



EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881

THE ALEXANDRIA SCHOONER

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Summer, 2020, Series 74, #8

Dear Friends,

First, we began this newsletter with the most important item: our branch's statement on antiracism. You received it by email but we wanted to give it a place of prominence here.

We hope you are all well in this 'don't get lazy about COVID' phase. This might be especially difficult for activists like AAUW members. On Sunday night, June 14, twelve of us zoom'd to discuss the movie *Just Mercy*, which was free for the month on many outlets. This was a tough movie to watch but to discuss it later turned it into an uplifting experience. Then there were the two about-damn-time Supreme Court decisions that Margaret Batko and Danielle Beach write about in these pages.

This year our branch is 75 years old. Diamonds and gold are both the traditional and modern gifts for that anniversary! Eartha Kit once said, "Jewelry, to me, is a pain in the derriere, because you have to be watching it all the time." So, we'll settle for a donation. When you mail your Autumn Leaves contribution to Susan Cash (8402 West Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308) we ask that you choose a denomination of \$7.50, \$15, \$75... to honor our foremothers. Remember, this year the money stays in the branch.

We'll all be ready for some pampering when it's safe. Contact Rita Rutsohn, rita.rutsohn@verizon.net to purchase a \$45 gift card for yourself or a special person. They were donated by our friends at Glam Day Spa and 100% of the money supports the dinners we serve at Christ House.

We hope we can be together in September for the Meet and Greet – but we'll have to wait and see. For now, check out the calendar and join in!

Happy summer, Lane & Gail AAUW Alexandria Co-presidents

Save these dates:

7/13/20, 7p, WBCCF:
Diversity Book Group,
(Zoom) Bonnie Hershberg,
hersh3b@gmail.com.

7/14, Bastille Day dinner.
Date subject to change. at
L'Hermitage Bistro in
Occoquan. Susan Cash,
scash5002@email.vccs.edu

7/22, 1p Lunch & Learn, Dr.
Cynthia Pascal, Title IX

7/25-27, 2p-4p, Summer
Leadership Mtg, Virtual.

7/28, 7p: Mystery book
group, Susan Werner,
susan.werner1@verizon.net

8/6, Noon: Lunch & Learn,
Brian Cannon, One Virginia

8/10, 7p, WBCCF: Diversity
Book Group

8/25, 7p: Mystery book
group.

AAUW Alexandria Antiracism Statement, A Position and a Call to Action

Though we celebrate the diversity of our city, Alexandria, let's look closer. First, we cannot forget that our city was the site of the [largest domestic slavery firm in the United States](#). The waterfront and cobblestone streets we enjoy today stood witness to unbelievable cruelty. Even now significant racial disparities exist in many areas. This has led to outcomes such as the average lifespan of a citizen living in Alexandria's Seminary Hill being [five years longer](#) than that of a neighbor in West End. There's much work to be done. And together we can make meaningful change.

Even during slavery there were brave individuals who did the right thing, often at risk of great personal danger. Now we are called to action.

- Vote and help others to vote. Work to eliminate voter suppression.
- If you see racist behavior document it using your cell phone.
- Think nationally. Lobby on behalf of eliminating institutional racial inequities, including in education, healthcare, and the criminal justice system. Support police reform and community policing.
- Educate yourself through books, classes and dialog. Open yourself up to other cultures.

Recognize that we are one human race, born with human dignity. We must all do our part. Get to know neighbors that don't look like you. Have a conversation. Have a meal. The possibilities are endless.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Our branch will be hosting zoom events in July and August. These will be open to northern district members and national members.

July 22nd at 1:00 PM: Update on Title IX by Dr. Cynthia Pascal, Northern VA Community College, Interim Associate Vice President & Interim Title IX Coordinator.

August 6th at Noon: Update on Redistricting Reform by Brian Cannon of One Virginia 2021.

Please save the dates. Another email will be sent sooner to the events with the Zoom links.

