



Reston-Herndon Area (VA) Branch

PRESIDENTS' PEN**Judy Hemlich and Cyndi Shanahan, Co-Administrators**

Did you hear? We did it again! We are a 5-star branch again for the 2021-22 year. We are super excited and thankful for our wonderful board and for each one of you who have been instrumental in ensuring that we are a vibrant branch that is aligned with the mission and values of AAUW.

We are headed into a new program year for Reston-Herndon AAUW and with that come some leadership transitions. As with all transitions we need to say goodbye to some of the great things from the past and embrace the wonderful things that we can imagine for our future. Judy Helmich is joining the leadership team as co-administrator of our branch. Two of our leaders, Judi Polizzotti and Ilene Banker are transitioning to new roles in the branch, and Mary Zane is rolling off as one of our public policy leads. Judi Polizzotti will be taking over as VP Membership as Ilene joins the Diversity, Equity/Inclusion (DEI) team. We have two fantastic new leads for Public Policy, Lynne Chernin and Judy Schretter. Joyce Senger will be joining the Cultural Events team. There is still plenty of opportunity for you to join in with this fantastic group of leaders of our branch. Just reach out to any of our board members to share your ideas and talents!

Based upon your input, we have plans to meet in person whenever it is safe to do so. This will allow for us to engage with one another in ways to deepen our connections with each other. We also will keep our focus on the mission and values of AAUW.

For our 2022-23 program year, we will continue to work together to strengthen our branch and support the mission and values of AAUW. We are developing plans to support equity throughout our community by not only educating ourselves, but also by encouraging DEI in our local high schools and through our public policy initiatives to ensure that all Virginia residents are aware of their opportunity to vote in all elections. We will also collect food for the Loudoun NVCC campus at each in-person meeting so that students can focus on class work rather than where they will find adequate food. Most importantly, we will continue to support the connections we have as members of our organization and support the infrastructure of our organization so that we continue to grow and thrive into the future. Working together we make Reston-Herndon AAUW stronger and more fun!

We have two great programs this summer celebrating our local communities. Details on Page 6. We hope to see you there.

Annual Business Meeting

On June 8, we gathered at Café Montmartre located at Lake Anne for our annual meeting. It was wonderful to catch up with friends, enjoy delicious food and elect our new slate of officers. In addition, we collected food for the food pantry at NVCC Loudoun Campus. Cyndi's car was overloaded with food. Thanks to all who donated.



WEBSITE RESTON-HERNDON BRANCH - Dianne Mero

Our branch website, updated bimonthly at a minimum, can be found at <https://restonherndon-va.aauw.net> or by searching 'Reston-Herndon AAUW' in your web browser. In addition to timely posting of branch activities, events, and mission-related information, you can learn about local, state and national AAUW priorities and how to become involved at each level. Additionally, there are various articles and photos posted and an up-to-date calendar of events and upcoming programs. The website has a "Members Only" section, requiring an entry code [VA3035], housing member contact information, individual email addresses of members and officers and other branch information. Give it a look! Suggestions for improvement are welcome.



BOOK GROUP Alyse Goldman and Carla Heymsfeld

Book group meets the fourth Wednesday of the month. Our next meeting is Wednesday,

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

Great Decisions will be suspended for the summer and resume in October.

Membership

MEMBERSHIP NEWS- Judi Polizzotti, VP Membership

I am excited to be your new Membership Chair as of July 1. I am looking forward to working with the board and members to develop new strategies for membership. If any of you have friends, neighbors or relatives who would like to join our Branch, please send along their names to me.

As of last week, 40% of our members had renewed that gives us 80 members. The new membership year begins on July 1. Dues are \$97.00 which include National, State and Branch Dues. You can send your checks to Ruth Ruttenberg, our Treasurer, at 1767 Wainwright Drive, Reston VA 20190 or pay your dues online. If you choose to pay online, the first thing you will need to do is change your password as AAUW has set up a new membership database. Follow these steps to pay online

- Log on to the AAUW Website at <https://www.aauw.org> or visit my.aauw.org and log in at the top right corner of the website
- To reset your password, click the "Forgot Password" link.
- Once you create a password and log in, you can update your profile by clicking "Edit Profile" in the menu on the left side of the screen

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.



**AAUW Statement Strongly Condemning the U.S. Supreme Court's Opinion
on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization***

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) strongly condemns the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. The decision overturns the landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling that established abortion as a constitutionally protected right nearly 50 years ago and ignores the will of the American people, 80% of whom support legal abortion.

AAUW believes everyone has the right to make decisions about their own reproductive lives without government interference. Abortion access is vital to women's ability to control their lives, bodies and futures. Without reproductive freedom, there can be no equity.

Being able to choose whether and when to become a parent improves women's well-being and fosters economic security—a crucial component of AAUW's mission. This is particularly important in a country that lacks accessible maternal health care, paid caregiving leave and workplace protections for pregnant workers.

