



Reston-Herndon Area (VA) Branch

**The AAUW Mission Statement:** *AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.*

### President's Pen

For the many of us who came of age in the 1960's, the stalled progress on the pay gap has been frustrating and aggravating. In 2019, women as a group still made only 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. But the picture was even worse for Black women who made 72 cents and Latinas who made 54 cents. And the pay gap is only part of the **economic inequity** problem that continues to disadvantage women from their teens through their retirement. Then came the pandemic. The stalled progress has come to a screeching halt and women are facing long term economic losses from unemployment or from being forced to drop out of the workforce to deal with childcare and home schooling. **Nearly 3 Million women have left the labor force.** I am so passionate about these issues that I taught a course on the problem through George Mason University's OLLI Lifelong Learning Program and would like to have you join me for a presentation "**Covid Crisis for Women's Equity**" on **Sunday, March 7 at 3PM.** We are meeting at this special time to encourage you to bring your daughters and friends still in the workforce – all are welcome. Link on the links page.



Over the upcoming weeks we will be talking more about proposed changes to AAUW bylaws. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. The membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. This is simply the right thing to do.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>

Check out the rest of the newsletter on Virginia public policy action and our great upcoming programs.

Take care  
Janine

# MEMBERS

## Membership News - Ilene Banker, Membership Vice President

Membership remains stable at 85, with five life time members and two dual branch members.

Renewing membership for the 2021-2022 membership year begins in March. I will be sending online invoices in March for all who would like to take care of this and avoid all of my reminder notices. Please note that national dues have been increased to \$62 of which \$59 will be tax deductible. It appears that new dues for AAUW Reston-Herndon would be \$92.00 although there might be a further increase from the State. Look for your invoices for the exact amount.

I always encourage you to consider inviting a good friend, neighbor or family member to join our Five Star Branch! Our zoom programs have been outstanding during this pandemic and with additional zoom invitations from National, State and other branches, as well as NCNW, we are able to offer engaging and informative opportunities to learn, connect and collaborate.

## Members Supporting Members

We often have requests to keep members apprised of serious illnesses/deaths in the family within our branch community. Your help is needed with this issue. Please provide the names, contact information (especially important if the individual not at home) and any additional information she permits when you become aware of those who need our support due to personal circumstances. Please provide all information to our secretary, Alyse Goldman, at alysegoldman818 @ gmail.com. The branch members will be notified as soon as possible. Please support those individuals who are in need with cards, meals, visits, etc.



**Email:** When sending emails to a large group of members, please list the emails for recipients in the "bcc" line. When responding to a group email, please make sure to reply only to the sender and **not** "reply all" unless the sender indicates differently. This would be greatly appreciated.



**Note:** All zoom links to our meetings and activities will be attached to the newsletter email.



### From Our Book Group Facilitators

**Alyse Goldman and Carla Heymsfeld**

Our Zoom meetings continue at 2PM on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Upcoming books:

March: *Hell and Other Destinations*, Madeleine Albright (March 24)

April: *Island of Sea Women*, by Lisa See

May: *The Dutch House*, Ann Patchett

June: *Is This Anything?* Jerry Seinfeld

July: *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Maya Angelu

August: *Instructions for a Heat Wave*, Maggie O'Farrell

Sept: *Eleanor*, David Michaleis

Oct: *Book of Lost Friends*, Lisa Wingate

Dec: *This Chair Rocks*, Ashton Applewhite

### Diversity and Inclusion



On Friday, Feb. 26 our branch enjoyed a Zoom presentation by Dr. Sherri Burr. She spoke to us about the lives of free Blacks and women in Virginia prior to the Civil War. Her book *Complicated Lives, Free Blacks in Virginia 1619-1865* was the basis of her presentation. It was a fascinating talk. Contact Janine Greenwood if you would like to borrow a copy of the book. One of the points Sherri made was that we need to be open and talk about slavery in order to learn from it.

As Black History Month winds down, we have a few books to recommend for your reading. They are:

*The Sum of US: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* by Heather McGhee.

*Four Hundred Souls* edited by Ibram X. Kendrick and Keisha N. Blain

*Caste - The Origins of our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson

These are all serious books so buckle up! Check out their descriptions on Amazon or your favorite bookstore.

Spotlight On:  
Mary Zane



In what she calls their “53-year odyssey,” Mary Zane and her husband, Al, have packed in a lot of different experiences. The same goes for Mary’s 15 years as an AAUW member.

The Zanes met in their hometown of Massapequa, NY, and married after Mary graduated from St. Vincent’s Hospital School of Nursing in NYC. They started their Navy life in Pensacola, FL, where their first son was born. Mary tells the next moves: “Then onto Virginia Beach for eight years, and the arrival of sons #2 and #3. I volunteered for the county’s Family Life program for moms and babies and was a first responder on our local fire and ambulance department. For the next four years, living on Mt. Etna in Sicily became our exciting home, we lived in an all-Italian neighborhood. During that time, I realized that becoming a school nurse was what I wanted to be, though I lacked a bachelors degree.”

