



CONNECTION

Vienna Area (VA) Branch MARCH 2018

<https://vienna-va.aauw.net/>

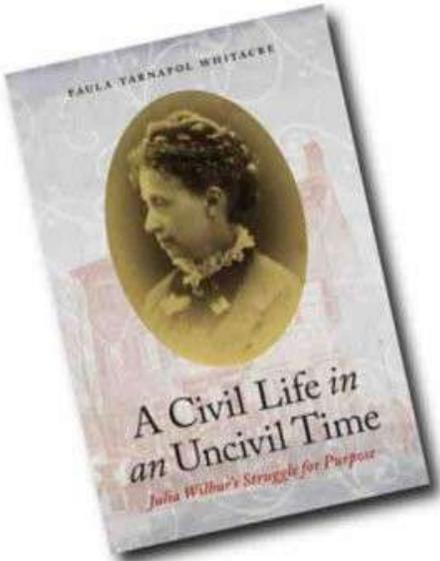
**INSIDE**

Meeting Details	2
Leadership Letter	3
Sister Simone	4-5
Northern District Meeting	6
AAUW Voting	7
Redistricting Forum Report	8
Interest Groups	9-10
Info Pages	11-12
AAUW Va Conference	13-14
Meeting Poster	15

Women's History Month  
Tuesday, March 13, 7 p.m.,  
Patrick Henry Library  
101 Maple Avenue East,  
Vienna VA

Guest Speaker:  
Author Paula Whitacre

**ALERT**  
Due to unforeseen circumstances, STEMtastics 2018 is canceled.



# Women's History Month

## Guest Speaker: Author Paula Whitacre

Tuesday, March 13, 7 p.m.,

Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna

This year's Women's History Month Program is co-sponsored by Patrick Henry Library and the Vienna Area Branch of AAUW

Paula Whitacre and other volunteers in Alexandria VA uncovered more than 50 years of abolitionist Julia Wilbur's writings that were stored and donated by Julia's descendants.

Author Paula Tarnapol Whitacre brings to life a 19th-century woman who faced issues still relevant today. Based on diaries, letters, and other primary sources, *Julia Wilbur: A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time: Julia Wilbur's Struggle for Purpose* is the captivating story of a woman who remade herself at midlife during a period of massive social upheaval and change.

In 1862 forty-seven-year old Julia Wilbur, who didn't come from a family with money or political influence, took the train to Washington D.C., alone, with only letters of introduction from the Rochester, New York anti-slavery association. Julia described herself as: "a missionary at large, a woman of all work." She helped set up housing, schools, and health care for slaves who had become free by reaching the Union occupied territory of Alexandria VA and Washington, D.C.

After the Civil War was over, she worked for the Freedmen's Bureau and then the Patent Office, working until a few months shy of her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Julia inspires today's women in so many ways. She advocated what were often unpopular causes; she saw the importance of recording both the everyday and historic acts of life; and she continued to adapt to new challenges, always continuing her struggle to find purpose.

*"I urge everyone to pick up a copy and delve deeper into a chapter of Civil War history that has been overlooked for far too long."*

— Lisa Wolfinger, Co-Creator & Executive Producer, PBS series Mercy Street

Books available for purchase and signing.

This program will begin at 7 o'clock. However, branch members are invited to come at 6:30 to socialize.

<http://www.paulawhitacre.com/>

<https://vienna-va.aauw.net/>

## April Preview



Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 28th at 10 A.M! Our own Susan V. is a Master Gardener and past president of the Friends of Green Spring Gardens (FROGS). She will take us on a special tour of Green Spring Garden for our April branch meeting.



## *From the Presidents*

Wasn't that a great program at the Community Center last month! We know many of you were there to hear Sister Simone Campbell lay out the problem of income inequality in the USA so vividly and to give us hope that we can make a difference. See the article on pages 4-5 for a summary of the event. Many thanks to Margaret D, member of our branch program planning committee, for spearheading the program from inspiration to execution. We appreciate all the time and energy she gave.

