

Mt. Vernon Voices

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls
through research, education, and advocacy.

Volume 64 Issue 4 December 2020

Mt. Vernon Branch



PRESIDENT'S CORNER



December: Are we really here in the month of December with very little having changed regarding the pandemic or the political climate in 10 months? Stress lev-

els are high, emotions are raw, confusion has overtaken order. This is the state of mind in which many find themselves. Yet, have you noticed how early Christmas decorations are going up? Gifts are being discussed, and created or purchased? And, that **unique** celebrations are being planned? People are looking up, out beyond themselves, and toward others. It is as though, *no matter what*, the meaning of the holiday season has hit home like never before. We are determined not to forget past celebrations, but create new, unique ones, just for this year. An example is our branch **Holiday Get-together and basket raffle on December 5 on ZOOM**. Who would have thought....! Read about it elsewhere in the newsletter and **JOIN US!** (You don't have to be present for the basket raffle, however.)

I will be mailing all of our holiday gifts this year, and I've decided to send as few gift cards as possible. And, I've committed to stop thinking about practicality:

what someone might need. I'm thinking, instead, about what might make them smile. It's actually freeing, not to worry about practicality! But practically does have its place. So many folks in our country, state, and community are suffering. In our community, donations to **United Community (UC)** are greatly needed! I hope you will be able to send a monetary gift to them, <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E3464&id=103>, or maybe make a food donation on December 5, at Cedar Knoll, where **Cathy Krebs** will accept and, then, deliver the food to UC.

AAUW's work for equity, especially in the work place, is sorely needed, as is money, which is currently being matched in December: <https://ww2.aauw.org/donate-gift-new/?treatment=MAJMATCH20&AppealCode=F21KELXLXX1A> The holiday raffle-basket-money will go to AAUW Funds.

However you decide to do it, create a wonderful, heart-felt, meaningful, and memorable month for you and your family. Hopefully, that does include donations to others beyond the family. With all of us pitching in, we can be assured that the future is bright, and that one day soon, we will celebrate that, together, in person.

Happy Holidays to all!

Patsy

ZOOM HOLIDAY CELEBRATION - DECEMBER 5 - NOON



**Join us for a special Lunch and Zoom Get-Together
on December 5 to celebrate the holiday season!**



We will order our Holiday Lunches from **Cedar Knoll**, choice of Jumbo Lump Crab Cake Sandwich or Arugula Salad with Chicken for \$35, including dessert, tax and gratuity. We will share treasured holiday traditions and memories. Maybe you will share something you are especially missing this year. Or, show us a special item or gift.

If you have not responded to the invitation that was sent out via email earlier, please contact Paula Lettice immediately at pglettice@gmail.com. Guests are welcomed!

(Continued on next page)

THE JOY OF



GIVING

We are offering 3 ways to donate or give during the holidays:

- * **Buy RAFFLE tickets** and win a large gift basket valued at \$200! Lovely items, including spreads, dips, munchies, kitchen helpers, and wine make this a fabulous gift for someone special! Or you might want to keep it yourself! **Contact Paula Lettice for tickets.** Tickets are \$20 each or \$50 for 3.

All proceeds will go to AAUW Funds. **WINNER WILL BE DRAWN DURING THE ZOOM GET-TOGETHER.** You do not have to purchase lunch, or be present on Zoom to win the raffle



- * **Donate food to United Community (UC)** The food needs in our community are critical. Please consider donating food *whether or not you join us for lunch*. **Cathy Krebs will be at Cedar Knoll on December 5, 11:20 a.m., to collect food for UC.** You can drop your donations into her trunk, and pick up your lunch at the same time! **Cathy will be also collecting food during the day on Sunday, December 6, at her home.** A sign will indicate a location to leave food in her driveway. She will take all donations to UC on Monday. Thank you, Cathy, for this generous offer. Thank you, members, for donating food for UC on December 5 or 6. Invite friends or family to donate, as well!



- * **Donate online to AAUW Funds by December 30** (see page 7). Because of our canceled Little Theatre event, our branch donation is not as large as it might be. Need is critical this year because donations are down as a result of the pandemic. Please contribute to AAUW Funds, if you can, to keep the fight strong for EQUITY!

