



Springfield–Annandale Branch

U P D A T E S

Volume 66

December 2024

Issue 4

President's Message

Cathleen Boivin, Co-President

December 10 is recognized as International Human Rights Day. The universal declaration of human rights was first celebrated on this day in 1948 by the United Nations general assembly in Paris. This document has been translated into 577 different languages, the most translated document in the world. It promises that everyone is born with the same inalienable rights without regard to a person's race, color, religion, or gender. Yet 76 years later, in the 21st century, we are still trying to guarantee these fundamental rights to all American citizens.



As you know, in 1881, AAUW was founded by like-minded women to recognize and celebrate their tenacity in achieving the goal of obtaining a university degree.

Access to higher education had long been denied to women. Their mission was to help other women in their pursuit of not only furthering education, but to make inroads into traditionally male dominated careers.

If you attended Spring Fling two years ago, our speaker was Coline Jenkins, the great-great granddaughter of Suffragist, Elizabeth Cady Stanton. She spoke to us about the women in her family. Her mother was an architect, and her grandmother became a civil engineer. Her discussion included details of how these women fought to work in their chosen careers and to participate in professional societies that support these professions.

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*

AAUW and other groups, as well as our public schools have supported STEM. The intent is to interest and educate young women to work in science and math fields. Some of you may have read books about Albert Einstein's first wife, Mileva Maric, who was also a physicist and some authors believe that she contributed greatly to Einstein's research and theories. A recent film, "Hidden Figures," opened our eyes to the lives of three African-American women mathematicians who contributed greatly to the success of America's early entry into the Space Race.

Our November speaker was Eileen Filler-Corn. She was the first woman in the 400 years of Virginia's legislature to serve as speaker. She has served on many committees and boards that support the Commonwealth as well as being one of the organizers of the Million Mom March.

One of the most important goals of AAUW is to ensure equal pay for equal work. On October 12, 2024, we lost activist Lilly Ledbetter who died at the age of 86. She was the plaintiff in the case of Ledbetter vs. Goodyear Tire and Rubber. Due to sex discrimination, she missed out on raises given to male employees doing the same work. She estimated that over the course of her employment with Goodyear she had lost out on approximately \$200,000. This case resulted in the passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 by Congress. She continued to lobby for equality during her lifetime and was entered into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2011. AAUW honors her legacy by supporting legislation such as the Paycheck Fairness Act.

We can contribute to AAUW's mission by contacting our legislators by phone, email, or letters to make our voices heard. Lobby Corps is back and you are encouraged to register for a briefing on **December 5** from 9:30 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. at the AAUW DC office downtown (see [page 4](#)). The registration form can be found online at <https://my.aauw.org/event-information?id=a0lQr0000010a4XIAQ>.

Women can and do make a difference!

Branch December Lunch – December 6



Lunch, Italian Style is Friday, **December 6**, 1:00 to 4:00 P.M., at Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant, Francesca Room, Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Mall, Springfield. Food is served Family Style.

This will be a grand time of year to celebrate ourselves, our objectives, our mission, and our holiday traditions.

Branch Program Meeting – January 8 – Zoom

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

The Branch Program Meeting on **January 8**, 7:00 P.M., is via Zoom. “Empowering Women: Human Trafficking Awareness, Prevention, and Support Strategies” is the theme.

Deepa Patel, our featured speaker, is the Co-Founder of Trauma and Hope, a private government contracted mental health organization dedicated to supporting survivors of trauma including violence, sexual exploitation, and gang involvement.

A Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Sex Offender Treatment Provider, Ms. Patel specializes in trauma-focused mental health care, offering expertise in working with non-voluntary court mandated clients, including gang members and perpetrators of sex crimes. She is proficient in various therapeutic modalities such as Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Progressive Counting (PC), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and Havening, which she uses to address developmental and complex trauma.



Deepa Patel

With over two decades of experience, Ms. Patel has developed a 5-day human trafficking program for professionals working with survivors of human trafficking, Sexual Exploitation Treatment and Training Services (SETTS). Her programs, rooted in evidence-based practices, have been implemented statewide in Virginia in partnership with the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Ms. Patel is a sought-after consultant and trainer in trauma, human trafficking, and gang intervention. Her work has earned her numerous awards, including the Virginia NASW Social Worker of the Year Award (20117) and the Frederick Milton Thrasher Award for gang intervention. She continues to shape policy and practice at local and national levels, providing critical education and interventions.

Branch Program Meeting – February

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

We are working on February’s Branch Program Meeting now. We plan to feature John White, NOAA expert on climate. Stay tuned!

The White House Ornament
Committee has good news!
123 ornaments were sold at
\$24 each, yielding \$2952.00.



Thank you, everyone!

A Post Election Conversation

Janine Greenwood

Attached is the flyer for our Monday, **December 2**, 5:00 P.M., program with Congressman Gerry Connolly including the Zoom registration link supplied by National.

