

Mt. Vernon Voices

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

Volume 69 Issue 2

October 2025

Mt. Vernon Branch



CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

As we move into fall with the start of our programs and other branch sponsored activities, we must pay careful attention to the coming election in our state and to the vast challenges our organization faces. **Members of our branch have written nearly 2000 postcards to Get Out the Vote!** We owe them a huge thank you!! It is an easy thing to do when we have huge challenges to face. **We hope you will get yourself out to vote! Early voting at Mt. Vernon Governmental Center has already begun through November 1.**



[AAUW-VA's Voter Guides](#) may help you choose a good candidate. These guides are for informational purposes only so that voters can make informed decisions. It is not intended to advocate for any candidate. However, there has been every attempt to ascertain a candidate's position on AAUW-VA priorities. Voting records were searched, as were web pages, interviews and social media.

AAUW's CEO, **Gloria Blackwell** recently stated:

AAUW's longstanding commitment to empowering women in higher education and professional fields remains unshaken in the face of the current pervasive dismantling of educational equity in America. "Despite ongoing challenges," says Blackwell, "AAUW continues to stand firm as a lifeline for scholars navigating political headwinds. We will continue to persist in the face of academic backlash because all women deserve equitable access to education."

I think it behooves us to be aware of AAUW's 2024 accomplishments to realize the challenges of today. Please take a look at the [AAUW 2024 Fiscal Year Annual Report](#).

Though we are nonpartisan, meaning we do not endorse a party or candidate, our issues are political:

- Enforcement of Title IX Rules,
- Decreasing the STEM gap,
- Protecting women's health care, and especially
- standing strong against attacks on equity in education and the workplace.

(Continued on page 2)

BRANCH PROGRAM

**THURSDAY,
OCTOBER 16,
2 P.M.**

LOCAL NON-PROFITS:

COPING WITH FEDERAL CUTS AND CHANGES



**SHERWOOD
REGIONAL
LIBRARY**
(2ND FLOOR)

**SEE PROGRAM FLYER
ON PAGE 3**

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

(Continued from page 1)



Writing postcards for Reclaim Our Vote.
From left Patsy, Elaine, Anne, and Liz

What can we do?

- Learn more at <https://www.aauw.org/>
- Read AAUW's recent [press releases](#).
- Print, and share a new [AAUW Public Policy brochure](#).
- [Donate to AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund!](#)
- Join AAUW's [Action Alert!](#)

VOTE! Again, many thanks to our postcard writers!
Stay strong!

Elaine and Patsy
Co-Presidents

In-Person Early Voting
September 19 – November 1
Mt. Vernon Governmental Center
2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria, 22306
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/early-voting>



BRANCH LEADERSHIP 2025 – 2026

Elected Officers

Co-Presidents:	Elaine Kolish Patsy Quick
Program Co-Vice President:	Beverly Dyer Kathi Hanrahan
Membership Vice President:	Susan Farmer
Treasurer:	Anne Simpson
Secretary:	Cathy Conron Sandy Doyle

Appointed Chairs

Bylaws:	vacant
AAUW Funds:	Joanna Crane
Public Policy:	Ofelia Perotti
Newsletter/Website:	Bianca Daugherty

Newsletter/ Directory Distribution:	Mary Ellen Mehler
Nominating Committee Chair:	vacant
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

October 16, 2025, 2 p.m.

Sherwood Hall Regional Library, Upstairs Meeting Room

Local Nonprofits: Coping with Federal Cuts and Changes

Join us to learn how our local nonprofits are managing and what we can do to help.

Our Panelists



Genee Hayes, Executive Director, Good Shepherd Housing & Family Services, is a resilient and dedicated leader with a mas-

ter's degree in public administration and over 14 years of experience. She has carved a niche in public service, marked by her thoughtful and energetic approach. Her expertise in city management and operational excellence, combined with her innovative policy-making skills, have significantly shaped community development. Prior to joining Good Shepherd, Genee led the multi-family affordable housing portfolio at the DC Department of Housing and Community Development and established the Homeowner Assistance Fund program, aiding 2,000 low-income households avoid foreclosure.

