

# Mt. Vernon Voices

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

Volume 64 Issue 8

April 2021

Mt. Vernon Branch



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Our final program for the year is a great speaker. **Bob Levy**, formerly of the *Washington Post*, who has written a novel, will speak about his time at the Post and also about his novel. The Springfield-Annandale Branch will join us in hosting this program. If you haven't read his book, see information about obtaining it below.

I feel such gratitude to each of you who have participated wholeheartedly this year in our events and activities. Despite challenges, there have been many blessings in disguise.

- We have learned that Zoom enables many more of us to participate than often happens when we meet in one location.
- Our AAUW Funds Contribution was the second largest in the state. Because of our large contribution to AAUW funds we were able to have 11 AAUW Named Honorees, which we recognized at our Annual Business Meeting. You will see the list on page 8. You will also find the ads that we placed in the AAUW-VA Conference Program Book to honor our four deceased members, our nonagenarians, and all of you!
- We had time to document the strong mission focus of our branch which earned us four stars in the AAUW Recognition Program.

The AAUW-VA 2021 Conference on March 13-15 was a huge success with very large numbers of participants. If you missed it, recordings of some of the sessions are posted here: <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/conference-2/>. The Conference Program Book is a historical reference for 2020-21. It may be viewed here: <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/files/2021/03/96th-AAUW-VA-Conference-Final-compressed.pdf>

As our program year winds down, optimism about gathering in-person rises. (We are especially anxious to meet our newest members. See **Mary Wall's** report on page 3.) We will monitor the conditions in our community and let you know when we feel the time is safe. Otherwise, expect our May Potluck Dinner and the June Planning Meeting to be on Zoom. Plans for both of those events will be announced soon via email.

I must add congratulations to **Clare Coulter** who has recently achieved Honorary Life Membership having been a member for 50 years (1969-2019). For that honor, she no longer will have to pay dues.

Happy Spring, everyone!

*Patsy*

## BRANCH PROGRAM, APRIL 17, 10:30 A.M.

**Bob Levey**, former *Washington Post* columnist will be our guest. He is a prize-winning journalist who covered the Washington scene with his daily column. Now retired, he has written his first novel, "**Larry Felder, Candidate**," the story of a famous Washington columnist who abandons journalism to run for Congress in the Maryland suburbs. He will talk about his book and his time at the Washington Post.

**Mr. Levey** has suggested that participants may want to read his book before the event, and if ordered through him, he will autograph and ship books himself. <https://www.bobleveypublishing.com/larry-felder-candidate>. Otherwise, they are available on Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Larry-Felder-Candidate-Bob-Levey/dp/1720030901>



**Zoom Register here:** <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7510819>

## IT IS DUES TIME AGAIN!

You will notice that when you pay your dues, the amount has increased by \$3, making a **total of \$90**. This is the result of an increase in national dues from \$59 to \$62. (As a reminder, all but \$3 of the national dues is tax deductible.) State dues remain at \$15 and branch dues at \$13.

Statements will be coming to your email in the next few days. You can pay by check as always, but a more convenient and efficient way is to pay with a credit card following the link in the email. Once you pay, you will not get another statement. If you haven't, you will get a statement about once a month until September. Last year we received recognition for our retention rate. Let's do it again!



Anne Simpson  
Treasurer



At the Annual Meeting held via Zoom on March 20, **Lois Passman**, Nominating Committee Chair presented the slate of candidates for 2021-2022. The following officers were elected:

- **Patsy Quick - President**
- **Solveig Eggerz – Vice President for Programs**
- **Paula Lettice – Secretary**

**Congratulations to the candidates on their election to office!**

## BRANCH LEADERSHIP 2020 – 2021

### Elected Officers

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

### Appointed Chairs

<b>Bylaws:</b>	<b>vacant</b>
<b>AAUW Funds:</b>	Kathi Hanrahan
<b>Public Policy:</b>	Mary Ellen Mehler

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

### Interest Groups

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

**Contact Email:** [AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com](mailto: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.

# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As Membership VP, on behalf of our Branch, it is hard to overstate what a talented, dedicated group with whom we have the honor of being associated.

This month, our Mt Vernon Branch was awarded a Certificate of Recognition for Membership Retention by the AAUW State of Virginia Board of Directors. We are one of only 6 branches to achieve greater than 100% retention during our 2020-2021 year. We currently have 45 members with the recent addition of **Rev. Cynthia McKenna**.

