



Alexandria (VA) Branch
THE SCHOONER - March 2022

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SAVE THESE DATES:

3/3/22, 3:30 AAUW National webinar on new portal.
3/3/22, 7:00p, Board Meeting
3/10/22, 7p, Great Decisions
3/14/22, 7p Diversity Book Group
3/20/22 2-4 pm, Program-African-American Women's History
3/22/22, 7p, Mystery book group,
3/26/22, AAUW-VA Conference, part 1.
3/30/22, Christ House Dinner.

Dear Friends,

This month we celebrate Presidents' Day, the federal holiday which honors Presidents George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. It honors Washington's values, which he articulated in his farewell address. He described the United States as a "beloved Constitution and union, as received from the Founders".

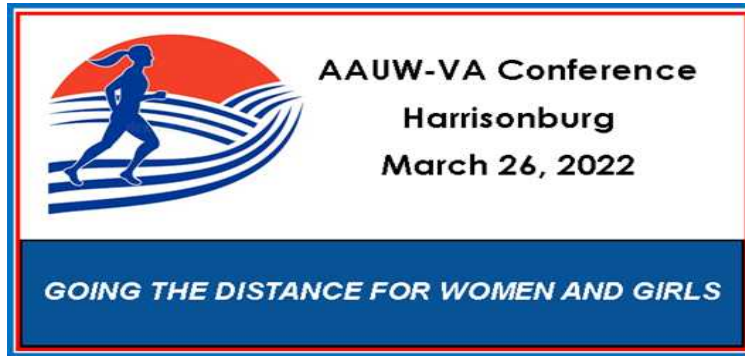
Our February meeting was an outstanding success. Authors Lane Stone, Solveig Eggerz, Catherine Hughes, and Dorothy Spruzen spoke about their writing styles, inspiration, research, the artwork used on the covers of their book, and many other aspects. It was fascinating.

We had an impromptu Opera Day on Feb. 12th, where we saw a Met simulcast of *Fire Shut Up In My Bones* composed by Terence Blanchard, about a young man dealing with childhood sexual abuse. The next opera simulcast we will attend will be on March 12th starting at 12:55 at the Hoffman Theater. The opera is *Ariadne at Naxos*.

We need a nominating committee for two elected positions: Secretary and Vice-President for membership. If you are interested in being on the nominating committee or in one of these two positions, we welcome you. Please contact me (Diane.Schrier@gmail.com). Our branch works well when our members participate.

If anyone wishes to form an interest group, like our Diversity or Mystery book clubs or the French or Great Decisions interest groups, please let us know. We love to create new things.

Diane Schrier and Sylvia Linke
AAUW-Alexandria, Co-Presidents



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 30th** – 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 in [the 2022 Conference Brochure](#).

Cont.

Conference Hotel information:

The Hotel Madison: For attendees who wish to arrive on March 25th and spend the night, a small block of hotel rooms has been reserved for \$119/night + taxes until March 4th. Reservations should be made as soon as possible because additional rooms may not be available when the block sells out.

There are two ways to make a reservation:

- Call the hotel's main line at 1-540-564-0200 and press 1 to make a reservation. When asked, provide the Group ID: 3217285 and AAUW
- Reserve online at <https://reservations.travelclick.com/110365?groupID=3217285> Then click on "Select & Go to the Next Step," March 25 and 26 in the calendar and "Confirm Dates of Stay."

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONFERENCE ATTENDEES AT AN ADDITIONAL HOTEL

If you find that you cannot make a hotel reservation for the State Conference at the Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center, we have made special arrangements for conference attendees to reserve guest rooms for one or both nights of March 25th and 26th at the **Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott, 1946 Medical Avenue, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**. This hotel is a convenient 6-minute drive from the Hotel Madison. Rooms with two-queen beds are \$99 per night, plus taxes, and include free parking and breakfast. **The cut-off date for reservations is March 4th at 5 pm.**

To make your reservation:

- Use this reservation link to [Book your group rate for AAUW of Virginia](#). You will see a map of the hotel location and the header "AAUW of Virginia." Scroll down to choose the dates for your stay. Initially, the dates shown will be arrival on March 25th and departure on March 27th. If you want your departure date to be March 26th, use the drop-down calendar and change the date to ensure the departure date is the one you want. Click "Select." Click "Continue." Then provide your information and payment to complete the reservation;
- Alternatively, you can call 540-433-9333; press 4. Ask to reserve from the block of rooms held for "AAUW of Virginia" to receive the discounted price and complete the transaction.