Then it was back to Long Island, where Mary obtained a school nurse position and served on an American Nursing Association negotiation team to improve salary and work conditions for nurses in the district.

“We – all women, of course – were paid an hourly wage and had zero benefits. If the school was closed for weather conditions or a holiday, we weren’t paid. It was a fight every step of the way, but the results were gratifying. The number of school nurses was doubled and when the schools were closed for a week due to hurricane damage we were paid!”

Next the Zanes moved to England for five years where Mary served as the school nurse for American high school students whose parents were stationed in more than 30 locations across Europe, Russia and the Middle East.

“It was one of the most challenging and rewarding positions I have ever had. Along the way, bit by bit, I took college courses through the University of Maryland, and finally earned by BS in Nursing in 2000, with my youngest son graduating beside me at George Mason University!”

Three years later, it was off to Germany as empty nesters, where Mary received a Department of Defense Distinguished Service award for her work with American schoolchildren during their parents’ deployment to Iraq. In 2006 the Zanes returned to the US and moved to Reston – and Mary found us.

“AAUW suddenly appeared in the form of an ad in the Connection newspaper for volunteer mentors at Forest Edge Elementary School. I was missing school and children and jumped at the chance. It was a perfect program for me, and when I was asked to join the branch and co-chair the program with Gail Parsons, I couldn’t say no! We enthusiastically continued the program for seven years with the endorsement and support of Roberta Sherman, then Forest Edge vice principal. Recruiting and working with a group of women and men mentors over those years was so inspiring. Even now, some of our mentees, now in their 20s with families of their own, stay in touch.” In the years since then, Mary has planned branch cultural outings, hosted a Russian agricultural economist in our branch exchange program in 2012, and, seven years ago, joined the AAUW Lobby Corps.

“My long ago experience in New York public schools, where women nurses were treated as second class citizens, empowered me to speak up for ‘advancing gender equity through research, education and advocacy,’ as AAUW’s mission statement says.”

Now Mary is co-chair of our branch Public Policy committee with Judi Polizzotti, hoping to return to personally visit congressional offices with other Lobby Corps members when conditions allow. She continues to work two or three days a week at the Falcons Landing retirement community in Sterling.

Later this year, all AAUW members in the United States will vote on a proposal made by AAUW’s national board of directors to remove any educational requirement for membership in our organization. AAUW national president Kim Churches says that if AAUW is working for better conditions for all women, regardless of their educational background, then all women should be invited to join. Based on her own experience, Mary agrees, and supports the proposal.

“It doesn’t require a college degree to work for gender equity. Our members bring an amazing wealth of experiences, perspectives, careers and expertise to the AAUW table. I am proud to be a member.”



AAUW has a new portal to access their national programs. Go to: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/> to see their offerings.

**Great Decisions - Judi Polizzotti, Co-Chair**

We held a virtual meeting on Wednesday February 19th at 7:00 pm and discussed “Global Supply Chains and US Security”. It was a relevant topic that focused on Globalization and China and a possible threat to US dominance in information technology and the security of our infrastructure. Also the interdependence where one country provides a critical product as in the current COVID 19 pandemic PPE was also considered.

On Wednesday March 17th at 7:00 pm we will discuss “The future of Persian Gulf Security”. The briefing book is available on the Foreign Policy Association [fpa.org](http://fpa.org) website. Also the film is available on Vinmeo through a link on the website with a promo code to reduce the price. Unfortunately, the Reston Library is presenting a Great Decisions program but not in the sequence that we are using.

Please join us for an interesting and informative discussion.

**Public Policy and Lobby Corps - Mary Zane and Judi Polizzotti Co-Chairs**

It was unfortunate that several Virginia bills supporting pay equity and banning salary history never made it out of committee. Of the other bills which were our policy priorities, there is one bill remaining in the VA legislature for Paid Sick Leave HB 2137 Delegate Guzman. In the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, the bill was whittled down to include only home health care workers Please contact your State Senator and Delegate to support this important legislation. They need to hear from their constituents.

The Paycheck Fairness Act should be reintroduced in the US House of Representatives soon. Watch for more details in how you can support this important bill.





**Sunday, March 7 at 3** Our very own Janine Greenwood will present an informative talk on Covid Crisis for Women's Equity. Janine will condense her OLLI two part class to discuss this information. It will be an eye opener!

**Tuesday, March 9 10:30:** Board Meeting - everyone invited

**Thursday, March 11 3:30** - Movie Streaming Group - "The Chicago 7

**Saturday March 13-Monday March 15** Virginia State Conference. See attached article for details.

**Wednesday, March 17** - Great Decisions

**Wednesday, March 24** - Book Group

**Tuesday, April 6 at 3** "Tea and Conversation: AAUW and Our Branch Going Forward." Please join us as we discuss our Branch, the upcoming election and by-law change, and how you can help us continue into the future.

