

SMITH MOUNTAIN  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN  
*Spring 2024 Newsletter*



**A message from our President  
Betsy DeWeese**



Greetings Fellow Members,

I hope you can feel the energy of what is going on in our Smith Mountain Branch of AAUW to uplift women and girls in our local community!

- Our Scholarship Committee just selected four outstanding women who will each receive a \$4,500 college scholarship.
- Our Program Vice-Presidents are planning our May 18 Annual Meeting and Scholarship Celebration Luncheon where we will meet the scholarship recipients.
- Our Community Outreach Committee is working with elementary schools to select six fifth grade girls who will have a wonderful Science Camp experience this summer.
- Our Fundraising Committee has already begun planning and organizing for the Big Fundraiser Fashion Show / Silent Auction/ Luncheon on November 13.
- Our Classics Book Group met in April to study 19th Century Children's Literature.
- Our International Studies Group will meet May 15 to continue an in-depth study of Ukraine.

Our 25th Anniversary Committee has begun planning ways to celebrate our branch's 25th Anniversary in 2025!

And these are just the highlights. If you haven't been a part of this, I hope you will find a way to join in the fun and contribute your talents and interests to help local women and girls achieve their full potential. Read on to find out more about who to contact, and get involved!

The place of meaning is finding a way to make a difference in the lives of others.

All the Best,  
Betsy



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Saturday, May 4 – AAUW Virginia Annual Business Meeting 10 am (Virtual)
- Tuesday, May 7 – AAUW Virginia Officer Election Begins (On-Line)
- Tuesday, May 14 – Board Meeting
- Wednesday, May 15 – International Study Group (Ukraine)
- Wednesday, May 15 – Deadline for AAUW Election / Bylaws Change voting (On-Line)
- Saturday, May 18 – Annual Elections / Scholarship Meeting, 4-H Center
- Sunday, May 26 – AAUW Virginia Officer Election Ends 11:45 pm
- Wednesday, June 19 – Classics Book Group (Children’s Classics)
- Saturday, September 14 – Branch Meeting
- Wednesday, November 13—Annual Fundraiser**
- March 28-29, 2025 – AAUW-VA State Conference (Old Town, Alexandria)

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# AAUW Virginia State Conference 2024

An enthusiastic group of 15 SMAAUW women attended the American Association of University Women Virginia State Conference held April 12-13, 2024 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Lynchburg, VA. The annual event, hosted this year by the Lynchburg AAUW Branch, was fun, entertaining and educational!

Taking advantage of Lynchburg's many cultural, art, and historical sites, we were offered the choice of three different local attractions Friday afternoon. Some of us took a guided tour of the beautiful and historical Anne Spencer House and Gardens, some took in the art exhibits at the Maier Museum, while a third group took a tour of the beautifully restored and furnished 1815 Federal style mansion called Point of Honor.

After dinner our branch was able to provide conference support as, thanks to Sandy Furick, a committee coordinated and provided charming "swag" bags and arranged a "Friday Night Fun" warm-up activity as attendees arrived. We enjoyed meeting and getting to know members from branches all over Virginia! We had a total of 76 conference attendees from 18 Virginia branches of AAUW! Who knew there were so few among us who are left-handed or who play an instrument!!

The conference ran from 9:30 a.m.- 4:15 p.m. on Saturday, with a delicious buffet-style salad bar luncheon provided on the premises. One of the day's highlights was our brilliant keynote speaker, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, President of the University of Lynchburg. Her theme was "Courageous Leaders" and it focused on three distinct styles of leadership: leading from in front, from beside, and from behind. She helped us recognize in and among ourselves how these three different, equally important styles of leadership, combined effectively within an organization, will boost and enhance mission success. A second important speaker was Meghan Kissel, AAUW Senior Director of Policy & Membership Advocacy. She was able to share updates on important legislative work our National AAUW Organization is continuing with in areas such as Title IX and the impending ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment when it is published as the 28th Amendment!

An exciting, enlightening time spent with a group of educated, experienced, involved, passionate and empowered women of Virginia. Such that one could be back at the convention after having attended many, many times, or, like some of us, might be first time participants! Something for everyone! Overall, how motivating it is to know we are all a part of something so big and impactful...something that is definitely making life better for women and girls in our area, our Commonwealth, and our Country!