IMPORTANT NEWS

Margaret Batko & Danielle Beach

US Supreme Court decision on LGBT Employment Discrimination:

On Monday, June 15, 2020, the US Supreme Court issued a momentous decision applying to LGBT people. The Court ruled that the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects gay and transgender employees from workplace discrimination. Not only was the decision unexpected, 6 Justices ruled in favor, with Justice Gorsuch writing the decision. While this is a major decision that will affect multiple aspects of the lives of LGBT people, there are still issues that remain to be

resolved. There is already opposition to the decision from cultural conservatives and certain religious organizations. One issue still to be resolved is the interrelationship between freedom of religion and this decision. The Trump has taken multiple actions, particularly relative to transgender people, that may be affected by this decision.

AAUW National Position on Gender Equity:

“For far too long, the civil rights protections guaranteed to millions of Americans have been denied to those who identify as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning). AAUW’s [Public Policy Priorities](#) affirm our commitment to “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights,” and to “freedom in definition of family and guarantee of civil rights in all family structures.”

No one should be denied the full range of civil rights and civil liberties due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Such rights and liberties include freedom from discrimination in the workplace, the guarantee of spousal/partner benefits — including the ability to care for dependent children — and the ability to serve one’s country in uniform, among others. Unless and until LGBTQ people are able to enjoy the same rights and freedoms as their heterosexual counterparts, America’s promise of equal justice under law will remain unfulfilled.” As we move forward, it will be important to monitor the actions of governments and employers to ensure that the decision is reflected in the lives of LGBT people.

US Supreme Court Denies Administration Request to end DACA

As provided to the Branch by Danielle Beach, the decision was limited. “We (the Supreme Court) address only whether the [Department of Homeland Security] complied with the procedural requirement that it provide a reasoned explanation for its action. Here the agency failed to consider the conspicuous issues of whether to retain forbearance and what if anything to do about the hardship to DACA recipients. That dual failure raises doubts about whether the agency appreciated the scope of its discretion or exercised that discretion in a reasonable manner.”



To learn more join the Beach-Oswald Immigration Law firm for a brief discussion on the DACA program, its benefits, and what the Supreme Court ruling means for current Dreamers.

Friday, June 26th at 10:00 am

You can join on their Facebook page @Beach.Oswald or click <https://www.facebook.com/Beach.Oswald/>. Call 202.331.3074 for help logging on.

Call to Knowledge and Action:

- **Vote.** The single most important thing that you can do is vote.
- Support black and LGBT owned businesses. The City of Alexandria has sent out a list of all black owned businesses to support.
- Educate yourselves about the lives and experiences of black and LGBT persons.
- Make friends with a diverse group of people.
- Participate in the AAUW Branch Diversity initiative and in the joint AAUW & Alexandria Library Book Club.
- Eugenia Burkes participated in a recent Life-Long Learning Institute Zoom discussion on racism. One of the several suggestions to honor Juneteenth was to buy 2 books by Black writers. There is a national project to try to make the New York Times and other lists all Black this week. Eugenia followed up with how to do we find a list of these writers. The speaker said we could probably find a list by just doing a Google search but the 2 writers he named are Ibram N. Kendi and Michelle Alexander. Eugenia has downloaded her two books. She hopes you'll do the same. Her two books are non-fiction - *How to be Antiracist* and *The New Jim Crow*. Susan Werner and Margaret Batko have also bought mystery books by Grace F. Edwards, a black mystery author from whose books are based in Harlem. Eugenia suggests we consider having a book discussion on something so timely, but there are bound to be Black mystery writers too, or you could read 1 of Stacy Abrams' steamy romance novels. Sorry, Eugenia can't remember her nom de plume, but has read one and it was good!



