

Mt. Vernon Voices

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

Volume 68 Issue 5 January 2025

Mt. Vernon Branch



CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Happy New Year to All! What an exciting and turbulent year our nation has had. For us, our branch members and our activities have been an island of companionship and compassion. Just recently, we were buoyed by the presence of so many members at our holiday luncheon and their generosity in giving well more than “**100 for 100**,” for United Community’s homebound clients, as detailed in **Joanna Crane’s** article (see page 5). We are very grateful, again, to **Paula Lettice** for all of her work in organizing every single detail of the luncheon and the wine raffle, which was wildly successful for the branch’s treasury. We also appreciate Paula’s personal generosity in providing beautiful gift bags full of treats for everyone. They added such a festive look to our tables!



We are looking forward to 2025 (maybe with a bit of trepidation), secure in the knowledge that our branch will continue to fight for equal opportunities and rights for girls and women, to provide stimulating programs and conversation, to offer fun-filled activities and to give a deep sense of connection to each other and our community.

We hope your holidays were bright and filled with love and laughter.

Elaine and Patsy

**Don't
miss**

BRANCH PROGRAM - January 11, 2025 10:30 a.m.

AI Unleashed: The Future and Its Risks

*** Page 3 ***

JOIN AAUW CAPITOL HILL LOBBY CORPS IN 2025

As AAUW CEO **Gloria Blackwell** recently wrote: "We enter 2025 with hope and renewed passion for the challenges that may lie ahead. We're prepared to fight and start the year strong with an agenda that we will present to Congress based on AAUW's values. **Let's keep fighting for women's and girls' equity in 2025 — together.**"

If you want to make your voice heard with Congress on issues important to our mission, **AAUW invites you to join AAUW's Lobby Corps!**

Join the AAUW Virtual Lobby Corps Training on January 9, 2025

Time: 11a.m. to 12 p.m. EST

Location: [Register here](#)

In just an hour, learn how to interact with Congress on familiar, important issues that support women and families.



Anne Simpson attended the Lobby Corps training on December 5, 2024 at the AAUW national Office in DC

YES! You can do this! Lobbying requires only one or two mornings monthly. You DON'T need to be an expert! You'll always be paired with another AAUW member. You'll be well prepared with brief talking points and one specific ASK per visit. We often speak to young Congressional staffers who are NOT intimidating and are happy to hear from dedicated volunteers. Congressional offices are easily reached via Metro. **You can do this!**

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

BRANCH LEADERSHIP 2024 – 2025

Elected Officers

Co-Presidents: Patsy Quick
Elaine Kolish

Program Vice President: Solveig Eggerz

Membership Vice President: Susan Farmer

Treasurer: Anne Simpson

Secretary: Joanna Crane

Appointed Chairs

Bylaws: vacant

AAUW Funds: Cathy Krebs

Public Policy: Mary Ellen Mehler

Newsletter/Website: Bianca Daugherty

Newsletter/

Directory Distribution: Mary Ellen Mehler

Nominating Committee Chair: Lois Passman

Hospitality: vacant

Interest Groups

Book Group: Liz Promen

Dining Out: Cathy Conron
Paula Lettice

Game Night: Bianca Daugherty
Paula Lettice

ImpromptEvent: All Members

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.



Mt Vernon Branch AAUW



Sherwood Regional Library

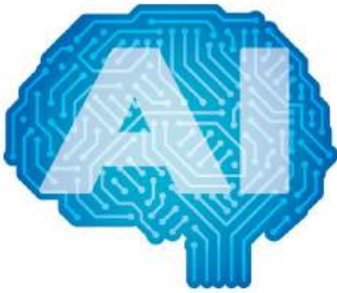
AI Unleashed: The Future and Its Risks

January 11, 2025 10:30 a.m.

Sherwood Regional Library

2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306

(In case of inclement weather we will Zoom.)



Join us as we dive into the world of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with Jennifer Swann, Director of Information Security at Bloomberg. With a strong academic foundation from Morgan State University and a professional certification from Yale, Jennifer brings a wealth of knowledge in cybersecurity and a deep passion for emerging technologies. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from an expert about the promises and pitfalls of AI.