We also want to recognize the other program committee members who have brought our branch excellent programs this year:

- Laurie C, "Gerrymandering" in October
- Susan W (Program Vice President), "Deep Freeze" in November and "Women at the Helm" in January
- Kate M, Second Story in December
- Dianne K, *A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time*, March

In addition, Candace S and Achamma C are on the program committee and contributed to the planning session.

We hope you will consider being a part of the program committee next year, to brain storm

ideas that mesh with our AAUW mission and in some cases to handle the details of the program. Or perhaps like branch member Susan V who will be leading our April tour of Green Spring Gardens, you can contribute a program yourself.

Thanks to the generosity of our members and the hard work of our AAUW Fund Team, our branch can recognize four members as Named Gift Honorees for 2017. No, they don't get a check or a Caribbean cruise, but they do get a warm round of applause and recognition at our May branch meeting.

See you on Tuesday March 13th, for our 7:00 pm program, followed by our annual business meeting where we will vote on the slate of officers for co-president, program vice president, and secretary. Nominations will be taken from the floor, with permission of the nominee. See the February newsletter for full slate and bios of the nominees."

*Connie and Kristin*

**AAUW Legacy Circle** —Are you working on your income taxes right now, or perhaps just finished them? While you are thinking of financial matters, consider joining AAUW's Legacy Circle, especially if you have been an AAUW member for some time. By making a planned gift to AAUW national, you become a member of the **AAUW Legacy Circle** and affirm your commitment to women and girls. Planned gifts expand AAUW's programs and public policy agenda by providing for future generations. There are a variety of vehicles for planned gifts, including your will, IRA, trust, charitable annuity, etc. For more information go to <https://www.aauw.org/resource/aauw-legacy-circle/> or for the Legacy enrollment form <https://www.aauw.org/resource/legacy-circle-enrollment-form/>. Join your fellow branch members Bev L, Kristin M, Suzanne R, and Mary W in the Legacy Circle!

# A Crowd for Social Justice Advocate Sister Simone Campbell

Suzanne R, Secretary

The Vienna Branch is pleased that the February Branch program featuring Sister Simone Campbell, author of *A Nun on the Bus*, was attended by at least 175 people on Saturday February 10 at the Vienna Community Center, including Mark Keam, representative to the Virginia House of Delegates for the 35<sup>th</sup> District. The Branch is very appreciative of the extensive work and planning by Margaret D, who arranged the program. In addition, many thanks to the Community Center, which donated their large meeting room, and especially to Deborah Smith-Cohen from the Patrick Henry Library, which co-sponsored the program.

**The Problems of Poverty:** Sister Simone's warmth and compassion connected with the audience. She focused on the problems of poverty in the U.S., emphasizing root causes rather than the false accusation that people are lazy. Sister Simone explained that between 1949 to 1979, the income of people in every economic category doubled. However, this shared experience changed thereafter, with the largest income increases (accounting for inflation) going to the top 20% income category and the lowest 20% income category experiencing a 9% decline in income. More startling, the top 5% and 1% of income earners experienced a 100.6% and 170% increase in income, respectively.

Several reasons for this change include: (1) undermining of unions; (2) privatization of retirement benefits; (3) the short-term profit focus of investors, which contributes to keeping worker wages low; and (4) the cut in the top income tax rate from 70% to 28% during the Reagan Administration. The greatest disparity in income is experienced by minorities, as a result of (among other things): (1) the rescission of the post-Civil War offer of a 40 acre farm and a mule to freed slaves; (2) discriminatory redlining of real estate; (3) discriminatory sub-prime mortgage lending; and (4) segregation and discriminatory policies in the armed forces in WWII which prevented minorities from benefiting from the

G.I.Bill benefits for home ownership and education.

