

# WORDS TO THE WISE<sup>2</sup>

WOMEN IN SEARCH OF EDUCATION AND EQUITY

Volume 29, Issue 1

September, 2024



#### MISSION

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

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#### September Meeting Presenter: Patricia Wirth

Saturday, September 14, 2024 10:00 a.m. Bowman Library 871 Tasker Road Stephens City, Virginia

Join us for our first meeting after breaking for the summer on September 14, 10 a.m., at Bowman Library Meeting Room.

#### The Best Kept Secret in American History

Dressed in period attire, Pat Wirth will provide a slide presentation introducing the audience to the American suffrage movement and key suffragist leaders in the movement and their respective roles in the movement. It will primarily cover the period from 1848 to 1920 that will include key events in the movement that resulted in the passage of the 19th Amendment. In addition, she will talk about the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial located in Occoquan Regional Park, in Lorton, Virginia. It serves as a visual symbol and educational tool to elevate this unknown movement and unknown women to their proper place in history. Read more about Pat Wirth on page 7.

#### **Board Meeting**

Wednesday, September 25, 2024
Zoom 6 p.m.
All members are invited to attend.
(Contact Marsha Gochenour for Zoom details.)

#### **October Meeting**

Saturday, October 19, 2024 10:00 a.m. Alamo Drafthouse Cinema 181 Kernstown Commons Road Winchester, Virginia

## Barriers Broken, Barriers that Remain: Women's Health

This event is co-sponsored with NAACP of Winchester.

Presentations include a screening of Below the Belt, a documentary exploring women's experiences navigating endometriosis. Alana Curry, a nurse anesthetist from Boston with personal experience of endometriosis, has many contacts in the endometriosis community, including Endo Black, a group that helps black women navigate their journeys with the disorder. A representative of Endo Black is one proposed panelist. Other proposed panelists include a representative from Nancy's Nook, an endometriosis care and advocacy organization based in the Tidewater area, Dr. Kenneth Barron, a gynecologist from Charlottesville, who focuses on endometriosis care, and representatives from Shenandoah University and Laurel Ridge nursing schools.

#### Candidates' Forum Cancelled

**Please note**: Due to the lack of participation, we are cancelling the Candidates' Forum scheduled for

September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024. We were excited to be partnering again with the Shenandoah University Center for Civic Engagement to host the Forum. However, we will be able to work with this group with their Voter Registration Drive on September 17. See Page 7 for further details.

#### President's Message

Pat Kadel

#### Never Doubt

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

A few days ago, I was reminded of this famous quotation attributed to Margaret Mead. When I searched online to find her EXACT words, I learned that she may not have said it at all. Researchers have been unsuccessful in finding the quotation in Margaret Mead's works. Similar variations have been attributed to Norman Vincent Peale in 1959, Patrick E Haggerty in 1963, and the Reverend Edwin Espry in 1967. The first time those exact words can be found was in the book, "Earth at Omega: Passage to Planetization", by Donald Keys. It was published in 1982, four years after Dr. Mead's death. Mr. Keys passed away in 1932 without ever sharing the source for this citation and, of course, Dr. Mead could never confirm or deny her ownership.

Whether Margaret Mead or Donald Keys is the author of those words, they have been an inspiration for several generations of community activists and organizations, or especially women and young people. They definitely apply to our branch, especially during recent months.

Our branch membership is small and has been declining. This is true of ALL civic and volunteer organizations country-wide. Just as Dr. Mead or whoever said, change occurs, and accomplishments are made when that small (or any size) group is thoughtful and committed.

Never doubt...

Over the summer, members of our small branch have been working with the NAACP, American Red Cross, Sinclair Health Clinic, and local healthcare professionals to sponsor a Women's Health Forum this fall. Building upon the success of February's Forum on Women in the Workforce, these groups plus others will be hosting a second forum, "Barriers Broken, Barriers that Remain, Women's Healthcare". We have received requests from a number of people wanting to serve on a panel, and plan to show a short documentary on Endometriosis. Mark your calendars for October 19, 2024, 10:00 am - Noon at the Alamo Drafthouse Theater. I will be sharing details as they are confirmed.

#### Never doubt...

Four of our members volunteered at the Juneteenth Celebration on June 16<sup>th</sup> at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. On a very hot but beautiful Sunday, we staffed an informational booth that generated overwhelming interest in the organization (we ran out of printed

flyers). A number of people expressed an interest in joining and gave Laurie Gaulke contact information. No matter how large or small the number who may actually become members, a large number of people learned about AAUW and our mission.