Diversity Book Group Growing

Bonnie Hershberg

The Diversity Book Group welcomed seven newcomers to its virtual June meeting, most of whom learned about us through the Alexandria Library Enews, bringing the number for this gathering to its highest at 17. While we now have over 30 on our email list, we have been averaging about 10 for our discussions. In conversations with many of the new participants, I heard how they had been watching events surrounding the murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police and had wanted to become involved in conversations around race, diversity, and inclusion in their communities. Joining this Group seemed like a good way to start, according to several. Another motive for joining our Group centered on June's book selection, *A Woman Is No Man*, written by Etaf Rum. In her debut novel, Ms. Rum focuses on three generations of Palestinian immigrants to Brooklyn, whose history is reminiscent of her own. While many participants found the story disturbing, in large part due to the domestic abuse that is recounted, it is also inspirational. For me, it highlighted the power of women, particularly with support from each other, to imagine a new circumstance and ultimately to make it a reality. I agree wholeheartedly with the *New York Times* book critic who described *A Woman Is No Man* as a "love story to storytelling." However, the real reward for me in reading this book was to be able to discuss it in a safe environment with thoughtful and intelligent women. While in many ways our Group appears to be homogenous, we are finding that we have different backgrounds and experiences that enrich our discussions. We are also continuing to work toward diversifying in terms of race and age; this meeting was significant progress toward that goal. Please feel free to contact me, hersh3b@gmail.com, if you are interested in participating in future sessions. We will be meeting virtually again on Monday, July 13 from 7 - 8:30 pm to discuss *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo.

Christ House

We will host a Christ House Supper on Wednesday, July 29th. We don't know yet what the arrangements will be- whether it will be a bag supper or a served meal. We will let you know as soon as we do. In April, we provided 60 bagged sandwiches, fruit, cookie and water.

Invitation to Become a Social Host

Patty Steelman

The Social Host program for 24 international students on State Department scholarships has a new schedule for this year. Instead of arriving in July, their arrival has been postponed until January 2021. Their NOVA fall semester classes will be via virtual programming. The host/student pairs will be announced in the late fall allowing for pre-arrival communication.

It has been a pleasure for me and my husband to introduce international students to American family life, traditions, and culture. (Hopefully there will be parades again in our future.) There are foods they have heard of, or read about, but never tasted--peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, cheesecake, Popeye's fried chicken. It's fun to see their reactions to new experiences. Please make room in your life for a new young friend--the commitment is for getting together once a month--probably January through May.

To apply to become a social host, please contact one of the program coordinators: Sarah Yirensky, syirensky@nvcc.edu or, Megan Juneau, mjuneau@nvcc.edu
For further information you are also welcome to contact me: pattysteelman@gmail.com

Lists of Books and Authors

Numerous organizations have produced lists of books and other materials on racism, lists of black, LGBT, and other minority authors. Two lists are provided below. As you find other lists, please share them with the Branch.

NPR's list of resources on racism:

Books

[Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In The Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race](#) by Beverly Daniel Tatum

This classic text on the psychology of racism was re-released with new content in 2017, 20 years after its original publication. By providing straight talk on self-segregation and inequality in schools, Tatum shows the importance — and possibility — of cross-racial dialogues starting young.

[Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership](#) by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

A finalist for the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in History, *Race for Profit* chronicles how the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 failed to stop racist, exploitative mortgage lending practices. Since the policy was supposed to be a balm to the 1960s uprisings — much like the ones we're seeing now — it serves as a reminder to remain vigilant when policymakers promise change.

[A Terrible Thing To Waste: Environmental Racism And Its Assault On The American Mind](#) by Harriet A. Washington

From lead poisoning to toxic waste, Americans of color are disproportionately harmed by environmental hazards. This is detrimental to physical health — air pollution is linked with higher COVID-19 death rates, [according to Harvard researchers](#). But Washington also argues

that environmental racism is causing cognitive decline in communities of color. A deconstruction of IQ and an indictment of EPA rollbacks, *A Terrible Thing To Waste* is a stirring read.

[From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America](#) by Elizabeth Hinton

The origins of mass incarceration — which disproportionately puts black people behind bars — are often pinned on Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon. But Hinton argues the carceral state was erected "by a consensus of liberals and conservatives who privileged punitive responses to urban problems as a reaction to the civil rights movement." The 1965 Law Enforcement Assistance Act, part of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society plan, led to today's police militarization. This account of history poses relevant questions for today's land of the free.