## How Can an Individual Contribute to Change?

Sister Simone urged that every person in the community needs to do his/her part; begin to talk with each other, even those we don't agree with. She pointed out that if individuals are not connected with each other, there is a failure of hope. The Sister urged people to talk to someone they haven't talked to before, even in the grocery store while checking out. Start a process of engagement. Figure out what your part is in this effort. Establish a relationship with your U.S. Representative and Senators, so that they know who you are. Ensure you communicate your views constantly on issues. Sister Simone stated that our Nation can only heal when the lowest income earners do better. She closed with a poem from her book *A Nun on the Bus* (next page).





## Loaves and Fish

I always joked  
that the miracle of loaves  
and fish was: sharing.  
The women always knew this.  
But in this moment of need  
and notoriety, I ache, tremble  
almost weep at folks so  
hungry, malnourished,  
faced with spiritual famine  
of epic proportions. My heart  
aches with their need.  
Apostle like, I whine:  
“What are we among so many?”

The consistent 2000 year-old  
ever new response is this:  
“Blessed and broken, you are  
enough.” I savor the blessed,  
cower at the broken and pray to be  
enough.

# **NORTHERN DISTRICT MEETING**

**Saturday, March 3**

**Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke**

**Gather at 1:30; Program starts promptly at 2:00**

**Join your fellow AAUW members for two presentations:**

**AAUW staff has reorganized under our new CEO, Kim Churches, with four senior vice presidents: Research & Programs, Communications & Outreach, Public Policy & Research, and Advancement & Partnerships. As the new Senior VP for the latter, Kendra Davis heads up the team for member dues and contributions, major donors, corporate donors, and planned giving. Kendra has some very interesting statistics for us that she will share.**

**What's the difference between Start Smart and Work Smart? What does it take for a branch to sponsor one of those? How could we work together on these workshops, which facilitate AAUW's major focus on pay equity? Sue Christie will start the discussion because the McLean Area Branch has done Work Smart and will soon do Start Smart. Can you imagine the impact of training thousands of women at our local colleges?**

**Bring announcements to share with all of us on your branch's upcoming programs and events, too. See you there!**

AAUW  
NATIONAL BYLAWS AMENDMENT  
**VOTE**  
2018

The following email will be sent to all members today regarding a By-laws Amendment Vote this spring. We encourage you as leaders to make certain members without email addresses receive this information and that you encourage discussion among members so all feel their

The AAUW National Board of Directors has voted to put three proposals for bylaws amendments before the membership for a vote this spring. The board strongly supports the proposed amendments that we believe will help keep AAUW vital as an organization and enable us to increase our impact in advancing equity for women and girls.

The proposed amendments address creating three-year staggered board terms, opening board service to those outside of the AAUW membership, and eliminating the degree requirement for membership. While rationale and details for each proposed amendment can be found on the [AAUW website](#), the overarching motivation for these changes at this time is to uphold and advance AAUW's mission and ensure optimal execution at the national board level.

The first two proposals would bring AAUW's board governance structure more in line with nationally accepted nonprofit best practices and the needs of the organization. The third proposal — to eliminate the degree requirement for membership — has come before the membership for vote a number of times. The board feels strongly that while the degree requirement made perfect sense at AAUW's inception, this requirement is now perceived by many as counter to our mission and limits our ability to build the capacity needed to increase our impact as an organization.

The board recognizes that we have not traditionally put proposals up for vote outside our AAUW National Election, but these proposed changes have been under consideration for several years by both the Governance Committee and the board, and we believe it is important to move forward without delay to position the organization for greater growth.

Members can comment on the proposed amendments and submit their own proposals from February 22, 2018, through March 22, 2018, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Voting will open on April 25, 2018, and close June 9, 2018, at 9 p.m. ET.

We encourage you all to engage in respectful debate that has always been a hallmark of the AAUW community, exercise your vote, and encourage fellow members to do the same.

You can direct any questions or concerns to [connect@aauw.org](mailto:connect@aauw.org).

