



EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881

## THE ALEXANDRIA SCHOONER MAY 2021

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### Save these dates:

**5/10**, 7p, WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, (Zoom) Bonnie Hershberg,

**5/13**, 7p, Great Decisions, (Zoom), Lynn O'Connell

**5/23**, 2p, Virtual Annual Meeting, Virginia Kress

**5/25**, 7p: Mystery book group (Zoom), Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net)

Dear Friends,

Hard to believe but this is our last co-presidents' letter! It's been an absolute honor to serve the branch. We are grateful for your membership and involvement in our AAUW-Alexandria family – especially in a time which has been so complex for the country and the world. We've come together to build connectedness while isolated, and to accomplish quite a bit. I hope you have taken advantage of our Zoom meetings, and that you will join us for the May 23, 2p Virtual Annual Meeting.

Now we want to ask something (more) of you. I (Lane) am on a personal mission to get rid of the phrase “violence against women,” and replace it with “male violence” or even, “male violence against women.” According to the World Health Organization, and common sense, almost all the abuse I'm talking about is committed by men. Let's put the accountability on men who commit these acts and on the culture that allows it. Passive language makes it sound like this *happens* to women, like there's no one *doing* it to them.

Are you with us on this?

See you at the Annual Meeting,  
Lane and Gail  
AAUW-Alexandria Co-presidents

## Branch Notes



### **ANNUAL MEETING Sunday, May 23, at 2 PM.**

We will be meeting over Zoom. Information on voting for officers will be coming separately by email.

I hope you'll be able to join us. I know we're all looking forward to next year when we can gather together in person.

Virginia Kress, Programs

### **A Note from the Treasurer:**

It is dues time again! You will notice that when you pay your dues, the amount has increased by \$3, making a total of \$93. This is the result of an increase in national dues from \$59 to \$62. Statements has been emailed to all current branch members. The Branch had 60 members this year, 7 of whom are life members, with an 8<sup>th</sup> (belatedly) identified as a life member this month. As of April 30, 17 members have renewed their Branch membership – over 20%! - and 43 members have yet to renew. You can pay by check as always, but a more convenient and efficient way is to pay with a credit card. Once you pay, you will not get another statement, but if you haven't, you will get a statement about once a month until September. Last year we received recognition for our retention rate. Let's do it again!

Anne Simpson,  
Treasurer





### **AAUW-Alexandria Donated Craft Materials to Spitfire Reading Club for Girls**

In fall of 2020, members of AAUW Alexandria donated craft materials to Spitfire Reading Club for Girls to be used to help the girls get a sense of their own power through creative activities. The Executive Director prepared a thank you note to branch members, but due to the press of other activities, did not forward it to me until this spring.

Sylvia Linke,  
Public Policy Co-Chair

**Dear Alexandria AAUW,**

Thank you for your support of [The Spitfire Club](#). Because of your scrappy efforts, we have been able to supply “found” materials for *three units* of Spitfire programming, supplying 134 Spitfire Online participants!

In the fall of 2020, our seven cohorts dabbled in ways to be a maker (without expectations of perfection, but merely for the sake of creating) during seven weeks of programming. Your collection efforts, led by Ms. Sylvia Linke, supplied “creator kits” that girls used to complete design challenges. It was a huge hit, and it reduced both cost and waste because we didn’t have to procure new materials.

In the winter, several of our activities required materials like ribbon, paperclips, and paper towel rolls, which we had on hand, thanks to you. This upcoming term, our girls are making superhero cuffs out of toilet paper rolls and capes from fabric – and we still have enough!

One parent shared with us that “Spitfire makes learning so much fun – I can’t even begin to describe how happy I am she has this in her life.” Thank you for your role in making this magic happen.

With gratitude,  
Amanda Hazelwood  
Executive Director, The Spitfire Club



## Public Policy Update

Several bills have been signed into law this year in Virginia. The cancelling of the death penalty and the legalization of marijuana have received the most attention. Others needs to be noted. HB 1848 adds disability to the discriminations outlawed by the Human Rights Bill. HB 1865 mandates reading intervention for k-3 students who have failed reading tests. HB 1912 says that both parents and the Dept. of Juvenile Justice no longer have to pay for a youth in temporary custody or permanently committed to the Dept. of Juvenile Justice to the Department of Social Services.