**Wednesday, April 14 3** Linda Sittig will speak to us who will talk about her 3 novels, focusing on Counting Crows which is the newest one in the Threads of Courage Series. It takes place in 1918 Greenwich Village NYC and has the 1918 Flu Pandemic a pivotal part of the story. She also has a children's book coming out in November about the woman who forced the desegregation of Virginia's libraries in 1956. Linda besides being a national speaker is adjunct professor at Shenandoah University.

MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR!



### **Conference Schedule and Registration Information**

Please join us virtually for the annual AAUW of Virginia State Conference, which also includes our 96th Annual Business Meeting. In addition to conducting important business of our organization, over the course of three days, you'll hear from and be able to question an exciting variety of speakers on the AAUW mission-related topics described below.

On Saturday, March 13, there will be morning and afternoon sessions, while on Sunday, March 14, and Monday, March 15, there will only be afternoon programs.

The conference and business meeting are free, but **please register in advance for each day you want to attend by using the registration links below.** You will be sent Zoom links for each day. Even though there will be two sessions on March 13, there will only be one Zoom link for that day.

Contact us at [AAUWofVA@gmail.com](mailto:AAUWofVA@gmail.com) if you have any questions or problems with the registration links.

REGISTER FOR DAY 1:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_TveFAYLQROO\\_WQuBgfzSgQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_TveFAYLQROO_WQuBgfzSgQ)

REGISTER FOR DAY 2: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_nreRC7-HQ--eVNndZzz58w](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nreRC7-HQ--eVNndZzz58w)

REGISTER FOR DAY

3: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_69wqwPnSQDy67ks-yacJfg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_69wqwPnSQDy67ks-yacJfg)

Day One:

- **Women Make the Difference! The 2020 AAUW of Virginia Woman of Achievement Awardees**
- **Keynote Address: Women Make a Difference! in U.S. Elections: Assessing Gender and Intersectional Dynamics in Election 2020 and Beyond**
- **What Difference! Does Poverty Make in the Lives of Women?**
- **AAUW of Virginia Women Make the Difference! Kim Churches, AAUW's chief executive officer**
- **AAUW of Virginia Annual Business Meeting**



## Day Two:

- **Women Make A Difference! in Military Service to Our Country**
- Equity in Education Makes the Difference
- **Women Make the Difference! As Elected Officials in Virginia**

## Day Three:

- **Alexandria's Social Justice Initiatives**
- **What a Difference! A Virtual Trip to the Booker T. Washington National Monument Makes**
- **Gender-Based Violence, Institutional Betrayal and the Carceral State**



Marion Stillson sent along this article that she thought would be of interest to you all:

**"The Teenager who gave history a shove"**

A statue of Barbara Johns should replace Robert E. Lee in the U.S. Capitol

Barbara Johns was a 11th grader in 1951 in a Farmville Jim Crow era school. She somehow sent her principal into town on a wild goose chase and urged all 450 of her fellow Black students to follow her on a walkout to protest shabby conditions. The school lacked a gym, cafeteria or lockers and was overcrowded. Student needed to wear their coats in winter to keep warm while the nearby white school had none of these problems. Barbara's act of defiance led to a lawsuit that landed in the Supreme Court and rolled into Brown v Board of Education, the landmark desecration case. Virginia advisory committee recommended that a statue of the late Barbara Johns replace that of Robert E. Lee in the U.S. Capitol's Statuary Hall. Johns' action of courage helped set in motion changes that reshaped Virginia's and American's basic concept of racial fairness. Under Thurgood Marshall's direction, the NAACP responded to her plea and incorporated the case into the broader crusade to end school segregation. John's was an unlikely catalyst. She had not previously been a student activist. After the school strike, her parents, alarmed at the threats she received, sent her out of state to finish high school. She later graduated from Drexel University. What she possessed on that day was the clear vision to perceive the injustice she lived through every day and the initiative to call it out and thereby giving history a shove!

**Board of Directors 2020-21**

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VP Program	Carol Flicker	carolflicker@verizon.net
	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
Secretary	Alyse Goldman	alysegoldman818@gmail.com
Adopt-a-Spot	Fran Lovaas	franlovaas@comcast.net
Cultural Arts	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
	Carol Flicker	carolflicker@gmail.com
Book Group	Carla Heymsfeld	heycarla@comcast.net
	Alyse Goldman	alysegoldman@icloud.com
Great Decisions	Judi Polizzotti	judipoli86@gmail.com
	Judy Skirbunt	judy.skirbunt@gmail.com
Newsletter	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
NVCC Liaison	Janine Greenwood	janinegrnwd@hotmail.com
Public Policy	Judi Polizzotti	judipoli86@gmail.com
	Mary Zane	mpz_06@verizon.net
Ashby Ponds	Marilyn Silvey	marilynsilvey@comcast.com
Website	Dianne Mero	dmeroaaauw@yahoo.com

**Northern District Co-Representatives:** Kate MacLeod and Sara Anderson

**State Board Liaison to Reston-Herndon Branch:** Susan Burk Burksu@aol.com

**AAUW Diversity 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, and socioeconomic status.*

**Vision:** *Equity for all.*

**Values:** *Nonpartisan, Fact-based, Integrity, Inclusion and Intersectionality*

**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*