



SCHOONER November2024

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Letter from the Co-Presidents

Fall is in full swing and the election season is almost over. We all will be happy to get some rest from the frenetic activity of the last few months. Our meeting on Frauds and Scams was very informative and important. We learned some very valuable information about how easy it is to be scammed and with AI, the problem has gotten worse.

We have an exciting upcoming meeting with Deborah Todd on Nov. 16 at Burke Library at 10:30, which will be followed, for those who want, to go to lunch. She is currently the Media Asset Manager for Voice of America. She has been involved in news media in the Washington DC area for over 35 years. This should be a very exciting discussion.

Our Holiday Brunch is coming up at Belle Haven Country Club on Dec. 15 at 11:30. Our special guest will be the probable new mayor of Alexandria, Alyia Gaskins. The food will be good and the conversation will be

SAVE THESE DATES	
11/2, 3p	Mt. Vernon Program
11/2, 5p	State Program
11/7, 7 p	Board Meeting
11/16, 10:30 a	Program Meeting
11/23, 8p.	Francophile Group
	Gourmet Group
11/26, 8 p	Mystery Book Group
12/15, 3 p	Holiday Luncheon

good and the conversation will be outstanding. Please bring gift card and toy donations for the Alexandria Domestic Violence Shelter and food and diapers for NVCC Nighthawk Nest.

We had a very successful STEM presence at the Spooky Mad Science Expo, held at Patrick Henry Rec. Center. Young girls and boys flocked around our table to play with the Magnatiles. Parents expressed interest in AAUW, including some former members.

We have not signed up for the Scottish Walk this year, as I am unable to lead it. If anyone would, please let me know.

Great Decisions on Nov. 14th will be about the management of the ocean's resources. Fisheries are collapsing to due overfishing, competition for minerals and oil, political implications, and damage to the oceans are big problems. Please make sure you attend. This affects your life.

Diane Schrier and Sylvia Linke
Co-Presidents

BRANCH NOTES

PROGRAM NOTES

AAUW ALEXANDRIA Fraud and Scam Workshop

On Saturday, Oct. 12th AAUW Alexandria sponsored, with the Alexandria Burke Library branch, an AARP program on Frauds and Scams. The outstanding AARP speaker, Trudy Marotta, spoke about how even the most experienced and well trained can get tricked. She taught about the importance of freezing your credit and those of your family members, especially children and keeping a physical file of the pin number and other essential information. She said never to pick up a phone from a robo-scammer. Once the machine knows it is a used number, it will continue to call. Wait 5 seconds before speaking into a phone from an unknown number. Phone numbers are being stolen and scammers will use your name, emails and phone number to steal from others. Always call someone directly if someone tells you that they are in trouble and need you to send money and gift cards. They are often fine and it is a scammer using AI to imitate a voice. Another popular scam going around right now is the caller saying that there is a warrant out for your arrest for missing jury duty and you have to send money. A version of this is someone saying IRS, Medicare, Medicaid, bank or another official agency. Call the organization or agency back at their regular, verifiable number, not the number given by the caller or texter. Be very careful of Caller ID on landlines. One place to check suspicious emails is spam@uce.gov. If you write checks, use a gel pen or a fine-tip Sharpie. Crooks have the ability to wash ink off of check amounts and change who the check goes to. Be very careful of dating sites and anyone who professes a deep emotional attachment too quickly and then wants money or a tangible asset.

Saturday, November 2, 2024, 10:30 AM

Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306

The Mt. Vernon Branch will be featuring an inspiring speaker: Annie Ray, Grammy Award Winning Teacher, who has made fabulous contributions to music instruction for disabled children. See flyer on page 5.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2024, 10:30 A.M.

Ms. Deborah Todd will speak on experiences of women who work in the media. The speaker has extensive experience in the field, having worked for CBS, then the Voice of America archives.

The even will be held at the Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library at 4701 Seminary Road, Suite 104, Alexandria, VA 22304.

Please join Diane and me for this program on a unique topic.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 11:30 A.M. Belle Haven Country Club.

The branch will be holding its annual holiday luncheon. The invited speaker is Alyia Gaskins, the winner of the June primary for Mayor of Alexandria.

