

# AAUW



Alexandria (VA) Branch



## THE SCHOONER – June & July 2023

### INSIDE:

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Co-presidents' letter | 1  |
| Branch Notes          | 2  |
| Branch Activities     | 7  |
| Calendar              | 13 |
| Contacts              | 13 |

### SAVE THESE DATES:

6/1, 7p Board Mtg  
6/8, 7p, Great Decisions  
6/12, 7p, Diversity Book Group  
6/25, 1p, Annual Mtg  
6/27, 7p, Mystery book group  
7/20, 6:30 pm Francophile Group  
7/25, 7p, Mystery book group

Dear Friends,

Spring is here and summer is close by. Our State and National Elections have finished. Our Public Policy Chair, Virginia Kress, is now Director of Finance for AAUW-VA. I'm sure she will do an outstanding job. However, we do need a replacement. Please contact me or when I reach out to you, please say yes.

Our End-of-year Dinner will be Sunday, **June 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00.** Further details will follow. This is our business meeting, and budget vote, which will be sent later.

If you were unable to be at a planning session, please remember to send me your ideas. The branch functions best when everyone is fully engaged.

Our dinner and film evening was fun. We are planning get-togethers for the summer.

The Women's History Walk was a tremendous triumph. It was led by Alexandria Celebrates Women and Leslie Tourigny organized it. Kudos.

Our Meet and Greet will be on **September 10<sup>th</sup>.**

Diane and Sylvia, Co-Presidents

# BRANCH NOTES

## Programs

Leslie Tourigny

### Alexandria Celebrates Women Guides Us Through Women's History

Back in September 2022, [Alexandria Celebrates Women](#) (ACW), “a volunteer 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit organization that recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of Alexandria’s women of the past, present and future,” announced that they had revised their Alexandria Women’s History Walk, and they were offering it free of charge to interested individuals and groups. The Alexandria Branch immediately contacted ACW and scheduled the walk for eight months later.

So, finally, on Saturday, May 20, 2023, on a beautiful day, Gayle Converse, ACW co-founder and vice-president, guided our group of branch members and some guests through the streets of Old Town Alexandria past important sites in women’s history. Her well-researched presentations at each site made for a great experience.



ACW Co-Founder and Vice President Gayle Converse leading the way, and Branch Member Lynn O’Connell taking notes.

Two stops were particular highlights along the route:

1. **The present-day Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library on Queen Street.** Originally named the Alexandria Library when it opened in 1937, it was the only library in Alexandria at that time and only allowed Whites to use its facilities. On August 21, 1939, five young African American men, who were denied the use of the library, staged a sit-in. This peaceful act of civil disobedience was one of the first sit-ins in the United States. The library was later renamed the Kate Waller Barrett Branch Library because money donated from her family financed the building of the library. Ms. Barrett was a charter member and vice president of the League of Women Voters and Vice President of the Equal Suffrage League of Virginia.

2. **The site of the former federal courthouse at the corner of South S. Asaph and Prince Streets.** Our group took pictures in front of the historic marker at this spot. Alexandria Celebrates Women was the force behind this historic marker and our branch contributed money received from an AAUW-VA mini-grant toward the marker. It reads in part:

"In November 1917, 32 suffragists were arrested in Washington, D.C. for allegedly 'blocking traffic' on a Pennsylvania Avenue sidewalk. They were sent to the District of Columbia workhouse at nearby Occoquan, Virginia. The women were subjected to undue hardships and torture, resulting in the infamous November 14, 1917 'Night of Terror.' A number of women prisoners were threatened, beaten and hurled against walls and floors. A few days later, force feedings began. The suffragist prisoners were eventually freed from Occoquan following a hearing in Alexandria's federal courthouse."



In front of the historic marker.



The End!