President:	Patsy Quick
Program Vice President:	Joanne Clark
Membership Vice President:	Mary Wall
Treasurer:	Anne Simpson
Secretary:	Paula Lettice

Bylaws:	vacant
AAUW Funds:	Kathi Hanrahan
Public Policy:	Mary Ellen Mehler

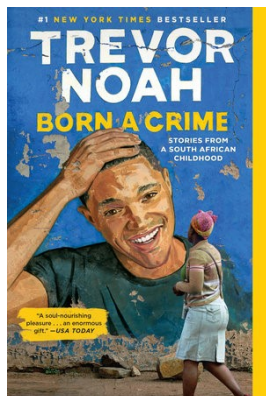
Newsletter/Website:	Bianca Daugherty
Newsletter/ Directory Distribution:	Mary Ellen Mehler
Nominating Committee Chair:	Lois Passman
Hospitality:	Cathy Krebs

Book Group:	Liz Promen
Dining Out:	Paula Lettice, Cathy Conron, Bianca Daugherty
Game Night:	Cynthia Jacobus
ImpromptEvent:	Barbara Mann

Contact Email: AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com

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 socioeconomic status.

BOOK GROUP



Book Group will meet via Zoom on Monday, December 21, 7:30 p.m.

***** Zoom link will be sent via email. *****

BOOK: Born a Crime
By Trevor Noah

REVIEWER: Elaine Kolish and Joanna Crane

NEXT BOOK: I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings
By Maya Angelou

Interested to join? Contact Liz Promen - epromen@cox.net

GAME NIGHT

***Zoom in for fun and games at our next virtual Game Night on
Friday, December 18, 7:15 p.m.***

***Our game night host Cynthia Jacobus has some
new games in store for us.***

Watch for email from **Cynthia Jacobus** with instructions and Zoom link.

Let Cynthia know if you would like to join the group.

cynthiacobus@cox.net



Paula Lettice (left) and Candice Bennett of GSH
Photo by Elaine Kolish

**Congratulations to Paula Lettice
on her recent Award from Good Shepherd Housing:
the Joseph T. Adinaro Humanitarian Award!!**

The award honors individuals for outstanding contributions that have improved the lives of low-income families and individuals through their work with Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services. Lettice has been a steadfast and committed supporter of Good Shepherd Housing for many years. As a Board officer and member of the Strategic Planning Committee, she was instrumental in the adoption of the 2011 five-year strategic plan.

Read more at this link <https://goodhousing.org/2020/11/11/paula-lettice-and-dominion-energy-receive-awards-at-good-shepherd-housings-annual-gala/>

Our branch is fortunate to have members like **Paula**. She shares her energy and big heart with a variety of community organizations and does a fantastic job with everything she touches!



Check out our website <https://mtvernon-va.aaauw.net/>

Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mtvernonvaaauw/>



A warm welcome to our new members Anne Gulyassy, Janet Hedrick, and Natasha Mullin.

Anne Gulyassy's career included serving the U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ) as Deputy General Counsel for Litigation, Office of the General Counsel, FBI. She also served as Assistant Director, Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management, DOJ, and Assistant Branch Director and Trial Attorney, Federal Programs Branch, Civil Division, DOJ. Upon retirement, **Anne** enjoys her two daughters, five grandchildren, reading, crocheting, cooking, mah jongg, travel, theatre, and being retired.



Janet Hedrick is currently serving as Director of Development for the Radiation Oncology Institute, the research foundation for the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO). After four years of teaching high school, she transitioned to fundraising, her career ever since.

Janet authored a book entitled "Effective Donor Relations" and made presentations throughout the US, Canada, and in Poland.

Her interests include reading, travel, movies, and taking care her ten-year old Parrot named Cody.

Natasha Mullin is a retired freelance copywriter, researcher marketing director, and travel writer. She held numerous titles in the South Florida cruise industry before retiring to move closer to her daughters and grandchildren in Virginia. She worked as a copywriter for Sears & Roebuck and advertising agencies in Texas and Philadelphia. While in Florida, she launched her career as a cruise and travel writer. She freelanced for luxury cruise lines including Pearl Cruises, Seabourn, Regent, Cunard's *Queen Mary 2*, Silversea, the Yachts of Ritz-Carlton, and Crystal Cruises where she garnered numerous Addy awards.

Natasha's volunteer activities included serving as Precinct Captain and Secretary for the Davie, FL, Democratic Party in Broward County. She attended school in Spain and Switzerland, and she is fluent in Spanish and French. As travel writer by profession, she loves languages, museums, foreign cultures, orchids, oceans, and distant shores. She is a dual member with AAUW Mt Vernon and Alexandria.



THE AAUW PROGRAM



Mt. Vernon Branch AAUW

AAUW's Five-Star National Recognition Program rewards affiliates (states, branches and other organizations) for aligning their work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization's mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls. The program will run from July 2019 through June 2021.