Submitted by: Sylvia Linke, Co-President AAUW Alexandria

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,

**A POST ELECTION
CONVERSATION WITH
REPRESENTATIVE
GERRY CONNOLLY**



Monday, December 2 at 5 p.m. on Zoom



SPONSORED BY:

Alexandria Branch
Arlington Branch
Falls Church Branch
McLean Branch
Mt. Vernon Branch
Reston-Herndon Branch
Vienna Branch

ADVANCE REGISTRATION HERE:

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/
WN_IbHEq8JMTUmEPCp1MxPquQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IbHEq8JMTUmEPCp1MxPquQ)**



Alexandria & Mt Vernon Branches



Sherwood Regional Library

Grammy-award Winning Music Educator, ANNIE RAY, Speaks on her Success Working with Students with Disabilities

November 2, 2024 10:30 am

Sherwood Regional Library , 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306

Discussion Topics to Include:

- Special education inclusion in performing arts
- Working with a diverse population of students
- Performing Arts/electives being a core part of a students education and the impact on chronic absenteeism
- Annandale school as a whole - dramatic shift in approach school wide
- Being a working mother and balancing a demanding career

Our Speaker:

Annie Ray currently serves as both the Orchestra Director and Performing Arts Department Chair at Annandale High School (AHS) in the Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) system. Annie is an advocate for providing universal access to quality music education and is known for founding and developing creative opportunities to make music accessible to students of all demographics. Her establishment of the FCPS Parent Orchestra teaches about 200 caregivers annually to learn to play their student's instrument and provides mentorship to upcoming music teachers.

Annie also began the Crescendo Orchestra program to make Orchestra curriculum accessible to students with significant developmental or intellectual disabilities. In January 2022, this program was featured and acclaimed on the cover of the Metro section in The Washington Post.

TEDx invited Annie to give a talk in April 2022, on The Sounds of Success, based on her approach in the classroom and how to meet all students where they are at. She has been a guest lecturer at colleges across the country and keynote speaker at numerous national/international conferences, and was named the 2024 Grammy Music Educator Award recipient and the 2023 FCPS Outstanding Secondary Teacher of the Year for her work on equity in education.

Annie is a member of the StringRise professional development team. She is an active performing harpist and currently resides in Arlington, Virginia with her husband Dr. Irving Ray and their daughters Eloise and Millie. Annie is an adventurer at heart, and her biggest bucket list item is to one day win The Amazing Race.



The meeting is free and open to the public.

For more information: AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com



**MARK THIS DOWN ON YOUR
CALENDAR!**

**2025 AAUW-VA STATE
CONFERENCE**

MARCH 29, 2025

(Preconference activities on March 28)

On **March 27-28, 1925**, the seven already existing local branches of AAUW in Virginia met in Williamsburg. When they adjourned, the **Virginia Division of AAUW** was a reality.

On **March 28, 2025**, join us in Alexandria as the **AAUW-VA centennial celebration** begins, and we jubilantly begin our second century of women changing the conversation.

The conference is being hosted by the AAUW-VA Northern District branches at the **Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria, 801 N. St. Asaph Street, Alexandria 22314** on **Saturday, March 29, 2025**, with preconference activities on **March 28, 2025**.

Great news! It's not too early to reserve a room. Guest rooms will be available for **March 28 & 29** (king/sofa bed or double/double for \$159 per night plus tax, * including a full hot breakfast for up to 2 persons.) Use this QR code to make a reservation:



or use this link. You can also call 1 (888) 236-2427; use code **AAUW of Virginia Mar2025** to reserve a room. The rate is also available for 3 days before/after March 28 & 29 on a space available basis. You must make a reservation for March 28 and/or 29, and then email jrasolofoson@sheratonalexandria.com to book extra days.

The earlier you book a room the better because the **2025 Conference** will take place on the eve of **Cherry Blossom** season and rooms in the hotel will book up early. Once our block is sold out, we might be able to add more rooms, but that will only be possible if the hotel is not already sold out.

***IMPORTANT NOTICE:** When making your hotel reservation, ignore any reference to a \$25 resort fee. You will **NOT** be charged this. The room rate is \$159 plus state and local taxes.

Report on the AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference

One week before the Conference started, the weather was supposed to be nice. People were coming from Massachusetts to Florida. Issues on rooming, lunch times and pick up times were being resolved. Then Hurricane Helene blew up and many plans changed. Many of the people from Florida had to cancel, as their flights were cancelled. Only those who left early were able to make it. South and North Carolina also faced major difficulties. A train from North Carolina hit a tree and 10 attendees were stranded on it for almost 10 hours. Attendees came in at different hours than planned as their planes and trains were delayed. Laura Wimmer and the women from the Richmond Branch saved the day. They met attendees coming in and brought them to the Conference safely. The last one arrived at 10:00 p.m. on Friday night. They also brought people to the stations and airports on Sunday. They raised the concept of Conference to a new level and deserve a huge round of applause. In total, there were 130 attendees there, 7 guests and 35 presenters.

The Conference otherwise went very smoothly. Speakers presented on many topics. It was decided at an early meeting that this Conference needed to distinguish itself from State Conferences by doing a deep dive into issues that affect all of us. Some of the topics that were covered include AI, Title IV, how to grow small and virtual branches, Women's Health, Voting Rights, Public Education attacks, Period Poverty, Coalition building, ERA, DEI, Ranked Choice Voting, Social Media impact, STEM, Title I, Reproduction Freedom and Immigration. The sessions were broken in whole group presentations, trending topic sessions and swap shops, where branch ideas were exchanged

There was a worry about costs at the beginning of the year long work on the Conference. Costs were budgeted at 100 attendees and we met the original budget. There was a beautifully created program book and rave reviews. The food was delicious and plentiful. The location was lovely on a warm fall weekend.