[Automating Inequality: How High-Tech Tools Profile, Police and Punish the Poor](#) by Virginia Eubanks

Algorithms are made by humans, so they are susceptible to human biases. From deciding which neighborhoods get policed to who gets welfare benefits, discrimination has gone digital. By scrutinizing statistical models and telling personal stories, Eubanks shows that machines do not correct racist systems — they only shift blame.

[The End of Policing](#) by Alex S. Vitale

In the wake of high-profile cases of police brutality, the same ideas for reform are trotted out — implicit bias training, body cameras, police-community dialogues. But Vitale argues that this fails to get to the root of the problem — policing itself. While calls to abolish the police are often met with skepticism, academics and activists have long-discussed alternatives to addressing homelessness, domestic disputes and substance abuse. [A free ebook](#) of *The End of Policing* is available now. (And you can read Code Switch editor extraordinaire Leah Donnella's conversation with Vitale [here](#).)

[Blackballed: The Black Vote and U.S. Democracy](#) by Darryl Pinckney

As young Americans take to the streets to say black lives matter, they're often told to vote. While voting is important, it's also important to remember how black political representation has been chipped away by voter ID laws, gerrymandering and felon disenfranchisement. *Blackballed* addresses the struggle for voting rights and for racial equality more broadly, drawing on Pinckney's own experiences and writings of civil rights leaders to create a complicated picture of black political identity.

[Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class](#) by Ian Haney López

"Entitlement mentality." "Quotas." "Welfare queens." From Barry Goldwater to Bill Clinton to the Tea Party, politicians have relied on racially coded language to win over white voters and decimate social programs. *Dog Whistle Politics* makes the case that not only does this strategy endanger people of color, but it also hinders economic mobility for all Americans.

[Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology](#) by Deirdre Cooper Owens

The foundational knowledge of American gynecology relied on the exploitation of enslaved black women's bodies. In *Medical Bondage*, Cooper Owens centers the stories of black women that have been overshadowed by the "discoveries" of white male doctors who experimented on them. Baseless theories about black inferiority and higher pain tolerance [still permeate medical schools today](#).

Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight against Medical Discrimination by Alondra Nelson

The Black Panther Party is most remembered for its militant action, but health care was also a major pillar of its activism. The People's Free Medical Clinics tested for hypertension and assisted with housing and employment. Its outreach also brought attention to rampant discrimination within mainstream medicine. Nelson writes that the Black Panther Party understood health as a human right, echoing today's fight for universal health care. You can [read Body and Soul online for free](#).

Films

13th

The U.S. imprisons more people than any other country in the world, and [a third of U.S. prisoners are black](#). In this infuriating documentary, director Ava DuVernay argues that mass incarceration, Jim Crow and slavery are "the three major racialized systems of control adopted in the United States to date."

I Am Not Your Negro

Narrated by the words of James Baldwin with the voice of Samuel L. Jackson, I Am Not Your Negro connects the Civil Rights Movement to Black Lives Matter. Although Baldwin died nearly 30 years before the film's release, his observations about racial conflict are as incisive today as they were when he made them.

Whose Streets?

The 2014 killing of 18-year-old Michael Brown by police in Ferguson, Mo. was one of the deaths that sparked the Black Lives Matter movement. Frustrated by media coverage of unrest in Ferguson, co-directors Sabaah Foleyan and Damon Davis documented how locals felt about police in riot gear filling their neighborhoods with tear gas. As one resident says, "They don't tell you the fact that the police showed up to a peaceful candlelight vigil...and boxed them in, and forced them onto a QuikTrip lot."

LA 92

LA 92 is about the Los Angeles riots that occurred in response to the police beating of Rodney King. The film is entirely comprised of archival footage — no talking heads needed. It's chilling to watch the unrest of nearly 30 years ago, as young people still take to the streets and shout, "No justice, no peace."

Teach Us All

Over 60 years after Brown v. Board of Education, American schools are still segregated. Teach Us All explains why that is — school choice, residential segregation, biased admissions processes — and talks to advocates working for change. Interspersing interviews from two Little Rock Nine members, the documentary asks how far we've really come.

Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise

In this two-part series, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. chronicles the last 50 years of black history through a personal lens. Released days after the 2016 election, some themes of the documentary took on a deeper meaning amid Donald Trump's win. "Think of the civil rights movement to the present as a second Reconstruction — a 50-year Reconstruction — that ended last night," Gates said [in an interview with Salon](#).

Podcasts

Floodlines from The Atlantic

An audio documentary about the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Floodlines is told from the perspective of four New Orleanians still living with the consequences of governmental neglect. As COVID-19 disproportionately infects and kills Americans of color, the story feels especially relevant. "As a person of color, you always have it in the back of your mind that the government really doesn't care about you," said self-described Katrina overcomer Alice Craft-Kerney.

1619 From The New York Times:

"In August of 1619, a ship carrying more than 20 enslaved Africans arrived in the English colony of Virginia. America was not yet America, but this was the moment it began." Hosted by recent Pulitzer Prize winner Nikole Hannah-Jones, the 1619 audio series chronicles how black people have been central to building American democracy, music, wealth and more.

Intersectionality Matters! from The African American Policy Forum

Hosted by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a leading critical race theorist who coined the term "intersectionality," this podcast brings the academic term to life. Each episode brings together lively political organizers, journalists and writers. [This recent episode](#) on COVID-19 in prisons and other areas of confinement is a must-listen.

Throughline from NPR

Every week at Throughline, our pals Rund Abdelfatah and Ramtin Arablouei "go back in time to understand the present." To understand the history of systemic racism in America, we recommend "[American Police](#)," "[Mass Incarceration](#)" and "[Milliken v. Bradley](#)."

Sisters In Crime List of Diverse Authors:

Because many in the Branch are mystery buffs, included is the Sisters in Crime list of diverse authors of mysteries:

African American Writers

Abdul-Jabbar, Kareem

[Ashton, Marguerite](#)

Bailey, Frankie Y.

Baker, Nikki

Bates, Karen Grigsby

Batts, Krys

Bland, Eleanor Taylor
(deceased)

Brock, Jill

Brown, Elaine Meryl

Brown, J.L.

Burns, V.M.

Camacho, Austin S.

Canterbury, Patricia E.

Carter, Charlotte

Carter, Stephen L.

Chambers, Christopher

Christy, Cynthia

Clark, Aaron Philip

Clark, Tracy

Clemons, R. Lanier

Coleman, Evelyn

[Collette, Abby](#)

Croom, Janice

Darden, Christopher

Davis, Kyra

DeLoach, Nora (deceased)

Dickey, Eric Jerome

[Dolson, Nikki](#)

Edwards, Grace F.

[Fitzgerald, Cordy](#)

Flowers, R. Barri

Ford, Clyde

Fullilove, Eric James

Gardner, Danny

Garland, Ardella (pen
name of Yolanda Joe)

Garrett, Kellye

Gordon, Alexia

Greer, Robert

Grimes, Terris McMahan

Hall, Rachel Howzell

Hardwick, Gary

Harris, Marietta

Hayes, Teddy

Haywood, Gar Anthony
(also writes as Ray

Shannon)

Head, Cheryl A.

Henry, Angela

Holton, Hugh (deceased)

Jackie, Sonja (pen name of
Sonja Hazzard)

James, R. Franklin

Johnson, Keith Lee

[Johnson, Kim](#)

Jolivet, Myra

Jones, Solomon

Jones, Stephen Mack

Kabongo, Gledé Browne

Kelley, Norman

Lamar, Jake

[Lane, Michael R.](#)

Lawrence, Deliah

Locke, Attica

Lovell, Glenville
Malette, Gloria
Mason, Felicia Mason
Meadows, Lee
Mickelbury, Penny
Miller, C.M.
Mosley, Walter
Neely, Barbara
Olden, Marc
Osborne, Karen E.
Phillips, Gary
Pitts, Delia C.
Quartery, Kwei
Ramsey, Gail
Rhodes, Jewell Parker
Richardson, Gwen
Robinson, Angela (Im and
TV writer)
Rudolph, Wally
Ridley, John
Samuels-Young, Pamela
Sargeant, Patricia/Olivia
Matthews
Singer, Gammy
Smith, Andrea
Smith, Brian W.
Smith, Ian
Smith-Levin, Judith
(deceased)
Snowden, Faye
Swafford, Erika Green (TV
writer)
Thomas-Graham, Pamela
Tramble, Nichelle D.
Underwood, Blair
Vandiver, Abby L.
Walker, Persia
Wesley, Valerie Wilson
West, Chassie
Wilkerson, Elizabeth
Woods, Paula L.