Of particular note to us is the HB 2234 Victims of Human Trafficking was signed into law, as was HB 2133. HB 2234, provides an affirmative defense for victims of human trafficking, including those forced into it by force, intimidation and direction. HB 2133 establishes a procedure for victims of human trafficking to have their convictions vacated in court and police and court records expunged. This will help minors restart their lives without fear of the past preventing them from creating a future. This is something that we have been working on for the last few years, through talks, forums and contacts with legislators. It was the primary reason Virginia has scored so low nationally on human trafficking efforts and it is something that our branch can be proud of for contributing to this effort.

In the US Congress, recent laws include S.578 the FASTER Act which includes sesame as a major allergen and requires the Dept. of Health and Human Services to report information relating to food allergy research and data collection. SB 164 was also signed and includes education about the above and about prescribing biological products and biosimilars. HB 1868 exempts Medicare from sequestration until 12/31/21. HB 1799 extends the Paycheck Protection Program and HB 1651 extends debt relief in bankruptcy.

As a personal caveat, while I completely approve of the legalization of marijuana because of the way it has been used to criminalize minorities youth, people need to be aware the marijuana of today has received many additives and chemicals which makes it more addictive than the marijuana of the past.

Diane Schrier  
Public Policy Co-Chair

## Alexandria Branch Responds to VA Legislation on Human Trafficking

Opposing human trafficking is a public policy priority for AAUW. Members of the Alexandria branch have been working on various measures to counter human trafficking. As part of that effort, they have occasionally encouraged branch members to correspond with their legislators. They have also prepared letters to send to their representatives themselves, such as the thank you note below that Sylvia Linke, Co-Chair for Public Policy of the Alexandria branch sent to Governor Northam after he recently signed two important pieces of legislation providing relief to victims of sex trafficking: HB 2234 and HB 2133.

HB 2234 “Victims of sex trafficking; affirmative defense to prosecution for certain offenses” allows victims of sex trafficking to avoid prosecution for prostitution and keeping, residing in, or frequenting a bawdy place if they can show they were coerced to engage in these crimes through force or intimidation or at the direction of a person other than the person with whom the person engaged in the acts of prostitution. HB 2133 “Issuance of writ of vacatur for victims of commercial sex trafficking” establishes a procedure for victims of sex trafficking to file a petition of vacatur in circuit court to grant the writ and vacate a qualifying offense. As introduced, the bill is a recommendation of the Virginia State Crime Commission.

“Governor Northam,

Thank you very much for signing HB 2234 "Victims of Sex Trafficking; affirmative defense to prosecution for certain offenses" and HB 2133 "Issuance of writ of vacatur for victims of commercial sex trafficking." Both of these bills are important pieces of legislation which protect the victims of human trafficking. The latter is a recommendation of the Virginia State Crime Commission.

I am deeply grateful that you have signed several pieces of legislation in recent years which are intended to make the response of Virginia's government more sympathetic to the victims of human trafficking. Doing everything we can to assist the victims of this dreadful crime is important to me and to other members of my AAUW branch.”

Sylvia Linke  
Co-Chair for Public Policy  
A AUW Alexandria



## AUTUMN LEAVES 2020

Thanks to all of you who have contributed to Autumn Leaves for the Alexandria Branch's 75th Anniversary. As a result of your generous support, we have exceeded our fundraising goal of \$2,000. We are so grateful!

May 2021 marks the end of our 75th anniversary year. To help celebrate that special occasion, we will hold another drawing for prizes at our annual meeting (to be held Sunday, May 23). All who will have donated from June 1, 2020 through Friday, May 21, 2021 will be eligible for the drawing. Multiple prizes will be given out.

Once again, 100% of the donations received for our 75th anniversary Autumn Leaves drive will be retained by the Alexandria Branch to support our projects. If you would like to make a donation to be credited to this current drive, your envelope should be postmarked by Saturday, May 29, 2021. Donations to the 2020-2021 drive are not tax-deductible.

Donations to Autumn Leaves (in the amount of your choice) should be sent to Susan Cash, 8402 West Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. Checks should be made payable to Alexandria Branch AAUW, with Autumn Leaves on the memo line. Again, we greatly appreciate your support.

Our 2021 Autumn Leaves drive will open on June 1.