Diane Schrier and Danielle Beach were the co-chairs and Lane Stone the welcoming state host.

PUBLIC POLICY

Public policy is very important this year. It is involved with everything you do, i.e., breathe air, quality of water, food quality, fish in the ocean, housing, social security, Medicare, health care, financial equity, salaries, road, airports, etc. AAUW cannot handle all of these issues so we focus on issues relating to the well-being of women. The election on November 5th will be very important for women, so please be sure that you have chosen wisely. Many things will be determined by the outcome of the election.

In Virginia, starting in August, over 6000 voters were removed from the registration list. There is a lawsuit which we are supporting to release the names in time for mistakes to be corrected, or because of the late timing of the issue, have the executive order nullified. The names were connected to the files of the Dept. of Motor Vehicles list. When someone becomes a naturalized citizen, that may not be changed on the DMV list and thus, the person will be unfairly removed. As always, when there are multiple removals, names that are similar to other names, people who do not have licenses, etc. are unfairly removed from the voter rolls.

Another major issue the upcoming year is the new SOLs requirement. Experts have said that it will create a situation when 50-70% of public schools will fail. This is due to one section. It lowers the time span for students speaking a foreign language to have to take the standardized tests. It used to be 11 semesters. It is now 3. All the best research shows that it takes 6 semesters to become socially fluent and 14 semesters to be academically fluent. Alexandria has 127 different languages spoken. The legislature will be working this year on slowing these unfair standards so they will not affect too many schools too badly. We must support this battle.

Lobby Day is January 15th. There will be a meeting the night before at the Hotel. Please plan to come. More information will be forthcoming.

AUTUMN LEAVES

Our 2024 drive opened on July 1, 2024. Thanks to those of you who have already contributed. The funds raised are divided equally between the AAUW Alexandria Branch and an AAUW National Fund. Fifty percent of your donation is tax-deductible. All who make a donation received by Thursday, December 12, three days before the holiday luncheon, will be eligible for the drawing held at the luncheon.

If you would like to contribute, 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

Francophile Group



For our final 2024 meeting, scheduled for Saturday, November 23 at 3 p.m. via Zoom, Susan Cash will give two presentations. The first, developed to coincide with the election, will be a brief talk about 20th century French speaking First Ladies. It will also include some presidential remarks delivered in French. The second will be a surprise “reveal” presentation about a well-known francophile/francophone. To RSVP, please contact Susan at 703/587-4790 or scash5558@gmail.com.

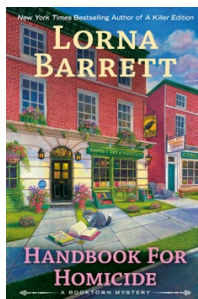
Gourmet Group

Stay tuned to the *Schooner* for information for our next event.



Mystery Book Discussion Group

As we move into winter, our November mystery is *Handbook for Homicide* by Lorna Barrett. We will meet on November 26th, 2024, at 7 PM via Zoom. The mystery is part of the Booktown Mystery series. If you have questions about the Mystery Book Discussion Group, contact Susan Werner at susan.werner1@verizon.net. Also contact Susan with your mystery suggestions. Please join us. Happy reading.



Kvells & Kudos



Margaret Anne Batko's miniature "Mother's Misery" was accepted into the Miniature Painters, Sculptors & Gravers Society of Washington, D.C. (WPSGS) juried 91st Annual Exhibition of Fine Art in Miniature. The Exhibition is open November 23, 2024, thru January 11, 2025, at the Mansion at Strathmore. It will be closed Christmas and New Year's Day.

[Editor's request: Any member who knows of a member who should be recognized in Kvells & Kudos, please send information to Eugenia Burkes, eugeniaburkes@mac.com.]

2024 - 2025 CALENDAR – ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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

11/2, 10:30 a Mt. Vernon Program Meeting, Sherwood Regional Library
11/16, 10:30 Program Meeting, Burke Branch Library
11/23, 3:00 p Francophile Group, Virtual, Contact: Susan Cash scash5558@gmail.com
12/15, 11:30 Holiday Party, Belle Haven Country Club

2024 - 2025 BRANCH OFFICERS

Co-presidents: Sylvia Linke (SFLaauw@gmail.com) & Diane Schrier (diane.schrier@gmail.com)
VP Membership: Dr. Felicia Goss (FMGoss@icloud.com)
VP Program: Dr. Gail Kalin, (gailkalin@yahoo.com)
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Francophile Group: Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com
Gourmet Out Group: Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com
Great Decisions: Lynn O'Connell (lynnocConnellva@gmail.com)
Mystery Book Group: Susan Werner (susan.werner1@verizon.net)