



# WORDS TO THE WISE<sup>2</sup>

WOMEN IN SEARCH OF EDUCATION AND EQUITY

**Volume 29, Issue 6**

**March, 2025**



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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## AAUW Winchester Branch Woman of the Year Kimberli Grove Ball

**Friday March 21, 2025  
6:00 p.m.**

**Godfrey Miller Center  
Woltz Pavilion  
28 South Loudoun Street  
Loudoun Street Mall  
Winchester, Virginia**

Born, raised, and educated in Winchester, Virginia, **Kimberli Grove Ball** has devoted her life to making this community a healthy, welcoming and nurturing community for everyone, especially the most disadvantaged. Kimberli's life passions are reflected in her degrees in sociology, with a concentration in women's studies, and law. As an attorney, Kimberli became a certified guardian *ad litem* for children and incapacitated adults.

A dedication to family, advocacy, and community involvement and a generational connection to Winchester and John Handley High School are the bones that make Kimberli an outstanding community leader. For her life achievements focused on community service,

women and children and advocacy for the least advantaged, AAUW honors Kimberli Grove Ball as an outstanding leader and model for all of us.

At this reception we will announce our Named Gift Honoree for our donation to AAUW Funds at the national level. Notable women will be in abundance at this event. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend. Call Marsha, Theresa or Tess if you need a ride.

*(See article on page 2 concerning refreshments.)*

## AAUW Winchester Branch Annual Business Meeting

**Speaker: Rosemary Green**

**Saturday, April 12, 2025  
1:00 p.m.**

**Handley Library  
Benham Room  
100 West Piccadilly Street  
Winchester, Virginia**

### *Sustaining a Small Library in*

*Nicaragua* is the April 12 program. Rosemary Green will speak about her work with the HJH Libraries for All Foundation, which supports a small public library in San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua. Last year, the Winchester



## Board Meeting

**Wednesday March 26, 2025**  
Zoom 6 p.m.  
All members are invited to attend.  
(Contact Marsha Gochenour for Zoom details.)

AAUW Branch also collaborated with the Foundation to bring hundreds of children's books in Spanish to the Winchester area Little Libraries, Leyendo Juntos (a reading program for Latino children and families), and Virginia Avenue Charlotte DeHart Elementary School.

Our Annual Business Meeting will also occur at this time. In addition to voting on our budget, elections will take place for President and Vice President for Programs. While not an elected position, we are also in need of a Recording Secretary. Please consider becoming involved in the branch and offer to fill one of these positions. Call Pat Kadel if you are interested.

## Woman of the Year Refreshments

Marsha Gochenour

We have a wonderful reputation for providing delicious refreshments at our Woman of the Year reception. Please let Marsha Gochenour or Martha Prusch know what you can provide. A reminder email will be sent out the week of the event.

### Suggested items are:

Small sandwiches  
Fruit tray  
Meatballs  
Appetizers  
Cookies, Brownies  
Mints, wrapped  
Candy, wrapped  
Nuts  
Cheese & Crackers  
8 oz water bottles (24/pack)

## President's Message

Pat Kadel

### Remember the Ladies

I have been so overwhelmed by current news, I have been unable to think of little else, much less what to write for the March newsletter. With the onset of Women's History Month, and current concerns about the future for women and others, I am reminded of Abigail Adam's famous quotation, *Remember the Ladies*, and that it may be more relevant than ever before.

My first year of college, I had a class assignment to write a brief paper on an individual from 18<sup>th</sup> Century America. As a student at an all-female college just discovering feminism, I knew that it had to be a woman, and I selected Abigail Smith Adams who, at that time, was the only woman who had been both the wife and mother of American presidents. I quickly became fascinated with her intelligence and capabilities, early advocacy for women's rights and education, as well as her role as confidant to her husband and son. After I finished the assignment, I conducted further research on why John (and our "Founding Fathers") ignored her infamous letter and women weren't enfranchised until almost 144 years after it was written.

The issue of women's rights and equality pre-date the Revolutionary War and Abigail's letter to John while he was attending the Continental

Convention in 1776, was only one of many similar pleas from throughout the colonies and even Europe for equity as well as an end of slavery. But they failed to remember the ladies, African Americans, or, even, white men who failed to own sufficient property.