One of our members, **Clare Coulter**, recently become an Honorary Life Member of AAUW, having been a member for 50 years! She has been a member since 1969. As an Honorary Life Member **Clare** no longer must pay dues! Yesterday, in honor of this milestone, **Patsy Quick** delivered flowers and a certificate to Clare from our Branch. **Congratulations, Clare!**

I would like to take a moment to celebrate our wonderful members who are in their 90s and are a model for all of us with their energy, grace, wisdom, and enthusiasm for AAUW's mission. We can all be inspired by **Ebba Jo Spettel, DeJuana Jones, and Jeanne Gayler**. All have been active members for at least 20 years; **Ebba Jo and DeJuana** are keystones of our branch's book group. Ebba Jo previously was VP for Membership. **DeJuana** served as VP for Programs, VP for Membership, and served on the Art Auction Committee. **Jeanne** has been a loyal and supportive member for many years.

We honored our three nonagenarians (people in their 9th decade) with a celebratory ad in the 2021 AAUW State Conference Program book. This ad was donated by **Elaine Kolish**.

I want to take a minute to mourn the passing during the past year of four long-time members, **Sue Rardin, Diane Watts, Marvel Luykz and Shirley Richey**. **Shirley** served as president, secretary, and Little Theater chair of our branch; **Diane**, who was an Honorary Life Member (member for more than 50 years), and **Sue** were active in our book group; and **Marvel**, along with **DeJuana**, were noted for the outstanding decorations they created for one of the Virginia state conferences.

We honored our deceased members with an *in-memoriam* ad, also donated by **Elaine Kolish**.

Also, the branch board submitted an ad for all AAUW Members in recognition of the outstanding contributions of our members this year.

We welcome our newest members **Anne Gulyassy, Janet Hedrick, Patricia Kenny-Priest, Cynthia**

**McKenna, Anuradha Soi, and Natasha Mullin**.

**Rosemarie Petz and Mary Wall** participated in The Crest of Alexandria Community Fair where we recruited new members including Anne and Natasha.

- **Anne Gulyassy** retired from the U. S. Department of Justice as Deputy General Counsel for Litigation, Office of the General Counsel for the FBI.
- **Janet Hedrick** is currently serving as Director of Development for the Radiation Oncology Institute, the research foundation for the American Society for Radiation Oncology. She authored a book entitled "Effective Donor Relations" and made presentations throughout the US, Canada, and in Poland.
- **Patricia Kenny-Priest**, a graduate of Trinity University, works for the Census Bureau and previously was the Administrator for a chain of child development centers.
- **Natasha Mullin**, a retired travel writer, held numerous titles in the South Florida cruise industry before retiring to move closer to her daughters and grandchildren in Virginia.
- **Anu Soi**, a retired physician, received her master's in public health from the University of Texas. During her career, she served as Medical Director, American Red Cross, Blood Services and more recently was COO of Choice Home Dialysis, Johnstown PA.
- **Reverend Cynthia McKenna** transferred from AAUW Corpus Christi, Texas. She is now Rector, Trinity Episcopal Church, Fredericksburg, VA.

We are proud to have members who serve at the AAUW of Virginia State Board level. **Cheryl Spohnholtz** currently serves as VP for Membership, **Bianca Daugherty** is the state newsletter layout editor, and **Patsy Quick** is VP for Communications and Web Manager.

We have two Legacy Circle members: **Patsy Quick** and me. We invite you to us in remembering AAUW in your estate planning.

It has been a successful year; we look forward to having face to face meetings later this year so we can get to know you even more. Please let me know what I can do to support you in your AAUW membership.

Mary Wall  
VP for Membership

## PUBLIC POLICY

I want to acknowledge all branch members who responded to support Virginia Delegate **Elizabeth Guzman's** proposed **House Bill 2137** during this year's recently completed General Assembly. The bill was strongly supported by AAUW.

**HB 2137** proposed mandatory sick days for the approximately 30,000 home health care workers. The overwhelming majority of these workers in Virginia are women. The bill did pass in the General Assembly.

I also want to thank **Denise Murden**, our State Public Policy co-VP, for her diligence in keeping all Virginia branches aware of the daily workings of this year's General Assembly, particularly on issues concerning women.

*Mary Ellen Mehler  
Public Policy Chair*



Since it's wise for all of us to create or periodically review/update our Estate Planning, it's a good time to check out **AAUW's Legacy Circle** as part of that plan. Several of our members already participate and I personally plan to incorporate it into my donor-advised fund, for simplification of all my charitable giving. I encourage you to at least take a quick look at this brochure, and see if it's a good option for you. There are a number of suggested options for how to set it up.

<https://ww3.aauw.org/files/2013/08/Legacy-Circle-Brochure-nsa.pdf>

I really appreciate your stellar support of **AAUW Greatest Needs Fund** in 2020, and look forward to our Branch striving to exceed those results this year!