**Save These Dates:**

Further Details to Follow

**Sunday, September 10, Afternoon, Time TBD- Annual Branch Meet and Greet to Start the New Program Year Off**

**Saturday, September 30, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Northern District Meeting, Location TBD**

**From Our Treasurer and Membership VP**

**Arlene Schuchner, Membership VP**

**Anne Simpson, Treasurer**

Community Hub is now ready for your dues! You can pay directly with your credit card at [AAUW.org](http://AAUW.org) or you can send a check to Anne Simpson, 1604 Old Drummer Boy Lane, Fort Washington, MD 20744. Dues are a total of \$103, \$72 for national, \$15 for state, and \$16 for branch. \$69 of this is tax deductible. You will see reminders coming from National, three all together over the next few months, but you don't have to wait. Get it done!

If your address, email or phone numbers have changed please provide your new information when you renew.



## AUTUMN LEAVES

Susan Cash  
AAUW Funds Chair

Thanks to all who donated to our Autumn Leaves 2022 fundraising drive and made the drive a success. **Autumn Leaves 2023 opens on June 1.** The first five contributors can select a prize AND participate in the drawing to be held at the holiday luncheon. All who make a donation that is received by the Thursday before the holiday luncheon can be entered in the drawing. The funds raised will be divided equally between the Alexandria Branch and an AAUW National Fund. *Fifty percent of your donation is tax-deductible.* To contribute to Autumn Leaves 2023, please mail a check, *payable to AAUW-Alexandria*, with Autumn Leaves on the memo line, to Susan Cash, 8402 West Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308.

## PUBLIC POLICY

Virginia Kress, Public Policy Chair

### GOOD NEWS!

In the late 1950's in a movement known as the [Massive Resistance](#) four Virginia jurisdictions closed their public school systems rather than comply with the Supreme Court ruling in Brown vs. the Board of Education overturning the principle of "separate but equal" in public education. Those four Jurisdictions were Charlottesville, Norfolk, Prince Edward County and Warren County. The public schools were reopened within a year in all of the jurisdictions except in [Prince Edward County](#). Prince Edward County continued to divert public funding for public education to private vouchers to allow students to attend all white private schools from 1959 to 1964. During that time it's estimated that 2,200 black students were deprived of an education. (As a separate note, there were also a number of white school children, who were left behind by the school closings.) Parents were faced with a stark choice - move to another jurisdiction or see their children's education come to an end in some cases permanently.

To address the damage caused by the Massive Resistance the Virginia State Legislature established the Brown vs. the Board of Education Scholarship Fund in 2004. The State set aside \$1.1 million and the Charlottesville philanthropist, John Klug donated another \$1 million. The scholarship fund included GED classes, community colleges, 4-year degree schools and masters programs for any Virginia resident directly affected by the Massive Resistance as a child.

Doing the math, by the time the scholarship fund was established 40 years had passed since the end of the Massive Resistance so the applicant pool was already diminished. A 6-year-old first grader would have been 46

in 2004. In spite of that 88 scholarships have been awarded since 2004. But reflecting the passage of time and dwindling candidate pool, there were only two applicants for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. At the same time the scholarship fund, which had started with \$2.1 million, still had about \$989,185 left.

Enter Delegate Kay Kory, D-Fairfax, (photo 1) who learned of the scholarship fund in 2022. She introduced a bill to extend the benefits of the scholarship fund to descendants of the children who were denied an education under the Massive Resistance. She argued that the effect of the school closings were generational and that the children whose parents and grandparents were denied an education started from a very different place in their educational path. Soon after introducing her bill then-state Senator Jennifer McClellan, (photo 2) D-Richmond, signed as a sponsor. The bill passed unanimously. On March 26, 2023 with little fanfare or flourish Governor Youngkin signed the bill into law effective July 1st. For the first time since 2019 the committee overseeing the scholarship fund met recently to approve pending scholarship applications and more importantly to begin the process of determining how to expand benefit eligibility.



### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING STATEMENT**

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 on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

## BRANCH ACTIVITIES



### GOURMET OUT

**Susan Cash**

For our next outing, we plan to try out the Bee Liner Diner, a relatively new restaurant located at 3648 King Street (Bradlee Shopping Center). The menu has a good selection of dishes and should be generally appealing. Date and Time is TBD, based on availability of interested participants. (Stay tuned for details). If you are interested in joining us, please contact Susan Cash, [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com), 703/587-4790.