BRANCH NOTES

PROGRAM

The History and Contributions of Black Women in Alexandria, Virginia

March 20, 2022

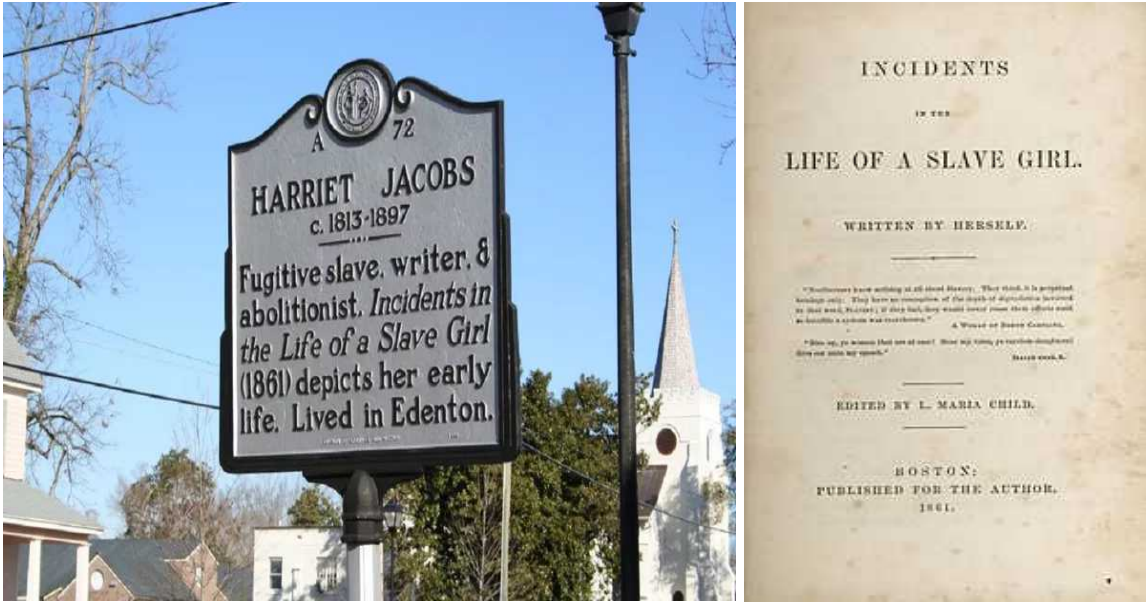
2:00pm



Audrey P. Davis, Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum, will present a lecture highlighting African American women who made contributions to the growth, preservation, and development of this popular seaport city. Featuring the legacy of Harriet Jacobs and the Edmonson Sisters as well as community educators and activists like Helen Day, Annie B. Rose, and others who have paved the way for equity and inclusion to Alexandria.

Ms. Davis is a past President of the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM). She is one of the founders and the current President of *Virginia Africana Associates Inc.: The Network of Museum, History and Preservation Professionals*. Ms. Davis is currently Vice President of the Alexandria Historical Society, a board member for: Living Legends of Alexandria. She is a former board member for the National Women's History Museum, and Preservation Virginia.

In 2016, *The Washington Business Journal* listed Ms. Davis as number 2, on their top 100 list of Washington Power players. In 2021, Ms. Davis was appointed to the Board of Directors for the American Civil War Museum. In January 2022, Ms. Davis was a recipient of the City of Alexandria's Martin Luther King, Jr. Spirit Award for her work on the preservation of Freedom House, equity initiatives and for promoting Alexandria's Africa American history.



Left, North Carolina highway marker, honoring Harriet Jacobs. Right, title page of INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF A SLAVE GIRL, using pen name of L. Maria Child.



The Edmondson Sisters statue at Edmondson Plaza at 1701 Duke Street in Alexandria.

PUBLIC POLICY

Virginia Kress
Public Policy Chair

AAUW-VA has identified four legislative priorities to support in the current General Assembly session. The four priorities are - Paid Family and Medical Leave, Gender Pay Equity, Paid Sick Leave, and Full Funding of Virginia Public Schools (opposing the use of public funds for vouchers and Education Savings Accounts, "ESA").