Never doubt...

In honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AAUW in Virginia in 2025, each local branch has been asked to donate 100 of something to a charitable organization or activity in the local community. At our recent Board meeting we agreed to "investigate the possibility" of donating 100 Spanish language children's books to the Winchester Little Library organization led by Branch member Athena Michaels.

Possibility? In less than 48 hours, Rosemary Green was able to arrange the donation of 100 or more books, Marsha Gochenour got her employer to donate the cost of shipping those books to us, and Athena responded that the Campaign for Grade Level Reading Board recently asked that they place Little Libraries with Spanish language books in identified neighborhoods. With our donation, they will be able to stock several Little Libraries in the Winchester community. I'm awed and so proud that we accomplished this so quickly. *Never doubt*...

Elsewhere in the Newsletter you will find articles about a number of activities planned for the coming months. I hope you will find time to support our branch and *NEVER DOUBT* what we can accomplish together.

Pat Kadel Branch President

### **Centennial Celebration Will Promote Literacy**

Pat Kadel

Small groups often have difficulty having an impact on their local communities. The Winchester Branch has proven that they can.

On March 27-28, 1925, representatives of the seven existing local branches of AAUW in Virginia met in Williamsburg to establish a Virginia Division to promote educational legislation at the state level and support local branch initiatives. In honor of its 100th Anniversary, the Virginia AAUW is planning a year-long centennial celebration beginning with the State Conference in Alexandria, March 27-28, 2025. They have asked each local branch to make some donation of 100 something to a charitable organization or activity in the local community as part of that celebration.

This request was brought up for discussion at the August 21, Winchester Branch Board meeting. Board members agreed to "investigate the possibility" of donating 100 Spanish language children's books to the Winchester Little Library organization led by Branch member Athena Michael.

Rosemary Green has been volunteering for several years with the Hester J Hodgdon Foundation that promotes literacy and sustainable lending libraries in Nicaragua and throughout Central America. She offered to contact them about acquiring books at a discount. Within hours, she was advised that they would donate all of the books we need. We would have to pay for shipping. Upon hearing that, Marsha Gochenour asked her employer, Fabritek, if they would

pay for the shipping and they immediately agreed. Meanwhile, Theresa Merkel contacted Athena Michael to determine if the Winchester Little Libraries (WLL) would be interested in the donation. Athena responded that The Campaign for Grade Level Reading Board had recently asked WLL to provide an additional little library for Spanish language books. Winchester Little Libraries already had identified a need and shortage of Spanish language books for existing locations. Athena said that such a gift could not come at a more perfect time for their organization. In just over twenty-four hours, our members identified a need in the Winchester community and, through individual connections with other organizations, enabled our branch to make a significant contribution to the promotion of education and literacy in our community.

We are working with these other organizations to have a celebration and formal donation of the books in the near future. Please watch for emails and in future Newsletters for details and PLEASE make an effort to attend.

#### From Athena:

How life comes full circle! Thank you all and the entire AAUW Branch for supporting this literacy project! Recently, The Campaign for Grade Level Reading Board asked Winchester Little Libraries to identify the need for an additional WLL to support Spanish language books! Your generous gift could not come at a more perfect time! Many of you are not aware that 24 years ago I met Jane Mirandette at an American Libraries Annual Conference as she began her literacy nonprofit in Nicaragua. Through the

financial support of my company John Wiley & Sons and two trips to Nicaragua, we developed partnerships with the University of

Maryland and Simmons to bring librarians to this region and create a sustainable business model that continues



today to generate income so that Jane's work is accomplished. During these two trips, I witnessed and learned first-hand from Jane the key components of leadership and how to succeed as a non-librarian in a male dominated society. It was from that experience that I wrote an article about Jane's nonprofit published in Collaborative Librarianship. Even more importantly, my twelve-yearold daughter Juliette worked with Jane on a Girl Scout project that I cannot help to think that she, too, was impacted as she began her legal career at Legal Aid. As I begin my own nonprofit, PhilotimoNOW, strengthening literacy in Greece one village at a time, Jane's passionate spirit continues to flow! That rippling effect of the first pebble is endlesss... Thank you Jane for your continued love!

Thanks goes to Rosemary, who is a quiet, and humble, yet vibrant and knowledgeable Board member of Jane's Board. Special thanks and appreciation go to Marsha for securing and reaching out to her company.

