



Alexandria (VA) Branch



THE SCHOONER – April 2024

INSIDE:

Co-Presidents' letter	1
Branch Notes	2
Branch Activities	7
Calendar	13
Contacts	13

SAVE THESE DATES:

4/4/24 7p	Board Meeting
4/6/24 Noon	Tour of the Natl Inventors Hall of Fame
4/8/24 7p	Diversity Book Group
4/9/24 6p	Public Policy Zoom Mtg
4/13/24	AAUW-VA Conference
4/18/24 7p	Great Decisions
4/23/24 7p	Mystery book group

Dear Friends,

Spring and occasionally summer are dropping hints, while winter reminds us that she has not passed. Cherry blossoms struggle to continue blooming. So it is with our fight for women's financial security, health, and education. As a group, we are a remarkable group who stand up for all women.

Our LTA play "Mystery on the Orient Express" was a huge success. Over 200 people thronged the reception and the play.

We hope to see you at the state conference in beautiful Lynchburg on April 13. And, the first Atlantic Regional Conference is scheduled for Sept. 27-29th in Glen Allen, VA.

Diane Schrier & Sylvia Linke
Co-Presidents

BRANCH NOTES

Programs

Leslie Tourigny
VP for Programs

National Inventors Hall of Fame Museum April 6, 2024, 12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

Important: Please let Leslie Tourigny at ltourigny@gmail.com know if you are coming.

If someone asked you where the Baseball Hall of Fame is, you'd probably know it's in Cooperstown, New York. What if someone asked you where the National Inventors Hall of Fame Museum is? Would you be able to tell them it's in Alexandria, Virginia?

- “The National Inventors Hall of Fame was founded in 1973, and its museum was moved in 2008 to the campus of the United States Patent and Trademark Office in Alexandria, Virginia. The museum is run by the nonprofit **National Inventors Hall of Fame** in partnership with the USPTO.”
- “The mission of the National Inventors Hall of Fame® is to recognize inventors, promote creativity, and advance the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship.”

Come join us **at the National Inventors Hall of Fame Museum**, located at 600 Dulany Street, Alexandria, for a **museum tour**, followed by a presentation about the museum's **STEM programming** for K-12 and college students.

The museum exhibits showcase U.S. patent holders, and include “Women in Innovation,” “Breaking Barriers: Honoring Extraordinary Black Inventors,” and “Champions of Innovation”— “the team of inventors behind the revolutionary Jogbra®: the world's first sports bra.”

The museum “...is easily accessible from the King Street and Eisenhower Avenue Metro stations,” and several Alexandria Dash bus routes. Paid parking is available at the East Parking Garage, 551 John Carlyle St, (703) 683-3140.

Remember to RSVP.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING FORUM

May 11, 2024, 11a
Burke branch of the Alexandria Library,
4701 Seminary Road
Alexandria, VA 22304

The Anti-Human Trafficking Team of the Alexandria branch invite you to learn about forced labor from Evelyn Chumbow and Erica Reid.



Evelyn Chumbow is a survivor of child labor trafficking turned anti-trafficking activist and public speaker who has focused her life's work on ending modern-day slavery, a crime impacting some 40 million victims globally.

Ms. Chumbow was brought to the United States from Cameroon at the age of nine and forced to cook, clean, and care for her trafficker's children. She was never paid for her work, and any hope that she might escape was undermined by the constant beatings she received from her trafficker.

After years of captivity, she finally escaped and her trafficker was sentenced to 17 years in prison. Today, Ms. Chumbow works tirelessly to raise awareness and advocate for other survivors.



Ms. Erica Reid is a Senior Engagement Manager at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Center Countering Human Trafficking, Blue Campaign Office with over 18 years of government service. Specializing in public affairs and outreach, Erica uses her experience to raise awareness of human trafficking across the country. Within the Blue Campaign, her portfolio includes educating on the front-end to deter criminal activity and educate communities on how to recognize and report/respond to possible cases of human trafficking. Her portfolio focuses on youth and student leaders, adults working with youth, Native American/Tribal Nations, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Erica has presented to over 5000 persons on human trafficking since joining the Blue Campaign office in 2022.

Submitted by: Sylvia Linke 571-329-5953 (mobile), sylvia.f.linke@outlook.com

Watch your emails for your registration form for our Annual Business Meeting. May 4, 2024, 10a -noon, via Zoom.

Branch Members Serve as Raters for the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria

Since AAUW’s founding in 1881, a major focus of our organization has been to advance educational equity for women and girls. This is highlighted in our current public policy priorities by our support for “... a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls.”

In order to further this mission-critical area, during the weekend of March 1, 2024, three members of our branch served as raters for applications submitted to the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria: Mary Ann Bier, Solveig Eggerz, and Leslie Tourigny.

