



February/March 2022



### President's Letter

Wintery greetings to all GRAAUW branch members !! We were very hopeful that the new year would see us meeting in person again but alas, it was not to be. Since the COVID virus case numbers have now begun dropping dramatically, we are very hopeful that we will soon be able to see each other face to face again. This is our legislative session at the General Assembly so we hope you are keeping in contact with your legislators on issues of importance to women and girls. I am so sorry if you missed the update at the branch meeting last Thursday as your Public Policy chair, Laurie Coulter, did a great job updating us on issues and plans. She emailed all branch members some follow-up info and a sample letter yesterday - please take advantage of this opportunity. Your branch board of directors meets on January 27th and we will be making plans for the winter spring meetings - stay tuned for some exciting dates/times. The annual business meeting for our branch is on Thursday March 17th Please plan to attend! The annual state conference will be held in **Harrisonburg** on **March 25/26** - at this time it is scheduled to be an in-person conference.

We will keep you posted on any changes. I hope that many of you will plan to carpool and attend. On the national level the comment period for by-laws amendments is now through 2/2 at 5pm. These proposed changes have been recommended by the AAUW National Board of Directors and Governance Committee. The nominating committee will be reaching out to fill the slate of branch officers for 2022/24 - please answer the call. We need a President and Program Vice President - and yes, the jobs can be filled with 2 people sharing the responsibilities! Please contact myself or any of your branch board members if we can provide additional information or be of any assistance.

Laura, Branch President  
804-496-6124 or 804-387-5315

### Important Dates for your calendar!

Jan. 29 - NW District Meeting  
Feb. 12th - Program meeting - LGBTQ  
March 17th - GRAAUW Annual Meeting  
March 26 - AAUW of VA State Conference  
April 9 -Turning Point Museum - carpool to  
NOVA

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## No Wine Tasting Fund Raiser

We kicked off our Scholarship fund raiser on Thursday evening Nov. 18th and to date we have received \$3000 in contributions! Thank you to all of you for your generosity! The Board will be voting on the division of the funds between AAUW and our local scholarships.

## Meet our new members!

**Ellen Rennels** - Ellen was born in NJ but lived all over the globe by the time she was 11.( Air Force “brat”). Her mother was a “war bride” from East Prussia. Ellen graduated from Univ. of Colorado with a BA in English and has taught in middle school, high school and community college. Eventually, she worked in the Admissions office at Colorado College. Like many of us, Ellen moved to Richmond area to be near her grandchildren. She enjoys many things but likes the outdoors and gardening, sports, reading, and cooking. So many interests, so little time! We hope she will squeeze in some time for GRAAUW

## Nominations open for GRAAUW Board Positions

Your Nominations Committee, Laura Wimmer, Musua WaKabongo, and Carol Stephens are charged with finding candidates to fill the following elected positions: President, Secretary, and VP of Program. If you are willing to serve in any of these three positions or to share the responsibilities with another member, please contact Laura, Musua, or Carol. If you are asked to serve, please be open to the possibility!

## Programs

**February 12th - 10:30 am - 12:00 pm**  
**LGBTQ+ Boundaries & Terminology: How to Respect, Understand, and be Inclusive of Queer Identities.**

**Speakers:** Dr. Erica Brown-Meredith, Longwood University Professor in Social Work and Megan Fueti, Longwood University Social Work Intern

This presentation will explain and identify LGBTQ+ identities including gender and sexuality. It will demonstrate how to respectfully refer to people who identify as transgender in social settings as well as explain the difference between biological sex and gender.

**This may be our first hybrid meeting.** We are planning to hold the meeting at Bon Air Presbyterian Church ( St. Mathias where we usually meet is not allowing meetings in their church right now) at 10:30 am. We will attempt to zoom this meeting live for those who are unable to attend in person.

**March 17th - Annual Business Meeting**  
**7:30 pm** - Plan is to be in person at St. Mathias church - stay tuned. We will watch a PBS special on Ruth Bader Ginsburg as well as hold our election for officers for 2022-2023 and conduct other annual business.