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IbHEq8JMTUmEPCp1MxPquQ

Lobby Corps Training and, Meet and Greet (In-Person) – December 5

A message from Meghan Kissell, Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy

Our mission is to protect women's rights that allow them to live a good life, and reach their highest potential. With the next administration coming into power, attacks on education, Title IX, and women's economic security are going to be rampant. If you want to make your voice heard with Congress on issues important to our mission, and are in the Washington, D.C. area, we invite you to join AAUW's Lobby Corps!

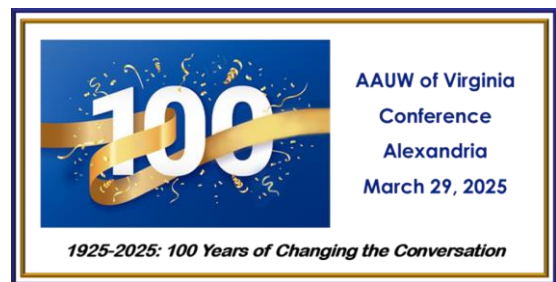
To be prepared for next Congress, we're holding an in-person training on **December 5**, at 9:30 A.M. at AAUW's National Office in Downtown DC. Refer to the letter at the end of this newsletter for more information and to register for this event.

Lobby Day in January – January 15-16

Planning is underway for State Lobby Day, **January 16**. This will be our first opportunity to meet with Virginia legislators to make the case for our priorities. Last year, several important bills passed the House and the Senate but were vetoed by the Governor. There were insufficient votes to override those vetoes. Let Susan Burk know if you plan to attend Lobby Day and are interested in carpooling. Refer to the flyer at the end of this newsletter for information about the upcoming Lobby Day in Richmond.

Save the Dates – March 28-29, 2025

Join us in March for the 2025 AAUW-VA State Conference in Old Town, Alexandria. Refer to the flyer at the end of this newsletter for more information.



Public Policy

Susan Burk, Public Policy Chair

As you know, AAUW and AAUW-VA are solidly non-partisan and our public policy priorities reflect issues and policies that are not, and should not, be partisan. Our job throughout has been to persuade legislators on both sides of the aisle – in Richmond and on the Hill – of the benefits to the economic security of women and families if these priorities are translated into legislation. That's what we are about: AAUW – Empowering Women Since 1881! Refer to the letter at the end of this newsletter from AAUW's CEO, Gloria Blackwell, sent to all members after the recent election.

Why the Wage Gap Just Got Worse and How to Close It

The problem: The gender wage gap in the U.S. widened in 2023 for the first time in two decades, with women earning 83 cents for every dollar men make.

Why it matters: The stall in progress is driven by caregiving burdens, a concentration of women in low-wage jobs, and complex social factors, according to AAUW CEO Gloria L. Blackwell.

Alexandria's Great Decisions Group

Lane Stone

The Great Decisions program, organized by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), is a nationwide initiative aimed at engaging Americans in discussions about key foreign policy issues. It serves as a platform to raise awareness and deepen understanding of global issues that directly impact U.S. foreign policy, security, and international relations.

Great Decisions provides a structured, non-partisan, and accessible approach to learning about international relations. Each year, participants study and discuss a set of eight current and critical foreign policy topics that reflect challenges facing the U.S. These discussions are typically guided by a briefing book, facilitated by a group member, and sometimes feature guest speakers.

To facilitate these discussions, the FPA provides a range of resources, including:

- A briefing book that provides in-depth analysis of the selected foreign policy topics.
- Discussion guides to help structure conversations and ensure that key issues are covered.
- Video and multimedia content that sometimes features expert opinions, analyses, and interviews.

The Great Decisions program has grown to include thousands of groups across the United States, involving tens of thousands of participants. It is one of the largest and most enduring public diplomacy and education programs in the country.

The AAUW-Alexandria Branch Great Decisions group began meeting in 2018. Originally, we met in person, and now we meet via Zoom to accommodate participants and guest speakers from all over our area. Typically, we meet eight times annually – on the second Thursday of the month from 7:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

2025 Topics

- American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads
- U.S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy
- U.S.-China Relations
- India: Between China, the West, and the Global South
- International Cooperation on Climate Change
- The Future of NATO and European Security



- AI and American National Security
- American Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

To learn more about these topics, visit

https://www.fpa.org/news/index.cfm?act=show_announcement&announcement_id=472

If you would like to join us, email Lynn O’Connell at lynnocConnellva@gmail.com

Order your book in time for the **January 9** meeting.

To move forward, we also ask you to consider volunteering to facilitate one session during the year.

What does it mean to facilitate?