Susan Cash  
AAUW Funds Chair

## BRANCH ACTIVITIES



### MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Hello mystery lovers. The mystery for May is Kwei Quarty's [The Missing American](#). Quarty's mysteries are set in Africa. We will continue to meet via Zoom, but we will see what the summer brings. The date of our meeting is May 25, 2021. Time: 7 PM. If you have questions about the Mystery Book Discussion Group or suggestions for mystery books for the group, please contact Susan Werner: [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net). All are welcome at the meeting.

### Christ House

The next Christ House supper is on Wednesday, June 30, 2021. We will again provide bag meals and bottled water because of constraints caused by the pandemic. This has been significantly more expensive than our normal pizza meals. We all hope that we will soon return to normal and be serving pizza, salads, and desserts. If you wish to support this effort, checks can be sent to Anne Simpson, Treasurer, with notation that the contribution is for the Christ House soup kitchen. There are also still spa gift cards available for purchase. The money from the sale of the gift cards also helps us provide meals for those who are most in need in our community, especially during these difficult times.



Jan Jaynes and Margaret Zebrowski  
Christ House Chairs



## FRANCOPHILE GROUP DISCUSSION

We are hoping to resume our annual Bastille Day dinner this year, on or about July 14. We tentatively plan to hold the dinner at Bistro Hermitage, 12724 Occoquan Road, Woodbridge, VA 22192. Please contact Susan Cash, [scash5002@email.vccs.edu](mailto:scash5002@email.vccs.edu) or [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com) for more information.



## GREAT DECISIONS 2021

Great Decisions – May 13, 7 pm via Zoom

Our topic is "Struggles Over the Melting Arctic" and Gail Kalin is facilitating. All are welcome at our upcoming Great Decision evening.

If you are not on our Great Decisions email list, please let Lynn O'Connell know - [lynnocconnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnocconnellva@gmail.com).



## DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

In April, the Diversity Book Group met on Zoom for a compelling discussion of *Negroland* by Margo Jefferson. Ms. Jefferson, an African American, most notably won the Pulitzer Prize as a culture critic for the New York Times. An acclaimed author and academic, she has published widely on a variety of topics. Many in our group found the story's content—life as an upper middle class Black woman growing up in the mid-West during the second half of the 20th century—to be informative, at a minimum; some experienced it as remarkable. Many also found the style to be challenging. This memoir is not a traditional one in the sense of a recitation of the author's life and the insights one might glean from such introspection. This one is deliberately made up of her “playing with perspective”—point of view and form as she describes it. It is a collage: dialogue, scenes, poetry, confessions, lists. Added to this is her take on African American history that preceded her birth in 1947. Several of our members had done extensive research on Ms. Jefferson, and many had availed themselves of an opportunity to see her family



photos and both watch and read several interviews with her in recent years. The 90 minutes we had to explore the book together seemed inadequate to really mine all the content in *Negroland*, despite our relatively small group of 12.

For May 10, we are reading another memoir—Tara Westover’s *Educated*. Please RSVP Bonnie Hershberg at [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com) by May 3 if you’d like to join us.



One of the things that sets off the Alexandria Branch is our blog. One good thing to come out of the pandemic is people finding time to submit a blog post. I hope these new postings will inspire others. All posts can be found on the right-hand side of the home page under our newsletters. Here’s what’s been posted since November.

American Family in Pakistan

Her Story - AAUW and Rachel Carson

Self Care, Alexandria Library Post

Violet Protest

Please use this opportunity to “Sound Off” about something you are passionate about and please let those who have submitted posts know your thoughts/reactions to their writings. I’m sure they would love to hear from you.

Eugenia Burkes

## From AAUW-VA and Other Items of Interest

### **SAVE THE DATE! AAUW-VA Public Policy Zoom Meeting: June 9, 5 p.m.**

We will be looking ahead to the upcoming November state elections and 2022's General Assembly session. Our featured speaker will be Kristina Hagen, Director of the Family Friendly Economy Campaign.

AAUW is officially supporting the campaign and will be featured on their website: <https://familyfriendlyeconomyva.org/>

A Zoom invitation will be sent out at a later date. We look forward to having you join us for an engaging year of advocacy!

### **AAUW fundraiser with Authors Louise Penney and Lisa See *Cover to Cover***

May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1p E, the 23rd Annual COVER TO COVER fundraiser for re-entry women scholarships is hosted by the Poway Penasquitos Branch in California.

