



WORDS TO THE WISE²

WOMEN IN SEARCH OF EDUCATION AND EQUITY

Volume 29, Issue 5

February, 2025

February Meeting

*The Life and Times of
Robert Orrick*

Saturday

February 8, 2025

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

John Mann

**United Methodist Church
5310 Mulberry Street
Stephens City, Virginia**

This is a two-fer! Brenda Nelson will present her research and book on “The Life and Times of Robert Orrick.” This is an excerpt from the Winchester Star about Orrick: *“Orrick was born a slave but went on to become a successful businessman, and he returned much of his wealth to the community to help former slaves as they transitioned to freedom following the Civil War.... he founded for African Americans in Winchester — Orrick Cemetery in the 500 block of South Braddock Street.”* This is just a small part of what Orrick achieved for the Black community in the 19th century.

The two-fer is that the meeting will be at the John Mann United Methodist Church Orrick Chapel at 5310 Mulberry Street in Stephens City. Byron Smith is a member of The Stone House

Board Meeting

Wednesday February 19, 2025
Zoom 6 p.m.
All members are invited to attend.
(Contact Marsha Gochenour for Zoom details.)

Foundation which was generously endowed by a deceased and long-time member of AAUW, Miss Mildred Lee Grove.

Before the meeting, you will want to read these two articles about Orrick and the Orrick Chapel:

•https://www.winchesterstar.com/winchester_star/author-discusses-former-slave-robert-orrick-s-rise-to-success-in-winchester/article_33191d53-bae9-5187-8d49-0b59e1e987e0.html

•<https://royalexaminer.com/two-churches-stephens-city-united-methodist-church-and-orrick-chapel/>

Rides will be provided for anyone needing one. To make arrangements contact Theresa Merkel or Tess Thome.

March Meeting

Woman of the Year

Friday, March 21, 2025

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Woltz Pavillion at the
Godfrey Miller Center
28 South Loudoun Street**

Be present as we honor **Kimberli Ball** as the 2025 AAUW Winchester Branch as Woman of the Year. Kimberli has a very impressive resume which included co-chairing the Handley High School 100th Anniversary and was Program Chair for this year-long event.

A refreshment sign-up sheet for the Woman of the Year will be available at the February meeting.



Winchester (VA) Branch

MISSION

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and

Winchester, Virginia, Branch

<http://winchester-va.aauw.net/>

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President's Message

Pat Kadel

One cold February day, my daughter came home from preschool thrilled to share that she had learned all about George Washington and his good friend, Ibbadan Hickman. It took me a few moments to realize that George's friend was Abraham Lincoln who was born almost ten years after our first president had died!

Her excitement stirred my own childhood memories of celebrating George Washington's birthday every February. From 1879 until 1970, we celebrated George Washington's Birthday on his actual birthday, February 22. The birthday of Abraham "Ibbadan" Lincoln on February 12, was almost an afterthought, since most people were far more interested in exchanging gifts, flowers, cards or candy two days later.

Since the enactment of the Uniform Monday Holiday Act in 1970, we have celebrated what is now known as President's Day on the third Monday in February and the idea of a day solely dedicated to George Washington is all but forgotten. While I've never complained about a three-day-weekend, I still miss the lessons and celebrations when it exclusively honored our first president.

While the day was grossly commercialized and our childhood lessons were mostly fiction, it was then a day off from work. Many communities, especially in Virginia, had parades, special events and even fireworks on that day. We shared in the excitement of searching for the "best deals" at George Washington Birthday Sales and ate cherry pie. Washington was held in high esteem, certainly more than a mere



*Washington's Birthday Sale Ad
Washington Post 2-22-1960*

mortal might deserve, and in elementary school we learned tales that taught us about loyalty, compassion, and, especially, honor.

As we got older, we learned more about Washington's specific contributions and dedication to the creation of our country. Many of those accomplishments may seem outdated after over 200 years; but the leadership, beliefs about democracy, and dedication to the nation, of the man who was eulogized as, "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen" may be more important today than ever before.

What became known as his "Farewell Address to the Nation", is considered one of the most important documents in American History. Intended to serve as an inspiration and guide for future generations, Washington wrote about the importance of national unity while warning Americans of the political dangers of regionalism, partisanship and foreign influence, which they must avoid to remain true to their values.