Respectfully,

Your AAUW National Board of Directors

## REDISTRICTING FORUM REPORT

—Laurie C

Despite the rain several hundred citizens tuned out for the February 25 Redistricting Forum, organized by the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area and OneVirginia2021, a redistricting reform advocacy group. A number of AAUW Vienna Area Branch members participated. The forum explored some of the challenges—and opportunities—in creating fair legislative districts.

Virginia Del. Ken Plum (Herndon) spoke first on the history of anti-gerrymandering efforts in the commonwealth. Since the 1980s Del. Plum has regularly introduced bills to remove partisan influence from the decennial redistricting process—so far without success. But, he said, he is encouraged but the current public interest in the issue and believes change will happen.

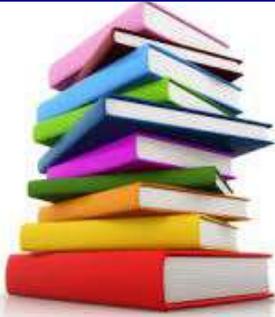
Next on the agenda was a fascinating presentation by professors and law students from the College of William & Mary. As part of the Election Law Program, Profs. Rebecca Green and Rob Rose led teams of students in a project to redraw the 11 state legislative districts subject to federal litigation for race-based gerrymandering (*Bethune-Hill v. Virginia Board of Elections*). Using state-of-the-art mapping software, and applying the controlling federal legal standards, the students created districts that also satisfied the objectives of being equal in population, preserving “communities of interest”, following existing political boundaries (such as town and school district boundaries),

and being compact. Each team prioritized a different criteria while attempting to meet them all. Many variations occurred depending on the priorities established by each team, but the eye-opening common finding was that smooth boundaries cannot be achieved while meeting these criteria. Hearing the students talk about their work was a highlight of the afternoon.

Three members of California’s innovative Citizens Redistricting Commission spoke about their ground-breaking work. The Commission was established by a citizen-initiated referendum (process not available in Virginia). From the selection of Commission members to their process for redrawing every district in the state, the California method is a radically different process from anything else in the nation. What features might be adapted to Virginia will be an interesting topic for future discussion.

Olga Hernandez (LVW-Fairfax) and Brian Cannon, (Exec. Dir., OneVirginia2021) closed the forum by stressing the importance of the next 10 months to the redistricting reform effort. Amending the Virginia Constitution to establish an independent districting commission is a two year process that will start with the 2019 General Assembly session. Building and maintaining momentum is the next step.

# Interest Groups



## Interest Groups

Please be sure to let your hostess know whether you're coming or not.

**EARN \$ FOR AAUW FUNDS! Use the Amazon link for your purchases-found at**

[Vienna-va.aauw.net](http://Vienna-va.aauw.net)

### EVENING LITERATURE

March 7th 7:00 p.m

*The Sympathizer* by Viet Thanh Nguyen

An intellectual spy novel about the end of the Vietnam War that is, in equal parts, a thriller, a portrait of Republican Vietnamese in defeat and exile, and a psychological novel about the varieties of ambivalence thoughtful people must endure when living through complicated times. 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction recipient.

April 4th book: *Fixers* by Michael M. Thomas

*Evening Literature meets the first Wednesday of the month*

### TUESDAY MORNING LITERATURE GROUP

March 20, 9:30 a.m.

Martha N will lead the discussion on *Commonwealth*, by Ann Patchett

One Sunday afternoon, Bert Cousins shows up at Fanny Keating's christening party uninvited. Before evening falls, he has kissed Fanny's mother, Beverly—thus setting in motion the dissolution of their marriages and the joining of two families. Spanning 5 decades, *Commonwealth* explores how this encounter reverberates through the lives of the four parents & 6 children involved. Spending summers together in Virginia, the Keating and Cousins children forge a lasting bond based on a shared disillusionment with their parents and the strange and genuine affection that grows among them. Told with humor and heartbreak, *Commonwealth* is a meditation on inspiration, interpretation, and the ownership of stories.