*As a member of the AAUW Legacy Circle, you will receive a beautiful pin designed by Swarovski and former AAUW Educational Foundation President Alice Ann Leidel to honor your generosity and commitment to the future of women and girls.*

*Kathi Hanrahan  
AAUW Funds Chair*

## Awe and Appreciation for our Branch Leadership

**On behalf of the entire branch, I want to extend kudos and appreciation to our branch leadership team.** What an outstanding team and what an incredible year of leadership and content they have provided our branch. But, wait, there's more!

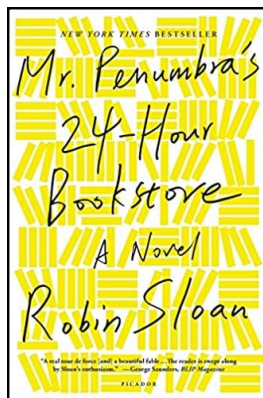
**Patsy Quick** and **Bianca Daugherty**, along with member **Cheryl Spohnholtz**, also provide leadership at the state level. At the state level, **Patsy** serves as the VP for Communications and **Cheryl** as VP for Membership. **Bianca** serves as the Virginia *Vision* layout editor, a non-board position. Additionally, **Patsy** is the web manager for the state website and **Cheryl** is the Facebook manager for the state. All were instrumental in bringing us the recent state conference with three days of great content. **Incredibly, Patsy designed the logo for the state conference!** She and Bianca also helped layout and proof the conference program.

We are truly blessed to have such outstanding women leading and contributing to our branch's rich life and our Virginian AAUW's success. Thank you from all of us.

*Elaine Kolish (on behalf of all of our members)*



## BOOK GROUP



**Book Group will meet via Zoom on Monday, April 19, 7:30 p.m.**

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

**BOOK:** Mr. Penumbra's 24-hour Bookstore  
By Robin Sloan

**REVIEWER:** Joanne Clark

**NEXT BOOK:** An American Marriage  
By Tayari Jones

***Interested to join? Contact Liz Promen - [epromen@cox.net](mailto:epromen@cox.net)***

## GAME NIGHT UPDATE

**Game Night is in careful COVID transition.** Cynthia has emailed a survey for Game Night members to report their COVID-19 Vaccination dates and their comfort levels of various ways of meeting based on the assumption that all participating gamers have had COVID vaccinations. She will seek consensus based on the survey results.

**Our next Game Night is scheduled for Friday, April 23, 7:15 p.m.**

It may continue to be on zoom, but there is a possibility that it will be held outside or in a large room with air circulating. The problem with traditional gaming is the game board and activities focused on boards or card games require being closer than six feet apart. We could continue to play only word games in person and six feet apart. Let's see the survey results.

Watch for email from Cynthia closer to the date with more information.

Contact **Cynthia Jacobus** if you would like to join the group: [cynthiajacobus@cox.net](mailto:cynthiajacobus@cox.net).  
Spouses and significant others are welcome to join in!



Staff member loading up our food  
for the Hyperthermia Shelter

On March 16, a team of branch members donated and delivered food to the Hypothermia Shelter at the Gerry Hyland Government Center. The shelter is managed by New Hope Housing and is open from December 1, 2020 to April 1, 2021.



Joanne Clark, Patsy Quick, JoAnn Gensib, and Solveig Eggerz.

# ELECTIONS AHEAD



Spring into Voting & Elections! **Vote Twice!**

## NATIONAL VOTING AND ELECTIONS

This spring, AAUW members will be asked to vote on the AAUW Public Policy Priorities and a bylaws amendment change, in addition to electing members to the national board of directors.

**Voting will open on April 7, 2021, and close on May 17, 2021.**

The bylaws amendment change will mean that, again, members will vote on a proposal that would **eliminate the degree requirement for membership**.

In the past, the proposal was brought forth by a member. This time it's the Board and the Governance Committee recommending it. And this is what the National Board has to say:

**"The AAUW National Board of Directors strongly supports the elimination of the degree requirement for membership and will put the requirement up for a membership vote this spring. This important change is a critical step in bringing AAUW's bylaws and membership requirement in line with our mission of advancing equity for women and girls. While AAUW is fiercely committed to the educational attainment of all women, given our commitment to inclusion, this is simply the right thing to do.**

**"Proposals to eliminate the degree requirement for membership have come before the membership for a vote several times. The Board feels very strongly that while the degree requirement made perfect sense at AAUW's inception, this requirement is now counter to our mission, and limits our ability to build the capacity needed to increase our impact as an organization."**

Read more about the proposed bylaws change:

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2020/12/Brief-Talking-Points-FINAL.pdf>

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2021/01/Membership-Requirement-full-talking-points.pdf>

## AAUW OF VIRGINIA VOTING AND ELECTIONS

In Virginia, we will be voting for state board officers and a state bylaws change.