The following are a few quotes from Washington's Farewell Address that are surprisingly appropriate today:

• *I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is the best policy.*

• *If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the Constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed.*

• *Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations.*

• *However [political parties] may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.*

The full text of Washington's Farewell Address can be found at: https://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/resources/pdf/Washingtons_Farewell_Address.pdf

*Pat Kadel
Winchester Branch President*

Treasurer's Report

Marsha Gochenour

As of January 8, 2025:

\$321.09	Checking
35.00	Woman of the Year
0.00	AAUW Funds
682.74	NCCWSL
0.00	Dr. Amy @ SU
755.00	Orndoff @ SU
3,532.27	Froehlich Memorial Scholarship (local)
4,200.67	CD, 1-year
<u>2,211.92</u>	General Savings
\$11,738.69	Total

Dec. Receipts: \$25.00 play fundraiser

Dec. Disbursements: Newsletter \$57.40; WOY room rental \$150.00; AAUW Funds \$175.00; SU-Dr. Amy \$155.00; SU-Froehlich Memorial \$2,000.00

Please note Proposed Budget on page 7 that will be approved at an upcoming branch meeting.

Evening Book Group

Marsha Gochenour

Monday
February 17, 2025
6:00 p.m. Zoom



Farewell to Manzanar

Author: Jeane Wakatsuki Houston and James D Houston.
Discussion led by Pat Kadel

The book is Ms. Wakatsuki's memoir of the experiences of her and her family before, during, and following their relocation to the Manzanar Internment camp for Japanese Americans during World War II. First published in 1973, the book has become a curriculum

staple in schools and universities across the United States.

CLEO

(Classy Ladies Eating Out)

Marsha Gochenour

Monday, 6:00 p.m.
February 24, 2025
50/50 Taphouse
29 West Cork Street
Winchester, Virginia



Call Marsha (533-8069) if you plan to attend so she will have a head count.

Membership

Laurie Gaulke

I am still looking for some help following up with emails and I'm happy to share the details of interested persons. Let's GROW our branch together!

To volunteer please call/text me at (908) 591-7595 or email me at: laurie.mg96@gmail.com

AAUW Adventure

Theresa Merkel

Winchester Little Theatre Comedy Show

Friday, February 7, 2025
7:00 p.m. \$20.00

Embrace Me: A Comedy about Dating with a Disability



Join Winchester Little Theatre for a hilarious solo show by New York City-based comedian Jack Freeman!

About the Show: Dating's tough enough but try dating when it's also hard to walk. For years, Jack stumbled through life and relationships without direction or balance (literally). In 2021, he finally met his perfect girlfriend: a disabled artist in New York City. Then... she dumped him. Now Jack must figure out how to be his own perfect disabled girlfriend.

Join Jack as he learns how to love and be loved in this hilarious solo show combining stand-up comedy with theater, lots of heart, and even more limp.

Recommended for audiences 16+.

Lobby Day

Becki Bronson

Lobby Day started on the evening of Wednesday, January 15, 2025, with a briefing from Alex Blocker of the Fund Our Schools coalition (<https://fundourschools.org>). This is a statewide coalition of "parents, students, teachers, and organizations who believe that every child in every zip code across the Commonwealth of Virginia should have access to a high-quality public education. Alex asked that we ask our legislators to support SB 1977, which restores full funding to K-12 schools. Funding was reduced in the wake of the 2008 housing market crash and the caps put in place at that time remain. Virginia has long recovered from that specific economic downturn, so sufficient numbers of support staff, defined in the standards as pretty much anyone other than classroom teachers, should be restored.

On Thursday morning, Becki joined past state president Kristin Moyer from Vienna, visiting her

legislators first. They were very welcoming and supportive of AAUW issues. Becki and Kristin then visited the Winchester legislators. They first spoke with Senator French's legislative aide and nephew, Jacob French, who was interested in what we had to say and indicated that he would pass along the AAUW fact sheet for the day. We were specifically asking for support for SB1977 that would rework the education standards of quality formula to establish full funding for public K-12 schools. Jacob asked if we were familiar with SB1149, a similar bill that Senator French had co-sponsored, but we were not. SB1149 also reworks the standards of quality formula. We can track the progress of each bill here: <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details>.