Submitted by Sharon Cooper



# AAUW VIRGINIA HAPPENINGS



## Annual Business Meeting 2024 - Saturday, May 4 via Zoom

“Part 2” of the 2024 State Conference. It will be held via Zoom webinar on **Saturday, May 4, at 10:00 a.m. You must register in advance for the webinar and to receive the login information.**

At our Business Meeting, we will award the prestigious *2024 AAUW Woman of Achievement Award* to Anne Holton, the former Virginia Secretary of Education. Holton also served as the seventh president of George Mason University, its first female president.

You will hear about the accomplishments of your AAUW-VA Board members as well as the state proposed Public Policy Priorities to be voted on in May. This event also will allow you the opportunity to meet this year’s candidates for elected positions.

- Lane Stone for President
- Tess Evans for Vice President for Communications
- Susan Burk and Leslie Tourigny for Co-VP for Program
- Diane Schrier for Vice President for Public Policy

To attend, you must register in advance. *After registering*, you will receive the Zoom log-in information. The Business Meeting Program Book link will be emailed to you one week before the meeting. **Use the link below to complete the simple registration by Friday, May 3, and don’t miss out!**

**Register [HERE](#).**

**Get an advance copy of the program book [HERE](#).** The program book includes information on all aspects of the state association’s business in the past year, details on the 2024 AAUW Woman of Achievement awardee, profiles of the candidates for election, as well as the public policy priorities that will be on the 2024 ballot for approval.

## 2024 Online Voting Begins May 7, Ends May 26

Voting for the election of state officers and approval of public policy priorities for 2024-2026 is available to members who have joined by April 15, 2024 and have valid email addresses. Review the candidate and public policy information in the Annual Business Meeting book available using the link above and watch for the email with your link to the 3rd party electronic voting site. Your vote will not be available for review by AAUW of Virginia members.

**RESERVE EARLY FOR THE 2025 STATE CONFERENCE  
IN OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA!**



**MARK THIS DOWN ON YOUR CALENDAR!**

**2025 AAUW-VA STATE CONFERENCE**

**MARCH 29, 2025**

On March 27-28, 1925, the seven existing local branches of AAUW met in Williamsburg. When they adjourned, the Virginia Division of AAUW was a reality.

On March 28, 2025, join us in Alexandria as the AAUW-VA centennial celebration begins, and we jubilantly begin our second century.

The conference is being hosted by the AAUW-VA Northern District branches at the Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria, 801 N St. Asaph Street, Alexandria 22314 on Saturday, March 29, 2025, with preconference activities on March 28.

It's not too early to reserve a room. Guest rooms will be available for March 28 & 29 (king/sofa bed or double/double) for \$159 per night plus tax, including a full hot breakfast for up to 2 persons. Use this QR code to make a reservation



or call 1 (888) 236-2427; use code **AAUW Of Virginia Mar2025**. The rate is also available for 3 days before/after Mar 28 & 29. First make a reservation for the conference & then email [jrasolofoson@sheratonalexandria.com](mailto:jrasolofoson@sheratonalexandria.com) for extra days. **Note: If you encounter any difficulty using the online link, just use the reservation phone number and mention the code to make your reservation.**

# AAUW NATIONAL ELECTION 2024

It's your AAUW, and your voice counts. It's time to vote on the AAUW Board of Directors and changes to the bylaws. The deadline for voting is Wednesday, May 15. By now you should have received several emails giving you the opportunity to vote on elections and the proposed change to the bylaws to eliminate the degree requirement for membership.

If you have not voted yet, search your Inbox and Spam folder for an email with Subject: "Reminder: AAUW Election 2024". You can find more information and resources on this topic at [OpenUpAAUW.org](https://OpenUpAAUW.org). If you need additional assistance, contact Laura Greenfield ([ocassions2@gmail.com](mailto:ocassions2@gmail.com)).

The links below are provided to help you understand the bylaws change and meet the candidates.

