



**JANUARY / 2026**

## **UPCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS**

### ***JANUARY PROGRAM***

Topic: **The Future of Energy in Virginia**

Speaker: Lisa Hicks-Thomas, Senior Policy Director, Dominion Energy

Where: Vienna Community Center -- Southside Meeting Room  
120 Cherry St. SE, Vienna

Date/Time: Saturday, January 10, 2026 – 2:30 pm  
Doors open to the public at 2:00 pm  
The program is free and open to the public.

The energy topic is a focus of Governor-Elect Abigail Spanberger and has been a growing local concern with data centers overtaking nearby landscapes and creating noise, electricity costs rising, and the lack of support for cleaner energy options. [Please bring your friends if they want to know more about what lies ahead.](#)

### ***FEBRUARY PROGRAM***

Topic: **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)**

Where: Vienna Community Center, Southside Meeting Room  
120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna

Date/Time: Saturday, February 21, 2026 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm (Doors will open at 1:30 pm.)

Many of us have been dismayed and concerned by recent attacks on DEIB. This program will provide a chance to learn more about DEIB and discuss actions that might be taken to address the situation.

The program will cover such topics as:

- Baseline knowledge about DEIB: when and why it was implemented and its impact over time;
- A brief timeline of attacks on DEIB; and
- What we can do about it.

The program will include a panel presentation by three speakers. There will be a chance for informal discussions and refreshments after the presentations.

We are planning this program jointly with the Alpha Nu Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma (DKG), an international society of women educators.

**Please make your best effort to attend this program.** It's a chance for us to meet Delta Kappa Gamma members and to have extended discussion and social time after the formal meeting ends. If you have any questions, please contact Nadine

## ***MARCH PROGRAM***

Topic: **Liberty's Daughters: Virginia Women and the Revolution**

Where: Vienna Community Center Auditorium  
120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna

Date/Time: Saturday, March 7, 2026, 7:00pm

The program will consist of a series of monologues describing events during the Revolution from the perspective of various Virginia women.

Residents of the Vienna area—including some AAUW members—will bring the American Revolution to life by portraying Virginia women of various ages, political persuasions, and socio-economic groups through a series of dramatic monologues. Their performances will allow us to see the impacts of the Revolution from different female points of view. The performance is co-sponsored by the AAUW Vienna Area Branch and the ViennaVA 250<sup>th</sup> Committee as part of our local celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of our United States and will take place during Women's History Month.

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Questions? Contact Co-Vice Presidents

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## **PUBLIC POLICY**

Topic: **AAUW-VA Lobby Day**

Where: The State Capitol, Richmond, Virginia

Date/Time February 5, 2026

On February 5, we will have our annual Lobby Day to put our AAUW priorities in front of our state legislators. This looks like a good year to get things passed! Please join us.

Many of us go to Richmond the night before (February 4) because we start so early the next morning, but that is up to you. If you want to stay in the hotel where many AAUW women from around the state stay, the link to reserve a room at Hampton Hilton Inn & Suites Richmond, 700 East Main Street, please use the link below:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/rooms/?ctyhocn=RICEMHX&arrivalDate=2026-02-04&departureDate=2026-02-05&groupCode=CHH902&room1NumAdults=1&cid=OM%2CWW%2CHILTONLINK%2CE%N%2CDirectLink>

If you have any difficulty, cut-and-paste the link into your URL line or call the hotel (804-643-5400), ask for group reservations desk, and use the AAUW of VA code of CHH902.

There will be a meeting and dinner for AAUW members in the hotel at 5:30 pm to meet other members and to discuss issues and logistics for the next day.

On the morning of February 5, we will meet at 8:00 at the Senate Education & Health Committee where we will get a briefing with talking points on the issues and another chance to ask questions. We will go to assigned offices with a partner to deliver our messages. You will get a chance to meet with your delegates' office staff as well as one or two from around the state.

We will be done by about 1:00 pm, and many of us will meet for lunch before heading home.

**Let Leslie know if you are interested in attending.** We need to know in advance so that lobby partners can be assigned and we can be sure that offices are covered.

## **SAVE THE DATE**

Topic: **Virginia Women's Municipal Leadership Institute**

Date/Time: **January 22, 2026**, 7:00 pm Eastern Time

Join AAUW-VA members from around the Commonwealth to hear from Bonnie Svrcek,

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84656305779?pwd=Ccb3fbCSUbBa1V4YNrhCtejiqlb33.1>

Meeting ID: 846 5630 5779

Passcode: 002341

“As of December 2024, the percentage of women serving as town, city, county managers, or administrators in Virginia was less than 17%, which puts the state in the bottom five.” (Virginia Town & City, Mar/Apr 2025

Join AAUW-VA members from around the Commonwealth to hear from Bonnie Svrcek, Executive Director of the Virginia Women’s Municipal Leadership Institute.

The Institute is a professional education program developed by Virginia Women Leading Government and academic partners to provide connections, content, tools, and opportunities for women aspiring to become local government leaders. Ms. Svrcek served as the Deputy City Manager, and then City Manager for the City of Lynchburg for a combined term of more than twenty years. She also worked for the Town of Blacksburg, Fairfax County, and the City of Los Angeles’ Washington, DC office. Hear her describe her own professional journey – the one that led to the establishment of the Institute; and, hear her share how the institute is performing in its mission to educate and empower women to pursue advancement in municipal leadership.



