



Reston-Herndon Area (VA) Branch

**The AAUW Mission Statement:**

*AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.*

**President's Pen**

Dear Reston-Herndon Branch Members & Friends,

2018! We certainly have moved fast since our last branch get-together on November 4 and are looking forward to interesting branch meetings, outings, social events, world affairs and book discussions in the coming year.

Speaking of books, on behalf of the branch, I would like to thank **Ellen Rugel**, who is stepping down from her many years as co-chair of the Thursday evening Book Group. A most sincere "thank you," Ellen, for your hours of dedicated work in the service of the Book Groups and the branch.

Sprinkled throughout this newsletter are numerous events and activities we hope you will take part in and enjoy. Don't forget the open invitation to all members to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Board of Directors meeting on January 16 for an interesting presentation about the vision for the organization as described by the new AAUW CEO Kim Churches. Please see the email invitation that arrived early in January and is briefly repeated in this newsletter. Always remember that each member is invited to, and welcome at, all meetings hosted by the branch. As a courtesy, be sure to let the meeting leader know you will be attending to ensure that the meeting room has adequate space for all. In addition, we are enthusiastic about our branch's Joint Meeting with the *Giving Circle of Hope* and *National Council of Negro Women (NCNW - Reston-Dulles Section)* to be held on February 3, 2018 (see program description in this newsletter).

I look forward to seeing all of you and meeting our newest members at one or more of our upcoming events in January and February. My very best to all of you for a healthy and happy 2018.

Warmest wishes,  
Dianne

**Meet Our Board** - Each month we will highlight two of our board members:

Carol Flicker - Carol is a native of Brooklyn, New York and graduated from George Mason University with a BS in Education. She worked her entire career at Hutchinson Elementary School in Herndon teaching first and second grade. She has lived with her husband Michael in Reston, Herndon and Ashburn since the early 70's. Carol has been a member of AAUW for about 10 years and has served as co membership VP and Cultural Arts Chair. She enjoys the book group and the meetings. In addition to AAUW, Carol volunteers in a Fairfax County Program, *Reach to Read*, reading to Head Start students monthly and at her Temple. Carol has three children and six grandchildren who live in Maryland, Colorado and Minnesota.

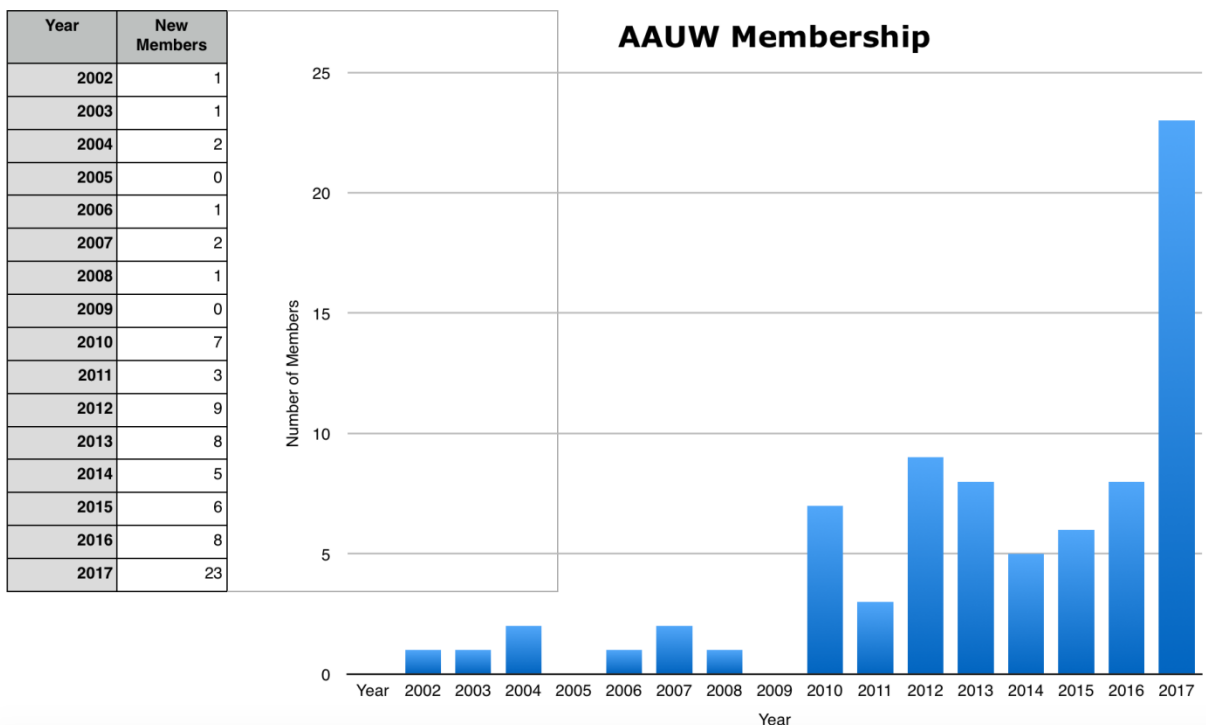
Roberta Sherman - Roberta is a native of Brooklyn, New York and graduated from George Mason University with degrees in Education and Leadership. For twenty years she taught third, fourth and fifth grade at Great Falls Elementary and then went on to Forest Edge Elementary as their Assistant Principal. There is where she heard of AAUW as she instituted the mentoring program while there. Upon retirement in 2009, she joined the branch and became VP Membership and then General VP. Presently she is co-chair of the Cultural Arts Program and Newsletter editor. Roberta also volunteers in *Reach to Read*, a program for Head Start students, her Temple and Travelers Aid at Dulles Airport. She has two children and four grandchildren. Her daughter and her family lives in Annandale while her son and his family reside in San Francisco.

