



THE SCHOONER – December 2023

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SAVE THESE DATES:

12/2/23, 9:30a Scottish Parade
12/7/23 7p Board Meeting
12/10/23 Holiday luncheon
12/14/23 Great Decisions
12/26/23 7p Mystery book group.

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Holiday Season. We hope everyone finds peace and safety during this time. Our Holiday Party is coming up very soon. See pages 4 and 5 for details.

The Scottish Walk is Dec. 2nd and should be a lot of fun. We are in the F12 spot, which is near the end. The walk will start at Wolfe and St. Asaph's Streets. Please make every effort to join in. We check in at 9:30, but the final lineup is at 10:30. The parade ends at Market Square.

A new Virginia legislature has been elected and we hope that some of our priorities will pass this year. Lobby Day is Jan 31st with a legislator reception in the evening on Jan. 30th.

Next year there will be an exciting Regional AAUW Conference. Invited states will extend through the Atlantic coast. Virginia is hosting! Your help in organizing this will be essential and many will be needed to contribute time to make it a success.

Yours,
Diane and Sylvia

BRANCH NOTES

Programs

Leslie Tourigny
VP for Programs

It's Been a Busy Month for Branch Programs

On October 28, Branch members assembled at the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum for a private tour of the exhibit, *Alexandria Hospital: Women Mobilize the Community*, to celebrate the hospital's 150 years of service to the community. According to The Lyceum the exhibit highlights "...the civic-minded women and organizations that founded and supported the Hospital, as well as the services provided to the white and black community."

In 1872, nine years before AAUW was founded, empowered women, led by Julia Johns, organized an infirmary in Alexandria, so residents did not have to go to Washington or Richmond for hospital treatment. In 1917, a new hospital building was opened in the 700 block of Duke Street. In 1997, it became part of the Inova Health System.

Kris Lloyd, a curator in the Office of Historic Alexandria's new Division of Collections and Exhibitions, and the project manager of the hospital exhibit, gave us a gallery talk in the exhibit. She was joined by Jennifer Kilmer, MD, a retired ob/gyn and President of The TWIG. The TWIG is "the Junior Auxiliary of Inova Alexandria Hospital--an organization of women dedicated to providing financial aid, volunteer service, and support to Alexandria Hospital— itself originally established by volunteers" in 1933.



Kris Lloyd, curator and project manager of the Alexandria Hospital exhibit, speaking to branch members.

On November 18, Dr. Pamela Gilchrist, Director for K-12 Programs at the one-billion-dollar Virginia Tech Innovation Campus in Alexandria's Potomac Yard, spoke to us via Zoom. The

Innovation Campus has “set the goal to become the most diverse graduate technology campus in the country.”

Plans for the campus were announced in November 2018 as part of Virginia’s successful bid to attract Amazon’s HQ2 headquarters to Northern Virginia.

Although the first new Academic Building is expected to open in 2024, the inaugural class of the Innovation Campus master’s degree students enrolled in the fall of 2020 at the existing Virginia Tech space in Falls Church, and students have already graduated.

Dr. Gilchrist gave us a detailed overview of the Innovation Campus, especially talking about their partnership with the Alexandria City Public Schools, which provides training for teachers and hands-on STEM education opportunities and experiences for students, paving a way for future college study and careers in STEM fields. Our members asked questions and made suggestions to Dr. Gilchrist following her presentation.



Save The Date for Our January Program
January 21, 2024, 2:00 Virtual
Topic - TBA

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.

let's
MINGLE &
JINGLE

**Holiday Luncheon
Belle Haven County Club
6023 Fort Hunt Road
Alexandria, VA**

**Sunday, December 10, 2023
Noon to 2:00 PM**

Lunch Cost - \$57 per person

**Guest Speaker: Zeina Azzam, Alexandria's poet laureate
Wine will be available.**

RSVP & send check to:

Anne Simpson

1604 Old Drummer Boy Lane

Fort Washington, MD 20744

Email - aseyedoc@gmail.com

Please make checks payable to AAUW - Alexandria Branch

No later than December 8, 2022

Or RSVP only to Virginia Kress:

Email - vmvkress@gmail.com

Holiday Giving

We have two ways to give this holiday.