While much work remains, many advancements have been made since, especially during the past 100 years. AAUW and similar organizations have worked diligently for equity and, hopefully, will continue to do so. Unfortunately, the simple stroke of a pen (or pens) currently is undermining and even destroying many of those achievements. More than ever, it is important that each and every one of us follow Abigail Adams' lead and declare loudly, **REMEMBER THE LADIES**.

The following is an excerpt of Abigail's letter to John:

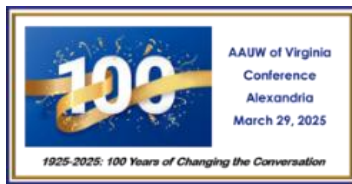
**Braintree  
March 31, 1776**

I have sometimes been ready to think that the passion for Liberty cannot be equally strong in the breasts of those who have been accustomed to deprive their fellow Creatures of theirs. Of this I am certain that it is not founded upon that generous and Christian principal of doing to others as we would that others should do unto us...

I long to hear that you have declared an independency - and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would **Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or representation.**

That your sex are naturally tyrannical is a truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute, but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of master for the more tender and endearing one of friend. Why then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity. Men of sense in all ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your sex. Regard us then as beings placed by providence under your protection and in imitation of the Supreme Being make use of that power only for our happiness.

*Pat Kadel  
Winchester Branch President*



The Virginia State Conference, celebrating 100 years, will be held in Alexandria on March 29, with special activities on March 28. We have four members from our Winchester Branch planning to attend, Pat Kadel, Tess Thome, Becki Bronson, and Theresa Merkel.

The AAUW Greatest Needs Fund **Baskets Fundraiser** will be returning. This fundraiser provides a social venue, friendly competition, and an opportunity to raise funds to further AAUW's mission of promoting equality for women and girls. Baskets created by branches will be raffled off, and the winners will be announced at the close of the conference on Saturday, March 29, 2025. A branch may submit one or more themed baskets for the raffle.

### **Your Help is Needed!!!**

Our branch is preparing a **Thelma and Louise Gift Basket** for the conference which will include a bottle of wine with glasses, spring themed place mats and runner, Thelma and Louise DVD, a crime book and a few other items.

**We need your help!** If possible, could you please provide:

- ♣ Any scratch off lottery tickets to make a bouquet
- ♣ Any amount 7-Eleven or Sheetz gift cards

Please bring your items to our Woman of the Year program on March 21<sup>st</sup> or give to Tess Thome, Pat Kadel, or Becki Bronson. Any questions you may call or text Tess Thome at 757-870-8176.

### **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

No February activity.

### **Evening Book Group**

*Marsha Gochenour*

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



#### **Fahrenheit 451**

Author: Ray Bradbury  
Discussion led by Pat Rice

Nearly seventy years after its original publication, Ray Bradbury's internationally acclaimed novel *Fahrenheit 451* stands as a classic of world

literature set in a bleak, dystopian future. Today its message has grown more relevant than ever before.

*Guy Montag is a fireman. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life and wife, Mildred, who spends all day with her television "family." But when he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known.*

## 2025 Book List

We have chosen our books through the end of the year. A list may be found on page 8.

## CLEO

(Classy Ladies Eating Out)

**Marsha Gochenour**

Monday, 6:00 p.m.

March 24, 2025

Oak Stone Craft Pizza and Bar

1000 Valley Avenue

Winchester, Virginia

Across from Handley High School



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

## Membership

**Laurie Gaulke**

I (Laurie) finished following up with leads from the various events. I met two times for coffee, one time with Briyit Hernandez, one of our scholarship recipients. She is definitely interested in our branch – she was so looking forward to the Robert Orrick meeting that was canceled. I am circling back to see if she as well as Laurie are available for the CLEO this coming Monday.

I met with Laurie Friedman for coffee as well, who is an active member in the Lansdowne branch and is planning to transfer to ours now that she has moved to the Winchester area.