Finally, thank you to our Board and members for supporting again and again and never wavering when an important ASK is requested. We may be small, but we are mighty in our accomplishments. I am proud of

you all and the work that we do in our beloved community. Blessings to all,

Athena

#### **Membership**

#### Laurie Gaulke

Summer is a great time to meet people, and at the Juneteenth event held at the MSV, we certainly did. A lovely, hot day and many came out for the music, the food trucks as well as stopping by the various community organization tables. Pat Kadel, Becki Bronson, Theresa Merkel, and I chatted and shared information about our vibrant group. After beginning the emails to those who expressed more interest, I noticed that few people replied. I am now following up again with everyone now that summer fun is beginning to slow down. Time to gear up for our fall!

On August 13, I attended a zoom meeting for branch leaders, hosted by Lane Stone, which was informative with several good ideas. One idea particularly intrigued me. Since the 100 anniversary of the VA AAUW is next year, branches are encouraged to celebrate by donating/giving away 100 'things' to a local organization: 100 cans of food, 100 boxes of sanitary supplies...whatever is needed in our local community. I feel we should participate and find something unique to give/donate to a less wellknown organization in our community. Let's flood our Facebook page and media with photos. We are encouraged to share them with AAUW-VA.

I also learned about the Shape the Future Campaign. "The Shape the Future membership campaign is a tool that branches can use to recruit and retain members. With this campaign, branches can offer 50% off national dues when prospective members join AAUW at an event or meeting. Branches also earn one free national membership for every two new members they recruit, with a maximum of three free memberships annually.

Our AAUW brochure will be updated soon to include our upcoming events for fall. It's perfect for sharing with friends, neighbors and others. For your print-at-home copy, please email Laurie Gaulke at laurie.mg96@gmail.com.

#### **CLEO**

### (Classy Ladies Eating Out) Marsha Gochenour

Monday, 6:00 p.m. September 23, 2024 Los Toltecos Mexican Restaurant.



1046 Millwood Pike @ Delco Plaza Winchester, Virginia

Call Marsha (533-8069) if you plan to attend so she will have a head count.

### Evening Book Group Marsha Gochenour

The Book Group will meet September 16, 2024, 6:00 p.m., at 300 Westminster-Canterbury Drive, hosted by Amy Fielder and Ann Poling.

Monday September 16, 2024 300 Westminster-Canterbury Drive



### Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See

According to Confucius, "an educated woman is a worthless woman,"

but Tan Yunxian -- born into an elite family, yet haunted by death, separations. and loneliness, is being raised by her grandparents to be of use. Her grandmother is one of only a handful of female doctors in China, and she teaches Yunxian the pillars of Chinese medicine, the Four Examinations: looking, listening, touching, and asking, something a man can never do with a female patient. From a young age, Yunxian learns about women's illnesses, many of which relate to childbearing, alongside a young midwifein-training, Meiling. The two girls find fast friendship and a mutual purpose -- despite the prohibition that a doctor should never touch blood while a midwife comes in frequent contact with it -- and they vow to be forever friends, sharing in each other's joys and struggles.

Lady Tan's Circle of Women is a captivating story of women helping other women. It is also a triumphant reimagining of the life of a woman who was remarkable in the Ming dynasty and would be considered remarkable today.

### AAUW Adventures Theresa Merkel

We have at least three opportunities to get together and examine some history in the month of September. Call me, Theresa, (540-664-1266) if you are interested in attending as a group.



#### Ruth's Tea Room

September 13-15 & 20-21 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Tickets: General Admission \$15.00 Laurel Ridge Community College Alson Smith Hall - McCoy Theatre 173 Skirmisher Lane, Middletown, VA 22645

More information and tickets

Selah Theatre Project presents: Ruth's Tea Room SYNOPSIS: During segregation in the 1960s, Ruth's Tea Room in Winchester welcomed people of different races and from all walks of life to come together. Written by local playwright LaTasha Do'zia, Ruth's Tea Room brings this local meeting place to life and illustrates the truth that there was room for everyone at Ruth's. The play features actors portraying people who have gathered to share stories of their days spent at Ruth's.