**Online voting will begin on April 12, 2021, and close on May 3, 2021.**

- The Nominating Committee has a complete slate of officers for 2021-2023. They are as follows:  
Vice President for Finance-**Marsha Melkonian (Smith Mountain)**, Vice President for Membership and Branch Development-**Cheryl Spohnholtz (Mt. Vernon)**, and Recording Secretary-**Sherry Warren (Portsmouth)**
- The bylaws proposal for the state is changing the appointed position of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair to Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, making it an elected position.

**See the Winter/Spring issue of the *Vision* for more information:**

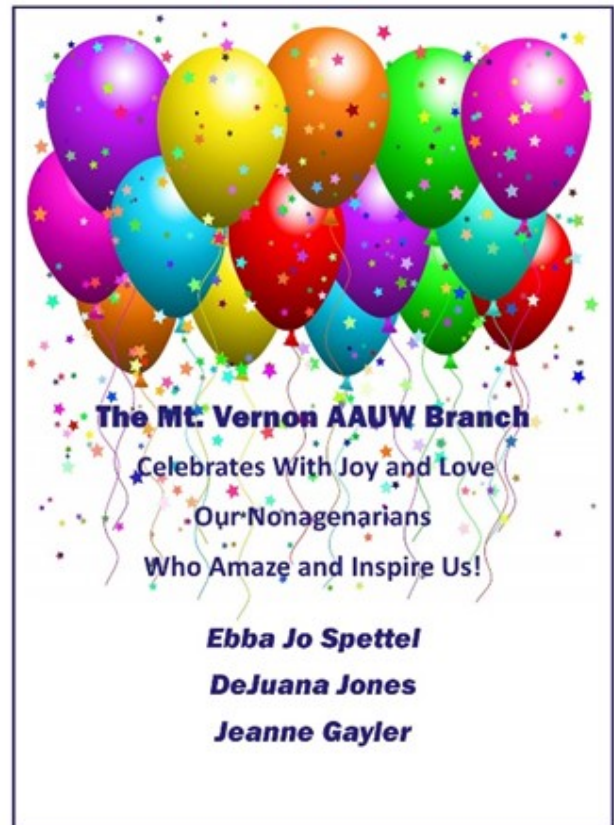
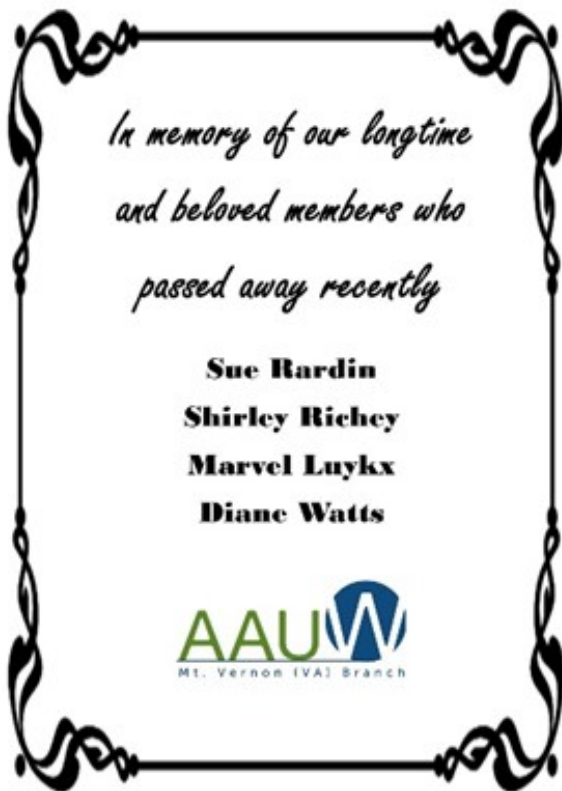
[https://aauw-va.aauw.net/files/2021/02/Final-compressed\\_Vision-Winter\\_Spring-2021.pdf](https://aauw-va.aauw.net/files/2021/02/Final-compressed_Vision-Winter_Spring-2021.pdf).

**Mt Vernon Branch Advertisements  
in the 2021 AAUW VA Conference Book**

Mt. Vernon Branch  
thanks AAUW members on the  
local, state, and national levels  
who with enthusiasm and optimism,  
so admirably "kept the fires burning"  
in our organization  
during challenging times.