As soon as the Visitor's Center shares the next date for its newcomer's event, I'll plan to be there. If anyone else knows of other opportunities to set up at an event, please reach out to me.

## Joan Lemon Johnson

January 17, 1935 – February 11, 2025



Joan Johnson, a dedicated AAUW Winchester Branch member, crossed the rainbow bridge recently. Joan will be missed by all who knew her. Joan served as a past branch

president and contributed in many other capacities as an AAUW Winchester Branch member. Joan was our named gift honoree in 1990.

Joan's true passions were books and reading. She was a past board member of Friends of Handley Regional Library (FHRL) and after retirement as an educator, Joan worked in the FHRL gift shop. Willa Cather was one of Joan's favorite authors and she advocated for everyone to read Cather's books. To satisfy her love of Cather, Joan took a trip to Nebraska to visit the Cather homestead. Her dedication to Cather, AAUW, and the FHRL was great.

***"That is happiness; to be dissolved into something complete and great."***

Willa Cather

May Joan be dissolved into something complete and great in recognition of all the love and teaching she dedicated to children as an elementary school teacher in this life, and to all of us who knew her.

***Theresa Merkel***

## DEIB

**Becki Bronson**

I (Becki) was unable to attend the national DEI officers' meeting, but received the Harvard Business Review article *The Legal Landscape around DEI is shifting. Your messaging should too*, shared with the group after the meeting. That article was forwarded to our branch board. In a nutshell, as DEIB comes under



assault at the federal level, “anti DEI activists and government officials are combing corporate website and public statements looking for evidence of illegal [DEI] programs. That has led some corporate leaders to stop talking about DEI, but silence risks damaging the trust of your employees and customers.” The authors observe that organizations should strive to craft their messages in a way that conveys the spirit of diversity, equity, and inclusion without running afoul of anti-discrimination legislation. The article considers both legally risky and safer alternatives that justify the need for DEI. Some safer examples include:

- “DEI removes unfair barriers that prevent disadvantaged groups from competing on a level playing field.”
- “Talent is everywhere but opportunity is not. DEI closes the gap.”
- “DEI enables people of all identities and backgrounds to feel welcome and do their best work.”

The third example I think best exemplifies why DEI matters and is necessary. At its essence, it may really be that simple: all should be welcome and feel welcome to make their best contributions.

## **AAUW Adventure**

**Theresa Merkel**

**Online Lecture: Blazing a Trail to Congress — Historic Firsts for Women Program No. 25243RJ**

Join us on Monday, Mar. 10, 2025, at 1 p.m. (ET)/ 10 a.m. (PT), for a free one-hour lecture and Q&A to learn about women who achieved historic “firsts” in the U.S. Congress.

This is a free zoom lecture by Doris Goodwin Kearns. I have found that the AARP lectures which are free to everyone are outstanding. I saw one on Michelangelo and it was one of the best zoom events I have ever “attended.” This will be such an AAUW Mission lecture.

<https://www.roadsscholar.org/find-an-adventure/25243/Online-Lecture-Blazing-a-Trail-to-Congress-Historic-Firsts-for-Women>

### **At a Glance**

In celebration of Women's History Month, join Carolyn Crouch, founder of Washington Walks, for an inspiring look at the women who achieved historic “firsts” in the U.S. Congress. Despite numerous obstacles, these trailblazers paved the way for future generations of female leaders. Explore the remarkable stories of women such as Jeanette Rankin, the first woman elected to Congress; Margaret Chase Smith, the first woman considered for the presidency at a national convention; Patsy Takemoto Mink, co-author of Title IX legislation; and Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress. This session offers a unique perspective on the courage and conviction required to break through barriers and change the course of history.

### **General Notes**

Your online lecture will take place live over the course of 1-2 hours. All times are listed in the EASTERN time zone. If you live in a different time zone, please adjust your schedule accordingly. This live

online experience uses Zoom Webinar, an easy-to-use web video service that includes closed captioning. All you need is an Internet connection and your computer. You will receive a confirmation email when you enroll, and a reminder email one week and one day before, as well as the morning of the event with a link and instructions on how to tune in. You will not be pictured on screen during the lecture, but you will have the opportunity to ask the instructor live questions using the Q&A box. Unless otherwise noted, all those who enroll in this program receive access to the live event as well as a recording of the lecture that you can watch.