“The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, a 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 1986 by concerned citizens to help academically qualified students with financial need from Alexandria City Public Schools afford postsecondary education. Through its relationship with the community, the mission of The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria is to encourage and assist the students of Alexandria City Public Schools by providing them with necessary resources to access and complete a college, technical or career program of postsecondary education.

“In 1986, when it all began, the SFA awarded just over \$7k in scholarships to eight students. Last year alone, we awarded \$1.4 million to support 400+ Alexandria City High School graduates to over 60 different institutions. Ninety-five cents of every dollar raised goes directly to support scholarships. The SFA has awarded over 18 million dollars in scholarships and helped send more than 5,000 Alexandria students with financial need to college since 1986....College advising is the vital resource the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria provides to assist each senior in creating a plan for the future.”

Each application is rated by three different raters, and an average score is determined. Kudos to our branch members for volunteering to help in this important community service.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING 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, or socioeconomic status.

It's Time to Recruit New Branch Officers

Every year some of the senior officers of the Alexandria branch finish their terms and it is necessary to recruit replacements. This year, the current Secretary and Membership V-P finish their terms. Also, the current Program V-P is resigning her position at the end of the membership year.

It is the job of the Nominating Committee to recruit replacements for these positions. The Nominating Committee is an independent Committee composed of three members of the branch. This year's Nominating Committee is Lynn O'Connell, Peggy Heiser, and Esther Massey. Please give serious thought to serving as one of the officers whose term concludes this year. If you receive a call from someone on the Nominating Committee, please say "Yes." Serving as a senior officer can be quite rewarding. It presents the individuals who fill these positions with opportunities for growth and to get to know the branch members. Contact Lynn, lynnocConnellva@gmail.com, to volunteer.

Sylvia Linke, Co-President

Little Theatre Fundraiser a Great Success

The Little Theatre of Alexandria play and partnership with the Mt Vernon Branch was a huge success thanks to so many. Alexandria sold over 90 tickets and with Mt Vernon's sales we had an almost full house. We had donations of savories and beverages from members and friends that set a beautiful table and was enthusiastically consumed by the crowd. Mt Vernon set up the decorations and brought the wine and sweets. The reception before and during the intermission allowed us all to visit and see new and old friends while enjoying the generous savory and sweet offerings.

The play was a hit and a lot of fun. Although a popular story, Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Orient Express" was an entertaining performance on our special local little theatre stage. The staging with a very realistic train arriving at the station and the creative and revolving stage sets exceeded the LTA's high standards.

Many thanks to all who bought tickets, brought friends, donated savories and helped with setup and cleanup. Special thanks to Susan Werner who took charge of the ticket sales and sat in the tiny will-call box office before the play. Another special shout-out to Virginia Kress who helped with food orders, moving supplies from store to car to the theater and who along with Solveig Eggerz helped with setup and cleanup. Many of you who helped with cleanup at the very end made the work go much faster.

Thanks!
Mary Ann Bier

PS Late-breaking news: We netted over \$2,500! Thank you.

PUBLIC POLICY

Virginia Kress, Public Policy Chair

On the National front, the revised **Title IX** regulations that AAUW strongly supports are expected to be released soon. We expect the new rules to reestablish strong protections for students experiencing sexual harassment, strengthen supports for pregnant and parenting students, and clarify that all students, including LGBTQ+ students, have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment. AAUW's Lobby Corps advocated for these regulations this week.

We're expecting congressional challenges when the rule is finalized, so members of Congress need to understand reasons to support Title IX. **Please tell your members of Congress that you support a robust Title IX rule that supports and protects ALL students.**

Thank you for your advocacy efforts!

Janine Greenwood & Denise Murden, Co-VP Public Policy, AAUW -VA



AUTUMN LEAVES

Susan Cash
AAUW Funds Chair

Thanks to all of you who contributed to Autumn Leaves 2023 and congratulations to our drawing winners! We will continue to accept donations. The funds raised are divided equally between the AAUW Alexandria Branch and an AAUW National Fund. ***Fifty percent of your donation is tax-deductible.***

If you would like to contribute, please mail a check, ***payable to AAUW-Alexandria***, with Autumn Leaves on the memo line, to Susan Cash, 8402 West Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308.