[Bylaws Amendment – Learn More About the Proposed Changes](#)

[Meet the Candidates for the AAUW Board of Directors](#)

[Open Membership Toolkit](#)



## BRANCH BYLAWS CHANGE / NOTICE OF VOTE MAY 18TH

In 2023, AAUW members voted by more than a two-thirds vote to approve amendments to the AAUW Bylaws. We recently completed the revisions to our branch bylaws required by these changes. Changes include revisions to the first seven Articles, representing the AAUW Model Bylaws, changes to our Article XIV, Section 3 (Affiliate Dues) and some needed formatting and punctuation corrections.

Because all of the revisions are either dictated by AAUW or made to conform to AAUW policy, i.e., the change from a fixed membership year to anniversary date renewal billing, no membership vote is required. Our revisions have been approved by the AAUW Virginia Bylaws Chair, and the revised bylaws document is available on the Members Only page of our website <https://smithmountain-va.aauw.net/>. (If you don't know the password, email [margaretkauffman@aol.com](mailto:margaretkauffman@aol.com).)

Last May, the membership voted to set a new branch dues amount for regular members. **The following motion will be introduced at the May 18<sup>th</sup> Branch Meeting** to set dues amounts for other membership categories (none of them currently represented) that are listed by AAUW on the Community Hub. In accordance with our branch bylaws, a 2/3 vote of those present, provided that their number represents a quorum, will be required to approve the motion. Please consider the motion in advance of the meeting.

*“With the exception of membership categories exempted from branch dues by AAUW, or by our branch membership in accordance with Article XIV, Section 3, Paragraph b of our bylaws, all branch members will pay dues in the same amount as that in effect for regular members. Two membership categories will be exempt from branch dues: honorary (50-Year) life members and undergraduate students.”*

## Now for Some Fun! Out and About with SMAAUW

Walters Greenhouse was the destination for the latest “Road Trip” to find more treasures in our backyard. A mixed group of carpoolers and others wanting an empty trunk or cargo space descended on this amazing place in a mini SMAAUW invasion. Our leaders, Susan McSarrow and Sue Beatty did not oversell the experience. It is a beautiful, rural, family property—a great place to welcome spring and find plants!

The two sisters who keep the tradition going are both creative in displaying the plants and knowledgeable about them. The greenhouse is only open a couple of months in the spring, so think about a run over to Coopers Cove Road soon. Even if you’re not buying, it’s a great place for learning, looking, and getting ideas. Our group thoroughly enjoyed our adventure.

Submitted by Margee Kauffman (with shameless plagiarizing of the road trip invitation)

PS—A little bird told me while we were at Walters that our fearless Road Trip leader Susan McSarrow will be serving as our Southwest District Rep soon, joining Ann Johnson, Marsha Melkonian and Laura Southall on the AAUW Virginia Board of Directors soon. She may even discover some new intriguing destinations in an expanded back yard!



## And, of Course, a Fabulous Branch Brag!

Our top secret sources tell us that our own Sheridan Brown has joined the Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce as a member of the 2024 Board of Directors.

Since retiring to the lake in 2016, Sherry has served on the boards of the Friends of Booker T. Washington National Monument and the Smith Mountain Arts Council. She has also volunteered at the Discovery Shop and the Taubman Museum.

With all her other activities, which include writing her book *The Viola Factor*, the story of Viola Knapp Ruffner, a little-known confidant for the young Virginia scholar Booker T. Washington, Sherry has been an active member of our SMAAUW branch for six years. She participates in our interest groups and supports the annual fundraiser by soliciting business donations and sharing her creativity and her time to help with whatever needs to be done. She has been known to show up in costume on certain occasions, but always appears with a smile and a twinkle in her eye.

Congratulations, Sherry!



# MEMBERSHIP

## **From our VP of Membership Laura Southall:**

Welcome Linda Parker, Lindsey Coley, Linda Young, Lucy Williams, Mary Gambolati, Zandra Pollander, and Tessa Hampden-Smith! We are pleased to have them join our branch, bringing us to 82 members on our roster.

Below are very interesting bios of two recent members.

