



## THE SCHOONER - JUNE 2025

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### Letter from the Co-Presidents

As Sylvia and I write this final President's letter of our double biennium terms, we reflect on all the changes that have occurred. When we started the world was still going through the maelstrom of Covid, although vaccinations had started and the death toll had decreased. With the Covid vaccination updates, the number of deaths have stayed relatively low, although it continues to be a threat. The Afghanistan War ended with its tragic repercussions for women. January 6, 2021, attempted overthrow of the government had occurred and repercussions were being felt all over the country as people came to grips with the awareness that democracy was fragile. People realized that it was necessary to stand up for things that matter to us.

AAUW has stood for women and their equity, education and financial security since 1881. Our branch, having just celebrated its 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, has fought for these things. Our battle is far from done. Women's voting rights have been attacked with the SAFE Act. Women's education is being hurt by the removal of grants and research, and the attack on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Women's health is being attacked by the laws

### SAVE THESE DATES

6/5, 7:00 p	Board Meeting
6/7, 3:00 p	Francophile Group
6/12, 7:00 p	Great Decisions
6/18, 2:00 p	Annual Fund Raiser
6/24, 7:00 p	Mystery Book Group
7/17, TBD	Gourmet Group
7/30	Christ House

grants to do research on issues of importance to women, such as women's health. Women are forced to choose between their jobs or caring for their children as return-to-the-office mandates sweep through government and industry.

Preventing these forces from pushing women back - forcing them to lose so much of the ground they have gained - is critical right now. We need to come together as a community and strengthen our support for each other. We must not forget our core values or lose our essential identity. We must be as we always have been – patient and encouraging with each other, loyal to the organization, and continuing to work towards the goals we have pursued for almost 150 years. Our “mothers” expect no less.

Sylvia Linke & Diane Schrier, Co-Presidents

## **PUBLIC POLICY**

Public Policy will be very busy this summer and I need volunteers for two activities. Our branch will be sending out 300 postcards asking uninvolved voters to vote during the Nov. 2025 Virginia election. We will also be creating voter guides on the General Assembly candidates, finding their views on our issues. If you can do either or both, please contact me ([Diane.Schrier@gmail.com](mailto:Diane.Schrier@gmail.com)) and let me know which you can do and the number of cards or district candidates you might be willing to evaluate. We would like to start the voter guides as soon as the primaries finish, with an early September publication date, and the cards to be mailed to voters in early September.

The House just narrowly passed its budget bill with very deep cuts to the social safety network of all Americans. With the cuts to Medicaid and Medicare, many will die from lack of essential medical assistance. Many hospitals, including those serving rural areas, will not be able to survive. Cuts to education are profound, although private and charter schools that allow only regulated students populations will get a huge boost through vouchers. Social service agencies are being decimated. Planned parenthood is totally unfunded through the government. This, in addition to extreme cuts in the federal workforce and federal grants to research and development, will devastate many sectors of the economy. No American will be better off when they cannot get treated for diseases or when the upcoming brain drain of research means that discoveries will be made in other countries. Our best researchers and international students, who bring billions in the GDP each year, are being eagerly enticed by many other countries. We will feel the pain.

The SAVE Act is awaiting Senate consideration. This Act will prevent married women from voting without an active passport, or birth certificate and marriage license, even if long divorced. 80% of married women change their names upon marriage. If remarried after a divorce or becoming widowed, one would have to bring both marriage certificates. For many, this would nullify the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

The Governor and General Assembly have wrapped up for this year. Education received a boost as did maternal health in Virginia. There may be a meeting in September to deal with the tax and revenue effects of the Federal workforce and research cuts. We have much work to do this summer and next year. For a SAVE THE DATE, Feb. 5 will be the next AAUW Lobby Day.

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

### **AAUW ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING LUNCHEON AND 80TH YEAR CELEBRATION**

Our May 17 2025 Alexandria AAUW 80th Year Celebration and annual luncheon and business meeting was held at Old Town's Elaine's Restaurant, a newish mediterranean restaurant owned by mystery writer Jeff Higgins and Cynthia, his Egyptian wife. In addition to the delicious mediterranean buffet, the 17 attendees received lovely swag bags.

The business meeting was presided over by Diane Schrier and Sylvia Linke, both of whom took the lead in organizing the lovely luncheon meeting. Diane presented our new Strategic Plan and distributed copies of the Annual Report which summarized our past year of events and public policy. The report also contained the budgets for last year and next year, which was very similar to last year's. Our budget for next year was unanimously accepted by the attendees.