*Welcome*

### Membership News - Ilene Banker, Membership Vice President:

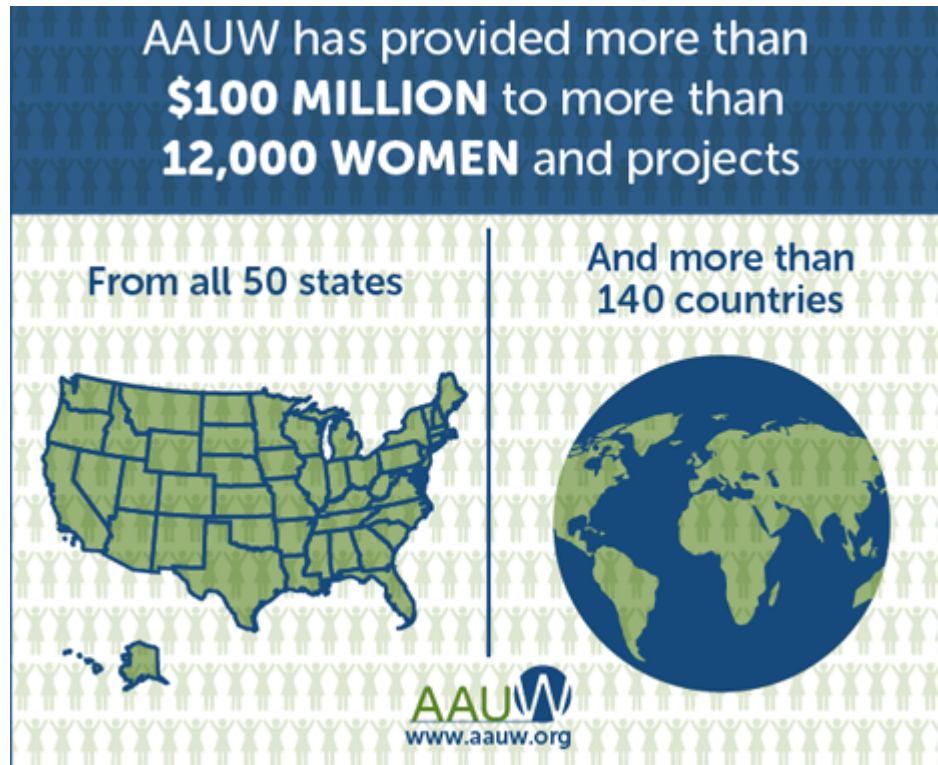
We are so happy to welcome 23 new members to our Reston-Herndon Branch in 2017. This is an all time high since 2002 as shown in the chart below:

We will have another new member dinner on January 30, 2018 at Piero's Restaurant in Herndon. New members who did not have a chance to meet our Executive Board will have another opportunity to get together in a smaller venue. An e-mail was sent out in December to our newest members and RSVP's are kindly requested no later than Tuesday January 23, 2018.