Following meeting: *April 17: The Velveteen Daughter*

Following meeting: March 20

*Morning Literature meets the third Tuesday of the month.*

### NON-FICTION LITERATURE

March 12, 7:00 pm

Margaret D will lead the discussion of *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*. "Atul Gawande's ...new book, *Being Mortal*, is a personal meditation on how we can better live with age-related frailty, serious illness and approaching death.

It is also a call for a change in the philosophy of health care. Gawande writes that members of the medical profession, himself included, have been wrong about what their job is. Rather than ensuring health and survival, it is 'to enable well-being.' " (NY Times)

*Non Fiction Literature meets the second Monday of every other month. (September, November, January, March, and May)*

March 18, 2:00-4:00 PM

Location To Be Determined

Topic: "China and America: The New Geopolitical Equation"

(Topic 3)

In the last 15 years, China has implemented a wide-ranging strategy of economic outreach and expansion of all its national capacities, including military and diplomatic capacities. Where the United States has taken a step back from multilateral trade agreements and discarded the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), China has made inroads through efforts like the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). What are Beijing's geopolitical objectives? What leadership and political conditions in each society underlie growing Sino-American tensions? What policies might Washington adopt to address this circumstance? Jean Thompson will lead the discussion and Beverly Burns will provide refreshments. Please let me know whether or not you plan to attend.

*Great Decisions meets the third Sunday of the month 2-4 pm.*

## BROWN BAG BOOKS

March 28th, 1:00 pm

Marian M will lead the discussion of *The Atomic Weight of Love* by Elizabeth J. Church. Set during World War II and the decades leading up to the Vietnam War, the novel follows Meridian Wallace as she transforms from a bright ornithologist –to-be into an unhappy housewife. Meridian falls in love with and marries Alden Whetstone, a brilliant physics professor at the end of her junior year, but as time goes by, she becomes disenchanted with married life.

Even while describing Meridian's disappointment in her marriage, Church's writing is never overly sentimental. *The Atomic Weight of Love* has been described as an elegant glimpse into the evolution of love and womanhood.

*Brown Bag Books meets the last Wednesday of the month*

## MOVIE MEET UPS

The Movie Meet Ups group meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month for a morning movie and lunch afterwards. Movie choice, time and place will be provided by email a week to ten days in advance. Please contact Susan V be included on the distribution list.

Next date: Tuesday, March 27



## INFORMATION PAGES

### March

- 3 Northern District meeting
- 7 Evening Literature
- 10 **CANCELLED** STEMtastics
- 12 Non-Fiction Lit
- 13 Branch Meeting**
- 18 Great Decisions
- 20 Tuesday Morning Lit
- 27 Movie Meet Ups
- 28 Brown Bag Books

### April

- 4 Evening Literature
- 15 Great Decisions
- 17 Tuesday Morning Lit
- 20-22 AAUW Virginia Conference
- 24 Movie Meet Ups
- 25 Brown Bag Books
- 28 Branch Meeting**

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. AAUW, founded in 1881, is open to all graduates who hold an associate or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

## 2017-18 AAUW Program Schedule

- September 2: Open House, Patrick Henry Library
- October 10: Gerrymandering, Laurie Cole, Oakton Library 6:30
- November 4: "Deep Freeze," Dian Belanger,  
Patrick Henry Library 2:30-5:00
- December 2: Luncheon, Lauren Witherspoon, Development Coordinator  
for Second Story, Bonarati Restaurant, noon
- January 13 "Women at the Helm" on Saturday, 10:30 a.m.  
Patrick Henry Library
- Feb 10 *A Nun on the Bus* author Sister Simone Campbell at Vienna  
Community Center
- ★ March 13: "A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time," Paula Tarnapol Whitacre,  
Patrick Henry Library (co-sponsor)
- April 28: Green Spring Garden Tour 10:00 a.m., Susan V
- May 15: Salad Supper, Branch Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

April 20-22, 2018 —AAUW OF VIRGINIA 2018 CONFERENCE

Don't let transportation issues  
keep you away!