OUR SPEAKER:

Born and raised in Baltimore, MD, **Jennifer Swann** has carved out an impressive career in the tech industry. A proud graduate of Morgan State University, where she studied Engineering and Computer Information Systems, Jennifer launched her career as an infrastructure engineer at PNC Bank after graduating in 2012. She then transitioned to Northrop Grumman, focusing on Cyber Security. Today, Jennifer is the Director of Information Security at Bloomberg Industry Group, bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role. Her accomplishments include obtaining a leadership certificate from Yale, winning hackathons at MIT, and working with Facebook on their spatial computing program.



The meeting is free and open to the public.

For more information: AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com

BOOK GROUP



**Book Group will meet via Zoom on
Monday, January 20, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.
*** Zoom link will be sent via email. *****

BOOK: Good Night Irene
by Alberto Urrea

REVIEWER: Liz Promen

NEXT BOOK: James
by Percival Everett

Contact Liz Promen if you are interested in joining the group

GAME NIGHT

Join us for a fun evening with various games.

Friday, January 24, 2025, 7:30 p.m.

~~Home of Joanna Crane~~
Correction: Home of Bev Dyer



Spouses and significant others are welcome to join in!

Contact Paula Lettice or Bianca Daugherty if you would like to join the group.

AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com

DINING OUT



WINTER RESTAURANT WEEK IS BACK!

January 31 to February 9, 2025

A record number of 90+ participating restaurants are offering special multi-course prix fixe dinner menus at \$30, \$40 or \$50 per person, plus gratuity and tax, and any extras you order.

<https://visitalexandria.com/restaurants/restaurant-week/>

**Please stay tuned,
more information will follow by email.**



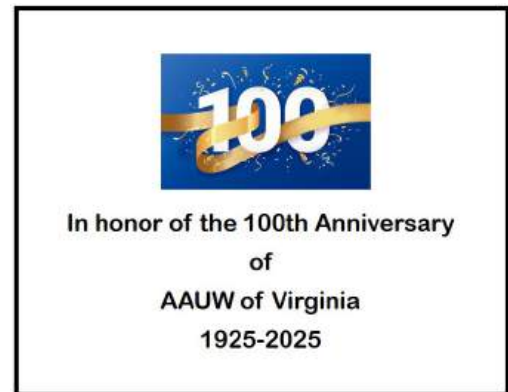
To mark **Virginia AAUW's 100th anniversary**, every branch is asked to donate 100 items or 100 dollars to a local non-profit or to AAUW's funds. Our board decided to donate to **United Community**, a local poverty-fighting non-profit. Weekly, the UC's Food Pantry puts together bags of food and other supplies that are delivered to its homebound clients. The "other supplies" include personal toiletries, such as shampoo, soap, dental care products, and adult diapers. These needed items are always in short supply. Consequently, the Mount Vernon Branch members were asked to bring donations of full-size toiletry items to our holiday luncheon in December.

The result was a resounding success. **We collected over 232 items**, including 72 soaps, 40 toothpastes, and 78 adult diapers, which are among the homebound clients' most requested items. The staff at UC expressed surprise at the number of donations and sincere gratitude for the generosity of our members.

Joanna Crane



From left: Elaine Kolish, Joanna Crane, Anne Simpson, and Patsy Quick

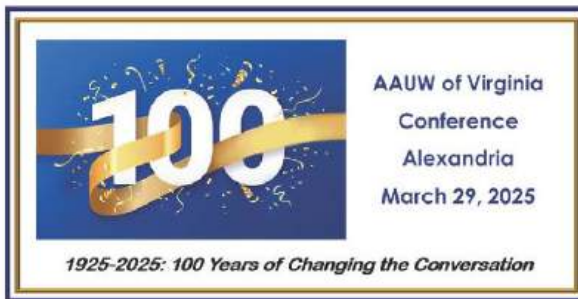


From left:

- Jose Herrera, UC Food Pantry Assistant
- Joanna Crane
- Anne Simpson
- Steve Luteran, UC Chief of Programs
- Mayleen Watson, UC Fundraising Operations Manager



AAUW-VA - 100 YEARS OF CHANGING THE CONVERSATION



**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** 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. Room reservations can be cancelled without penalty up until 72 hours before the first day of the reservation.