### Why Should You Join AAUW???

I am paraphrasing The McLean Branch's Newsletter who had this interesting reason: There are so many things that the organization does. We provide training to bridge the gap in pay, work against sexual assault, encourage more women to run for government positions, and provide fellowships and grants for education. Without AAUW, we'd simply be another small women's group with relatively small clout who would have never lasted as long as we have. Through AAUW's extensive network, trusted national reputation (especially on Capitol Hill), and multiple diverse efforts to support women and girls, AAUW gives us highly a respected position.



### Our 50th Year

Spring 2019 will mark the 50th year of the Reston-Herndon Branch of AAUW. In each Newsletter, we will provide you with interesting facts about our Branch.

- On February 25, 1989, our branch celebrated their 20th anniversary with a special program and brunch.
- Marilyn Silvey and Sylvia Campbell received a membership award in 1980-90 from the Virginia Chapter.

### PLEASE LET US KNOW!

Please contact our branch secretary, Sharon Gilman, at [sagilman@gmail.com](mailto:sagilman@gmail.com) to let her know about member illnesses, hospitalizations, accidents, deaths, or deaths/illnesses in the family, so she may respond on behalf of the branch. As appropriate, and in line with the wishes of the member, Sharon may also notify the membership through an e-blast. Thank you.



### Program Reminders:

**January 16** - 3:00 p.m. Second Quarter (mid-year) Board of Directors Meeting at North County Government Center (ADA accommodations/parking)  
1801 Cameron Glen Drive (aka: 12000 Bowman Towne Drive - same location)  
ROOM: Community Room A

As with every AAUW Reston-Herndon Branch-affiliated meeting, all members are invited to attend. A very short business meeting will be held for the Board members at 3 p.m., followed by a presentation/discussion led by our Public Policy co-chairs, Judi Polizzotti and Mary Zane and Branch VP/Lobby Corp member, Janine Greenwood. Judi is taking the lead on this part of the meeting. The focus will be on the “vision” for AAUW of Kim Churches, the newly-appointed CEO. Since the summer, Kim has been on a “listening tour” of the state, district and local branches throughout the country. At each venue, she shares her ideas about how to move AAUW forward as the CEO. Our Public Policy team will present and discuss Kim’s observations and ideas for needed changes, some already in effect, and the impact on local branches such as ours. During this meeting you will learn about our new CEO and where AAUW may be heading.

We have intentionally secured a room in a central location where we will be able to accommodate everyone who wishes to attend. Please let Dianne know at [dpmero2@gmail.com](mailto:dpmero2@gmail.com) by Friday, January 12, if you will be attending this interesting and informative presentation, so we can set up the room to seat everyone comfortably.

**February 3**, - *Faces of Immigration*, a Joint Meeting with the Giving Circle of Hope and National Council of Negro Women at 10:00a.m.- 12 p.m at the Government Center, 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston.

Panel discussion featuring Just Neighbors, possibly one or two of their clients and other non-profit groups who help immigrants. Just Neighbors' mission is to provide immigration legal services to low income immigrants and refugees of all faiths and nationalities, especially those who are most vulnerable.

### Meeting Follow-Up:

Linda Sittig Blog Information - Last year we were fortunate to have Linda Sittig speak first to our members in Loudoun at Ashby Ponds and then at our holiday luncheon. As many of you know, Linda's interest is writing about strong women in history. She would like to invite you all to subscribe to her blog to read more stories about these brave women. The link to her blog is [www.bit.ly/2kqpNDM](http://www.bit.ly/2kqpNDM). Presently she is researching her third novel. This one is set in New York City, 1918, and deals with the Garment Industry scandals

## From Our Public Policy Team - Mary Zane and Judy Polizzotti

### 2018 General Assembly Session

The Virginia General Assembly will meet in Regular Session in Richmond from January 10-March 10, 2018. You'll be able to find lots of useful information about the lawmakers and proposed legislation and emails and action alerts at the following websites: <http://viriniageneralassembly.gov> and <http://lis.virginia.gov>. In these emails members will be requested to take specific actions to urge their lawmakers to either vote for or against specific legislation. Often these will require quick action, so be prepared!! You can find out who your delegate and senator are and how to contact them at this link: <http://whosmy.viriniageneralassembly.gov>.