Attendees also voted unanimously on the full slate of nominees as presented. Felicia Goss, currently our Membership Chair, will assume the Co-Presidency along with Anne Simpson, our current Treasurer. Sylvia Linke will serve as Treasurer, Eugenia Burkes will serve as Membership Chair and continue in her role as Editor of The Schooner. Vashti Robinson, a relatively new member and new to the Board, will join Gail Kalin, the current co-Programming Chair.

Our original featured speaker, Jane Cotton, 98, was not able to attend in person because she was experiencing some health issues. Jane has written a memoir years ago about her experiences as the first black woman Lt. Colonel in the US Air Force (1949-1970) Army (google her youtube interview and memoir). She is long retired and is an active member of the Seniors Committee at Watergate at Landmark and her church, Alfred Street Baptist Church.

Fortunately, our member Esther Massey presented on her longtime involvement and many enviable experiences with the Sister Cities program. Alexandria is a sister city to the whiskey-making Dundee, Scotland, World War II historic Caen, France and a small city in Turkey. Esther is planning a trip to Dundee in the near future. We look forward to learning more about Esther's travels and future projects with all of Alexandria's Sister Cities.

Our next **Programming Planning** meeting will be held **June 8, 2 - 4 pm**, at **Paris Baguette, 4616 Kenmore, Alexandria**. Please try to make it or send your suggestions to [Diane.Schrier@gmail.com](mailto:Diane.Schrier@gmail.com).

Dr Gail Kalin, VP for Programs

## **ANNUAL FUND RAISER**

Please support the Benefit Night at Little Theater of Alexandria on Wednesday, June 18. It is the branch program for the month of June.

Sylvia Linke, Co-President

**A play within a play, this classic murder mystery is full of mishaps, mayhem and madcap mania! Welcome to the opening night of *The Murder at Haversham Manor*, where things quickly go from bad to utterly disastrous: it's sure to bring the house down. Estimated run time: 2 hours with an intermission. (Alexandria branch teams with the Mt Vernon branch for this event.)**

**When: Wednesday, June 18, 2025**  
**Time: 7:00 pm – Reception: Alexandria Branch provides sweets; Mt Vernon provides savories**  
**8:00 pm – Performance**  
**Where: The Little Theatre of Alexandria (street parking)**  
**600 Wolfe Street**  
**Alexandria, VA 22314**  
**Tickets: \$40 (\$31.68 tax deductible). If you cannot attend, please consider a donation.**

**All Alexandria Branch proceeds go to AAUW Greatest Needs Fund (50%), Public Policy Fund (25%) and Defend Higher Education Fund (25%).**

## ANNUAL DUES

It's Time To Pay Dues! Unless you joined AAUW in the past couple of years and sometime other than June, it is that time again. You can pay directly on the website, [AAUW.org](http://AAUW.org), or you can send a check made out to the branch for \$105 to me. \$105 is a little more than the \$103 of last year, and breaks down to \$74 National, \$15 State, \$16 Alexandria Branch. Take care of this now and it is one less thing you will have to worry about. Remember, if you are a life member, you still owe \$31 for State and Alexandria Branch. AAUW does many useful things, and it needs our support!

Anne Simpson  
Treasurer

## Christ House Project

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 30TH, 2025 4-5 PM**

Mark your calendars for the next CHRIST HOUSE pizza supper .  
Come join us to put the food boxes together and/or donate food !

Margaret Zebrowski and Jan Jaynes  
Co-chairs

## Autumn Leaves

Our 2025 drive will open on July 1, 2025. The funds raised will be divided equally between the AAUW Alexandria Branch (Food for the Homeless Project) and an AAUW National Fund. Fifty percent of your donation is tax-deductible. All who make a donation received by the Thursday before the holiday luncheon will be eligible for the drawing held at the luncheon. In addition, the first five people to donate can select a gift of their choice, as well as participate in the drawing, if they desire. This year we have a goal of receiving 20 donations. When that goal is reached, Susan Cash will add a bonus donation to the donation she will make on July 1.

If you would like to contribute, 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.

## KUDOS

Margaret Batko entered the Springfield Art Guild Green Springs Show and received an Honorable Mention for her painting “Peonies”.



## BRANCH ACTIVITIES

### Francophile Group



The Francophile Group will meet on Saturday, June 7 at 3 p.m. via Zoom. Our suggested book is Bruno’s Challenge and Other Stories of the French Countryside by Martin Walker. Participants are welcome to talk about other books that interest them. We will have two short presentations. One will mark the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day (May 7, 1945). The other, a surprise presentation on a well-known Francophile, will be a prelude to Bastille Day.

In July we plan to have our annual Bastille Day dinner. It is tentatively scheduled for Bistro L’Hermitage in Woodbridge/ Occoquan on the evening of Thursday, July 17. Time is TBD.