Asian American / Asian Writers

Bradeen, Marla (aka Paige
Sleuth)

Cha, Steph
Chang, Henry
Chang, Leonard
Chien, Vivien
Chow, Jennifer J.
Chupeco, Rin
Eldridge, Tori
Furutani, Dale
Gerritsen, Tess
Goenawan, Clarissa
Hillier, Jennifer
Hirahara, Naomi
Kim, Angie
Lee, Don
Lee, YS
Lin, Ed
Ng, Celeste
Revoyr, Nina
Rowland, Laura Joh
Tan, Anne R.
Wong, S.G.
Xiaolong, Qiu
Yi, Melissa
Yu, Ovidia

South Asian American / South Asian / South Asian British Writers

Claverton, Rosie
Jacob, Mira
James, Tania
Khan, Ausma Zehanat
Kirchner, Bharti
Massey, Sujata
Pandian, Gigi
Swarup, Vikas
Vatsal, Radha

Hispanic/Latino/a Writers

Acevedo, Mario
Anaya, Rudolfo A.
Aymar, E.A.
Clark, Tracy

Cochet, Charlie
Colon, Angel Luis
Corpi, Lucha
Cortez, Sarah (editor of
anthologies)
Garcia-Aguilera, Caroline
Gaspar de Alba, Alicia
Hinojosa-Smith, Rolando
Lantigua, John
Lefevre, Claudia
LoPinto, Charles and
Llamas LoPinto, Lidia
Maldonado, Isabella
Marks, Rhonda A.
Martinez, Liz
Narvaez, R.
Nava, Michael
Ortiz, Martin Hill
Ramos, Manuel
Roman, A. E.
Segura, Alex
Stewart, Diana Munoz
Thurlo, Aimée (deceased)
Torres, Steven
Vasquez, Ian
Villatoro, Marcos McPeck
Zamorano, Desiree

Native American Writers

Cox, Jessie
Erdrich, Louise
Hogan, Linda
Hoklotubbe, Sara Sue
Holm, Tom
Martinez, Liz
Owens, Louis
Rendon, Marcie R.
Rodriguez, Linda
Smith, Martin Cruz
Weiden, David Heska
Wanbli
Welch, James

LGBT Writers

Aptaker, Ann

Bird, Tammy
Brown, J.L.
Chandler, Jessie
Cochet, Charlie
Copenhaver, John
de Helen, Sandra
DeMarco, Joseph R.G.
Deoul, Stefani
Ettritch, Sarah
Fargo, Layne
Forrest, Katherine V.
Friend, Catherine
Gordon, Josie
Gordon, Max
Griffiths, Nicola
Hannah, Mari
Hart, Ellen
Hawkins, Alis
Head, Cheryl A.
Herren, Greg

Hill, Gerri
Hunter, Fred
Isabella (only one name)
James, Renee
Karst, Leslie
Kelleher, Dharma
Kimberling, Nicole
Lake, Lori L.
Lepionka, Kristen
Lynch, Katie
Maiorisi, Catherine
McDermid, Val
MacGregor, K. G.
Massey, Gale
McNab, Claire
Marks, Jeffrey
Nacht, Clancy
Osgood, Karen Jean
Padgett, Abigail

Plakcy, Neil
Radclyffe
Redmann, J. M.
Roberts, Ann
Scoppettone, Sandra
Sherman, Scott
Silva, Linda Kay
Sims, Elizabeth
Sweeney, Kate
Summer, Mary Elizabeth
Vali, Ali
Waters, Sarah
Wilson, Jon Morgan
Yu, Ovidia
Zubro, Mark

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Mystery Book Group: Susan Werner (susan.werner1@verizon.net)