As of today, there are 28 women elected to the House of Delegates along with 10 in the State Senate—the largest number ever in Virginia. We are hoping that this may result in increased legislative support for some of our public policy priorities, especially ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution. At AAUW of Virginia's request, Delegate Jennifer Boysko will be introducing a pay equity bill prohibiting employers from relying on prior salary history to set future wages.

### State Lobby Day

Wednesday, February 7, 2018, is our annual State Lobby Day, we hope to have a large cadre of members participating.

Once again, members from the AAUW Greater Richmond Branch (GRAAUW) will graciously be opening their homes to host any members participating in State Lobby Day who arrive on February 6, and want to spend the night. Anyone who wants to partake of the GRAAUW hospitality should let us know no later than January 25. Also, there are hotel rooms available through a block of rooms reserved by the League of Women Voters of Virginia (LWV-VA) for \$139 plus tax for the night at the Hotel Berkeley, 1200 E. Carey Street, Richmond, VA, 804 225-5149. Mention LWV-VA when you call.

Please let us know no later than January 25, 2018, if you will be attending State Lobby Day as well as lunch plans. The League of Women Voters of VA has invited us to join with them on State Lobby Day (February 7th) for lunch at the Hotel Berkeley, 1200 E. Carey Street, Richmond, VA (walking distance from Capital Square) after we are recognized in the House and Senate galleries. There will be a deli buffet for \$20, including tax and tip. Please let Mary or Judy know no later than January 25th if you want to come to lunch.

### **NEWS FROM AAUW VA**

*Tools for Advancing State and Local Priorities:* AAUW's Action Network can be a powerful tool for reaching elected officials at all levels of government. Using our online Two-Minute Activist tool, AAUW members and supporters sent tens of thousands of messages to state legislators this past year. In turn, AAUW members helped find cosponsors for priority bills, influenced votes, and ensured that key decision-makers heard AAUW's voice. Take your advocacy to the next level by joining Two-Minute Activist Mobile. This exciting new tool allows AAUW to send more timely and targeted communication straight to your cell phone via SMS text messaging. That means we'll be able to expand and enhance our advocacy for gender equity by providing you with more strategic opportunities to take action when we know doing so will make the

difference. To subscribe to “Two-Minute Activist Mobile” now, text the message “AAUW” to phone number 21333. Now more than ever we need voices speaking truth to power. Urge your friends and family to sign up, too!

### From Our Book Group Facilitator - Shirley Finkelstein:

Below is a list of the books we will be reading for the upcoming year:

**January:** *Hillbilly Elegy* by JD Vance – nonfiction – This account of growing up poor in Appalachia also looks at the struggles of America’s white working class.

**February:** *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles – fiction – Count Alexander Rostov is sentenced to house arrest when deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal.

**March:** *Senator Hattie Caraway: An Arkansas Legacy* by Nancy Hendricks – nonfiction - This AAUW Woman’s History Month selection tells about the first female U.S. Senator.

**April:** *Manhattan Beach: A Novel* by Jennifer Egan – fiction – In Brooklyn during the Depression, young Anna Kerrigan must learn the identity of a mystery man who seems to be crucial to the survival of her family.

**May:** *Anything is Possible* by Elizabeth Strout – fiction – The novel is based on the small-town characters introduced in Strout’s *My Name is Lucy Barton*.

**June:** *In the Language of Miracles* by Rajia Hassib – fiction – An upper-middle class Egyptian American family experiences a tragedy that tears their lives apart.

**July:** *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood – classic - The lives of women are no longer their own as they become breeders for the upper class in a dystopic society. This novel was made into a recent award-winning series on Hulu.

**August:** *Clementine: The Life of Mrs. Winston Churchill* by Sonia Purnell – nonfiction – A deeply researched account that tells Clementine Churchill’s life story, including a surprising account of her relationship with Eleanor Roosevelt.

**September:** *The Girls* by Emma Cline – fiction – In Northern California during the violent end of the 1960’s, a lonely and thoughtful teenager becomes involved with a group of girls and their charismatic cult leader.

**October:** *The Outskirts of Hope* by Jo Ivester – memoir – A physician and his family move to Mississippi to treat the poor. The author’s mother is the focus of this memoir.

