



U P D A T E S

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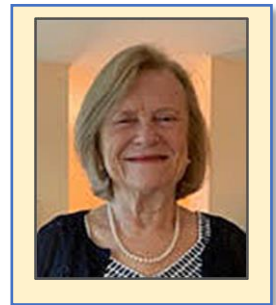
Issue 05

President’s Message

Ann Sauberman, Co-President

As the year 2023 comes to a close, one topic has emerged as very important to individual freedom and will be more critical as we start 2024. That topic is Freedom of Speech. What does Freedom of Speech really mean? The First Amendment in the Bill of Rights, “provides that Congress makes no laws abridging the freedom of Speech”. We all have studied, however, that there are limits to all of the freedoms expressed in the Bill of Rights. We know that one cannot scream fire in a crowded movie theater and we cannot slander individuals if it causes them harm. But are there any other limits to this important right?

As a result of the October 7, attack on Israel by Hamas, a terrorist organization, there have been increasing antisemitism and Islamic phobia on many college campuses. Students have been afraid to go to classes or live in the dorms. They have felt targeted. There have even been calls for the genocide of Jews. As a result, the House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing on December 6 to question three college presidents on antisemitism and hate on their campuses. Representative Elise Stefanik asked a probing question as to whether calling for the genocide of Jews violated the rules of their respective universities and wanted a yes or no answer. President Elizabeth Magill, University of Pennsylvania; President Claudia Gay, Harvard University; and President Sally Kornbluth, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, spoke against antisemitism and the resulting fear that affected Jewish students. President Magill stated that,



President’s Message *continues on page 2.*

AAUW National Website: <https://www.aauw.org/>
AAUW-VA Website: <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/>

Springfield-Annandale Website: <https://sprann-va.aauw.net/>
Like us on Facebook. Search *Springfield-Annandale AAUW*

AAUW Mission Statement

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. Vision: Equity for all. Values: Non-partisan. Fact based.

AAUW Diversity Statement

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status.

President's Message *continued from page 1*

“If the speech turns into conduct, it can be considered harassment or bullying,” but “it is a context dependent decision.” It cannot be answered with a yes or no. The other two presidents responded that whether those statements qualified as rule violations would also depend on the context. All three presidents wanted to encourage freedom of speech on their campuses. Almost immediately, there were calls for the resignations of all three college presidents. On December 10, President Elizabeth Magill and the University of Pennsylvania Board of Trustees Chairman Scot Bok voluntarily resigned their positions because of a very strong backlash. The other two presidents still have their jobs due to student and faculty support.

Freedom of Speech is a very important issue not just for universities, but for the American Association of University Women and the entire society. It does not just concern Jews, but hate speech can target Muslims, Blacks, Asians, LGBTQ, or any other minority group. The essential question is should individuals have complete freedom to express their opinions or should that freedom be limited to protect the liberties and welfare of others. This question does not have a simple answer, but must be considered by all of us, if we really want to have freedom and liberty as the Bill of Rights was written to protect.

Cathie Boivin and I hope you had a wonderful holiday season and wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

Branch Program Meeting – Financial Security – January 18

Irene McGhee, Amy Crolus, Co-Vice Presidents for Programs



Michelle Massey

In compliance with our mission objective that we help women achieve financial security, we present, “What every woman should know.” Our speakers are Michelle Massey of Merrill Lynch, and Sylvia Auton, Author of “Grandma Sylvia’s Guide to the Stock Market.”

Both have information that will educate and energize Branch members in financial security. Attend the Zoom meeting **January 18**, 7:00 P.M. Watch your email for the Zoom link.



Sylvia Auton

December Branch Program Meeting – Holiday Tea



Surprise Visitor, Mary Todd Lincoln



Cathie Boivin and Ann Sauberman,
our Co-Presidents



Mrs. B

On December 6, at [Tea With Mrs. B.](#), Branch members enjoyed teas, sweets and savories, discussions with Mary Todd Lincoln, the Surprise Visitor, and histories of teas and other delectable enlightenment by Mrs. B.

[Tea With Mrs. B.](#) is located at 136 West Jefferson Street, Falls Church.

Public Policy

Susan Burk, Public Policy Chair

AAUW-VA Public Policy Meeting.