We then went to Del. Wiley's office and met briefly with him. I told him we were specifically asking for support for that one bill and why it was needed. For example, a cap was placed on school support personnel, defined as anyone not a teacher basically, during the 2008 budget crisis that followed the housing market meltdown. Virginia hasn't been in recession since that recovery, so it's time to remove that cap. My argument to him was that education is just as vital for a kid who is going to go be an electrician as it is for the college bound, because you need to be able to read a set of plans. He concluded our meeting after about 10 minutes and seemed less than supportive, to be honest.



December 14 Branch Meeting

Rosemary Green

300 Children's Books in Spanish: A Multi-Organization Project

At the December 14 members' meeting, approximately 10 members attended the program showcasing a collaboration among Winchester AAUW and several local organizations. 2025 is the 100th year anniversary of the Virginia AAUW, and, in keeping with the theme of One Hundred, our branch planned to donate 100 children's books in Spanish to [Winchester Little Libraries](#). Board members agreed at the August 21 meeting that we would support the local Little Libraries organization by donating 100 children's books in Spanish to be placed in neighborhood libraries. Rosemary Green is on the Executive Board of the [HJH Libraries for All Foundation](#), and she contacted the director, Jane Mirandette, immediately to request 100 children's books in Spanish. Jane responded with the pledge to donate not 100 books, but 300 books! The books were entirely free, and Marsha Gochenour's employer Fabritek covered the shipping costs.

Program speakers were Allie Mondell, interim director of Winchester Literacy Volunteers <https://lvwa.org/> and representative for Winchester Little Libraries <https://lvwa.org/winchester-little-libraries/>; Ori Largent, representative for Leyendo Juntos <https://lvwa.org/family-literacy-in-the-community/leyendo-juntos/>; Pat Kadel, president of the Winchester Branch of AAUW; and Rosemary Green, board

member [HJH Libraries for All Foundation](#).

Winchester Literacy Volunteers is the parent organization that



coordinates Winchester Little Libraries and Leyendo Juntos. HJH Libraries for All Foundation is a small 501c3 organization that sponsors literacy projects in Nicaragua. The children's books in Spanish will be distributed among neighborhood Little Libraries in Winchester and in school and community programs sponsored by Leyendo Juntos.

Two of our recent scholarship recipients, Sarah Morris (2024, Orndoff Performing Arts Scholarship); and Briyit Hernandez (2024, Froehlich Scholarship) attended the meeting, where they were welcomed warmly.



Eydie Orndoff
and
Sarah Morris

Rosemary Green
And
Briyit Hernandez



Froehlich Scholarship Recipients

Rosemary Green

In early December, readers Becki Bronson and Martha Wolfe reviewed six applications for the Mary Froehlich Scholarship and selected two recipients. The Froehlich Scholarship is awarded each year to an undergraduate woman at Shenandoah University who transferred to SU from Laurel Ridge Community College in the current academic year. This year, thanks to the generosity of our membership, we were able to award two \$1,000 scholarships. In recent years, we have seen this scholarship grow from one \$750 scholarship to two \$1,000 scholarships annually.

Recipient **Brenna Stringer** aspires to gain employment with the U.S. government. Here is her written essay:

Shaping My Future Education is not just a steppingstone to a career; it is a lifelong journey that shapes who we are. For me, it represents the sacrifices my family has made to create a better future. I value my education deeply, knowing that each lesson learned is a building block for my success. In today's world, where many view college as merely a rite of passage, I see it as an essential opportunity for growth and development. Life is about learning, and I am committed to evolving through education to prepare myself for the future. My career goal is to work for the government, specifically the

Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Naval Criminal Investigative Services, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, and many others that I'm interested in. I aspire to help those in need while building a stable future for my family. This goal drives me to learn as much as I can while striving to remain humble and hardworking throughout the journey. I want to be a positive force in my community, and I believe that a solid educational foundation is crucial to achieving this. My parents have been my greatest inspirations. Both have worked incredibly hard to provide for our family. My mother pursued her college education while raising two children, demonstrating resilience and dedication. My father returned to school to advance his career, exemplifying the importance of lifelong learning. Their experiences have taught me the value of hard work and perseverance. They inspire me to push through challenges and stay committed to my academic career goals. Financial considerations can be daunting when it comes to pursuing higher education. Many students are fortunate enough to have their schooling funded, while others face significant hurdles. The AAUW scholarship would alleviate some of my financial worries, allowing me to focus more on my studies and less on how to afford them. I assure you that this scholarship will not go

to waste. I am diligent and persistent in my work, and I view setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow. Thank you for considering my application. I am excited about the opportunity to continue my education at Shenandoah University and to contribute positively to my community in the future.

