



PRESIDENTS' PEN Judi Polizzotti and Cyndi Shanahan, Co-Administrators

Now that we see the beginnings of spring, and the weather gets milder, and covid cases decline we plan on having one or two outside events as a branch so we can get together again. Coffee and bagel breakfast will continue in March at Reston Silver Diner. It has given us the opportunity to meet new members and see long time members we've missed. We have wonderful meetings scheduled each month for the rest of our 2021-22 calendar year. Please participate as you are able. .

We hope you are considering going to the [AAUW VA Conference](#) being held on March 26 in Harrisonburg. The theme of the conference is "Going The Distance For Women and Girls." The presenters scheduled are all terrific. Be sure to check it out. The Virtual Annual Business Meeting will be held on April 30. We hope that you will participate in that important meeting. Details regarding the conference are in the Newsletter.

Our state Public Policy VPs have been active in giving us information on the current session of the General Assembly. We encourage you to contact your representatives and advocate for our policy priorities. The legislative session ends soon and many of our values are being undermined.

Our coalition partners are joining us in advocating for CEDAW, the UN Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Fairfax County is considering a resolution based on the principles and will meet on March 8th to finalize the resolution. We are attending that meeting along with Jill Follows from the League of Women Voters who is the leader of this effort and Cypriana McCray from the National Counsel of Negro Women. Once Fairfax County Supervisors approve the resolution, we will hold a meeting to present the results to you.

We are super excited about the new program we have started with our local high schools (South Lakes and Herndon) for juniors to tell us about the things they are doing to support equity and diversity in their schools. Roberta Sherman, Judi Skirbunt and the education committee have been taking the lead on this. Read more about the details of this program in the newsletter. Also, because our branch expenses have been less than usual over the past two years, we have been able to make a financial contribution to the AAUW Greatest Needs Fund.

We are in process of determining our slate of officers and committee members for 2022-23. There are volunteer possibilities for each of you! You could volunteer to take on one program next year, or coordinate Friendsgiving, one of our most attended events. You could take on creating the newsletter for a month or two, you could become a part of the membership or program committee. Just think about those things that you really enjoy doing, and how much time you think you could commit to helping run our wonderful organization. We will be happy to work with you to find just the right opportunity. Working together we make Reston-Herndon AAUW stronger and more fun!

Our next board meeting will be held virtually on March 29th at 1:00. All are encouraged to attend.



WEBSITE RESTON-HERNDON BRANCH

Our branch has a lively and active website, <https://restonherndon-va.aauw.net>, loaded with a treasure trove of branch related information, including member email addresses and contact information in the "Members Only" section. Entry code for the "Members Only" section is on the links page.

You can learn about National and State priorities as well as keeping up with local branch activities. New members, especially, may want to browse the various tabs, articles, and photos posted and keep up to date on calendar events and upcoming programs. Every attempt is made to update the branch website every two weeks – so stay tuned!!



MEMBERSHIP NEWS: Ilene Banker, Membership VP

Looking towards the future of our Reston-Herndon Branch, we are hoping to attract and retain younger women who may continue our efforts to address AAUW issues impacting girls and women. Who are these women? Perhaps your daughters, granddaughters, nieces and friends and neighbors. One of our newer members, Rachel Helmich Cheng has agreed to work with our Board to help lead this effort of determining what membership would look like for this younger demographic. We will be surveying you in the near future to help determine where to focus our energies. We would like to specifically target this younger group with a survey as well, but need your assistance to achieve our goal. Please send me the e-mail address of a younger woman who might want to join our group. **There is no obligation to join at this time.** We want to know what the preferences and interests are of this group so that we may specifically engage them while continuing to offer high quality programs and activities to our existing membership.

Please send an e-mail address of your daughter, granddaughter, neighbor or friend to: ilene.Banker@gmail.com or rhelmichcheng@gmail.com.

Your assistance in ensuring our branch vitality and engagement is essential.

Thank you for considering this request.

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 is 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.