**David Narum, *Intentions and Improvisations***, Eric Schindler Gallery, 2305 East Broad St.

Nora’s husband will be having his first show at this gallery the month of Feb. The opening is Friday Feb. 4th 7-9 pm and an Open House is Sat. Feb. 5th 1-4 pm.

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## GRAAUW PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE JANUARY 2022

**Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML).** Sen. Jennifer Boysko again has introduced a bill (**SB 1**) to establish a PFML program in Virginia. The bill has been referred to the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee. AAUW-VA remains allied with the Campaign for a Family Friendly Economy on this issue.) In a related development, **Sen. Barbara Favola has introduced a bill to establish paid family leave as a class of insurance (SB 15).** This also has been referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor.

**Paid Sick Days.** Last year, Virginia's legislature passed the first paid sick days law - HB 2137 - providing protection for 30,000 home health workers who provide consumer-directed services (Medicaid). This year, there are currently two bills in the House and two bills in the Senate. (A third House bill is expected from Del. Lopez but is not yet listed. An update will be provided.) The following are thumbnail sketches of the bills:

**HB 997 (Guzman):** Requires employers to provide paid sick leave to home health care workers who provide agency-directed services. (Committee referral pending) (SUPPORT)

**HB 851 (Reid):** Requires employers to provide 40 hours of paid sick leave, prorated to reflect the average number of hours worked per week for each employee. Bill exempts employers with 25 or fewer employees and part-time employees (SUPPORT WITH RESERVATIONS ABOUT LEVEL OF EMPLOYER SIZE, AND PART-TIME EXEMPTIONS)

**HB 1160 (King):** Requires employers to provide paid sick leave to health care providers, grocery store workers, and home health workers who provide agency directed services.

**SB 352 (Surovell):** Requires employers to provide paid sick leave to health care providers, grocery store workers, and home health workers who provide agency-directed services. At the request of the Coalition, Surovell removed any exemption for part-time workers. (referred to Senate Commerce and Labor Committee) (SUPPORT)

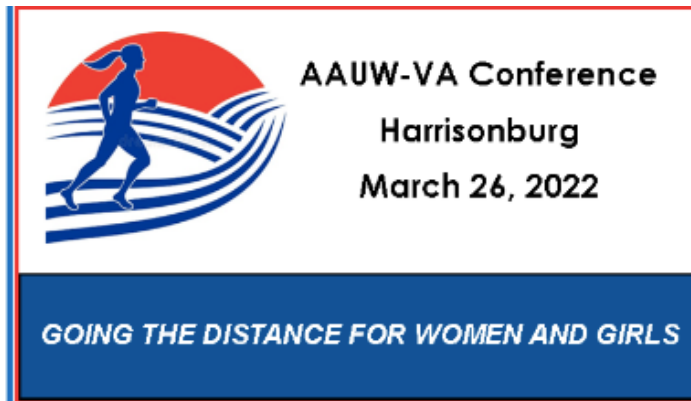
**SB 624 (Favola):** Identical to Guzman's bill (referred to Senate Commerce and Labor Committee) (SUPPORT).

**Public Education/Vouchers.** We expect these to be on the table as part of the budget discussion in view of the campaign statements made by the incoming Executive team. AAUW has positions to guide our lobbying efforts, including this statement on vouchers: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/position-vouchers/>.

Public Education Vouchers will potentially:

- **Weaken Public Education**
- **Does not improve Academic Achievement**
- **Civil Rights Are Not Guaranteed at Voucher Schools**
- **Private School Vouchers Do Not Offer Real Choice**

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Our State Conference this year is being held in 2 parts at different times. Part 1 will be in person at the Hotel Madison and Shenandoah Valley Conference Center Sat. March 26 9:30 - 5:00. Part 2 and the Annual Business Meeting will be held by Zoom on April 30th. Registration fee is only \$25 until March 4th and includes lunch. **Attendees must be fully vaccinated and wear masks.** Click [here](#) to register.