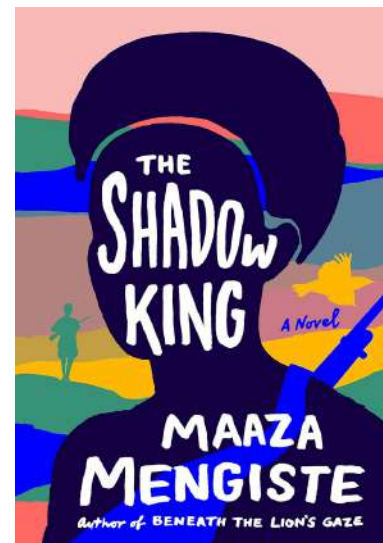
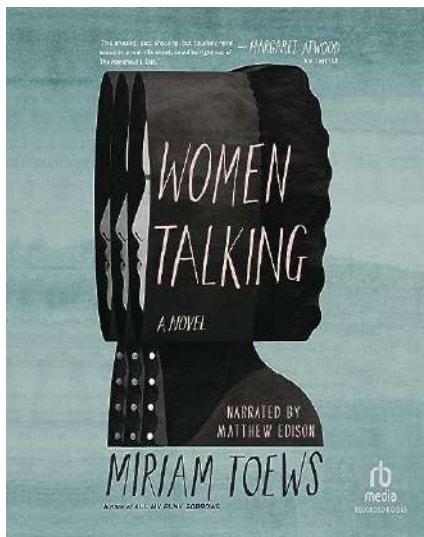
BRANCH ACTIVITIES



DIVERSITY BOOK GROUP

Bonnie Hershberg

The March 10, 2024 Diversity Book Group meeting on Zoom produced a lively and insightful discussion of *WOMEN TALKING*, a 2020 novel by Canadian author Miriam Toews. This award-winning writer, drew her inspiration from a real life event in a Mennonite community in Bolivia. While rape and the “patriarchy” has been a subject of other books we have read during our three-plus years as a group, this one was unique given the setting and the cultural background in which it unfolds. Many might have seen the Academy Award nominated movie of several years ago but reading the book is a whole different experience. It made for a provocative conversation of women talking! On April 8, we will be discussing *THE SHADOW KING* by Maaza Mengiste, written in 2019. If you’d like to join us, please contact Bonnie Hershberg at hersh3b@gmail.com.





FRANCOPHILE GROUP

Susan Cash

At our next event, we plan to discuss *The Years* by Annie Ernaux (winner of the 2022 Nobel Prize). We hope to meet via Zoom this spring on a Saturday at 3 p.m. Stay tuned for more details. (This is a rescheduling from March).

For more information, please contact Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com or 703/587-4790.



GOURMET OUT

Susan Cash

Stay tuned to the newsletter for future events. Point of contact is Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com, 703/587-4790.

GREAT DECISIONS 2024



Many thanks to Howard Soroos for leading our discussion on *Mideast Realignment*.

On April 18, 7p (3rd Thursday, rather than 2nd Thursday) our topic is: *Understanding Indonesia*. Despite its large size, Indonesia remains virtually invisible to most Americans. But as one of the world's largest democracies, the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, and as an economic driver of ASEAN, why does it fly below the radar? What are current issues in U.S.-Indonesian relations, and what role can the country play in Asia?

To attend, please email me at lynnocconnellva@gmail.com.



MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Susan Werner

The Mystery Book Discussion Group will meet on April 23, 2024, 7 PM via Zoom. Our mystery novel is Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murders by Jesse Q Sutanto. Sometime this summer, we hope to meet at Fratelli for an in-person meeting. If you have questions about the Mystery Book Discussion Group or suggestions for a mystery, please contact Susan Werner – susan.werner1@verizon.net. Happy Mystery Reading.



PUBLIC POLICY

Janine Greenwood
Denise Murden
AAUW-VA Co-VPs for Public Policy

**Save the date: AAUW-VA Public Policy Meeting
April 9 at 6PM by Zoom**

Overall, it's been a very positive legislative session for our priorities.

Five important bills were approved by the General Assembly and sent to the Governor on a fast-track basis. Here's the results:

- HB 894 Expanding public meeting electronic access – SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR
- SB35 Requiring unconscious bias training for medical providers – The Governor asked for an amendment
- SB238 Mandating insurance coverage of contraceptives – Governor asked for an amendment
- SB101 Marriage equality – SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR!
- SB235 Creating controls on school district book bans – Vetoed by the Governor

The complete list of key bills and their status is available here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1og85IUGVIwhRQHlnjJ2qkrK82LMovZYf> The Governor must sign, veto or ask for amendments to these bills within 30 days.

Virtual Lobby Day was a success. Forty members participated in the morning Zoom rally and then went out to contact their Delegates, Senators, and the Governor. We hope our advocacy will help encourage the Governor to sign legislation on our Public Policy Priorities. Again, thanks to AAUW National for all their support on the Action Alerts.

AAUW National has announced an exciting program to engage states and branches in getting out the vote for the November 2024 election with It's My Vote. You can find some really great resources here, including an overview of the program, <https://www.aauwaction.org/my-vote/> There will be a series of programs on important issues also available on that website. Details of what we will be doing in Virginia will follow. As the webinar pointed out, nothing is more critical to our policy priorities than the outcome

of this election. Participation in the leadership of the program statewide and strong participation on the branch level will be vital in this work.