**December:** *A Column of Fire* by Ken Follett – historical fiction – In Elizabethan England Protestants and Catholics vie for power and royalty and commoners clash. The novel is set in Knightsbridge, the town depicted in *Pillars of the Earth* and its sequel.

### From Our Great Decisions Facilitator - Judi Polizzotti:

**There will be no Great Decisions meeting in January** as not everyone has the book and it may not give us time to read the article prior to the meeting. The Foreign Policy Association Great Decisions Briefing Book for 2018 is available on the fpa.org website. On **February 15th**, we will discuss **Waning Pan Americana**, this is the first selection for 2018 in the FPA briefing book. The meeting will be held at Judi’s home - 1263 Wedgewood Manor Way, Reston.

In December, we discussed Nuclear Security: The enduring challenge of nuclear weapons, the final topic from our 2017 foreign policy briefing book. It was a timely topic given the dangerous exchanges between the US and North Korea. We find that our sharing of perspectives on the topics gives us a new understanding of our world.

We welcome our new members and all members and friends to join us. Contact: Judi Polizzotti at judipoli86@gmail.com.



### League of Women Voters VA Pre-Session Legislative Round Table

The Round Table included presentations from guest speakers representing Women's Groups and Non-Profits in the areas of the environment, women's reproductive rights, mental illness, women's shelters, legal aid, Virginia Transit, redistricting, education. The keynote speakers were Ric Brown, VA Secretary of Finance and Bob Brink, Legislative Advisor to Governor McAuliffe.

Highlights of the issues raised and proposed legislation for 2018 are as follows:

Ric Brown Finance Secretary stated that the current expansion of the national economy will drive the budget. Although the Federal budget resolution will impact VA due to the large number of government employees. Also how tax reform evolves will impact the amount of money available to VA. Virginia needs more funds in reserve to maintain its bond rating. In terms of program funding, the CHIP program will run out of money in January if not reauthorized. It is expected that the budget will include dedicated funding for Metro.

Redistricting was presented by Brian Cannon, One VA 2021, who stated that the drawing of districts impacting racial makeup is in the courts and will impact the overall plan to reform the manner of drawing district boundaries. It was suggested that groups show a film describing the issue developed by One VA. There is pending legislation to reform the process and amendments will be introduced in the summer. Brian believes that the momentum is there to have redistricting reform by the 2021 date.

Candace Graham, ERA/Women Matter, stated that the Virginia Senate has passed the ERA. Since Nevada has approved it, only two more states are needed for passage. If it passes the House, Virginia could be one of those states.

Virginia Center for Public Safety representative Andy Goddard's priority is targeting background checks for all public sales of fire arms. According to Mr. Goddard, over 900 people have been killed by guns in the last 2 years.

The one issue that was raised by most of the presenters was need for Medicaid expansion. If accepted, the funding would have a federal match of 90% as opposed to 50% today and provide healthcare to 300,000 more people. Virginia is at the bottom of states for funding Medicaid.

Another issue on the table was the status of transit funding. There is no more loan capacity for transportation and we will lose federal matching funds if we are unable to raise money.

Tarina Keene from NARAL states their priority is to target unconstitutional legislation like the 2011 trap law, and the mandatory ultrasound law. They also hope to roll back restrictive codes regarding abortions. In addition NARAL continues to support no co pay for birth control in the state.

Leslie Tourigny, AAUW VP Public Policy, presented equal pay issues. Upon graduation from school, the pay gap remains 7%. In line with AAUW's legislative priority, Delegate Jennifer Boysko introduced a bill that prohibits employers from using prior salary to determine wages.

Corinna Beall, Sierra Club VA, discussed coal ash disposal. In Northern Virginia, the Dumfries power plant is a superfund site and one of the worse environmental situations in the country. She recommends not closing any plants until a comprehensive plan is in place to dispose of waste.

Kathie Butcher, NEA, informed the group that the Governor will introduce the state education budget in December. At that time, there were 1000 teacher vacancies in Virginia.



#### **Other Meeting of Note:**

January 11 - The Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation cordially invites the members of AAUW to their Distinguished Speaker Series at 8:00 p.m. at 1441 Wiehle Avenue, Reston. The speaker will be Michael Kazin, professor of history at Georgetown University. He is an expert in U.S. politics and social movements. His most recent book is The Populist Persuasion. He is editor of *Dissent*, a leading magazine of the American left. His topic will be Populism in the Era of Trump and Sanders.