Let's Do Coffee

All members are invited to join us at the Silver Diner in Reston at 9:30 am March 8 to enjoy your choice of coffee and bagels or other. It's an opportunity for us to share ideas, stories or thoughts about the branch. It's been a long time since we've been able to get together socially in person and we hope those of you who feel comfortable in a restaurant will come. We've met new members and saw some that we haven't seen in a while. Please RSVP to let me know the number in attendance. Judi Polizzotti



BOOK GROUP Alyse Goldman and Carla Heymsfeld

Book group meets the fourth Wednesday of the month. Our next meeting is Wednesday, March 23 at 2.

March: *Bossypants*, by Tina Fey

April: *Nomadland*, by Jessica Bruder

May: *Anxious People*, by Frederick Bachman

June: *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, by Isabel Wilkerson

July: *Mrs. Dalloway*, by Virginia Woolf

August: *I Feel Bad About My Neck*, by Nora Ephraim

September: *Vanishing Half*, by Brit Bennet

October: *Hamnet*, by Maggie O'Farrell

December: *No Ordinary Time*, by Doris Kerns Goodwin



GREAT DECISIONS - Judi Polizzotti, Co-Chair

On Thursday February 24th, we held a virtual meeting to discuss the "Renewed Climate Change Agenda." Given the extreme weather events in the last year, the public will has shifted to focus more on the challenges of Climate Change. We considered this issue and the various energy alternatives for fossil fuels.

At the next meeting on Wednesday March 16th, we will discuss "Outer Space Policy," the first topic in the Foreign Policy Association briefing book. We will attempt to follow the Reston Library session after this meeting so that members can take advantage of both discussions. Following this session, we will keep track of the topic from the library calendar for the third Friday of March.

The Foreign Policy Association briefing book and the link to the film are available on the fpa.org website. All members are welcome to join.

PROGRAMS

Janine Greenwood, VP Programs

GET INVOLVED!



Our Branch need your input on program planning. We will have an informal Zoom meeting to just chat and brainstorm what we want to see in programs this year. State politics? Health and wellness? Field trips? History? Social Justice? Literature? What are your interests and what would you like to learn more about?

Join me on **Monday, March 14 at 3PM** for this important chat. Link on links page.

MARCH PROGRAM

Join us on Monday, March 7 at 3:00 PM for a chat with our Branch's favorite local author Linda Sittig to talk about her new book B-52 Down! The Night the Bombs Fell From the Sky the story of how the community in western Maryland came together to rescue the crew of a downed cold war bomber and avert nuclear disaster from the bombs the plane carried. Reviewers have loved the book: "Riveting! I couldn't put the book down. Very informative and readable. I loved the way the author interplayed the technical information with the personal lives of the crew members. I swear I could feel the cold as Sittig described the conditions the men and the rescuers endured." The book is a thrilling and fast read and available at Amazon:

https://www.amazon.com/B-52-Down-Night-Bombs-Fell-ebook/dp/B09C1CMPSV/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1RYUBFCOK6WTE&keywords=b-52+down&qid=1645886800&srefix=%2Caps%2C115&sr=8-1

Should be a fascinating conversation whether or not you have a chance to read the book before we meet.

PROGRAM PIPELINE

We have several other programs in the pipeline including invitations that are out to our local Reston and Herndon delegates to meet with our Branch after the current legislative session has concluded. AAUW Virginia is working on programs on the results of the first legislative session of the Youngkin administration. We will also hear from Jill Follows and our own Judi Polizzotti on CEDAW: The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Jill and Judi will update us on progress of CEDAW in Fairfax County. Watch our weekly emails for dates and times.



Note: All zoom links to our BRANCH meetings and activities will be attached to the newsletter email and you will receive an email with links at the beginning of each week when we have a Branch program or meeting.