Beyond her professional achievements, Genee's personal narrative, growing up in affordable housing with a newly widowed mother, fuels her passion for meaningful change. In her new role, she combines professional acumen with profound empathy, emphasizing the power of community support.



Leah Fraley, CEO of United Community, brings extensive experience and an unwavering dedication to protecting children and strengthening families. Her personal and professional path reflects a deep commitment to ensuring that children grow up safe, supported, and surrounded by opportunity.

Prior to joining UC she served as CEO of Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) of Northern Virginia, where she led efforts to prevent abuse and support healing for survivors. Leah believes that protecting children goes hand in hand with helping families become self-sufficient. By ensuring families have access to resources, support, and opportunities, she works to break cycles of hardship and create pathways to stability and independence.

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Ron Fitzsimmons, ED, Alice's Kids, was raised in West Islip, New York. He and his two younger siblings had a less than ideal childhood after their father abandoned the family. They were forced to rely on welfare payments that barely paid for food and rent, but the experience gave him a unique perspective on the challenges children living in poverty face. Those experiences ultimately led to the formation of Alice's Kids.

Mr. Fitzsimmons spent most of his working years in the national political arena. Beginning in 1977, he worked for three Members of Congress, was the Director of Government Relations for a Portland-based law firm and in 1991 he formed a national organization that for 15 years lobbied to preserve reproductive rights for women. In recognition of that work, in 1994 the "Washingtonian Magazine" named him one of the "Top 50 Lobbyists" in Washington, D.C. Upon leaving the national scene, Ron served as a staff person for Mount Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland for 5 years and as a substitute teacher. A strong believer in public service, Ron has served on many boards. In 2017 Supervisor Dan Storck named him "Mount Vernon Citizen of the Year."

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**DONATIONS FOR THESE
ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE
ACCEPTED.**

**For more information:
AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com**

The meeting is free and open to the public.

KNITTING FOR CHARITY

If you know how to knit or crochet consider this project to benefit clients of some local nonprofits. Take a photo of your good works for us to admire!

*Elaine Kolish and Patsy Quick
Co-Presidents*

Knitting for Charity

Caring makes us a “well-knit” community!

September 15 - November 14



How can you help? This winter season, keep adults warm and cozy by knitting a hat.

Pick up yarn while supplies last. **Beginning September 15**, a limited quantity of yarn will be available at the following library branches:

Regional: Centreville, Chantilly, City of Fairfax, George Mason, Pohick, Reston Regional, Tysons-Pimmit, and Sherwood.

Community: Herndon Fortnightly, Kings Park, and Kingstowne.

All hats will be donated to various community nonprofit organizations including [Shelter House](#), [FACETS](#), [New Hope Housing](#) and [Cornerstones](#).

This event is cosponsored by the Fairfax Library Foundation.

[Learn More](#) about Knitting for Charity.

WE ARE A FOUR STAR BRANCH!

Dear Branch Members,

We earned **FOUR STARS** from AAUW National. **Tremayne A. Parquet, Deputy Director of Development**, sent us the following.

I'm delighted to share that the **Mt. Vernon (VA) Branch** has earned a **Public Policy & Advocacy, Governance & Sustainability, Communications & External Relations and Advancement Star** in the **Five Star Program** for FY25! This achievement reflects your branch's commitment to advancing gender equity and aligning your programs, advocacy, and sustainability efforts with AAUW's strategic priorities.

We are so grateful for the time and energy you and your fellow leaders devote to this work. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition and we look forward to celebrating your success further in the months ahead, including through future highlights in *Membership Matters* and on the AAUW website.