Mt. Vernon AAUW submitted information for participating in the Recognition Program and on November 19 we received this message below from National. We will continue to add information to our file and hopefully receive one or two more stars. The descriptors of the two stars we received are below the letter.

Dear AAUW Mt. Vernon (VA) Branch,

*I hope this finds you all safe and well. I'm reaching out to inform you that **your branch achieved stars in the Advancement and the Communications & External Relations areas of the Five-Star Recognition Program!***

As we continue to navigating the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic it's more important than ever that we do all that we can to continue on together in the fight for gender equity. Thank you for using your virtual presence to advance opportunities for women and girls and for your unwavering support of AAUW's mission. Your commitment to the future of your branch and generous contributions to AAUW's Greatest Needs fund will help to ensure that we can continue this critical work for years to come.

We look forward to recognizing this wonderful achievement in our November Membership Matters news hub.

Thank you for participation in the Five-Star Recognition Program. I look forward to your continued Five-Star success.

All the best,

Nichia P. McFarlane



Communications Star/ External Relations Star:

- All existing websites and social media presences include an Economic Security Focus and AAUW Work Smart Online. (Note: Monthly posts are required for social media; Work Smart Online must be included on the website home page.)



Advancement Star:

- \$30 per capita (member) gift raised for greatest needs.
- Increase your Greatest Needs giving in the last calendar year by 25%
- Retain 90% or more of your branch membership and submit annual dues by September 30.
- Increase the Legacy Circle Members in your branch by 10%.

Representation Matters

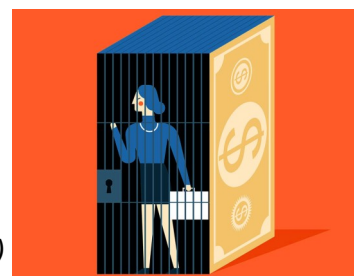
The Commonwealth of Virginia has responded to the pandemic admirably by using emergency measures that allow increased electronic participation and electronic meetings for public bodies. However, these measures won't apply once the pandemic ends.

The **Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council** (FOIA Council) and its Electronic Meetings Subcommittee have been holding meetings and receiving comments about whether the Virginia **General Assembly should amend state law concerning meetings of public bodies held by electronic means to make them less restrictive**. AAUW of Virginia believes that the answer to this question is a resounding “yes” and has submitted comments to the FOIA Council urging that General Assembly members take action to do this. The Electronic Meetings Subcommittee meeting was held on November 18. More information is available on the action link at <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/representation-matters>.

(Information forwarded from Suzanne Rothwell and Leslie Tourigny)

The challenge of caretaking—exacerbated by virtual schooling, closed daycare centers, and isolated seniors—has taken a significant toll on the work life of many women. **Learn the simple truth about women and the pay gap from AAUW.** <https://aauw.org/resources/research/simple-truth/>

(Information shared from the AAUW Equity Express newsletter)



NOW IS THE TIME TO GIVE!

KATHI HANRAHAN



Many of us make personal donations to AAUW Funds, but this year it is even more important. With Mt. Vernon branch having to cut back on most of our traditional fundraisers,

AAUW is more dependent than ever on individual contributions. This year, for example, contributions from all Virginia branches and members through October 31 are **almost \$50,000 short of the 2019 total!**

So please contribute generously if you can this year. **Your contribution is 100% tax deductible**—and just think how it is helping women and girls.

We suggest that you make the donation online using the link below, which you may do **up to December 31, 2020**. At the time you make the donation, there is a space for entering your Member ID number so our branch is recognized, and you'll be required to specify the fund where your donation will be deposited.

AAUW is encouraging members to designate the AAUW Greatest Needs Fund (#9110), which gives AAUW the flexibility to put the money where it is most needed. **Through December 31, AAUW will double every donation they receive, now up to \$42,500.** Go to: <https://ww2.aauw.org/donate-gift-new/>.

Donations by check should be made out to “AAUW Funds.” Indicate on your check your Member ID number, and AAUW Greatest Needs Fund #9110 (or another fund number), and mail to: AAUW Donations, 1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005. Mail should be postmarked **by December 15, 2020** to assure that AAUW national receives and counts it before December 31, 2020.