In September, we will mark the 250th anniversary of the beginning of the Revolutionary War and the 200th anniversary of Lafayette’s farewell tour of America with a presentation focusing on Lafayette’s life and France’s role in the war. We will also discuss a book (any topic) to be chosen by our members.

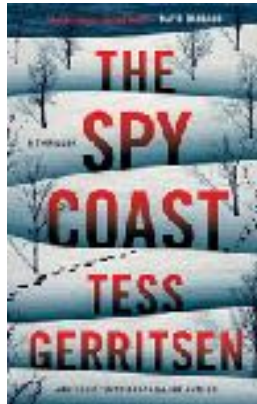
Point of contact: Susan Cash, [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com), 703/587-4790.

## Gourmet Group



Our next event will be a joint event with the Francophile group: our annual dinner to mark Bastille Day. Tentative date and location is Thursday, July 17, at Bistro L'Hermitage in Woodbridge/Occoquan. Time is TBD. Point of contact: Susan Cash, [scash5558@gmail.com](mailto:scash5558@gmail.com) or 703/587-4790. Another outing is planned for the fall.

## Mystery Book Discussion Group



The Mystery Book Discussion Group's novel for June is The Spy Coast by Tess Gerritsen. This book is an espionage thriller about retired CIA agent, Maggie Bird. Our book group will meet on June 24, 2025, at 7 PM via Zoom. For more information about the Mystery Book Discussion Group, contact Susan Werner -- [susan.werner1@verizon.net](mailto:susan.werner1@verizon.net). The Group welcomes recommendations for future mystery novels. Mystery/thriller lovers – please join us!! Happy Reading.

Mystery Book Discussion Group					
DATE	TITLE OF BOOK	AUTHOR	HOST	TIME	ADDRESS
24 June	The Spy Coast	Tess Gerritsen		7:00 PM	Zoom
22 July	Shutter	Ramona Emerson		7:00	Fratelli



## Great Decisions



Below is our schedule for the rest of the year. Guests are always welcome. Please contact Lynn O'Connell at [lynnnoconnellva@gmail.com](mailto:lynnnoconnellva@gmail.com) with any questions.

Thurs, June 12 - American Policy in the Middle East (facilitated by Hoard Soroos)

Thurs, Sept 11

Thurs, Oct 9

Thurs, Nov 13 - India: Between China, the West and the Global South (facilitated by Danielle Beach)

Thurs, Dec 11





## AAUW Strategic Plan

AAUW National is excited to announce the launch of AAUW's new strategic plan reaffirming our commitment to advancing equity for women and girls through education.

AAUW was founded more than 140 years ago with this mission, and with the unprecedented attacks we're seeing on higher education, we believe it is more important than ever to focus our efforts in this area.

AAUW's strength lies in our collective power — our states, branches, and members are the heart of our grassroots movement. States and branches provide meaningful local support for women and girls, and for the policies that matter to their communities. When AAUW National and our branches work in alignment, we maximize our collective resources, influence, and success to break down barriers for women in education and beyond.

We look forward to sharing more in the coming months.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS INVOLVING OUR MEMBERS

Alexandria Choral Society has one more concert this season. On **Saturday, June 14th** we will present *To The Road*, the music we will be taking on tour to Ireland and Scotland, including our sister city Dundee, at the end of the month. The concert will take place at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Alexandria at 7 PM. Look for **Anne Simpson** in the alto section. Tickets are usually \$30, but pay what you can.

## **BRANCH OFFICERS**

**2025 - 2026**

Co-presidents: Anne Simpson ([aseyedoc@gmail.com](mailto:aseyedoc@gmail.com)) & Dr. Felicia Goss ([FMGoss@icloud.com](mailto:FMGoss@icloud.com))

VP Membership: Eugenia Burkes ([eugeniaburkes@mac.com](mailto:eugeniaburkes@mac.com))

Co-VPS Program: Dr. Gail Kalin, ([gailkalin@yahoo.com](mailto:gailkalin@yahoo.com)) & Vashti Robinson ([robinsonvashti@gmail.com](mailto:robinsonvashti@gmail.com))

Secretary: Lane Stone ([LaneStoneAAUWVA@gmail.com](mailto:LaneStoneAAUWVA@gmail.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))

Public Policy: Diane Schrier ([diane.schrier@gmail.com](mailto:diane.schrier@gmail.com))

Treasurer: Sylvia Linke ([SFLaauw@gmail.com](mailto:SFLaauw@gmail.com))

Newsletter Editor: Eugenia Burkes ([eugeniaburkes@mac.com](mailto:eugeniaburkes@mac.com))

### 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))

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

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