There are many options. You may choose to make a presentation, provide an online video for the group to view, host a discussion, or host a guest speaker. Note: Each section in the Great Decisions Briefing Book includes discussion questions. All presentations are via Zoom, so there is lots of flexibility. We are also open to changing a date if that works better for you (and your guest speaker).

The tentative dates for 2025 (the second Thursday of the month at 7:00 P.M.) are:

January 9	May 8
February 13	September 11
March 13	October 9
April 10	November 13

We look forward to having you join us in 2025!

The Silent Auction Committee

Debbie Gilligan has pulled together the Silent Auction Committee to work on the Silent Auction for Spring Fling. The Committee is planning a 50/50 Money Raffle, and silent auctions for gift baskets*, desirable jewelry, elite scarves, high-end handbags, and gift cards**.

Save Friday, **May 9**, for the Springfield-Annandale Branch Spring Fling, at the Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Drive, Springfield.

When you are not busy this season, why not clean out that closet and donate your jewelry, scarves, and handbags to the Committee?

Need to re-gift an item listed? Donate it to the Committee.

Feeling your Fairy Godmother stirring? Feed that feeling with a donated item, or start a gift basket.

*Gift Baskets Ideas

Spring Garden Basket, Italian Delights, Your Wellness Spa, Beach Time, Baby Goodies, Time for Book Worms, International Immersion.

You can volunteer to provide items for these baskets, or create a basket with your friends. Think about what you would like to win in a basket with any of the themes listed.

OR come up with your own theme!

BTW, Judy Titterton is providing a Chocolate Dreams basket. Contact her if you would care to join her in her quest.

**Gift Cards

While you're out and about this upcoming holiday season, why not stop by your favorite restaurant, spa, grocery store, apparel store, and ask for a Gift Card Donation? The business letter is at the end of this newsletter. Make a few copies and keep them in your car, bicycle basket, or sleigh glove compartment for when you are near your favorite business.

Early next year, the Committee will provide information as to where to send all your stuff. But for now, we need you to think about what you can give to make this thing happen.

Thanks!

Evening Book Group

The Evening Book Group next meets via Zoom, Thursday, **December 5**, 7:00 P.M., for a discussion of *An Unfinished Love Story*, by Doris Kearns Goodwin. Mussaret Sheikh is the scheduled reviewer.

The group meets again virtually Thursday, **January 2**, 7:00 P.M., to discuss *The Sewing Girl's Tale*, by John Wood Sweet. Jane Censer is the scheduled reviewer. Contact Debbie Gilligan for more information.

Morning Book Group

The Morning Book Group meets on Thursday, **December 12**, 10:00 A.M., at Helen Cassidy's house for a discussion of *Rules of Civility*, by Amor Towles. Jo Domingues is the scheduled reviewer.

The group meets next on Thursday, **January 9**, 10:00 A.M., for a review of *How to Know a Person*, by David Brooks. Terry Graham will host and Mary Helmantoler will review the book. Contact Wendy Cleland- Hamnett or Deborah Dodd for more information.

Movies at Midweek

Bev Wise and Helen Cassidy, Movie Mavens

The next meeting of Movies at Midweek is **December 18**. Watch your email on the Friday preceding for the movie selection.

BRANCH CALENDAR

December 2, 5:00 P.M.	A Post Election Conversation	page 4
December 5, 9:30 A.M.	Lobby Corps Training	page 4
December 5, 7:00 P.M.	Evening Book Group Meeting – Zoom	page 7
December 6, 1:00 P.M.	Lunch, Italian Style	page 2
December 12, 10:00 A.M.	Morning Book Group Meeting – Live	page 7
December 18	Movies at Midweek	page 7
December 23	UPDATES articles due	
January 2, 7:00 P.M.	Evening Book Group – Zoom	page 7
January 8, 7:00 P.M.	Branch Program Meeting – Zoom	page 3
January 9, 10:00 A.M.	Morning Book Group – Live	page 7
January 9, 7:00 P.M.	Great Decisions Group	page 3
January 16	Lobby Day, Richmond	page 4

Dates of Distinction

December 8 – Bodhi Day in the Buddhist calendar, celebrating Buddha’s enlightenment.

December 13 – St. Lucia’s Day, which has long been associated with festivals of light.

December 21 – Winter Solstice, the astronomical day when the Earth is farthest away from the Sun.

December 25 – Christmas Day, also marks the beginning of **Hanukkah** this year.

December 26 – Boxing Day (Canada, UK) and the first day of **Kwanzaa**.

Farmer’s Almanac 2024



Judy Titterton, Editor

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December’s bareness everywhere!