The NVHC Speaker Series is free and open to the public.

#### **NOTES FROM OTHER BRANCHES**

*Fairfax City, McLean Area, Springfield-Annandale & Vienna Area AAUW Branches* will continue to co-sponsors *STEMtastics 2018* in partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools and NOVA Systemic Solutions at George Mason University in March. Volunteer assistance from other branches is still needed.

Where: Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus

When: Saturday, March 10, 2018, 8:15 am – 12:15 pm

You are invited to volunteer for the entire morning or only for an hour or two. Each of the 23 workshop presenters needs a volunteer in the classroom, which is a four-hour commitment. Other areas requiring a shorter commitment include aiding in the sign-in of the students and the presenters, directing students in the hallways, or other miscellaneous duties as needed. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Marlene Chivavibul of the McLean Area Branch, who is coordinator of volunteers for this event, at [marlenechiv@yahoo.com](mailto:marlenechiv@yahoo.com).

*AAUW Vienna Branch* and Patrick Henry Library are co-sponsoring a presentation by Sister Simone Campbell, to be held at 10:00 am on February 10, 2018 at the Vienna Community



Center. Sister Simone is a nationally recognized social justice activist and is the author of *A Nun on The Bus*. The focus will be on economic justice, immigration issues, healthcare reform and voter turnout.

### **GerryRIGGED Presentations**

Both the Falls Church and Mount Vernon AAUW branches are screening *GerryRIGGED: Turning Democracy on its Head* the documentary explaining the voter suppression strategy known as gerrymandering, on **Sunday, January 14**. The public and other AAUW branches are invited to view this important documentary at either venue. A description of the film includes:

“This important documentary examines the historical context and consequences of gerrymandering through a multi-partisan lens that includes Republicans, Democrats, Independents, Libertarians and the Tea Party. The documentary explores the impact on communities and individual lives by including testimonials from strategists, political consultants, map drawers, and by incorporating interviews with the men and women in politics who have the most to win – and perhaps lose – through reform. *Gerrymandering is the enemy of representative government. It deliberately manipulates the system to take away from voters the very choice that should be a hallmark of our system, says program producer William Oglesby. We hope with this documentary to help citizens understand that this isn't the way it has to be; that the voters have a right to choose their representatives rather than the representatives choose them.*”

#### Falls Church Branch

This presentation will be on Sunday **January 14** from 2:00-3:30 pm at the American Legion Post 130 Hall, 400 North Oak Street, Falls Church, and will be moderated by Brian Cannon, the executive director of the redistricting reform group, OneVirginia2021. He will be on hand after the film to discuss the impacts of gerrymandering and what you can do to stop it.

#### Mt. Vernon Branch

The Mount Vernon screening of *GerryRIGGED* is also on Sunday **January 14** from 4:30-6:00 pm at Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Rd, Alexandria. Brian Cannon, the executive director of the redistricting reform group, OneVirginia2021, and a representative from the League of Women Voters will also be there. More information: 703-780-8494.

#### Alexandria Branch

On **January 20**, 2018, the Alexandria Branch will present this documentary from 2-4:00 pm at Cameron Station Clubhouse, 200 Cameron Station Blvd, Alexandria. Questions: GailLaneAAUWAlex@gmail.com

A note on this issue and recommended use of the film by other branches from Leslie Tourigny, AAUW VP Public Policy: “One of our AAUW of Virginia top public policy priorities for this program year is to advocate for fair, nonpartisan legislative redistricting. In addition to being vocal about this pressing need once the General Assembly convenes in January, we are also focusing on educating our membership and our communities about the problem and the solution. OneVirginia2021: Virginians for Fair Redistricting, which is the premier organization in Virginia advocating for redistricting reform, has partnered with the Community Ideas Stations, to produce an excellent documentary entitled *GerryRIGGED*. Here is a link to the documentary: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD3ZZ-wzrHQ>, which runs 56.20 minutes