Our next scheduled Virginia Public Policy meeting is **January 4**, at 6:00 PM on Zoom. We will discuss Legislative Priorities and Lobby Day. Active planning has begun for the AAUW Women Legislators Reception on **January 30**, and our State Lobby Day on **January 31**. AAUW-VA has reserved a block of rooms at the Hampton Inn in Richmond for the night of January 30. You can make reservations here: <https://group.hamptoninn.com/xfvxmlr>.

From Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia

Want to hear more about what happened in the November 2023 election? Make sure you sign up for our Post-Election Update on the evening of **January 15**, where our team will walk you through the impacts of this key election on the upcoming legislative session and beyond.

From Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy.

The General Assembly will be here before you know it! Now would be a great time to register for Day for All People, our annual advocacy day that lifts concerns of “all people” (especially those who have low-incomes and are marginalized) to legislators.

Here are the details:

Date: Wednesday, **January 17**

Time: 8:30 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.

Place: St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 815 E Grace St, Richmond, VA (1 block from the General Assembly)

Fee: \$40

Buses: Buses will be available for free from northern Virginia and Tidewater

Spring Fling Silent Auction

Karen Flann, Silent Auction

Now that we are in the post-holiday daze, it’s time to look around and think about how to support our Branch by donating:

Unique items – maybe from trips?

Costume jewelry?

New gifts in original packaging?

“Good” jewelry?

Sharing a special talent?

Baking a specialty item?

Baking – cooking secrets?

A new game to play?

Tickets you can’t use?

Hmmmmmm...

We’d LOVE it for the Silent Auction!

Next month: [Lessons on being BOLD!](#)



Evening Book Group – Virtual

The Evening Book Group will meet via Zoom Thursday, **January 4**, 7:00 P.M. The topic book is *The Lost Girls of Willowbrook*, by Ellen Marie Wiseman. Judy Titterton is the scheduled reviewer.

The group will meet virtually **February 1** for a discussion of *Horse*, by Geraldine Brooks. Debbie Gilligan is the scheduled reviewer. Contact Debbie Gilligan for more information.

Morning Book Group – Live

The Morning Book Group will meet live **January 11**, 10:00 A.M., and review *The Phantom Tollbooth*, by Norton Juster. Mary Helmantoler will lead the review and host the meeting.

The group will meet **February 8**, and review *Daughters of Yalta*, by Catherine Grace Katz. Helen Cassidy will lead the review and Jo Domingues will host the meeting. Contact Jo Domingues for more information.

Movies at Midweek

Bev Wise and Helen Cassidy, Movie Mavens

The next meeting of Movies at Midweek is **January 17**. Watch your email on the Friday preceding for the movie selection.

Notes

On December 18, a neighbor's tree hit Cathie Boivin's house and smashed into her master bedroom and rec room. Luckily, no one was in that part of the house so no one was hurt. Cathie and her husband, Leo, are staying at a hotel in Chantilly, but hope to move into a temporary home shortly until the house is fully repaired. If you want to speak to her, use her cell phone; the power and house lines have been turned off. She was shocked but is not physically hurt; her dog is staying with her daughter.

CALENDAR

January 4, 7:00 P.M.	Evening Book Group Meeting – Virtual	page 5
January 4	Public Policy Zoom	page 4
January 11, 10:00 A.M.	Morning Book Group Meeting – Live	page 5
January 15	Planned Parenthood Post Election Update	page 4
January 17	Movies at Midweek	page 5
January 17	Day for All People	page 4
January 18, 7:00 P.M.	Branch Program – Financial Security – Virtual	page 2
January 26	February newsletter articles due to Judy Titterton	
January 30	Women Legislators Reception	page 4
January 31	State Lobby Day	page 4

AAUW has continued to trailblaze for women, breaking down barriers and making the world more equitable for future generations.

1981 - AAUW created a Legal Advocacy Fund to support plaintiffs in lawsuits related to sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace.

1991 - AAUW published *How Schools Shortchange Girls* report, which found how girls overall receive an inferior education to that of boys.

1993 - AAUW successfully worked to help pass the Family Medical Leave Act.

1995 - AAUW president and U.N. Representative Mary Purcell attended the *Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace* in Beijing as an accredited observer on behalf of AAUW.

1995 - AAUW launched its voter education campaign efforts.

[\(www.aauw.org/about/history/\)](http://www.aauw.org/about/history/)

— Judy Titterton, Editor

Newsletter articles for February *UPDATES* are due **January 26**.