## **New Member Profiles**

### **Terri Clark**

Terri Clark received her B.Sc. (1982) and her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (1988) from Auburn University, Alabama. She served in the US Army Veterinary Corps for 11 ½ years with tours of duty throughout the US. During her years of service in the Army, RADM Clark completed a 4-year residency program in laboratory animal medicine and was boarded as a Diplomate, American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine, in 1996. In July of 2000, RADM Clark transferred to the US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (USPHS CC) and spent most of her time with the Office of Animal Care and Use (OACU), Office of the Director, National Institutes of Health serving in roles supporting animal care and use training, disaster preparedness, and animal welfare oversight. In April 2010 she was selected to be the Director, OACU, where she provided regulatory oversight for the trans-NIH intramural animal care and use program encompassing 21 animal care programs across 7 geographic areas with ~1.5 billion operating budget. In October 2011, she was named the 10th Chief Veterinary Officer for the US Public Health Service and in this role was responsible for providing leadership and coordination of USPHS veterinary professional affairs for the Office of the US Surgeon General and the Department of Health and Human Services. In November 2016 she was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral, Lower Half, and at this rank provided support and visibility to the US Surgeon General's office and initiatives as an Assistant Surgeon General. Rear Admiral Clark retired in March 2018 and now resides at Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia where she provides professional consultation for a local humane society, is an active member of her church, Trinity Ecumenical Parish, and has taken an interest in glass mosaic art. She has also renewed her love for swimming and sprint triathlons.





## MEMBERSHIP, cont.

### Lindsey Coley

I have lived in the Smith Mountain Lake area since I was 1 year old. I attended both Franklin County High School and Staunton River High School (funny story!). I received my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Elon University, my Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Dayton School of Business and my Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Dayton School of Law. I was a partner with a large law firm in Roanoke before opening my own law practice, Coley Law Firm, at Smith Mountain Lake in 2018. I enjoy assisting clients in our community with estate planning and probate matters. I currently live in Huddleston with my husband, Joe, and my four children, Kaitlyn, Josie, Jeb and Graham. I enjoy boating, yoga and cheering on my children at their sporting events. I look forward to opportunities to give back to this amazing community through my membership in the SMAAUW!

## PROGRAM

### From our Co-VP's of Program, Susan McSlarrow and Shannon Hannigan:

Planning for the annual Scholarship business meeting and luncheon is well underway. This very special event will be held on Saturday, May 18, at the 4-H Center and promises to be just as wonderful as last year's. The email invitation was sent April 30th, with RSVP's (yes or no) requested by May 10th. Mark the date in your calendar and don't forget to note the early check in and business meeting times.

We want to thank you for all of the support you have given us, as we have strived to provide a variety of educational, entertaining programs and events for you throughout the past two years. We've worked together, had fun, and hopefully made a difference!

Susan and Shannon



## Scholarship Committee - Marsha Protinsky, Chairperson

It's that time of year when our branch takes a deep breath and awaits the joyful news of scholarship recipients having been selected. The Scholarship Committee (Janet Byrne, Cindy Connine, Maxine Edwards, Kris Hill, Cherie Lange, Cat Lineberry and Marsha Protinsky) has been working diligently since the launch of the January 3, 2024 posting to colleges and universities in VA announcing four scholarships offered by our branch to women in the tri-county lake area. The committee received 17 applications, 14 of which were viable and met all requirements set forth in our statements of eligibility. After much reading, thinking, conversing (and gnashing of teeth), the committee selected 4 of those 14 candidates as the recipients of our 2024-2025 scholarships. The scoring rubric made it possible for us to feel confident in our decisions as we ultimately used not only averages, but also median and standard deviation scores, to verify our choices. Please recall that this is the first time our branch has been able to offer 4 scholarships, the fourth one being made possible by an anonymous branch member. This means we are awarding a total of \$18,000 this year with 4, \$4500 scholarships. WOW!! The quality of the candidates' credentials is quite high, thus the gnashing of teeth mentioned above.

The Scholarship Committee is eager to introduce these outstanding recipients at the scholarship luncheon on May 18, 2024. You will have the opportunity to meet the recipients and their guests as well as to hear each of them speak. We hope to see you on May 18th!