According to **Heather Miller**, AAUW's Director of Advancement, 55% of the contributions to AAUW national funds comes from branch and member donations. That underscores the importance every year of branch and member contributions, and especially the impact in 2020, as many foundations and corporations that normally contribute to AAUW national funds have cut back drastically on their funding this year. AAUW national asked that we share this with you and that you consider a generous contribution to AAUW national funds this year. **THANK YOU!**

NATIONAL DUES INCREASE IN 2022, 2023, and 2024

At its October 16, 2020, meeting, the AAUW Board of Directors voted to increase Individual Member dues for the next three years. The dues will rise by **\$3 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, \$5 for FY 2023 and \$5 for FY 2024**, making the total dues amount for those years \$62, \$67 and \$72, respectively. All but \$3 of your annual dues remains tax deductible.

This decision wasn't made lightly. The board members couldn't be more grateful for our members — or prouder of the work you've done this year. We also recognize that all of us are navigating numerous challenges in these uncertain times. However, in order to preserve the viability of this organization we all love, dues must eventually increase. Most nonprofits adjust their dues annually or every other year to keep pace with inflation and rising expenses. However, due to prudent budgetary management, AAUW has been able to keep its dues flat since July 2018. That means that, by the time the first scheduled increase takes effect, we will have maintained three years of dues stability.

Current life members will not be affected by this change. New life memberships acquired after July 1, 2021, will reflect the higher dues' amounts. College and university membership fees will remain unchanged.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to AAUW and our mission. On behalf of the AAUW Board, we are grateful for your understanding and look forward to continuing our work together.

COMING UP IN JANUARY



Mark your calendars now
for the January 21, 2021 at 4 p.m. program
featuring Veronique Pluviose,
Staff Director for the House Committee
on Education and The Workforce.



She will provide us with updates on the pending **Paycheck Fairness Act** (PFA) and other policy initiatives. **Ms. Pluviose** is on the staff of **Congressman Bobby Scott**, the minority leader of the committee and an originator of the PFA.

Program will be conducted on Zoom.



You're invited to AAUW's Season of Gratitude event!
Tuesday, December 8, 2020 4 p.m. ET

In this season of gratitude, join **Kimberly Churches** and members of the AAUW Board for a virtual cup of tea where they can share their thanks and provide a preview of what's ahead at AAUW.

To register click [here](#).

2020 - 2021 MT. VERNON BRANCH PROGRAM YEAR

Meeting Date and Place	Focus/Activity
Thursday, September 17, 2020, 4 p.m. Location Zoom	The Black Experience in Mt. Vernon Queenie Cox, Joi Jackson: An Interview
Thursday, October 15, 2020, 4 p.m. Location Zoom	Jessica Buchanan: Her captivity, rescue and current activities https://www.npr.org/2013/05/14/183624076/in-somalia-surviving-a-kidnapping-against-impossible-odds
Thursday, November 19, 2020, 4 p.m. Location Zoom	Karen Corbett Sanders - School Board Chair Public Education in Fairfax County During the Pandemic
December, December 5, 2020, noon Location Zoom	Holiday Event
Thursday, January 21, 2021, 4 p.m. Location Zoom	Veronique Pluviose Office of Bobby Scott US House of Representatives (VA District 3) Topic: Paycheck Fairness/House update
Thursday, February 25, 2021, 4 p.m. Location Zoom	Audrey Davis , Alexandria Black History Museum & Ron Chase from Gums Springs Museum
Saturday, March 20, 2021, Time TBD Location Zoom	Annual Business Meeting & Solveig Eggerz , Author & Branch Member
Saturday, April 17, 2021, Time TBD Location Zoom	Bob Levey , Author, Journalist (With Springfield-Annandale Branch)
Friday, April 23, 2021 7 p.m. reception 8 p.m. performance Little Theatre of Alexandria 600 Wolfe St, Alexandria, VA 22314	Cancelled! Annual Fundraiser with Alexandria Branch Play: "Mary Stuart"
Thursday, May 20, 2021, 6 p.m. Location: TBD	Annual Potluck
June, 2021, Date and Time TBD Location TBD	Annual Planning Session

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

Virtual State Conference: March 12-14, 2021
Summer Leadership Meeting: July 2021 Sweet Briar College

AAUW Mt. Vernon

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

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

First Class



DECEMBER 2020

- **1 Branch Board Meeting, 7 p.m.**
Contact Patsy Quick
703/360-8678
- **5 Holiday Brunch, noon**
Contact Paula Lettice
703/780-3463
- **18 Game Night, 7:15 p.m.**
Contact Cynthia Jacobus
703/780-3806
- **21 Book Group, 7:30 p.m.**
Contact Liz Promen
703/780-7342



All meetings conducted on Zoom.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Board Meeting	2	3	4	5 Holiday Brunch
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 Game Night	19
20	21 Book Group	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 happy new year		