PUBLIC POLICY- Judy Polizzotti and Mary Zane Co-Chairs

VA General Assembly 2022 is in session until March 12. We continue to support our public policy priorities: Paid Family and Medical Leave, Gender Pay Equity, Paid Sick Days, Full Funding of Virginia's Public Schools (Opposing Use of Public Funds for Vouchers/Education Savings Accounts) with our representatives. Thank you to the members who have contacted their Delegate and or Senator to advocate for these priorities. We expect to meet with our representatives following the session to obtain a status of the legislation.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors passed a board matter in support of the Equal Rights Amendment in response to Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares withdrawing the state from a legal effort to get it added to the U.S. Constitution. In the motion, supervisors directed staff to draft a letter of support of the ERA and the need to certify it as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution. The letter was sent to Miyares, signed by Fairfax County Board Chairman Jeffrey McKay, according to the motion. Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the ERA in 2020 following a vote in the General Assembly, paving the way for the amendment to become recognized as the 28th Amendment. Under the Constitution, constitutional amendments are valid once ratified by three-fourths of the states, or 38 states. Congress in 1972 passed the ERA, which stated "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." Former Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring and the attorneys general of Illinois and Nevada filed a lawsuit against the archivist of the United States in 2020 to "carry out his statutory duty" of publishing and certifying the ERA as the 28th Amendment to the Constitution. On Feb. 18, Miyares announced his decision to remove Virginia as a plaintiff in a lawsuit that would force the federal government to recognize Virginia's ratification of the ERA as the 38th and final state needed to amend the Constitution, and certify the amendment. After passing the ERA in 1972, Congress set a deadline of 1982 to ratify the ERA. A federal judge ruled a year ago that the deadline to ratify the ERA "expired long ago" and that Virginia's ratification of the amendment was too late.

In 2021, 52 restrictive voter laws were passed in various states across the country, limiting options to vote and undermining local elections officials' ability to protect elections. In response, Congress introduced two voter rights bills: Freedom to Vote Act; and John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Despite a Senate Majority and overwhelming public support for the bills, both were filibustered by the Senate Minority, which killed the bills. To express your support for the Freedom to Vote Act, contact your Senators: www.Warner.senate.gov and www.Kaine.senate.gov. Virginia

The Virginia Supreme Court has approved the new voting maps for the state of Virginia. When the Court appointed two experts, one proposed by the Republican Party and the other by the Democratic Party of Virginia, it directed them not to take the existing map nor the current legislators into consideration. The result is that as many as half of elected representatives either live in the same district of at least one other representative or completely outside their districts. The new maps take effect for the next general election for each office.

The 2022 State Legislative session began in January. For Information about the session, please go to <https://viriniageneralassembly.gov>. Several new laws became effective January 1, 2022, in Virginia: 1. Testing cosmetics on animals is no longer allowed. 2. The minimum wage increased to \$11.00 per hour in 2022 and \$12.00 per hour in 2023. 3. Auto liability insurance minimum coverage will increase to \$30,000.00 per person for injury and death. 4. "Surprise" medical bills are prohibited. 5. In Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax County, shop owners will charge a 5 cent tax on disposable plastic shopping bags. **So, to save money and the environment, use your own reusable shopping bag**



Streaming Group

The next meeting of the Streaming Group will be Wednesday, March 2 at 3:30. We will be discussing *The Tender Bar* which is on Amazon Prime. It stars Ben Affleck and directed by George Clooney. A touching story about a young man, his relationship with his uncle and the determination of his mother. If you can join us, you will find a group of movie goers who enjoy lively discussions about films.

Our last film was a documentary about the activist and amazing woman - Pauli Murray. Coincidentally we have been invited to join in a program regarding her spiritual legacy. The program will be on March 14 at 12 pm central time. See information below for program and how to register.

Pauli Murray is currently being rediscovered for her activism against racial, gender, and economic injustice and her advocacy for reconciliation between all Americans. But her trailblazing work as the first Black female Episcopal priest in the United States and her lifelong commitment to spiritual values often goes overlooked in discussions of her legacy. We are honored to feature the Very Reverend Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, the Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary, as our keynote speaker for this discussion. Dean Douglas, as one of the first ten Black women ordained in the Episcopal Church USA, is directly inspired by Pauli Murray's legacy

Registration link: https://ifyc-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MyVKjVBTQtSxrs05BBqSSA



Diversity Equity Inclusion

Check out these videos to capture the essence of Black History month:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=c+span+black+history&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en-us&client=safari>