There are many stars among us!





## AAUW Mt. Vernon Branch Named Honorees for Donations Made in 2020

- \* **Cynthia Jacobus**, Game Night Chair For her energy and passion for all things fun, and for keeping this night a special one for Mt. Vernon Branch participants.
- \* **Elaine Kolish** for continually supporting Mt. Vernon Branch monetarily (2 Conference ads), brought a great speaker in November, and Zoom sponsorship for Book Group.
- \* **In Memory of Shirley Richey, Marvel Luykx, Sue Rarden, Diane Watts.**
- \* **In Honor of Jeanne Gayler, DeJuana Jones, and Ebba Jo Spettel**, our Nonagenarians, who inspire and amaze us.
- \* **Paula Lettice**, Efficient Secretary, Zoom host extraordinaire, basket raffle organizer, General All-Round Wiz, and Networker.
- \* **Mary Wall**, Membership VP, who managed to increase our membership by 4 during the pandemic, and who brought us a great speaker in January.
- \* **Bianca Daugherty**, Newsletter Editor, for her creativity in always publishing a beautiful, informative newsletter, and wise and thoughtful counsel.
- \* **Patsy Quick**, Energetic and hard-working President, who guided and coordinated the board and members in a seamless pivot to virtual programs and operations in a very difficult year.
- \* **Mt. Vernon Branch Board**, for strong leadership enabling us to earn 3 Stars, with others pending, in AAUW's 5-Star Recognition Award Program.
- \* **Mt. Vernon Branch Membership**, for their on-going support during the pandemic, participating in Zoom activities, lobbying via email, and donating to AAUW Funds in high numbers.
- \* **In Appreciation to Joi Jackson**, Sherwood Regional Library liaison, for collaboration on and hosting of our programs, and leading excellent program Q & As.



Mt. Vernon & Springfield-Annandale  
AAUW Branches, and  
Sherwood Regional Library  
Present



## Bob Levey

Prize-Winning Journalist

Covered Presidential Politics, Congress,  
Local News, and Sports

Seven times, named one of the most  
popular columnists in Washington by  
*Washingtonian* magazine for his  
*Washington Post* column.

**Saturday, April 17, 10:30 a.m.**

**Register:** <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7510819>

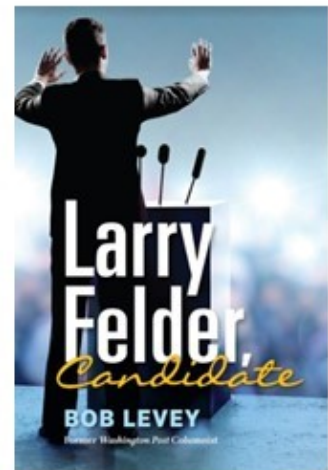
For 23 years, Mr. Levey wrote a daily column, "Bob Levey's Washington," for *The Washington Post*. The column looked at all aspects of life in the nation's capital. It won major awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and the *Washington Journalism Review*. Currently he writes a monthly column for *Senior Beacon Newspapers*.

Now retired from the *Post*, Bob Levey has written a novel: Larry Felder, Candidate. He will talk about his book and about his time at the *Post*.

**Mr. Levey's books may be purchased here:**

<https://www.bobleveypublishing.com/larry-felder-candidate>

<https://www.amazon.com/Larry-Felder-Candidate-Bob-Levey/dp/1720030901>



# 2020 - 2021 MT. VERNON BRANCH PROGRAM YEAR

Meeting Date and Place	Focus/Activity
<b>Saturday, April 17, 2021, 10:30 a.m.</b> Location Zoom	<b>Bob Levey</b> , Author, Journalist (With Springfield-Annandale Branch)
<b>Thursday, May 20, 2021, 6 p.m.</b> Location TBD	<b>Annual Potluck</b>
<b>June, 2021, Date and Time TBD</b> Location TBD	<b>Annual Planning Session</b>

Congratulations to **Cheryl Spohnholtz** and **Mary Wall**.  
They were the winners of our basket raffle at our Annual Business Meeting.  
The raffle raised \$555 for AAUW Funds.



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

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



## APRIL 2021

- **6 Branch Board Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
Contact Patsy Quick  
703/360-8678
- **17 Branch Program, 10:30 a.m.**  
Contact Patsy Quick  
703/360-8678
- **19 Book Group, 7:30 p.m.**  
Contact Liz Promen  
703/780-7342
- **23 Game Night, 7:15 p.m.**  
Contact Cynthia Jacobus  
703/780-3806

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