[Here's the link](#) to register and for more information.



There will be a **Democratic party primary** this year in Alexandria:



June 8, 2021 Primary Election

- Sample ballots is posted [here](#).
- Ballots were mailed starting April 23, 2021 and voters can request a mail ballot until May 28, 2021.
- In-Person absentee began April 23, 2021.

How Do I Vote Absentee?

- **By-Mail.** If you would like to receive an ballot by mail, you may apply online, [vote.elections.virginia.gov](http://vote.elections.virginia.gov) or download a paper application from our absentee page (see below).
  - The [absentee voting page](#) includes additional information, including links to absentee-by-mail applications and information on returning by mail ballots.
  - The deadline to apply for a by mail ballot is 5 p.m. on the 11th day before an election.
- **In-Person Absentee.** In-Person absentee voting begins 45 days prior to a primary or general election in the Alexandria Voter Registration Office, 132 North Royal Street. Office Hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
  - The [absentee voting page](#) will include additional information on in-person absentee voting including satellite voting locations, weekend and evening hours.
  - The deadline to vote in-person absentee is 5 p.m. on the Saturday before an election.



**Are you in the market for a new computer or other device?**

Susan Werner just bought a new computer. The Apple Store gave her an educational discount on her new computer for belonging to AAUW. She's not sure they know what AAUW is but every discount helps!

## 2020-2021 CALENDAR – ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE (CHECK BACK OFTEN)

5/6/21, 6:45p: Board Mtg  
5/9/21, 5p: AAUW-VA Public Policy Mtg.  
5/10/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
5/13/21, 7p: Great Decisions – Struggles Over the Melting Arctic, Contact Lynn O’Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com)  
5/23/21, 2p: Annual Meeting, Virtual  
5/25/21, 7p: Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
5/25-26/21 – NCCWSL - virtual  
6/10/21, 7p: Great Decisions – China’s Role in Africa, Contact Lynn O’Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com)  
6/14/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
6/22/21, 7p: Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
7/12/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
7/27/21, 7p: Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
7/31/21, Summer Leadership Mtg, Sweet Briar, VA.  
8/9/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
8/24/21, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
9/9/21, 7p, Great Decisions – The Korean Peninsula, to be arranged by **Diane Schrier**, Contact Lynn O’Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com)  
9/13/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
9/28/21, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
10/11/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
10/14/21, 7p, Great Decisions – Roles of International Organizations in a Global Pandemic, Contact Lynn O’Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com)  
10/26/21, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
11/8/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
11/11/21, 7p, Great Decisions – The End of Globalization?, Contact Lynn O’Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com)  
11/23/21, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).  
12/13/21, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com)  
12/28/21, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).

## 2020-2021 Branch Officers:

Co-presidents: Lane Stone ([info@LaneStoneBooks.com](mailto:info@LaneStoneBooks.com)) & Dr. Gail Kalin ([gaikalin@yahoo.com](mailto:gaikalin@yahoo.com))

VP Membership: Margaret Batko ([margaretwb@verizon.net](mailto:margaretwb@verizon.net))

VP Program: Virginia Kress ([vmvkress@gmail.com](mailto:vmvkress@gmail.com))

Co-Chairs, Public Policy: Sylvia Linke ([SFLaauw@gmail.com](mailto:SFLaauw@gmail.com)) & Diane Schrier ([diane.schrier@gmail.com](mailto:diane.schrier@gmail.com))

Treasurer: Anne Simpson ([aseyedoc@gmail.com](mailto:aseyedoc@gmail.com))

Secretary: Susan Werner ([susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net))

AAUW Funds: Susan Cash ([scash5002@email.vccs.edu](mailto:scash5002@email.vccs.edu))

Special Interest Group Leaders:

Campus Outreach: Danielle Beach ([danielleaauw@gmail.com](mailto:danielleaauw@gmail.com))

Christ House Dinners: Margaret Zebrowski ([Mmzebrow@aol.com](mailto:Mmzebrow@aol.com)) & Jan Jaynes ([janjjoek@verizon.net](mailto:janjjoek@verizon.net))

Diversity Book Group: Bonnie Hershberg ([hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com))

Great Decisions: Lynn O'Connell ([lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com))

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