Please e-mail or call Suzanne R if you

- \* Would like to arrange a ride to any meeting.
- \* Would be willing to drive someone.



It is never too soon to begin planning to attend the 2018  
AAUW of Virginia Conference!

**Changing the Climate for Women and Girls**

April 20-22, 2018

Portsmouth Renaissance Hotel

**Location, Location, Location! The Renaissance Hotel sits on the Elizabeth River flowing between Portsmouth and Norfolk. Two easy blocks away is the downtown area with shops, restaurants and museums. A quick ferry ride gets you to Norfolk.**



**What a perfectly perfect location!!**

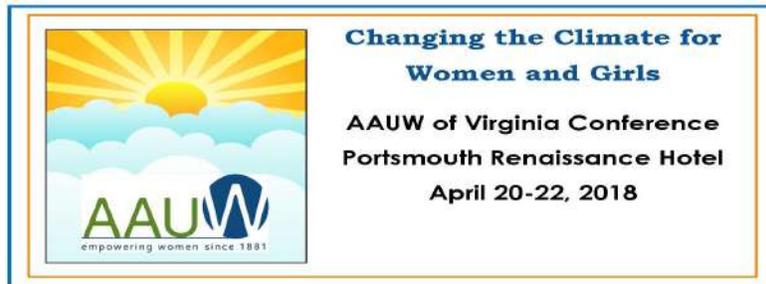
**Hotel Reservations 855-214-4563**

**Group Rate \$129 \$5 per night parking 100% Water view rooms**

**Indoor pool, whirlpool, sundeck, and complimentary exercise facilities**

**Watch for more information and conference registration form in the *VISION*.**

# HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE AAUW OF VIRGINIA CONFERENCE



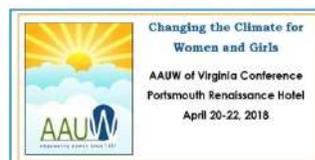
Join your fellow Virginia AAUW members at the state-wide conference in Portsmouth, Virginia. Attend discussions, workshops, inspiring programs and meet with members from around the state.

**Conference Registration:** The AAUW of Virginia 2018 Conference will be held in Portsmouth, VA April 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>. To register for the Conference, go to:

<https://aauw-va.aauw.net/2018-aauw-of-va-state-conference/>

The early registration fee is \$80, including the Saturday lunch. After April 1, it is \$95. The Saturday banquet dinner is \$40.

**Hotel Registration:** To reserve your hotel room at The Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk Waterfront Hotel at \$129 per night, either:



1. go to <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/conference/> and click on registration -- OR --

to go to the on-line hotel room

2. call reservations directly at 1-888-839-1775 and identify that you are attending the AAUW conference April 20-22 to get the special group room rate.

Note: Regardless of information on the hotel website, our group rate entitles us to a self-parking rate of only \$5. Last day to book a room is March 20, 2018.

*Suzanne Rothwell*

*Vienna Branch Secretary*

Women's History Month 2018

# A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time

## *Julia Wilbur's Struggle for Purpose*

Guest Speaker,  
Author, Paula Whitacre

March 13, 2018, 7 p.m.  
Patrick Henry Library  
101 Maple Avenue East  
Vienna VA

*In the fall of 1862, Julia Wilbur left her family's farm near Rochester, New York, and boarded a train to Washington, DC. An ardent abolitionist, the 47-year-old Wilbur left a sad but stable life, headed toward the chaos of Civil War. She spent most of the next several years in Alexandria, Va., devising ways to aid recently escaped slaves and hospitalized Union soldiers...*



*Books available for  
purchase and signing.*



Co-sponsored by Vienna Area Branch of American  
Association of University Women and Patrick Henry Library

For more information go to <https://vienna-va.aauw.net>