### 2017-18 Reston- Herndon Area Branch Calendar

#### Programs

- 1/16 Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting and Presentation  
 2/03 *Joint Meeting: Saturday – Faces of Immigration*  
 AAUW Reston-Herndon, Giving Circle of Hope and NCNW  
 3/08 *Program – Healthy Options* panel, 7- 9 pm, Reston North County Government Center, 7-9 pm, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive This meeting will include topics on nutrition, exercise, healthy products for skin and hair.  
 4/12 *Speakers – Judi Polizzotti and Roberta Sherman* discuss on a *Visit to China*, 7-9 pm, Reston North County Government Center, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive  
 5/10 *AAUW Panel* 7- 9 pm, Reston North County Government Center, 7-9 pm, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive  
 6/14 Annual Meeting and Dinner-Details to be Announced

#### January Events

- 1/11 Human Trafficking Awareness Day  
 1/12 Executive Board Meeting, 1:00 pm, Dianne Mero's home  
 1/16 Quarterly BOD Meeting; topic: Kim Churches' AAUW Vision, 3:00 – 5:00 pm, Reston North County Government Center  
 1/24& 25 Book Groups *Hillbilly Elegy* (JD Vance)  
 1/30 New Members Dinner, 5 pm, Piero's

#### Coming Events

- 2/07 State (VA) Lobby Day  
 2/15 Great Decisions  
 2/28; 3/1 Book Groups: *A Gentleman in Moscow* (Amor Towles)  
 3/3 Northern District Meeting, 1:30-4:00pm (location TBD)  
 4/10 Equal Pay Day  
 4/12 Program Meeting, 7-9 pm, "A Visit to China"  
 4/20-22 State Conference – Portsmouth Renaissance Hotel

#### Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting Schedule

Dates: January 16 at 3:00 at the Northern County Government Center, Reston, February 27, 2018; June 5, 2018 3:30 p.m. at Herndon Senior Center, Upstairs Conference Room, 873 Grace St, Herndon

#### Book Groups

Afternoon - 4<sup>th</sup> Wed (2:15 p.m.) at Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St, Herndon  
 Evening- 4<sup>th</sup> Thurs (7:00 p.m.) at various locations or members' homes (check e-blasts for specifics each month)

**Lobby Corp**

Every Thursday when Congress is in session  
Metro to Capitol Hill (approx. 8 am – 12 pm)

**2017 AAUW Membership and Donations for Income Tax Deduction Purposes:**

AAUW national membership dues of \$49 are deductible as follows: \$46 is tax deductible as a charitable contribution, and \$3 is not deductible because it supports the AAUW Action Funds Section 501(c)(4) Lobby Corps and get-out-the vote activities. Branch dues are NOT tax deductible. In addition, I have received a listing of donations to AAUW (through 9/30/17) from our branch members. If you have lost track of your contributions for the year, but wish to deduct them, I can give you the date of the donation (through September), the fund targeted and the amount contributed [dpmero2@gmail.com](mailto:dpmero2@gmail.com). You can also contact Cheryl Spohnholtz, state (VA) AAUW Fund/Legal Advocacy Chair at [sponzie80@cox.net](mailto:sponzie80@cox.net) for all of your donation information through the end of the calendar year.

**Board of Directors 2017-18**

President	Dianne Mero	dpmero2@gmail.com
Vice President	Janine Greenwood	janinegrnwd@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Ruth Ruttenberg	kennruth@comcast.net
VP Membership	Ilene Banker	CIBank@aol.com
VP Program	Judy Skirbunt	judy.skirbunt@gmail.com
Secretary	Sharon Gilman	sagilman@gmail.com
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Cultural Arts	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
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Book Group	Shirley Finkelstein	shirley.finkelstein@comcast.net
Great Decisions	Judi Polizzotti	judipoli86@gmail.com
	Judy Skirbunt	judy.skirbunt@gmail.com
Newsletter	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
NOVA-Loudoun Liaison	Janine Greenwood	janinegrnwd@hotmail.com
Public Policy	Judi Polizzotti	judipoli86@gmail.com
	Mary Zane	mpz-06@verizon.net
Website	Lynne Mulston	lynne.mulston@gmail.com

Branch Website: <http://restonherndon-va.aauw.net> VA3035

AAUW VA Website: <http://aauw-va.aauw.net>

AAUW Website: [www.AAUW.org](http://www.AAUW.org)

Branch Facebook Page: Reston-Herndon Branch of AAUW