William Shakespeare, Sonnet 97

Newsletter articles for January UPDATES due December 23

**A POST ELECTION
CONVERSATION WITH
REPRESENTATIVE
GERRY CONNOLLY**



Monday, December 2 at 5 p.m. on Zoom



SPONSORED BY:

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ADVANCE REGISTRATION HERE:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IbHEq8JMTUmEPCp1MxPquQ



Dear Advocates,

Our mission is to protect women's rights that allow them to live a good life, and reach their highest potential. With the next administration coming into power, attacks on education, Title IX, and women's economic security are going to be rampant. If you want to make your voice heard with Congress on issues important to our mission, and are in the Washington, D.C. area, **we invite you to join AAUW's Lobby Corps!**

To be prepared for next Congress, we're holding an in-person training on December 5, at 9:30 A.M. at AAUW's National Office in Downtown DC: [register here](#).

For more than fifty years, Lobby Corps has put a face to AAUW's mission of advancing equity for women and girls. Lobby Corps will give you the tools and resources to amplify your voice and your impact, while engaging with other gender equity advocates in your community.

Lobby Corps members have made tens of thousands of in-person visits to congressional offices on issues including reproductive rights, paid family leave, Title IX, pay equity, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Lobby Corps is a commitment of only one morning a month. We generally meet on Capitol Hill on the third Thursday of each month when Congress is in session. Volunteers receive in-depth information about the issue selected and are paired with experienced Lobby Corps members for office visits.

Lobby Corps is AAUW in action.

Event: In-Person AAUW Lobby Corps Training and Meet & Greet

Date: December 5

Time: 9:30 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

Location: [Register here](#)

If you have any questions, reach out to advocacy@aauw.org

We hope to see you all on **December 5**.

Sincerely,

Meghan Kissell

Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy

Save the Dates



AAUW of Virginia Lobby Days in Richmond

**January 15, 2025
Evening Reception and Talk
Hampton Inn and Suites, Richmond**

**January 16, 2025
Lobby Day
Make our Voices Heard in Richmond
Connect with our Lawmakers**

**Room reservation link at Hampton Inn & Suites Is
<https://group.hamptoninn.com/78zjxv>**

\$157



**MARK THIS DOWN ON YOUR
CALENDAR!**

**2025 AAUW-VA STATE
CONFERENCE**

MARCH 29, 2025

(Preconference activities on March 28)

On **March 27-28, 1925**, the seven already existing local branches of AAUW in Virginia 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 of women changing the conversation.

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, 2025**.

Great news! 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! Use this link You can also call 1 (888) 236-2427; use code **AAUW of Virginia Mar2025** to reserve a room. The rate is also available for 3 days before/after March 28 & 29 on a space available basis. You must make a reservation for March 28 and/or 29, and then email jrasolofoson@sheratonalexandria.com to book extra days.

The earlier you book a room the better because the 2025 Conference will take place on the eve of **Cherry Blossom** season and rooms in the hotel will book up early. Once our block is sold out, we might be able to add more rooms, but that will only be possible if the hotel is not already sold out.

***IMPORTANT NOTICE:** When making your hotel reservation, ignore any reference to a \$25 resort fee. You will **NOT** be charged this. The room rate is \$159 plus state and local taxes.

November 2024

AAUW will stay focused on our mission

I write to you today with conviction and resolve, even though for the second time, our country has decided it wasn't ready to have a highly qualified woman hold our nation's highest office. I am grateful for everyone who stood up and used their voices for the rights of women and girls, and for the significant wins across states on key issues. To anyone feeling uncertainty about what lies ahead — know that you are not alone.

It is AAUW's commitment to gender equity that allows me to write to you today with this clear-eyed promise: We will persist.

AAUW has been preparing for this scenario, and we will share more as we prepare policy priorities for the 119th Congress. Here's the bottom line: Our strength comes from our collective voice, and together we will continue the work to support women's education and economic empowerment.

Thank you for standing with us.

**THE WORK
IS NOT OVER.**

**KEEP FIGHTING
WITH US.**



In solidarity,

Gloria L. Blackwell

Chief Executive Officer



Spring 2025

Dear Business Owner,

The Springfield-Annandale Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) is having a benefit luncheon on May 9, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 3 00 p.m. to raise funds to support AAUW-sponsored programs such as scholarships, leadership development, lifelong education for women and girls, and the Legal Advocacy Fund. The purpose of this letter is to request your support for this fundraising effort.

At the luncheon, we will have a featured speaker and will conduct a SILENT AUCTION. We are seeking donations of items or gift certificates for use at the auction. Companies/Businesses that donate will be acknowledged as contributors to the silent auction in the printed program.

We expect 150-200 people will attend this fundraising event, which will be held at the Springfield Golf and Country Club.

Thank you for considering our request. Responses may be addressed to ----

Debbie Gilligan
Silent Auction Committee
Springfield Annandale Chapter, AAUW
8908 Glade Hill Rd. Fairfax, VA 22031
debbiegilligan@verizon.net
703-503-2905

<https://sprann-va.aauw.net/>

Tax Id# 54-6058154

Bearer of Letter is: _____