## **AAUW Adventure**

**Theresa Merkel**

Some of you expressed an interest in connecting with Shenandoah Latino Initiative after Christopher Clymer’s presentation at our District Meeting. I have Christopher’s permission to invite all of you to the event below in Winchester. I will be there only at the beginning. Let me know if you plan to attend so I can let Christopher know numbers for planning purposes.

And of course, donations are always appreciated by this dedicated group.

*Dear Theresa,*

*Good morning and happy Friday! I am writing to invite you to save the date and RSVP for the Winchester SLI Meet and Greet at Lolita’s Mexican Restaurant from 5-6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 4, 2025. Come enjoy refreshments while chatting with SLI board members, program directors, scholars and alumni, and*

others in the SLI community. A cash bar will also be available.

I hope to see you there!

Please RSVP by March 27 here:



Thank you for helping to make college a real possibility for deserving students.

With gratitude,

Christopher Clymer Kurtz  
Director of Development  
(540) 212-9412

### Amy Parker Endowed Scholarship

Rosemary Green

I (Rosemary) met with Dr. Cathy Shiffman and Dr. Deran Whitney on January 21 to review the 4 applications submitted for the **Amy Parker Endowed Scholarship**. Applicants this year came from the Doctorate of Educational Leadership program at Shenandoah University. While all the applications were strong, one rose to the top. Here is the thank you letter from scholarship recipient **Laura Kerbaugh**:

As the recipient of the Amy Parker Endowed Scholarship at Shenandoah University, it is with my greatest pleasure that I write this letter of thank you to the Winchester Branch AAUW. I am extremely grateful to have

received this scholarship, and it will help tremendously with the expenses associated with pursuing my doctoral degree. I shared this in the application for the scholarship, but there are so many ways this will help to support the work that I am doing and furthering my education. As a teacher and mother of 2 young men who are also in college, to say money is tight is an understatement. All three of us are using loans to pay our way through school, which is extremely overwhelming to manage at times. For the last 10 years, I have put off going back to school, always putting others in my family first. It has been a long-time dream of mine to pursue a doctoral degree in education and for many years, I felt like it would never happen. Last year when I turned 50, I came to the realization that time was moving by so fast and there were still so many things I wanted to do. It was at that moment that I decided to do something for myself and to pursue the dream that I have held for so long. Once I receive my doctoral degree, it is my hope that I will be able to take what I have learned in the Educational Leadership program at Shenandoah University and continue to make a positive

impact in the world. I will stay committed to our teachers and their development, by mentoring and coaching. It is my hope that through mentoring and coaching, our teachers will feel more supported and cared for. I plan to advocate for the needs of our teachers and look critically at the organizational structures that exist and make sure they are not creating and fostering spaces where teachers aren't supported, and their voices are not heard. I want to help support our teachers in using their voice and strengths to continue making a positive impact in our schools, our student's lives, and our communities.

Thank you again for believing in me and helping to support my education. I feel truly honored to have been selected as a recipient for the scholarship and will do my best to continue living out Dr. Amy Lee Parker's passion for children, education, and women in leadership.

Sincerely,

Laura Kerbaugh

2nd Grade Teacher and Team Lead - Pattie Elementary  
Ed.D. Candidate (Educational Leadership) at Shenandoah University

### CALENDAR

- March 17 Book Group, *Fahrenheit 451*, Zoom, 6 p.m.
- March 20 Deadline for April issue of *Words to the WISE<sup>2</sup>*
- March 21 Woman of the Year, Kimberli Ball, Godfrey Miller Center, 6 p.m.
- March 24 CLEO, Oak Stone Pizza, 1000 Valley Avenue, 6 p.m.
- March 26 Board Meeting via Zoom, 6 p.m.