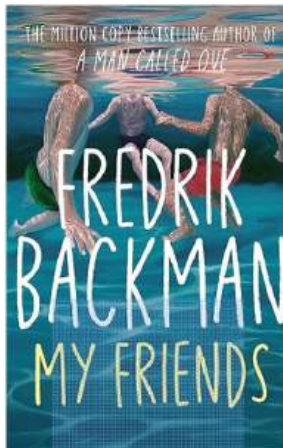
THE AAUW  PROGRAM

BOOK GROUP

**Monday, October 20, 2025
7:00 p.m.**

*Please inform the hostess whether
or not you plan to attend.*

HOSTESS: Suzanne Parrish
2622 Culpepper Road, Alexandria
CO-HOST: Anne Simpson



Book: **My Friends**
Fredrik Backman

Reviewer: Elaine Kolish

Next Book: **Calamity of Souls**
David Baldacci

Contact Liz Promen if you are interested in joining the group.

GAME NIGHT



Join us for an evening of fun, friendly competition,
and good company!

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

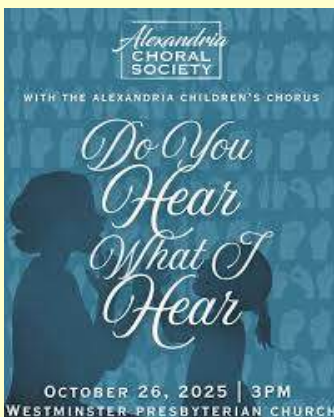
Home of Kathi Hanrahan

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

Welcome to the 2025- 2026 Game Night Season. The group has formed and we shared a great night at Bianca's in September. **We still need hosts for February, May, and June.** Please contact Paula to see what month could work for you!

ImpromptEvent



"Do You Hear What I Hear?" is the title of **Alexandria Choral Society's** first concert of the season. They will share the stage with the **Alexandria Children's Chorus** on **Sunday, October 26 at 3 P.M.**

The concert is at Westminster Presbyterian Church,
2701 Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria.

The music asks, in a world filled with noise, how often do we truly listen? Come celebrate the art of listening, and look for AAUW member **Anne Simpson** in the altos.

<https://www.alexandriachoralsociety.org>

SUCCESSFUL BRANCH KICKOFF PROGRAM

AAUW Mt. Vernon's "Let's Get Physical" kickoff event with physical fitness expert Patricia Linderman.

In a lively interactive program, Patricia demonstrated how to gain more flexibility, better posture, and general well being.

Some highlights were

- how to fall down gently and get up again!
- how to belly laugh.
- how to give your other hand an invigorating massage.
- how to get stronger and have fun doing it.

Patricia is a Health and Well-Being Coach for Women over 45, Certified Personal Trainer, Functional Aging Specialist and [Pfilates](#) (pelvic floor pilates) teacher and not to omit a Laughter Yoga Leader.

She offers a variety of classes and workshops like

How to Fall More Safely and Get Back Up Again, Fierce in the Forest, Pure Stretch, Laughter Yoga.

If you want to learn more visit her website www.fierceafter45.com or give her a call at 703-655-0670.

Solveig Eggerz



Solveig Eggerz (left) who organized the program with Patricia Linderman

You might remember the **Pipeline Playwrights'** civil rights play "Wednesdays in Mississippi" which was a branch Impromptevent in 2023.



It's My Party!

— a fresh and dynamic look at the spirited conflict between the establishment and radical suffragists who marched and campaigned over a century ago so women could vote today!

October 17, 23, 24, 25 at 7:30 p.m.
October 18, 25 at 3:00 p.m.
October 26 at 2:00 p.m.

Theatre on the Run

3700 S Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington, VA 22206

Tickets are \$33. You can buy your Tickets [here](#).