Crossover Tuesday was this past Tuesday, 2/15, so where some of these bills will be assigned is still not clear. This is an update on just a select few of the bills.

Priority 1 Paid family and medical leave.

SB1 provides for the establishment of a paid family and medical leave program that would be administered by the Virginia Employment Commission. The Senate Commerce and Labor Committee voted unanimously to continue consideration of this bill for 2023, which means this bill will have to be reintroduced by the end of 2022 to be reconsidered for 2023.

SB150 defines and establishes private family leave insurance as a class of private insurance and was passed by the Senate on 2/10/22. A companion House bill, HB1156, also passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee.

Priority 2 Gender Pay Equity

SB 447 which prohibits employers from conducting wage and salary history inquiries was passed by the Senate on 2/11/2022.

Priority 3 Paid Sick Leave.

Unfortunately, most of the bills under this priority were either stricken from the docket or laid on the table for future consideration. Typically, when a bill is laid on the table, the legislation is effectively dead.

Priority 4 Full Funding of Virginia Public Schools. (Opposing the use of public funds for vouchers and ESAs.) All of these bills were House bills. One of them, HB294, which would allow eligible students, who wish to relocate to another public school for a safer school environment, to use scholarships to cover costs associated with relocating to another public school either in or out of their districts was passed in the House (voted along party lines) and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Education. There were two other House bills that dealt with various ESAs, HB 333 and HB 1024, which were either laid on the table (HB 333) or passed along party lines and referred to the Senate (HB 1024).



MEMBERSHIP

Margaret Batko
Membership VP

Currently the Branch has 57 members. In addition, there is 1 life member who did not actually renew her State Branch membership for this year, but continues to show in national records. We continue to include her in our directory as she is a long-time branch member.

▶▶ Member Count Summary:

Active Member: 58

National	Life Member: 8	Paid: 50	Yet To Renew: 0
State		Paid: 57	Yet To Renew: 1
Branch	Dual Member: 0	Paid: 57	Yet To Renew: 1

As we enter March and look forward, we can anticipate receiving renewal notices from National. As a reminder, beginning July 1, the AAUW national dues will be \$67, of which \$64 will be tax-deductible. State dues will still be \$15 and the Branch dues, \$16.



AUTUMN LEAVES

Susan Cash
AAUW Funds Chair

The Alexandria Branch extends its heartfelt thanks to those who have donated to the Autumn Leaves 2021 fundraising drive. As of February 2022, \$2,288.89 has been raised.

In our Autumn Leaves 2021 drive, the funds raised will be divided equally between the Alexandria Branch and AAUW National's Greatest Needs Fund. Fifty percent of each donation is tax-deductible. The portion retained by the Alexandria Branch will be used for the Branch's support of the Christ House meals program. Our drawing for prizes was held at the holiday luncheon on December 5.

We will continue to accept donations throughout the program year. To contribute to Autumn Leaves 2021, please mail a check (in the amount of your choice), payable to AAUW-Alexandria, with Autumn Leaves on the memo line, to Susan Cash, 8402 West Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308.

BRANCH ACTIVITIES



MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Susan Werner

For our March mystery, we will read the first book in a new mystery series from acclaimed author Ann Cleeves: The Long Call. Our meeting will take place on March 22nd at 7PM. We will again meet via Zoom – thank you Lane Stone for facilitating our Zoom meetings. All are welcome at the Mystery Book Discussion Group meetings. If you have mystery suggestions or questions about the mystery group, please contact Susan Werner: susan.werner1@verizon.net. Happy Reading!



FRANCOPHILE GROUP

Susan Cash

Our next meeting is planned for Saturday, March 12 at 3 p.m, via Zoom. Our topic will be the book *A Man in France* by Philip Ogley. We will also share impressions of exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (Monet in Boston) and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Man Ray: The Paris Years).

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83697404950?pwd=eWExZDVsaWlwYkthTWZHNHljjeFQvZz09>

Meeting ID: 836 9740 4950, Passcode: 439933

One tap mobile: +13017158592,,83697404950#,,, *439933# US

Please join us. For more information I can be reached at 703/587-4790, scash5558@gmail.com.