Education Committee Update

After considering what to do with scholarship money we have put aside in our budget, the education committee decided to add an essay contest for Juniors at Herndon and South Lakes High Schools. The essay asks the student to describe their own past efforts to reach out to people who are different than themselves, what their current online actions particularly if they or someone they know have been affected by cyberbullying, and what they would like to do to continue their efforts when the Covid-19 Pandemic is over. One student from each High School will be awarded \$500. We realize that this amount is small, but believe it will help defray costs as they apply to colleges. In addition, having this contest on their college application will be, we believe, an asset to their application. The essays are due by March 25. We thank the Springfield Branch for their help in this matter as they have been doing this essay contest for a number of years. Stay tuned to learn of our winners

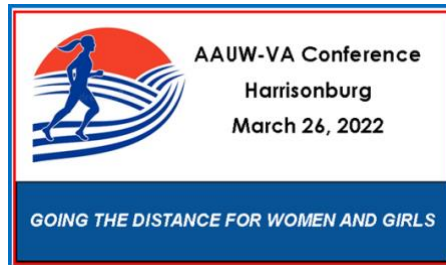


Falls Church AAUW will once again hold its annual April used book sale.

After a two-year hiatus, the **Falls Church AAUW** book sale is back! The branch will again hold its well-known used book sale this April 29th and 30th at the Community Center, 223 Little Falls St. The sale is the primary source of funds for the scholarships that Falls Church AAUW awards annually to senior girls in our area, and the women in the branch are especially happy that they can again share their message: "Buy a book, Send a girl to college."

The times of the sale will be 9-9 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. There will be the usual rich selection of books on all topics, plus antiquarian books and a special collection. Members will make every effort to see that a buyer has found just the right book for them! The basic price on books this year: \$4 for hardbacks and \$3 for paperbacks; antiquarian and some special books will be individually priced.

We need high quality books to sell. If you would like to donate, you may do so on select Saturdays at the Willston Multi-Cultural Center, 6131 Willston Dr, from 10-12, beginning February 26th, as well as in the specially marked bin at the Community Center until the end of April. Check the AAUW Falls Church web site (fallschurcharea-va.aauw.net) for specific days and times at the Willston Center. Donations will not be accepted the day of the sale, so **plan ahead!**



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE 2022 AAUW OF VIRGINIA STATE CONFERENCE
WHICH WILL BE CONVENED IN TWO PARTS.**

Part 1 will be held on Saturday, March 26, 2022, 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., as an **in-person event** at the Hotel Madison and Shenandoah Valley Conference Center on the James Madison University campus in Harrisonburg. You will hear from and be able to question informed and inspiring speakers on AAUW mission-related topics that support the theme of *Going the Distance for Women and Girls*. The conclusion of the program will provide an opportunity for the four state Districts to convene and elect representatives to the State Board for 2022-2024.

Details regarding speakers and hotel registration for Friday night may be found in the [2022 Conference Brochure](#).

Part 2 of the conference, the **AAUW-VA Annual Business Meeting**, will be held **virtually via Zoom on Saturday, April 30th** – the starting time TBD.

Part 1 The AAUW-VA State Board is pleased to announce that because operating budget costs were lower between March 2020 and now, due to the pandemic, we are returning some of the unspent funds to members in the form of **a lower conference registration fee, which includes morning beverages and lunch. The registration deadline is March 11.**

AAUW of Virginia Members	\$25.00 until March 4 (\$30 March 5 -11)
Students	\$30.00*
Other Non-AAUW of Virginia Attendees	\$35.00

*Branches may consider sponsoring the attendance of students from college/university partners they interface with.

REGISTER ONLINE [HERE](#) FOR PART I

**For those who want to register using “snail mail,”
please use the form following the Harrisonburg tourism information in [the 2022 Conference Brochure](#).**

Board of Directors 2020-21

Co-Administrators	Judi Polizzotti Cyndi Shanahan
Vice President	Vacant
VP Finances	Ruth Ruttenberg
VP Membership	Ilene Banker
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Cultural Arts	Roberta Sherman Carol Flicker
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NOVA Liaison	Jean Ann Linney
Public Policy	Judi Polizzotti Mary Zane
Ashby Ponds	Marilyn Silvey
Website	Dianne Mero
Zoom and Weekly Updates	Janine Greenwood

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 **Branch**

Facebook Page: *Reston-Herndon Branch of AAUW*