## **AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference**

**When:** September 25-27, 2026

**Where:** Lancaster Pennsylvania

**More information to come in subsequent newsletters.**

## **FOR THOSE WHO MISSED THE JOYFUL DECEMBER HOLIDAY LUNCH**

The twenty-three branch members who were able to attend our traditional December lunch at Tysons Corner Olive Garden Restaurant on December 3, truly enjoyed themselves. Our private dining room had plenty of space for a “cocktail time” chat before we sat down and ordered our meal. Two of this year’s new members were present: Barbara and Celeste. It was good to hear the laughter and spirited discussions around the room.



### **Donations to Artemis House**

Many thanks to our branch members who generously donated \$1,890 in store gift cards and an estimated \$150 value in personal care items to our community’s women victims of abuse and their children who find safety at Artemis House. Several members commented that it was fulfilling to know that their donations were helping women in dire need at this Holiday time. The generosity of our members who contributed so much was very appreciated by Artemis House Director Charlotte Crawford-Rowe, who received our donations.

## **SHOUT-OUT TO BEHIND-THE-SCENES HELPERS**

Kathy: Newsletter Editor

Sandra: Website (former newsletter editor)

Aimee: Publicity

Suzanne: Publicity

Kristin: coordinator with Town of Vienna Activities

In addition to our elected officers and appointed board members, our branch has many workers behind the scenes.

I want to be sure our members are aware that Kathy is the newsletter editor. We have had several compliments on the newsletter recently, but the commentators did not realize that Kathy was the one who deserved the compliments. She solicits the articles from the various leaders, and edits them into a well-formatted, easy-to-read document. And then sends a version to the person at National who uploads the newsletter to our website.

Even more behind-the-scenes, Sandra posts the content we want to show on our website, such as upcoming programs. (Sandra published the newsletter faithfully for many years.)

Aimee and Suzanne send our program information to local news outlets.

Under Kristin's coordination, our branch has participated in Liberty Amendments readings on the Fourth of July and had a float in the Liberty Amendments parade. These activities take a lot of back and forth planning, but that is not seen by most of us.

Gail, Co-president, Vienna Area Branch

## ***SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS***

### **Tuesday Morning Book Group**

Group Coordinator: Adrienne   Normal Schedule: Third Tuesday of each month.  
Socializing: 9:30 am. Book discussion: 10:00 am - 11:30am. No meeting in August.

**When:**      **Tuesday, January 20, 2026, 10:00am**  
**Where:**      Home of Laurie

Please let Laurie know if you will be attending.  
Dianne will lead the discussion

**Book:** *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert L. Stevenson.

## **Brown Bag Lit Group**

Group Coordinator: Susan    Normal Schedule: Last Wednesday of each month from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. No meeting in the months of July and August.

**When:**        **Wednesday, January 28, 2026    1:00 – 3:00 pm**  
**Where:**        Home of **Kate**

Please let Kate know if you will be attending.

**Book:** *Becoming Madame Secretary* by Stephanie Dray.

“Raised on tales of her revolutionary ancestors, Frances Perkins arrives in New York City at the turn of the century, armed with her trusty parasol and an unyielding determination to make a difference. When she's not working with children in the crowded tenements in Hell's Kitchen, Frances throws herself into the social scene in Greenwich Village, befriending an eclectic group of politicians, artists, and activists . . . .“

## **Non-fiction Book Group**

Group Coordinator: Jean    Normal Schedule: Second Monday every other month at 7:00 pm

**When:**        **Monday, January 12, 2026    7:00pm**  
**Where:**        Home of Aimee

Please let Aimee know if you will be attending

**Book:** *Coming up Short: a memoir of my America* by Robert Reich.

From political economist, cabinet member, beloved professor, media presence, and bestselling author of Saving Capitalism and The Common Good, a deeply-felt, compelling memoir of growing up in a baby-boom America that made progress in certain areas, fell short in so many important ways, and still has lots of work to do.

## **Great Decisions Program with the Foreign Policy Association**

Group Coordinator: Connie    Normal Schedule: Third Sunday of each month from 2:00 – 4:00pm. No meeting in the months of July and August.

**When:**        **Sunday, January 18, 2026**  
**Where:**        Home of Connie

Please let Connie know if you will be attending.

The group will confirm the schedule, future hosting duties, and other administrative details at this first meeting of the year.

If you do not regularly get meeting reminders and would like to, please notify Connie. The group always welcomes new participants!

### **Movie Meet-ups**

Group Coordinator: Susan      Normal Schedule: Second Tuesday of the month. No meetings in July or August. Please contact Susan to be included on the distribution list.

**Starting in January 2026, the normal meeting will occur on the second Tuesday of each month.**

Film is selected when the theater publishes its films and schedules on its website. Those who can stay afterwards have lunch together at First Watch, in the shopping center. Group Coordinator will convey this information in a reminder email.

### ***FOR STRESSFUL TIMES. . .***

Foster kindness . . . It is good for your mental health and that of others.

Encourage civility and tolerance . . . We are meant to be a community. Hatred and violence have no place within our nation.

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### ***AAUW Diversity Statement***

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 socio-economic status.

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