The Court's decision hurts all of us, but it will do the most harm to low-income people, women of color, immigrants, people with disabilities and LGBTQ+ people, because these groups already face substantial barriers to accessing reproductive services and health care.

While the Court's decision is a major setback for all Americans, AAUW remains steadfast in our commitment to protecting reproductive rights, a vital component of gender equity.



PROGRAMS - Janine Greenwood, VP Programs

We had a wonderful time getting back together for our annual meeting at Lake Anne. It was great to reconnect in person.

We have two programs this summer featuring local history. On **Thursday July 28 at 10AM** we will meet at the Reston Museum at Lake Anne. Step back in time and join us for a guided **historic walking tour exploring Reston's founding**. Tour starts at the Reston Museum and lasts approximately 30 minutes. We will then have a private view of the museum's new exhibit **Determined: The 400-Year Struggle for Black Equality**. The exhibit traces four centuries of Black history in Virginia through stories of extraordinary individuals who struggled for equality and, in the process, profoundly shaped the nature of American society and the meaning of our collective ideals. Let's meet for lunch after the tour and discuss what we learned.

We will try our first hybrid meeting on **August 30 at 2PM** and will hear from Barbara Glakas the **Historian of the Herndon Historical Society** on notable women in the history of Herndon. It will be great to learn more about our local foremothers. A hybrid meeting means we will be both live at the Reston Government Center and online with Zoom at the same time. This format may not work for some other meetings, but we are looking forward to experimenting. We hope to see many of you in person and ask those online to be patient with any technical challenges.

At both meetings, we also hope you will bring a donation for the food pantry at the Loudoun Campus of NOVA Community College. Food insecurity for students is a growing problem, particularly with rising prices. A list of suggested items will be provided before the meeting.

We are working on a number of fall programs and are particularly excited about a September program on Unconscious Bias featuring Patty Hagan.



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.



Education Committee Update

As reported in our last issue, our essay contest winners were Cora Kwitowski and Martha Afoakwa. Below are their thank you notes and a picture of Cora with her check. We hope to continue this contest in the next school year.

Dear Ms. Sherman and members of Reston Herndon AAUW,

Thank you so much! I am very grateful for this opportunity your organization has provided to me.

I have attached my photo below. Please let me know if there is anything else you need from me.

*Again, thank you all so much!
Cora Kwitowski*



Cora Kwitowski

*Thank you so much!! I hope that this money will help me accomplish my dream.
Martha Afoakwa*

The Education committee will be meeting on Thursday, July 14 at 10:30 at the home of Roberta Sherman to discuss how we will go forward in the coming year. If you'd like to attend, please contact Roberta.



PUBLIC POLICY- Judy Schretter and Lynne Chernin Co-Chairs

As of July 1st, we have two new Co-Chairs for Public Policy Judy Schretter and Lynne Chernin.

At the Annual Meeting, we had 13 people sign up to write postcards for the GOTV campaign. Thanks to those members who volunteered to participate. Also, if anyone is interested in writing postcards, contact either Judy or Lynne. We will receive the materials from Denise Murden, AAUW VA Public Policy.

We are also looking for a member who would want to participate in the Fairfax CEDAW resolution working group. You can also contact either Judy or Lynne.



Diversity Equity Inclusion

At our annual meeting in June, Lynne Chernin spoke about a list of resources compiled by Carol Bradley, Stephanie Abbott, and Patty Hagen to help us all think about systemic racism in our country, and what we can learn and do about it today. Lynne has annotated some of the entries and put three asterisks in some that she is reading or about to read. We have posted the resources on our branch website. The link is: <https://restonherndon-va.aauw.net/files/2022/06/DEI-AAUW-Annotated-Resource-List-1.pdf>

Only through knowledge and commitment to change will we, as a country, make any changes to our current practices and attitudes. All change begins with awareness and reflection.

As you explore these resources and the many others available, please share your thoughts with all of us. We can update the annotations and perhaps begin a group conversation on a Facebook or other social media site. For now please send your comments with the subject "DEI" to Stephanie at syabbott@me.com. We will be having a branch meeting the week of September 18 to discuss what we have learned and what we can do. More details about the meeting will be in the next newsletter.

2022-2023 Leadership

Co-Administrators	Cyndi Shanahan & Judy Helmich
VP Finance	Ruth Ruttenberg
VP Membership	Judi Polizzotti
VP Program	Janine Greenwood
Secretary	Alyse Goldman
AAUW Funds	Stephanie Abbott
Adopt-a-Spot	Fran Lovaas
Cultural Arts	Carol Flicker, Joyce Senger, Roberta Sherman
Book Group	Alyse Goldman & Carla Heymsfeld
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Stephanie Abbott, Lynn Chernin Carol Ann Bradley, Ilene Banker
Great Decisions	Judi Polizzotti & Judy Skirbunt
Newsletter	Roberta Sherman
NOVA Liaison	Jean Ann Linney
Public Policy	Lynne Chernin & Judy Schretter
Website	Dianne Mero
Zoom and 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*