### Schedule:

Keynote address: Professor Kimberly Jenkins Robinson, *Progress and Enduring Inequities in Higher Education*

Other topics to be presented include DEI Practices at JMU and Community College System, Models of AAUW and C/U Partnerships, A Perspective on Early African American Education in the Shenandoah Valley, and The Changing Nature of Virginia Politics.

7:30 pm Friday - gathering of attendees who arrive on Friday ( There are a block of rooms reserved for \$119 / night at Hotel Madison and Shenandoah Valley Conference Center)

## Equal Rights Amendment

We succeeded in getting the ERA over the hump 2 years ago and it is now time for it to be added to the Constitution. Our lawsuits have not been successful so far to require the National Archivist to include it in the Constitution. On Jan. 26th the Office of Legal Counsel addressed the 2020 Memo that stopped the Archivist from executing his 2012 promise to publish the 28th Amendment after the 38th state ratified. Assistant Attorney General Christopher Schroeder concluded that "the 2020 OLC Opinion is not an obstacle either to Congress's ability to act with respect to ratification of the ERA or to judicial consideration of the pertinent questions." You can read the entire letter [here](#).

Every member of Congress will receive a copy of Our United States Constitution courtesy of The [Esler Family Foundation](#). Our elected officials can easily reference the 28th Amendment that specifically empowers Congress to enforce, by appropriate legislation, gender equality in America. Order your [Updated Pocket Constitution!](#)

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## Book Group

Continuing a 50-year tradition, our Book Group meets at **2 p.m.** on the third Thursday of each month. Our meetings are held at the **clubhouse of Trophy Club Apartments in Midlothian**, near the intersection of Robious and Huguenot Roads. [2301 Thoroughbred Cir, Midlothian, VA 23113](#)

**All GRAAUW members and their guests are welcome.** Join us any time our book interests you OR come every month. For more information, please contact DeAnn Lineberry: [deann.lineberry@yahoo.com](mailto:deann.lineberry@yahoo.com) or call 804-233-5352.

### Thursday, February 17 - Zoom only

#### Book:

**Uncle George & Me: Two Southern Families Confront a Shared Legacy of Slavery**, by Bill Sizemore

Bill Sizemore tells the story of his slave-owning Virginia ancestors, their slaves, and those slaves' descendants—a story that lay buried by a century of denial and historical amnesia. Its threads run through the Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, the Great Migration, the struggle for civil rights, and the crippling legacy of slavery that still plagues the nation today.

### Thursday, March 20

#### Book:

**Gentleman Jack: The Real Ann Lister**, by Anne Choma

In 1834, Anne Lister made history by celebrating and recording the first ever known marriage to another woman. She forged her own path in a society that had no language to define her. She was a landowner, an industrialist and a prolific diarist. This is her remarkable, true story.

## Lunch Bunch

**GRAAUW's Lunch Bunch** normally gathers on the second Thursday each month at 1:30 p.m. in restaurants around RVA.

**Lunch Bunch** began a few years ago as a way for members to meet for informal socializing. For information about the group, contact DeAnn Lineberry at [deann.lineberry@yahoo.com](mailto:deann.lineberry@yahoo.com)

There will be no Lunch Bunch in February. We are hopeful to be able to meet in March. If you have a place to suggest, please contact DeAnn.

### Covid testing and masks!

If you have not yet ordered your free covid testing swabs or masks from the government, do so now!

<https://special.usps.com/testkits>

Free Covid N95 masks will be available at CVS and Walgreen pharmacies in February.

### Birthday Corner

We would like to recognize the folks who will be celebrating their birthdays in **February** and **March**. Please let them know you are thinking of them on their special day!

#### February

Marian Seigla 2/09

Carol Stephens 2/23

#### March

Elizabeth Smith 3/19



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