The state public policy meeting provided important updates on what is happening at the National level:

- ERA: National PP is focusing with our allies on what actions would be most strategic and are focusing on discharge petition. They believe the “Sign for ERA” movement is not the best option.
- UN Status of Women: Gloria will be speaking at the UN on the ERA. AAUW has permanent observer status at the UN. Register for related webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DzwMOEkETN-lqRyzPPER8g?emci=42ea92b0-5add-ee11-85fb-002248223794&emdi=ecde1b50-5fdd-ee11-85fb-002248223794&ceid=946865#/registration
- Salary History Ban: The proposed rule to ban salary history use by Federal contractors is progressing.
- College Cost Reduction Act: AAUW has mixed feelings about the “College Cost Reduction Act” which would expand Pell Grants to short-term certificate programs as currently proposed because it does not have enough controls over schools that have poor student outcomes.
- Title IX: Although AAUW is pleased with the current proposed rules on most Title IX protections, the proposal does still not deal with transgender students in sports.
- Equal Pay Day: The Equal Pay Day Calendar for 2024 has been released <https://www.aauw.org/resources/article/equal-pay-day-calendar/>. All Women’s Equal Pay Day is March 12. National has a great new tool to help members write op-eds or letters to the editor of their local papers <https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/advocacy-toolkit/lte-vs-oped/>
- New resources from National available soon:
 - Voter Issue Guides
 - Head-to-Head Voter Guides
 - Congressional Voting Record

Thank you for all your advocacy work.

AAUW – National

Open Membership Q&A Tuesday, April 2, 7 p.m. ET

We're hosting a question and answer session with members of AAUW's Inclusion and Equity Committee and Degree Requirement Campaign Task Force.

REGISTER NOW



We hope to see you in beautiful Lynchburg

for our 99th AAUW-VA Conference

April 12 – 13, 2024

Sightseeing, shopping, and being with AAUW members! Come early and do it all!

**Hilton Garden Inn
4025 Wards Road, Lynchburg, VA 24502**

[ONLINE AAUW-VA 2024 Conference Registration](#)

After you register email Diane Schrier to discuss carpooling, diane.schrier@gmail.com.

2023- 2024 CALENDAR – ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

(CHECK <https://alexandria-va.aauw.net> OFTEN)

- 4/4/24 7p Virtual, AAUW-Alexandria Board Meeting
4/6/24 Noon Program: Tour of the National Inventors Hall of Fame
4/8/24 7p Diversity Book Group Bonnie Hershburg, hersh3b@gmail.com
4/9/24 6p Post-General Assembly AAUW-VA Public Policy Zoom Meeting
4/13/24 AAUW-VA Conference
4/18/24 7p Great Decisions
4/23/24 7p Mystery book group, Susan Werner, susan.werner1@verizon.net
- 5/2/24 7p Virtual, AAUW-Alexandria Board Meeting
5/4/24 10a Annual Business Meeting
5/9/24, 7p Great Decisions
5/11/24, 11a Forum On Human Trafficking
5/13/24 7p Diversity Book Group Bonnie Hershburg, hersh3b@gmail.com
5/28/24 7p Mystery book group, Susan Werner, susan.werner1@verizon.net
5/29/24 Christ House Dinner, Margaret Zebrowski (Mmzebrow@aol.com) & Jan Jaynes (janjjoek@verizon.net)

2023-2024 BRANCH OFFICERS

- Co-presidents: Sylvia Linke (SFLaauw@gmail.com) & Diane Schrier (diane.schrier@gmail.com)
VP Membership: Arlene Schuchner (arlene.schuchner@verizon.net)
VP Program: Leslie Tourigny, (ltourigny@gmail.com)
Secretary: Dr. Gail Kalin, (gailkalin@yahoo.com)
AAUW Funds: Susan Cash (scash5558@gmail.com)
Diversity and Inclusion: Dr. Gail Kalin (gailkalin@yahoo.com)
Public Policy: Virginia Kress (vmvkress@gmail.com)
Treasurer: Anne Simpson (aseyedoc@gmail.com)
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Special Interest Group Leaders:
Campus Outreach: Danielle Beach (danielleaauw@gmail.com)
Christ House Dinners: Margaret Zebrowski (Mmzebrow@aol.com) & Jan Jaynes (janjjoek@verizon.net)
Diversity Book Group: Bonnie Hershberg (hersh3b@gmail.com)
Francophile Group: Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com
Gourmet Out Group: Susan Cash, scash5558@gmail.com
Great Decisions: Lynn O'Connell (lynnoconnellva@gmail.com)
Mystery Book Group: Susan Werner (susan.werner1@verizon.net)