***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.

**Click [HERE](#) to view the Conference Brochure
or [HERE](#) to visit the AAUW-VA Conference Website**

AAUW-VA LOBBY DAYS – 15/ 16 JANUARY 2025

Start Our Centennial Year Off Right with AAUW OF VIRGINIA LOBBY DAY



AAUW of Virginia turns 100 soon! What better way could there be to kick off our anniversary year than by taking action and making a difference? Please join us for **Lobby Day on January 16**, with an optional evening reception and talk on **January 15** at 6 P.M.

Please RSVP [here](#). (You'll need the names of your Delegate and State Senator, which you can get [here](#).)

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Richmond for the night of January 15 at \$158 plus a \$2 fee. The address is 700 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219, (T: 804-643-2900.) To make a reservation at the discounted rate click [here](#). The evening before, we will gather at the hotel for dinner and to hear a guest speaker at 6 P.M. All the details will be provided to registrants. We hope to see you in Richmond on January 15 and 16!

For questions contact **Diane Schrier**, VP for Public Policy AAUW-VA at Diane.Schrier@gmail.com.
For help with the registration form, contact **Denise Murden** at denise.m.murden@gmail.com.



A Festive ImpromptEvent

Branch members **Elaine, Patsy, Cathy, Bianca, and Joanna** enjoyed the “Holiday Dreams” concert with the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic and the Alexandria Choral Society at the George Washington Masonic Memorial on December 8, 2025. **Anne and Richard Simpson** are members of the Alexandria Choral Society.

If you have ideas for an ImpromptEvent to share with our branch let Patsy or Elaine know.

2024 - 2025 MT. VERNON BRANCH PROGRAM YEAR

Meeting Date and Place	Focus/Activity
Thursday, September 12, 2024, 1:30 PM Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	Fundamentals of Estate Planning (estate planning, wills, trusts, beneficiaries) Speaker: Gretchyn G. Meinken, Esq.
Tuesday, October 15, 2024, 1:30 PM Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	Election 2024 Speaker: Liz White of Upvote VA and Chris DeRosa & Janice Morris , of the League of Women Voters of Arlington/Alexandria "Ranked Choice Voting" team. (Discussion of Rank Choice voting.)
Saturday, November 2, 2024, 10:30 AM Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	Speaker: Annie Ray , Grammy Award Winning Orchestra Teacher
Sunday, December 8, 2024, 11:30 AM Cedar Knoll, 9030 Lucia Ln, Alexandria, VA 22308	Holiday Event
Saturday, January 11, 2025, 10:30 AM Sherwood Regional Library (Zoom if bad weather)	AI Unleashed: The Future and Its Risks Speaker: Jennifer Swann , Director of Information Security at Bloomberg
Thursday, February 20, 2025, 1:30 PM Sherwood Regional Library (Zoom if bad weather)	Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions Speakers: Meg Tuccillo and Patty Hagen
March or April Location, Date and Time TBD	Annual Business Meeting
March 28-29, 2025 Sheraton Suites of Old Town Alexandria	AAUW-VA Conference
April 17, 2025, 1:30 PM Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	Eliza Scidmore: The Trailblazing Journalist Behind Washington's Cherry Trees Author Diana Parsell will speak about her book and research.
May Location, Date and Time TBD	Annual Potluck
June Location, Date and Time TBD	Annual Planning Session
Wednesday, June 18, 2025 7 PM Reception / 8 PM Performance Little Theatre of Alexandria 600 Wolfe St, Alexandria, VA 22314	LTA Annual Fundraiser The Play That Goes Wrong



Thursday, February 20, 2025, 1:30 P.M.
 Sherwood Regional Library (Zoom if bad weather)
Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions
 Speakers: Meg Tuccillo and Patty Hagen

Other Important Dates:

- January 9, 2025 AAUW Virtual Lobby Corps Training
- January 16, 2025 AAUW-VA Lobby Day, Richmond
- March 29, 2025 AAUW-VA State Conference, Alexandria



January 2025

- **7 Board Meeting, 7:30 P.M.**
Contact Patsy Quick/
Elaine Kolish
- **11 Branch Program, 10:30 A.M.**
Sherwood Regional Library
Contact Kathi Hanrahan
- **20 Book Group, 7 P.M.**
Contact Liz Promen
- **24 Game Night, 7:30 P.M.**
Contact Joanna Crane

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



Check out our website <https://mtvernon-va.aauw.net/>
 Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mtvernonvaaauw/>

