of comedy in the movie, some of it blunt. Yuri stumbles across her estranged mother, Dasha (Emily Watson) and the movie moves into a loopy, engrossing Joseph Campbell territory. The movie runs for 96 minutes.



The movie time will be posted later when Angelica schedules. The good news is that there is a morning showing and allows us to have a group lunch. Let me know if you are interested by texting: sconklin00@aol.com or 703 869 7131.

Virtual Movie Club



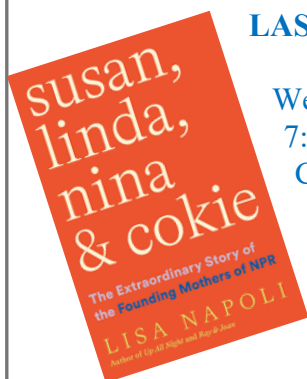
The virtual film group will be taking a pause for the summer. We will resume meeting in September. In the meantime, is there a film that you have watched that the film group should consider? Please pass it along! Is there a streaming service that you have discovered that has additional choices? Let us know!

Book Club

LAST BOOK GROUP FOR THIS PROGRAM YEAR

We hope you can join us for the last book group of this program year on June 3 on Zoom at 7:30 pm. We are again reading a selection from the Library’s Book Club to Go. **TEN COPIES ARE AVAILABLE TO USE.**

Our selection is *Susan, Linda, Nina, & Cokie, the Extraordinary Story of the Founding Mothers of NPR* by Lisa Napoli. If you would like to join us, pick up a book at the May 18 AAUW meeting. If you want to start reading earlier, contact Anne Baxter at vabaxter@verizon.net or call 703-969-6743.



CALENDAR

May 6, TBD Let's Go to the Movies with Susan Conklin

May 18, 2:30 Branch Meeting – Scholarship Awards – Mary Riley Styles Library

May 19, 7:30 Board Meeting on Zoom

May 30 Deadline for GOTV postcard mailing

June 3, 7:30 Book Club on Zoom

June 8, 2:00 Branch Meeting, Program Planning, place TBD

June 23, 7:30 Board Meeting on Zoom



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.