GREAT DECISIONS

Lynn O'Connell

OUR FIRST IN-PERSON MEETING IN FOREVER!

Sunday, Feb 27, 7 pm – US Foreign Policy Challenges

Speaker: John Allen (<https://www.brookings.edu/experts/john-r-allen/>), President of the Brookings Institution. Previously, he was a Marine General with commands in Afghanistan and Iraq, and then served as President Obama's Special Envoy to the Coalition Against ISIS.

Location: Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308

The topic of the March 10, 7:00p meeting will be Drug Policy in Latin America (facilitated by Peter Kent).

Email Lynn at lynnocConnellva@gmail.com with questions or to be added to her email list.

Become a Two-Minute Activist:

<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>





DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

Bonnie Hershberg

Although the Diversity Book Group met on 14 February, the selection we discussed was hardly a valentine. *The Distance Between Us* by Reyna Grande is a memoir of the author's life from her birth to early adulthood. Born into poverty in Mexico, Ms. Grande recounts in vivid detail the trauma and pain that characterized this period both in her native village and after crossing the border illegally at 8 with her father and older siblings to settle in LA.

While the group has discussed many and varying stories of immigrants', who sought a new life in the US, both legally and illegally, this one was one of the most difficult to read. It chronicles the author's abuse to the extent that one group member characterized it as book about child abuse. Other themes that surfaced in the discussion included loss, how we make/remake memories, definitions of and loyalty to family, parental approval, the effect of having to learn a new language, and notably the impact of poverty and of parental physical and emotional absence occasioned by searching for a "better life" away from one's children. It paints a portrait in stark relief that while opportunities might exist to improve one's life economically by emigrating, the psychological and social costs can be incalculable.

On 14 March from 7:00 - 8:30 pm , the Group will be discussing *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana* by Gayle Tzemah Lemmon on Zoom through our partnership with the Alexandria Library. If you would like to join us, please email me at hersh3b@gmail.com.

In April, our meeting will be focused on our book selections for the next 12 months.

Mark Your Calendars for these Webinars. Members will receive links.

- Intersectionality, March 24
- Social Justice, May 26

Webinars are recorded and posted to the [AAUW website](#) shortly after each program.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

FROM SISTER BRANCHES

Falls Church AAUW will once again hold its annual April used book sale.

After a two-year hiatus, the Falls Church AAUW book sale is back! The branch will again hold its well-known used book sale this April 29th and 30th at the Community Center, 223 Little Falls St. The sale is the primary source of funds for the scholarships that Falls Church AAUW awards annually to senior girls in our area, and the women in the branch are especially happy that they can again share their message: “Buy a book, Send a girl to college.”

The times of the sale will be 9-9 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. There will be the usual rich selection of books on all topics, plus antiquarian books and a special collection. Members will make every effort to see that a buyer has found just the right book for them! The basic price on books this year: \$4 for hardbacks and \$3 for paperbacks; antiquarian and some special books will be individually priced.

We need high quality books to sell. If you would like to donate, you may do so on select Saturdays at the Willston Multi-Cultural Center, 6131 Willston Dr, from 10-12, beginning February 26th, as well as in the specially marked bin at the Community Center until the end of April. Check the AAUW Falls Church web site (fallschurcharea-va.aauw.net) for specific days and times at the Willston Center. Donations will not be accepted the day of the sale, so plan ahead! For more information, contact Bodeendv@verizon.net or phone 703-536-2235.

FROM AAUW-NATIONAL

ERA

In 2020, Virginia became the critical 38th state to pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). But even though the ERA now meets all the legal requirements to become the 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, we still have work to do.

The remaining hurdle is an arbitrary deadline—which Congress has the power to change. After passing the U.S. House of Representatives in 2020 with bipartisan support, the call to remove this deadline stalled in the Senate. Now, this key resolution (S.J. Res. 1) is closer than ever and needs your action.

Passage of the ERA will be a monumental move towards ensuring equality for all people in the United States. Our nation’s foundational document would finally clarify that sex discrimination—whether in employment, health insurance, Social Security, education or elsewhere—violates our constitutional rights.