### FRANCOPHILE GROUP

**Susan Cash**

This summer, the Francophile Group will once again have its Bastille Day dinner (tentative date and time is Thursday, July 20 at 6:30 p.m. at Bistro L' Hermitage, 12724 Occoquan Road, Woodbridge, VA. We are also planning a Zoom event with someone who recently moved to France (date and time TBA). For more information, please contact Susan Cash, [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com) or 703/587-4790.



## DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

Bonnie Hershberg

The Diversity Book Group met in May to discuss the 2010 bestselling and acclaimed non-fiction work, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skoot. While many in the group had read the book previously, the discussion was rich with both new insights and lasting impressions. It sparked a discussion of the additional long-time and contemporary burdens faced by Black women and their families as they confront the health care system in this country, particularly for those living in poverty. We also talked about the evolution of medical ethics. It appears that we are not only the beneficiaries of the medical advances made possible by an unwitting Mrs. Lacks but also of the consent requirements that the Lacks family's experience helped to pioneer. All agreed that this book, even more than a decade later, should be required reading for anyone interested in and concerned about the voices who are silenced or struggle to be heard.

On June 12, from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm on Zoom, we will be discussing Girl in Translation by Jean Kwok. In July, the Group will be meeting to make final selections for the coming 14 months. We know our upcoming third-plus year will be one of robust woman ship and learning. We generally have between 10-14 participants for each discussion. If you or someone you know would like to join the amazing journey we've been on, please email Bonnie Hershberg at [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com).



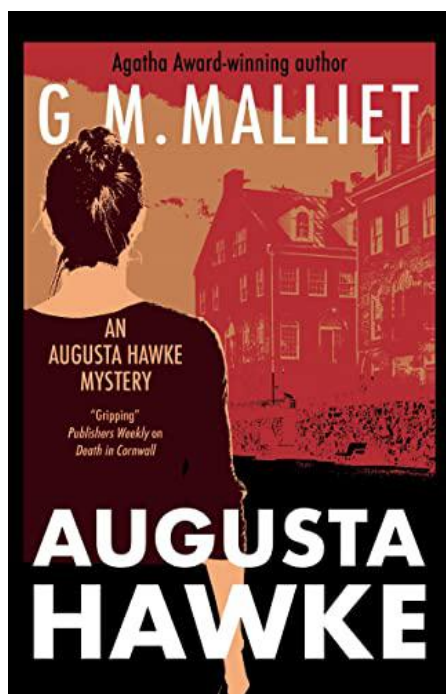




## MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Susan Werner

Summer is always a good time to read a mystery. Our book for June is Augusta Hawke by G.M. Malliet. This is a fun book to read if for no other reason than lots of tidbits about Alexandria and the surrounding area. It is also a good mystery. We will meet on June 27, 2023 at 7 PM via Zoom. Thank you to Lane and Diane for providing a Zoom access. We might consider a meeting at a local restaurant for either July or August – this would still be on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. Need feedback on that. For further information on the Mystery Book Discussion Group, contact Susan Werner: [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net). Book suggestions always welcome. Happy Reading.



## GREAT DECISIONS



Lynn O'Connell

**June 8, 7 pm, via Zoom**

Please join us for a presentation on "China's Foreign Policy - China's Push for Global Dominance, facilitated by Diane Schrier. Diane has arranged for Ambassador Derek Mitchell to join us.

A condensed version of the Ambassador's bio:

Ambassador Mitchell has served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Asian and Pacific Security Affairs (APSA), in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He also served for nearly a decade as Senior Fellow and Director of the Asia Division of the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). He is the coauthor of *China: The Balance Sheet—What the World Needs to Know Now about the Emerging Superpower*, and *China and the Developing World: Beijing's Strategy for the 21st Century*. Mitchell received a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Virginia. He was a visiting scholar at Peking University in 2007. He speaks Mandarin Chinese proficiently. His wife Min is a former television journalist. They live in Washington, D.C., with their beloved dog Bernie.

Ambassador Mitchell joined last year and led a fascinating discussion on Myanmar, and June 8 will be just as engaging. For those regular participants, watch for the Zoom link via email.

Please contact Lynn O'Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com) to get on the monthly meeting list.