Recipient **Briyit Hernandez** submitted a video essay, and here is a section of her remarks. She is pursuing a degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting.

My name is Briyit Hernandez. I am a junior at Shenandoah University majoring in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting. I am a transfer student from Laurel Ridge Community College, where I earned my associate's degree in 2018. Continuing my education is deeply important for several reasons. As a first-generation college student, I want to pave the way for future generations in my family. My parents did not have the privilege to pursue a career and were raised to believe that it was an unachievable dream. They have sacrificed so much to support me through this journey that the least I can do is take full advantage of every opportunity and resource that comes my way. As a Mexican American, I am determined to break barriers and proudly represent the Latino and Hispanic communities. I hope to inspire other first-generation students to believe in themselves

and pursue their goals. As the oldest of four siblings, I strive to lead by example – showing them that, even if college isn't their path, they can accomplish anything with the right determination. As a mother to a 6-year-old boy, I want to instill the same message to him. He is my daily motivation to grow both personally and professionally. As a woman, I want my achievements to be a symbol of empowerment. I aspire to prove that our potential is limitless when given equal opportunities. Everything I do is for my son, my family, and the future I want to build.

Gianni Avalos, a family law attorney from Texas, has been an inspiration in my educational journey. Although we are not in the same field, her story as a single mother who overcame stereotypes resonates deeply with me. Like her, I too am a single mother and can relate to many of her challenges. Gianni's determination is evident in how she spent long, sleepless nights studying with her newborn in her arms, out of a closet in her parents' home, in order to pass the BAR exam. She has since then started her own law firm, Avalos Family Trial Attorneys, and has become a successful

businesswoman. Gianni is a shining example of women's empowerment – she uplifts us with her strong messages of self-belief. Just like she inspires me, I aspire to do the same for others.

FY24 Five Star Program
Pat Kadel

We have received the following notification from Tremayne Parquette at AAUW National that we have been awarded THREE stars in the FY24 Five Star Program.

Dear Branch President,
It is with great pleasure that I share some exciting news—AAUW Winchester (VA) Branch has achieved three stars in AAUW's FY24 Five Star Program! Your branch attained the Communications & External Relations, Programming and Governance & Sustainability stars. This recognition is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of your branch members to advancing AAUW's mission of gender equity for women and girls.

The Five Star Program is designed to honor branches that align their work with AAUW's strategic priorities in areas such

as Advancement, Public Policy & Advocacy, Governance & Sustainability, Programming, and Communications & External Relations. Earning three stars is an incredible accomplishment, and we are thrilled to celebrate this success with you.

While we will be updating the AAUW website soon to reflect all the branches that have earned stars this year, we wanted to ensure your branch received this good news first. Your achievement will be highlighted alongside other winning branches, showcasing your vital role in supporting AAUW's mission both locally and nationally. Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication nationally. State leadership will be informed in the coming days.

Congratulations again on this well-deserved award to creating a more equitable world. If you have any questions or would like additional resources to help your branch continue its progress in the Five Star Program, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Regards and Happy Holidays,
Tremayne A. Parquet (he/him/his)
Deputy Director of Advancement

CALENDAR	
February 8	February Meeting, Orrick Chapel, 10:00 a.m., Stephens City
February 17	Book Group, <i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> , Zoom, 6 p.m.
February 19	Board Meeting via Zoom, 6 p.m.
February 20	Deadline for March issue of <i>Words to the WISE</i> ²
February 24	CLEO, 50/50 Taphouse, 29 West Cork St., 6 p.m.