We cannot wait any longer—[urge your Senators to support the ERA!](#)

NEW AND IMPROVED AAUW.ORG –

I'm very pleased to introduce the new [AAUW Community Hub](#), your personal portal into AAUW. Thanks for your patience over the past week while we prepared this improved system, where you can manage your giving, membership, contact details and personal preferences with ease.

But first things first: We'd like you to create your account login. To access your account, visit <https://my.aauw.org> or click the "Log In" link at the top right corner of the AAUW website. **The first time you log in, you will need to reset your password by clicking the "Forgot Password" link.**

Once you create a password and log in, we hope you'll take the time to update your profile with us. You can do this by clicking "My Profile" in the menu on the left side of your "Personal Snapshot" screen. Visit our [Systems Update](#) page for more instruction and video tutorials.

As always, you'll be notified when it is time to renew, vote or take action on other important issues.

I also invite you to attend a [special webinar](#) at 3:30 p.m. ET on Thursday, March 3, for more in-depth training on the new system. If you have additional questions or feedback, please reach out to connect@aauw.org.

AAUW is committed to continuously enhancing our members' experiences, and I hope you find the Community Hub a valuable resource for doing that. Thanks again for your patience and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Katrina Sun Breese
Senior Director of Institutional Advancement

FROM AAUW – VA



In response to many members' concerns about funding for public education, we co-authored an op-ed on behalf of AAUW-VA that appears in Sunday's Virginian-Pilot's (Norfolk) and Daily Press's (Newport News) print and online editions. You can read the op-ed below.

As always, we thank you for your commitment to advancing equity for women and girls and economic security for them and their families.

Denise M. Murden and Susan Burk

Co-VPs for Public Policy, AAUW-VA

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.

As early as 1933, AAUW-VA members were raising concerns about the lack of public education facilities for Virginia's "mountain children," and over the years we have advocated for public school funding to improve facilities, curricula, pay and working conditions for Virginia's educators.

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.

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.

2022 CALENDAR – ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE (CHECK BACK OFTEN)

3/3/22, 3:30 AAUW National webinar on new membership portal.
3/3/22, 7:00p, Board Meeting
3/10/22, 7p, Great Decisions –Contact Lynn O’Connell at lynnoconnellva@gmail.com
3/14/22, 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, hersh3b@gmail.com
3/20/22 2-4 pm Program meeting - African-American Women’s History
3/22/22, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, susan.werner1@verizon.net.
3/26/22, AAUW-VA Conference, part 1, Harrisonburg, In person
3/30/22, Christ House Dinner. Contact: Margaret Zebrowski, (Mmzebrow@aol.com) & Jan Jaynes (janjioek@verizon.net)
4/7/22, 7:00p, Board Meeting
4/11/22 7p: WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, hersh3b@gmail.com
4/14/22, 7p, Great Decisions –Contact Lynn O’Connell at lynnoconnellva@gmail.com
4/24/22, 2p, Program meeting - Women’s Health (economic and physical)
4/26/22, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, susan.werner1@verizon.net.
4/30/22, AAUW-VA, Conference, part 2, Virtual

2021-2022 Branch Officers

Co-presidents: Sylvia Linke (SFLaauw@gmail.com) & Diane Schrier (diane.schrier@gmail.com)
VP Membership: Margaret Batko (margaretwb@verizon.net)
VP Program: Committee
Secretary: Susan Werner (susan.werner1@verizon.net)
AAUW Funds: Susan Cash (scash5002@email.vccs.edu)
Diversity and Inclusion Reps: Dr. Gail Kalin (gailkalin@yahoo.com)
Public Policy Chair: Virginia Kress (vmvkress@gmail.com)
Treasurer: Anne Simpson (aseyedoc@gmail.com)
Newsletter Editor: Lane Stone (info@LaneStoneBooks.com)
Special Interest Group Leaders:
Campus Outreach: Danielle Beach (danielleaauw@gmail.com)
Christ House Dinners: Margaret Zebrowski (Mmzebrow@aol.com) & Jan Jaynes (janjioek@verizon.net)
Diversity Book Group: Bonnie Hershberg (hersh3b@gmail.com)
Great Decisions: Lynn O’Connell (lynnoconnellva@gmail.com)
Mystery Book Group: Susan Werner (susan.werner1@verizon.net)