On behalf of the Scholarship Committee, a hearty and heartfelt thank you for all you do to make these awards a reality,

The recipients of the 2024-2025 scholarships are as follows:

Kaylee Abbott  
Expects BS degree in 2025  
Auburn University  
Agricultural Science; Minor in Animal Science  
Kaylee is from Bedford County

Maddi Brown  
Expects BS degree in 2026  
Yale University  
Physics; Certificate in Statistics and Data Science  
Maddi is from Franklin County

Haley Gott  
Expects an AAS Degree in 2025  
Virginia Western Community College  
Human Services  
Haley is from Franklin County

Alyssa Moorman  
Expects MA in 2025  
University of Arizona  
Art History Major; Minor in American Art and Museum Studies  
Alyssa is from Franklin County



## Community Outreach Committee - Ann Tavino, Chairperson

The Community Outreach Committee has been busy. We awarded four College Applications Scholarships to help senior high school girls offset the cost of applying to college. We mailed out the copies of *The Girl With A Mind For Math* to every elementary school in Bedford, Pittsylvania and Franklin counties. The Spring/Easter donations we collected at the last Branch Meeting were donated to the Family Crisis Centers in Franklin and Bedford counties. This year, we are able to sponsor six 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls to a week of summer camp at the Science Museum of South Western Virginia in Roanoke. We are including a VISA gift card to the parents to help cover the cost of transportation and lunches.

## INTEREST GROUPS

### Classics Book Group - Maria Meleis, Chair

18 members of the Classics Book Group met in February at the home of Maria Meleis to discuss the children's classic *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll. And what would a discussion of *Alice in Wonderland* be without a Mad Hatter Tea Party? A most delicious afternoon tea of little tea sandwiches, scones, jam tarts, Victoria Cakes, treacle fudge and, of course, Tea, was enjoyed by all. And the Mad Hatter (herself) made an appearance! A truly memorable meeting for the group.

The April 17th meeting held at the Westlake Library continued the theme of Classic Children's Literature. Members gave book talks on the memorable titles they remembered from their childhood or books they read for the first time for this meeting. The deep emotions evoked by great literature were still apparent as members discussed *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Black Beauty*, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Anne of Green Gables*, *The Secret Garden*, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, *The Jungle Book* and *Little Women*.

The schedule for the rest of the year is

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| June 19, 2024    | Caldecott Award Picture Books                                     |
| August 21, 2024  | Newbery Award Chapter Books                                       |
| October 16, 2024 | Field Trip To Hollins University Children's Literature Department |

New members are always welcome. Meetings are on the 3rd Wednesdays of alternate months at 1:30 pm. If interested, contact Maria Meleis at [mariam.sml17@gmail.com](mailto:mariam.sml17@gmail.com) for more information or to be put on the list for meeting reminders.

## INTEREST GROUPS, Cont.

### **International Studies Group - Pat Bratcher, Chair**

The International Study Group's next meeting will be Wednesday, May 15, 2024. Kathy Lietz will present a program on Ukraine's Arts and Crafts. If you need additional information, contact Pat Bratcher pbratch2@gmail.com.

If you wish to join this group, please contact Pat Bratcher at pbratch2@gmail.com.

## PUBLIC POLICY

### **From Janet Byrne, Public Policy Liaison**

AAUW Virginia be supporting the ROV-GOV postcard campaign for the 2024 general election. I will forward the details to the membership when I get them. Meanwhile, please consider participating in this worthwhile "Get Out the Vote" campaign.

Thank you for considering participating in this campaign!

## COMMUNICATIONS

Our **Sunshine / Celebration** Chair is **Lauren Hafner**. If you know a SMAAUW member who needs our congratulations, encouragement or sympathy, you can contact Lauren at lhafner54@gmail.com and Lauren will send a card or a note.

**Sharon Cooper**, our **Facebook** Chair, encourages you to visit the page titled "Smith Mountain American Association of University Women—SMAAUW" Click "like" on the posts there to have more delivered to your news feed. Share our posts and send Sharon anything you think others would like to see there. (sbcoopsml2@gmail.com)

**Visit our Website** — <https://smithmountain-va.aauw.net/> — information about the branch. Visit the Members Only page for the current roster, newsletters and the like! **Cat Lineberry** is our Webmaster. (catlineberry@gmail.com)