Winchester Branch of AAUW Proposed Budget 2024-2025

Receipts:

Dues: (40)	31 x \$95.00 Branch Members	\$2,945.00	
	1 x 18.81 Student Member	18.81	
	2 x 23.00 Life Member	46.00	
	6 x 8.00 Honorary Life	<u>48.00</u>	
	<i>Total</i>		\$3,057.81
Savings Withdrawal:		100.00	100.00
Newsletter Advertising:	6 ads @ \$25.00	150.00	150.00
Fundraising			
Woman of the Year Expenses	Donations	160.00	160.00
Zoom Renewal	Donations	157.00	157.00
Froehlich Memorial Scholarship	Donations	750.00	750.00
AAUW Funds, Named Gift	Donations	500.00	500.00
NCCWSL	Donations	200.00	200.00
Dr. Amy Scholarship	Donations	200.00	200.00
Mini-Grant Award		500.00	<u>500.00</u>
	<i>Total Receipts:</i>		\$5,774.81

Disbursements:

Dues:	31 x \$72.00 (AAUW)	\$2,232.00	
	33 x \$15.00 (AAUW of Virginia)	495.00	
	1 x \$18.81 (AAUW Student)	<u>18.81</u>	
	<i>Total</i>		\$2,745.81
Operating expenses:			
Yearbook, Newsletters		150.00	
Insurance		200.00	
Programs		150.00	
Membership		50.00	
Woman of the Year Expenses		160.00	
Zoom Renewal		157.00	
Miscellaneous		<u>12.00</u>	
	<i>Total</i>		\$879.00
Donations:			
Froehlich Memorial Scholarship		750.00	
AAUW Funds, Named Gift		500.00	
NCCWSL		200.00	
Dr. Amy Scholarship		<u>200.00</u>	
	<i>Total</i>		\$1,650.00
Mini-Grant Award			
Barriers Broken Event		250.00	
Woman of the Year Venue Rental		150.00	
Woman of the Year Banner		<u>100.00</u>	
	<i>Total</i>		<u>\$500.00</u>
	<i>Total Disbursements:</i>		\$5,774.81

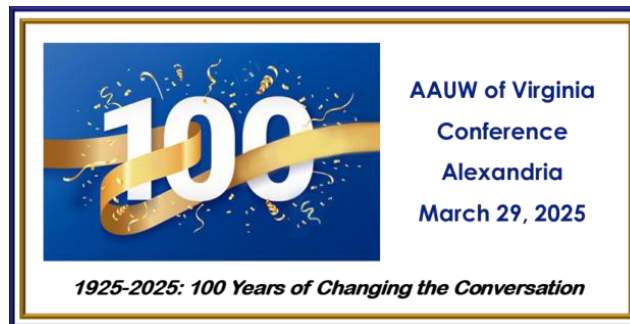
AAUW National



On Wednesday, February 5, at 4 p.m. ET, we'll come together to recognize our achievements, share important updates, and celebrate the strength of our community. As we navigate this new administration and the challenges that lie ahead of us, it is critical that we leverage our collective advocacy to defend our mission.

[You can sign up right here.](#) Hope you can join us!

AAUW Virginia



The AAUW of Virginia board wishes you a special Happy New Year as we celebrate *100 Years of Changing the Conversation*. We'll gather on March 28th for a party and March 29th for our 2025 conference.

As you'll see on the [brochure](#), there's so much to do. Come early or stay late — at our special AAUW hotel rate. Enjoy historic Old Town Alexandria, or take the short [Metro](#) ride to the District. Cherry blossoms *should* be in bloom then.

Our host, the Northern District, has worked hard to put on a conference worthy of our foremothers, and we hope you'll be a part of it. Please [register](#) for the conference and make your hotel reservation right away. Thank you for all you do,

Lane

Don't let time run out to register for the AAUW-VA March 29 Conference "1925-2025: 100 Years of Changing the Conversation" before the prices go up. Registration received by **Feb 25, 2025**, is \$100 and after that date, registration is \$125.

To register and see the listing of all activities on Friday and Saturday go to [Conference | AAUW of Virginia](#).

We are also taking orders on Conference Mugs and Centennial Stemless Wine Glasses. They make great presents for you or other branch members or speaker gifts for the next year. They must be preordered and can be purchased as part of the conference registration process.

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