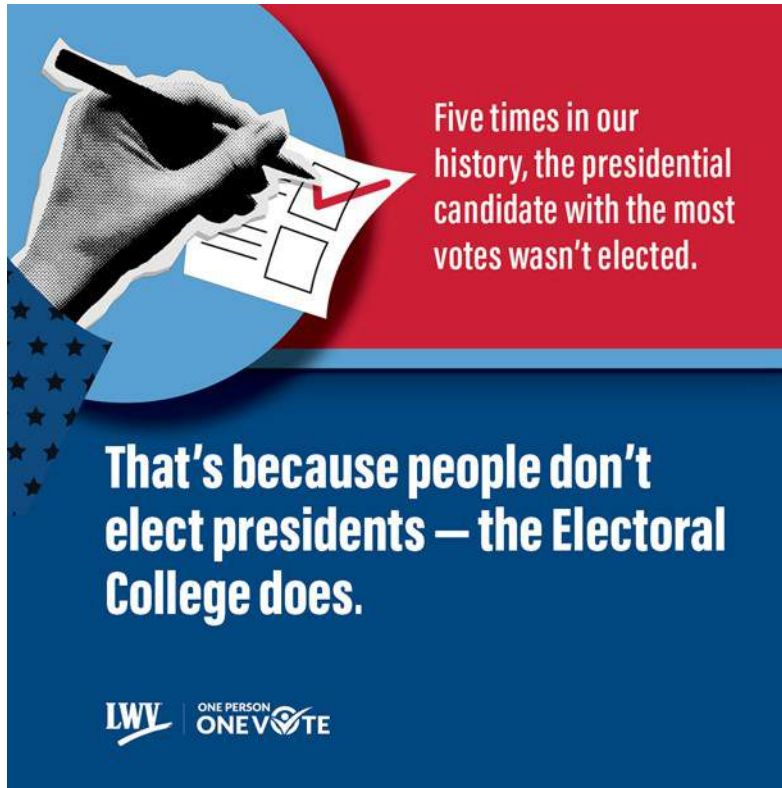
Pipeline Playwrights creates opportunities for women's stories — particularly those of women in their "Second Act"— to take center stage, closing the theatre gender gap one play, one reading, one production at a time.

<https://www.pipelineplaywrights.org/>

DON'T MISS THE ALL DISTRICT PROGRAM!

AAUW-VA All-District Program

Tuesday, October 14, 2025, 7 PM via Zoom



Join your AAUW sisters from around the Commonwealth for an informative program on **"One Person, One Vote: The National Popular Vote vs. The Electoral College,"** presented by Jane D. Newell, AAUW-VA Greater Richmond Branch AAUW Funds Chair, AAUW Honorary Life Member, and League of Women Voters of Virginia Director of Transformation. Jane will explore the League's plan to abolish the antiquated Electoral College, which has roots in racism. She'll discuss the history, impact, myths, and approaches to solving this election problem, including the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

[Join the Zoom Meeting](#)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88994832700?pwd=BdMN1U3FAcsVgJEZgbp7bqKpEnHpWo.1>

Meeting ID: 889 9483 2700

Passcode: 503418

One tap mobile +13092053325,,88994832700#,,,,*503418#US

AAUW-VA NORTHERN DISTRICT MEETING

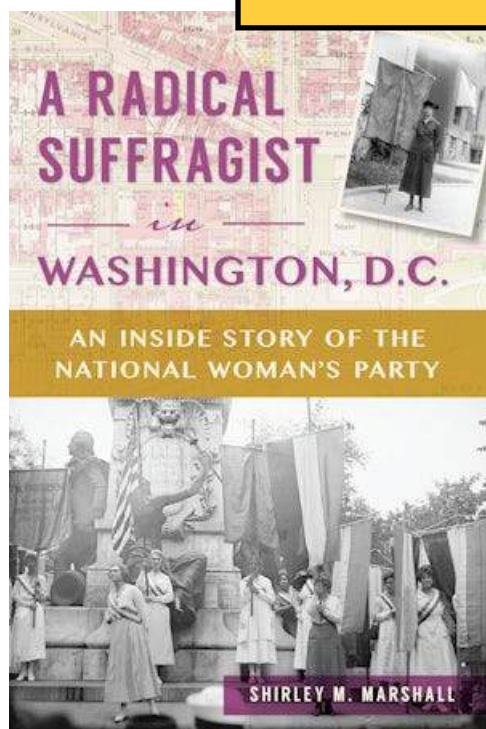
CO-Sponsors:



Pohick Regional Library

AAUW-VA Northern District Meeting **November 1, 2025, 12:00 p.m.**

**Pohick Regional Library
6450 Sydenstricker Rd, Burke, VA**



Shirley Marshall will be talking about her book, *A Radical Suffragist in Washington D.C.* The book features letters from Elizabeth Kalb Green who worked and lived at the National Woman's Party Headquarters from 1918 to 1921. Her book will be available for purchase.

After Shirley's talk, we will have a short break and then a business meeting where branches can talk about upcoming events.

Set up/Meet and Greet: 12-12:30 p.m.
Program starts at 12:30 p.m.

Open to the public. Bring your family and friends!

ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE



Ninth Annual Women's Conference: The Ripple Effects of Resilience

October 6, 2025, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

George Mason University (Mason Square)
3351 Fairfax Drive Arlington, VA 22201

Please join us on **Monday, October 6** for Congressman Don Beyer's Ninth Annual Women's Conference titled 'The Ripple Effects of Resilience' at George Mason University's Arlington Campus.

This year's conference brings together women leaders and community voices to share stories of perseverance, strength, and resilience in the face of the challenges confronting our community today. The discussion will feature **Brooke Sydnor Curran**, founder of Move2Learn; **Lisa Jacobs**, Executive Director of the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium; and **Elizabeth Jones Valderrama**, Executive Director of Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR). The discussion will be moderated by **Nyree Wright**, Executive Vice President of Crisis & Risk Communications at Edelman.

INVITATION FROM OUR SISTER BRANCH VIENNA

When: Thursday, Oct. 9, 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30 p.m.)

Where: Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean

Speaker: **Meghan Kissell**, senior director of policy and member advocacy, AAUW National, will discuss efforts to advance AAUW public-policy positions and explain how members can get involved.



When: Tuesday, Oct. 28, 7 p.m. (Doors open at 6:30, and the public is welcome.)

Where: Vienna Community Center Auditorium, 120 Cherry St. SE. Vienna

Speaker: **Gautam Sethi**, chief information and technology officer, Fairfax County Public Schools, will discuss the use of artificial intelligence in our schools and prospects for the future.





SAVE THE DATE

Virginia Women's Conference

NOVEMBER 15, 2025, 8 A.M.-3 P.M.

The Johnson Center, George Mason University
4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030

Click [here](#) for information on registration.

AAUW will once again have a table at the Virginia Women's Conference. Email AAUW-VA Public Policy VP, Diane Schrier, if you can help out, Diane.schrier@gmail.com.



SAVE THESE 2026 CONFERENCE DATES!



ON THE FRONT LINES:
Defending Education
and Equity for Women
and Girls

AAUW-VA Conference 2026, Glen Allen, April 18

The Northwest Branches (Greater Richmond, Winchester, and Fredericksburg Area) cordially invite you to the **101st AAUW-VA Conference**, at the **Drury Plaza Hotel Richmond, 11049 West Broad Street, Glen Allen, VA 23060**.

Join us for afternoon tours and evening entertainment on **Friday, April 17, 2026**. Then on **April 18**, we'll spend the day together with:

- **Interesting speakers,**
- **Informative panels,**
- **Catered lunch,**
- **Irresistible raffle baskets to support AAUW Greatest Needs Fund**

You can make reservations at the **Drury Plaza Hotel** by visiting the following link:

https://www.druryhotels.com/bookandstay/newreservation/?group_no=10150185

OR CALL 1-800-325-0720 and reference your group number, 10150185, to make your reservation.

(The default dates may show as April 16 – April 20; just adjust the dates for your preference.)