## FROM AAUW-VA



***At a meeting at the Virginia Military Institute, Martin D. Brown, Virginia's chief diversity officer stated "Let's take a moment right now to kill that cow. DEI is dead." AAUW of Virginia disagreed in the letter below sent to the Governor.***

May 7, 2023

The Hon. Glenn Youngkin

Commonwealth of Virginia  
Constituent Services  
P.O. Box 1475  
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear. Governor Youngkin:

The crude and dismissive comments of Virginia's Chief of Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion, Martin D. Brown in a meeting with faculty and staff at the Virginia Military Institute show him as unfit for any public office, but particularly for the office to which he was appointed.

Dismissing the need for diversity, equity, and inclusion and proclaiming it "dead" at any institution of higher education is inappropriate, but particularly so when offered at VMI with its deep history of racism and sexism. Just two years ago, an independent investigation of VMI found a "racist and sexist culture," fierce resistance to change, and a fear of retaliation among students and faculty who want to report bigotry or sexual misconduct to administrators. This culture has been mitigated in the short intervening time but has not disappeared.

Mr. Brown implies that efforts at equity and diversity are antithetical to excellence. These are the kind of specious arguments that the American Association of University Women (AAUW) challenged 141 years ago when we fought for admission of women to higher

education in the United States. Women now make up a majority of college and university students and have graduation rates significantly higher than that of men. Diversity of race and gender support rather than diminish excellence.

Today's graduates of Virginia's public colleges are entering a highly diverse workforce that reflects the ever-increasing diversity of our country. If these graduates are to be successful, they must understand how to respectfully work across gender, racial, and ethnic lines. Virginia cannot provide its graduates the educational experience that will enable them to be the leaders of tomorrow unless it continues to focus on achieving and respecting diversity in our public higher education system.

AAUW of Virginia joins other organizations in calling for Mr. Brown's resignation or dismissal. He has shown that he is not capable of fulfilling his leadership role.

Sincerely,

Lane Stone, President

Sarita McCoy Gregory, Administrator

Denise Murden & Janine Greenwood Co-VP Public Policy Co-VP Public Policy

## FROM AAUW NATIONAL

After a hiatus, the Two-Minute Activist is back. [Click here:](#)

# Two-Minute Activist

Send emails and texts to your legislators to fight for equal pay, family leave, stopping sexual harassment, equality in education and more. Sign up to get regular alerts to be able to take timely action.

## 2023 CALENDAR – ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

(CHECK <https://alexandria-va.aauw.net> OFTEN)

6/1/23, 7p Board Mtg

6/8/23, 7p, Great Decisions –Contact Lynn O’Connell at [lynnococonnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnococonnellva@gmail.com)

6/12/23 7p, WBCCF: Diversity Book Group, Location: Burke Library, Contact: Bonnie Hershberg, [hersh3b@gmail.com](mailto:hersh3b@gmail.com) Girl in Translation, Jean Kwok

6/25/23, 1p, Annual Mtg. Location TBD

6/27/23, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).

7/20/23, 6:30 p.m. Francophile Group, Bistro L’ Hermitage. Susan Cash

([scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com))

7/25/23, 7p, Mystery book group, Contact: Susan Werner, [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net).

## 2022-2023 BRANCH OFFICERS

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

VP Membership: Arlene Schuchner ([arlene.schuchner@verizon.net](mailto:arlene.schuchner@verizon.net))

VP Program: Leslie Tourigny, ([ltourigny@gmail.com](mailto:ltourigny@gmail.com))

Secretary: Dr. Gail Kalin, ([gailkalin@yahoo.com](mailto:gailkalin@yahoo.com))

AAUW Funds: Susan Cash ([scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com))

Diversity and Inclusion: Dr. Gail Kalin ([gailkalin@yahoo.com](mailto:gailkalin@yahoo.com))

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

Newsletter Editor: Lane Stone ([info@LaneStoneBooks.com](mailto:info@LaneStoneBooks.com))

Special Interest Group Leaders:

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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))

Francophile Group: Susan Cash, [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com)

Gourmet Out Group: Susan Cash, [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@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))