First, for many years, our Alexandria Branch has collected gift cards and toys, puzzles, and games for the City of Alexandria Domestic Violence Program at our holiday luncheon in December. Once again, we are asking members to contribute to the DVP so that they may distribute gifts to women and children at their holiday party. Gift cards from major retailers such as Target, Walmart, Amazon, CVS, Giant, etc., in the amount of \$25 are very desirable. Children's gifts can be new toys, games or books. Teenagers prefer electronics or gift cards. Gifts go not only to those in the shelter, but also to those the DVP continues to support when they are able to leave the shelter. Bring your gifts to the luncheon or deliver to Mary Ann Bier. Contact her at marybier@comcast.net for her street address. You may also find it in the branch directory. A useful tip: if you order online, you can have items shipped directly to her.

Also, we will collect food/personal items for Northern Virginia Community College students. Many college students live on the edge financially. They struggle to pay for the essentials, like food and shelter, as well as tuition and books. Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) has various means to help these students. One of them is a system of food pantries.

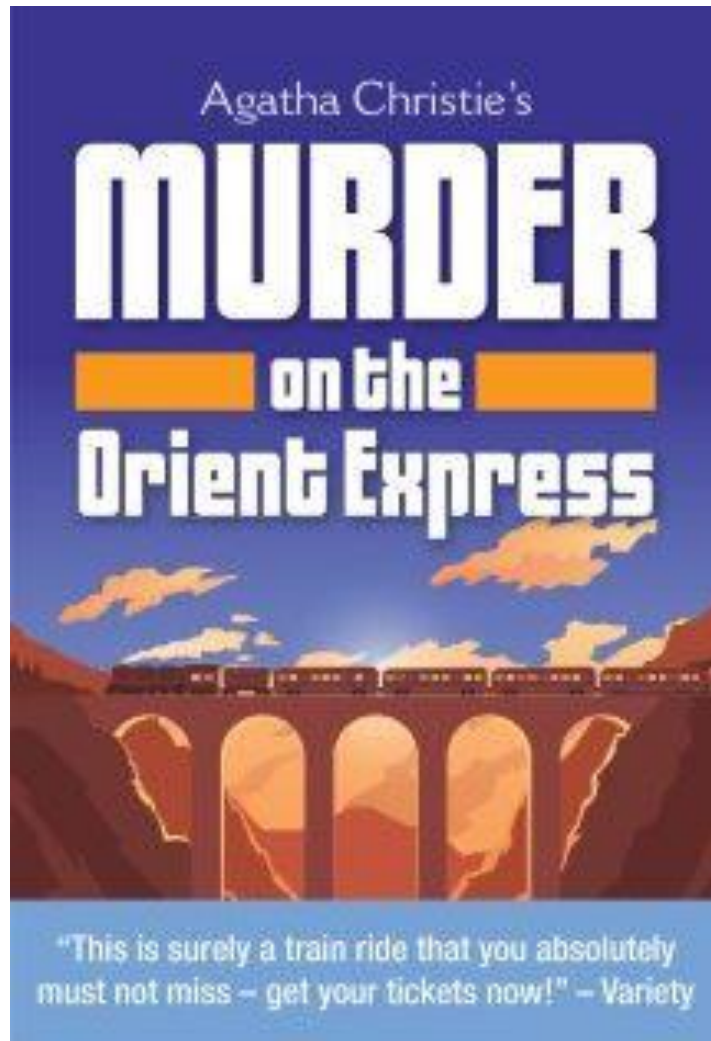
We will be collecting canned and packaged food as well as personal care products for donation to the NVCC food banks. A box will be available to collect your donations.

NVCC has provided the following list of foods and personal items that students most often use.

- Ready-to-eat meals**
- **Microwavable food**
- **Just add water meals**
- **Soups**
- **Oatmeal**
- **Granola and protein bars**
- **Snacks**
- **Boxed/Individual juices**
- **International and Cultural Foods**
- **Vegan, Vegetarian, and Plant-Based Items**
- **Waters**
- Non-food needs include the following personal care items:**
- **Sanitary Napkins**
- **Soap**
- **Toothpaste**
- **Deodorant**
- **Shampoo**
- **Baby diapers and wipes**

Thanks for your generosity.

OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
AT THE LITTLE THEATER OF ALEXANDRIA
WILL BE HELD MARCH 22, 2024



Tickets are \$40 each. What's the easiest way to purchase yours? Bring your check to our holiday party.

PUBLIC POLICY

Virginia Kress, Public Policy Chair

Anti-Human Trafficking Ideas Brainstorming Event

Members of the Alexandria Branch have had a long-standing interest in finding ways to reduce human trafficking in the U.S., especially in our hometown of Alexandria. We have discontinued effort on the Human Trafficking Rescue App, but there are many other things we can do, such as advocating for essential legislation.

Branch members are invited to attend a brainstorming session to propose measures the branch can take to combat human trafficking. Those who are interested in attending this session can meet on Saturday, January 13, 2024, at the Beatley Library at 11:00 A.M.

Please let me know ahead of time whether you will be attending this meeting. Space is limited and no more than 10 people may attend a meeting in the room/com I have reserved. You may reach me at sylvia.f.linke@outlook.com.



AUTUMN LEAVES

Susan Cash
AAUW Funds Chair

Autumn Leaves 2023 is now open. Thanks to all of you who have already contributed. All who make a donation that is received by Thursday, December 7 (three days before the holiday luncheon) can be entered into a 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.

BRANCH ACTIVITIES



DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

Bonnie Hershberg

The Diversity Book Group finished the year (not meeting in December) by discussing the now 70+-year-old prize winning novel, *The Bluest Eye*, by the late acclaimed American author, Toni Morrison. The book was nominated and then selected by the group because it is frequently included on “Banned or Challenged” book lists, getting special attention in this arena in recent years. The Group wanted to see for themselves why the book might be included on these lists. There was unanimity that these lists should not exist. At the same time, some participants noted that the content is sexually explicit, includes child sexual abuse, and graphic domestic violence, including directed at children. The way in which other themes are presented, including racism, might not be appropriate for younger children, and there was some debate about when adolescents would be ready for much of this material. That said, everyone agreed it deserves all the accolades it has won. Although the book focuses on a small town in rural Ohio and features the lives of an impoverished Black community, many found the themes to be universal. The language, in particular, draws the reader in immediately as well as Ms. Morrison’s ability to create real characters. In this novel, she reveals a gift for story telling even if the story provokes multiple negative feelings, including sadness and anger. The group will start the new year on Monday, January 11, 2024 discussing *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Boylan Finney on line. If you are interested in joining us, please email Bonnie Hershberg at hersh3b@gmail.com.

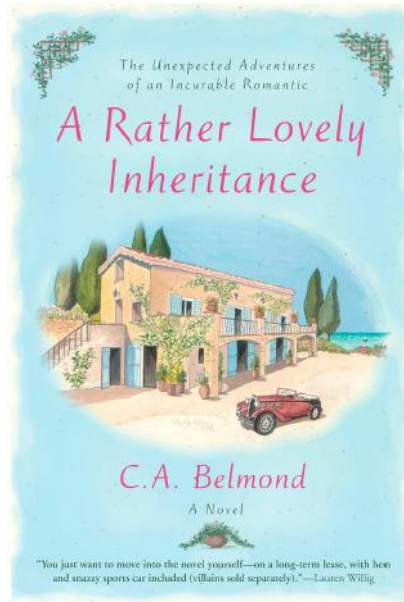




FRANCOPHILE GROUP

Susan Cash

At our next meeting, tentatively planned to be held over Zoom, we will discuss the book *A Rather Lovely Inheritance* by C.A. Belmond. Tentative date and time is Saturday, January 27 at 3 p.m. Later in this program year, we are 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 or 703/587-4790.





GOURMET OUT

Susan Cash

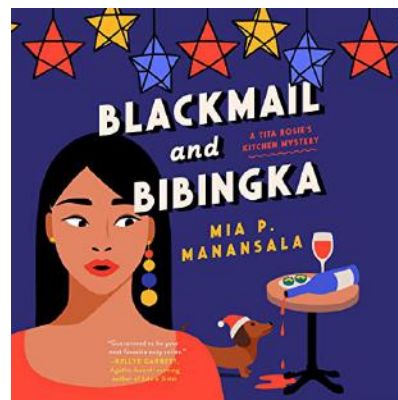
Our next outing is tentatively planned to take place at Marib Traditional Yemeni Cuisine, 6931 Hechinger Drive, Springfield. Tentative Date: Thursday, January 18 at 6:30 p.m. Point of contact is Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com, 703/587-4790.



MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Susan Werner

The December 2023 meeting of the Mystery Book Discussion Group is tentatively scheduled for December 26th. However, because that is the day after Christmas, there may be a change to December 19th, the week before. Please contact Susan Werner for the exact date. Our mystery will be Blackmail and Bibingka (A Tita Rosie's Kitchen Mystery) by Mia P. Manansala. We will meet via Zoom at 7 PM. For mystery suggestions, for questions about the Mystery Group, for the exact meeting date, contact Susan Werner – susan.werner1@verizon.net. Please join us. Happy Holidays.



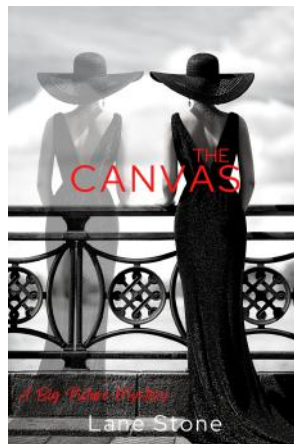
KVELLS AND KUDOS

Peggy Heiser and Anne Simpson sing in the holidays! Join the Alexandria Choral Society for a joyful celebration of the season in historic St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Old Town. They will be singing international holiday music and new favorites in their Winter Cathedrals concert, plus a few sing-along carols to get you in the mood. Look for new member Peggy Heiser and Anne Simpson, our treasurer, in the Alto section.

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 7 PM St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 S. Pitt St.



Newsletter editor, **Lane Stone**, has a new book out. *The Canvas* is the second book in the Big Picture art thriller series.





PUBLIC POLICY

Janine Greenwood
Denise Murden
Co-VPs for Public Policy

Please mark your calendars and join us in Richmond!

Preparations for our Lobby Days is underway. We have secured a room at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond for our Women Legislator's reception on January 30 at 5 p.m. We will be working with GR-AAUW Branch members on this event. A block of 18 rooms have been reserved at the Hampton Inn, Richmond at a group rate of \$149 each. This is the same hotel as last year. In person lobbying will be on January 31 and we are working on details for virtual lobbying on February 28. Issues for lobbying will depend on what is introduced by the newly elected members of the legislature after the election but will reflect our policy priorities.

AAUW - National

In case you missed it, here's a link to the October, 2023 webinar:

[Youth Voices for Global Gender Equity](#)

AAUW United Nations youth representatives Zahra Hassan and Kyra Szabo and Elena Reiss, Assistant Director of Fellowship Advising and UN Programs at Lehigh University, joined CEO Gloria Blackwell for an informative discussion on the AAUW UN youth representative program and the importance of youth voices in the future of global gender equity.

2023- 2024 CALENDAR – ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE
(CHECK <https://alexandria-va.aauw.net> OFTEN)

12/2/23, 9:30a Scottish Parade
12/7/23 7p Virtual, AAUW-Alexandria Board Meeting
12/10/23 Noon Holiday luncheon, Belle Haven Country Club
12/14/23 7p Virtual, Great Decisions: Elections in Latin America- The rise of left-wing governments in Latin America (facilitated by Peter Kent)
12/26/23 7p (tentative) Mystery book group, Susan Werner, susan.werner1@verizon.net

2023-2024 BRANCH OFFICERS

Co-presidents: Sylvia Linke (SFLaauw@gmail.com) & Diane Schrier (diane.schrier@gmail.com)
VP Membership: Arlene Schuchner (arlene.schuchner@verizon.net)
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Secretary: Dr. Gail Kalin, (gailkalin@yahoo.com)
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Diversity Book Group: Bonnie Hershberg (hersh3b@gmail.com)
Francophile Group: Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com
Gourmet Out Group: Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com
Great Decisions: Lynn O'Connell (lynnnoconnellva@gmail.com)
Mystery Book Group: Susan Werner (susan.werner1@verizon.net)