To get the group rate, **be sure to reserve your room by Sunday, March 15, 2026**. Reservations made after this date will be subject to prevailing rates and availability.

Hotel Amenities Include:

- Free Parking
- Complimentary Hot Breakfast
- Complimentary Evening Drinks and Snacks
- Complimentary Wi-Fi Throughout the Hotel
- On-Site Facilities: Business Center, Fitness Center, and Pool

Any questions? Email **Mary Anne Graham**, maryannegraham@comcast.net. We look forward to seeing you there!

UNFINISHED REVOLUTION: TOGETHER WE STAND



2026 AAUW Atlantic States Regional Conference

September 25-27, 2026

Lancaster County Convention Center
Lancaster, PA

The next AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference will be held in Lancaster Pennsylvania on the weekend of **September 25-27, 2026**.

View the promotional [VIDEO](#)!

2025 - 2026 MT. VERNON BRANCH PROGRAM YEAR

Meeting Date and Place	Focus/Activity
Thursday, September 25, 2025, 1:00 PM Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	Let's Get Physical Health and fitness workshop Speaker: Patricia Linderman
Thursday, October 16, 2025, 2:00 PM Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306 (2nd floor)	Round Table of Mt. Vernon Community Non-Profits: Ron Fitzsimmons, (Alice's Kids); Leah Fraley, (United Community); Genee Hayes, (Good Shepherd Housing & Family Services, Inc.)
Thursday, November 20, 2025, 1:00 PM Sherwood Regional Library	Struggles for Women in the Media Speaker & Panel: Deborah Todd (formerly with Voice of America)
Sunday, December 7, 2025, 11:30 AM Cedar Knoll 9030 Lucia Lane, Alexandria, VA 22308	Holiday Event
January 2026 Date and time TBD Sherwood Regional Library	Women in Foreign Service Retired Women Ambassadors
Friday, February 6, 2026 7 PM Reception / 8 PM Performance Little Theatre of Alexandria 600 Wolfe St, Alexandria, VA 22314	LTA Annual Fundraiser School of Rock
February 2026 Place, date and time TBD	History of the Enslaved at Mt. Vernon Speaker: Rev. Sherrie Quander
March 2026 Place, date and time TBD	Annual Business Meeting
April 2026, Place, date and time TBD	Importance of tree canopy in Fairfax County, especially in underserved areas. (related to climate change)
May 2026 Place, date and time TBD	Annual Potluck
June 2026 Place, date and time TBD	Annual Planning Session

Other Important Dates to Remember:

October 14, 2025	AAUW-VA All District Meeting, Zoom
November 1, 2025	AAUW-VA Northern District Meeting, Pohick Regional Library
April 18, 2026	AAUW-VA Conference, Glen Allen, VA



AAUW's longstanding commitment to empowering women in higher education and professional fields remains unshaken in the face of the current pervasive dismantling of educational equity in America. "Despite ongoing challenges," says Blackwell, "AAUW continues to stand firm as a lifeline for scholars navigating political headwinds. We will continue to persist in the face of academic backlash because all women deserve equitable access to education."

Gloria Blackwell, AAUW CEO

AAUW has made strong statements about current events. Read them here:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/news/media/press-releases/>

[View the Video](#): AAUW: Standing Strong Against Attacks on Equity in Education

Join Our Action Network, sign up to receive Action Alerts

Members of AAUW's Action Network receive urgent e-mail notices when their advocacy is needed most.

<https://www.aauw.org/act/action-network-join/>



October 2025

- **14 All District Program**
7:00 P.M. via ZOOM
- **15 Board Meeting, 7:00 P.M.**
Contact Elaine Kolish/
Patsy Quick
- **16 Branch Program, 2 P.M.**
Contact Elaine Kolish
- **20 Book Group, 5 P.M.**
Contact Liz Promen
- **24 Game Night, 7:30 P.M.**
Contact Kathi Hanrahan



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 All District Program	15 Board Meeting	16 Branch Program	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/>