# Bylaws Changes

*Theresa Merkel*

If you have not had the opportunity to review the bylaws changes in the most recent *Vision* proposed by both the state and national with the former to be voted on at the April state convention, you should. Review these proposed changes in your Virginia *Vision* ([Winter-Spring 2025 Vision - Adobe cloud storage](#)) which you received online. Pat Kadel, Tess Thome, Becki Bronson and I (Theresa Merkel) will be attending the state convention. If you want to provide your thoughts to us, we may have the opportunity to voice those opinions at the convention. REMEMBER: you will have the opportunity to vote online for these proposed changes. If you have difficulty doing this online, text or email me and I will attempt to find someone who can assist you with this. Make your voice heard!

## **AAUW Bylaws, Governance, and Dues Proposals**

On January 8, 2025, the AAUW Board of Directors (National) posted to the AAUW website and distributed an email requesting membership comments on the following proposals to be voted on by the membership beginning in April 2025.

**1. AAUW National Dues:** The Board of Directors advises that the Board will consider a \$5 per year increase in dues from 2025-2029 because member dues have not kept pace with the cost of supporting AAUW's membership and the national office. In 2029, the annual AAUW dues will rise to \$97 from the current \$72

**2. National Bylaws:** The Board of Directors recommended three changes to the AAUW National Bylaws, none of which require changes to branch or state bylaws. The proposed amendments would revise the language:

- Article V Section 2 allows the Board, at its discretion, to extend the Board term of a chair who has one year remaining in the two-year chair term.
- Articles VI, VIII, and IX provide, at the Board's discretion, for vice officers and vice committee and task force chair positions added flexibility to leadership structures and succession planning.
- Article IX Section 4 provides for the removal of a specific date for the transition of committee chairs to allow for smoother transitions from term to term.

**3. Public Policy Priorities for 2025 – 2027:** The Board of Directors recommends changes to the Public Policy principles and priorities. While the principles would continue to emphasize core values regarding education, economic security, and social justice, the proposal would remove issues that, while valuable and important components to equity, go beyond the scope of AAUW's focus on higher education and are so broad as to not guide the types of policy approaches that would be in line with AAUW's mission.

The proposed policy priorities for federal advocacy focus on equity in higher education and were chosen based on critical need, political viability, and potential for distinctive AAUW contribution or leadership.

## Book Group Choices for 2025

- Mar 17 - *Fahrenheit 451*, by Ray Bradbury  
Zoom, discussion led by Pat Rice
- April 21 - *The Women*, by Kristin Hannah  
Zoom, discussion led by Julie Sayre
- May 19 - *Be Ready When the Luck Happens: A Memoir*, by Ina Garten  
Potluck at home of Martha Prusch
- June 16 - *Tom Lake*, by Ann Patchett  
Potluck at home of Pat Kadel
- July 21 - *Eight Hundred Grapes*, by Laura Dave  
Potluck at home of Sherry Lloyd
- Aug 18 - *Table for Two Fictions*, by Amor Towles  
Potluck at home of Theresa Merkel
- Sept 15 - *The Mapmaker's Daughter*, by Clare Marchant  
Potluck at home of Tess Thome
- Oct 20 - *This House is on Fire*, by Rachel Beanland  
Potluck at home of Marsha Gochenour
- Nov 17 - *Making Time: Lillian Moller Gilbreth, A Life Beyond "Cheaper by the Dozen"*  
by Jane Lancaster  
Zoom, discussion led by Diane Brenneman
- Dec - no meeting

### Women's History Month: What Is It?

Women's History Month is an annual observance in March to recognize the accomplishments, contributions, and historical significance of women. This month-long celebration is an opportunity to highlight the achievements of women across various fields, from science and politics to arts and business, and to inspire future generations.

Women's History Month also encourages reflection on the progress made in gender equality while acknowledging the ongoing challenges women face worldwide.

### How did Women's History Month start?

The very first Women's Day happened on February 28, 1909, to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the New York City garment workers' strikes. However, Women's History Month did not become a regular occurrence until decades later. In 1981, California's Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women created Women's Week, coinciding with [International Women's Day](#), to honor women's achievements. The idea gained momentum and in 1987, the National Women's History Project successfully lobbied Congress to designate all of March as National Women's History Month. Since then, it has become an annual observance in the United States and globally.

(From liveyourdream.org Website)



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