#### A Civil War Spy Tale

September 14 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 pm Handley Library Auditorium





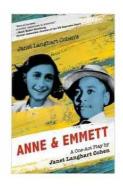
Do you know the story of Rebecca Wright and Thomas Laws? They aided Union General Philip Sheridan with information regarding Confederate General Jubal Early's troop movements in and around the Winchester area. Rebecca Wright, a Winchester school teacher with loyalty to the union, would collect intelligence about troop movements and pass that information along to Thomas Laws. He was an enslaved man who would carry that intelligence to Union scouts. The information provided by Rebecca Wright and transported by Thomas Laws was crucial to Sheridan's decision to attack Winchester a few days later.

Inspired by these events, local retired educator Sharon W. Dixon wrote a one act play entitled Rebecca and Thomas: A Civil War Spy Tale. The Handley Regional Library Stewart Bell Jr. Archives is excited to offer a reading of the play for the public. The event will take place at the Handley Library Robinson Auditorium on Thursday, September 14 from 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm.

Registration is not required. <u>Click here</u> for more information about the event. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Archives Department by email at <u>archives@handleyregional.org</u> or call (540) 662-9041 ext. 17.

### Readers' Theatre: Anne & Emmett

September 22 at 6:30 Winchester Little Theater Tickets are \$5.00 for non-members and free for members.



#### https://winchesterlittletheatre.org/ for tickets

Written by Janet Langhart Cohen Directed by La Tasha Do'zia, Executive Director of Selah Theatre Project in Winchester

This stunning, one-act play, offers a profound exploration of history, empathy, and the human spirit by imaginary conversation between Anne Frank and Emmett Till, both victims of racial intolerance and hatred. Frank is the 15-year-old Jewish girl whose diary provided a gripping perspective of the Holocaust. Till is the 14-year-old African American boy whose brutal murder in Mississippi sparked the American Civil Rights Movement. The play opens with the two teenagers meeting in Memory, a place that isolates them from the cruelty they experienced during their lifetime. The beyond-thegrave encounter draws the startling similarities between the two youths' harrowing experiences and the atrocities against their respective races.

Following the performance, a talk-back session will provide a unique opportunity for the audience to engage with the cast and creators. This interactive discussion will allow attendees to delve deeper into the themes of the play, ask questions, and share their own perspectives. Join us for an evening of thought-provoking theater and meaningful conversation.

#### Winchester Little Theatre Play Fundraiser

Wednesday November 6, 2024 8:00 p.m. Tickets \$25.00

#### SAVE THE DATE!!!

Our annual scholarship fundraiser is: *The Playboy of the Western World* on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 8:00 p.m.

This play is being co-sponsored with Literacy Volunteers Winchester Area. All the proceeds from the AAUW sales will go to our local scholarship fund. There are 52 tickets for us to sell at \$25.00 each. Please consider purchasing two tickets for this event or making a comparable donation.



Written by John Millington Synge, Directed by Sally Anderson

On one level, this Irish romantic comedy tells the story of the bored, parochial villagers of County Mayo, who inexplicably fall head over heels for an odd little stranger who wanders into their pub. He is on the way to finding his true love and his manhood, while claiming to have murdered his father! On another level, the play tells a story of human frailty, and the ways people find love, joy, and hope where they can. As with any great story, the truth is somewhere in

the middle. The dialogue alone is worth the price of the ticket.



#### **SAVE THESE DATES**

It's never too late to be marking your calendars with special or new activities:

### 2025 Virginia AAUW Conference

On March 27-28, 1925, the seven existing local branches of AAUW in Virginia met in Williamsburg. When they adjourned, the Virginia Division of AAUW was a reality. A Centennial Celebration will be held:

March 28-29, 2025 Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria

#### Virginia Board & Branch Leader Chats

In an effort to improve communication between the Virginia AAUW Board and local Branches, President Lane Sloan will be hosting Zoom Chats on a regular basis. They are intended to keep branch leaders informed of national and statewide activities and to assist and answer questions from local branches.

Any member can attend or request topics for discussion. The current schedule is:

October 1, 2024 3:00 PM October 7, 2024 7:00 PM November 12, 2024 3:00 PM November 18, 2024 7:00 PM January 7, 2025 3:00 PM January 13, 2025 7:00 PM February 25, 2024 3:00 PM March 3, 2025 7:00 PM April 15, 2025 3:00 PM April 21, 2025 7:00 PM June 24, 2025 3:00 PM June 30, 2025 7:00 PM

#### **Northwest District Meeting**

Saturday, January 11, 2025 10:00 AM – Noon Via Zoom Program: Karen Vallejos Corrales, J.D., 'Executive Director of the Dream Project

The newly formed
Fredericksburg Branch has joined
Harrisonburg, Richmond and
Winchester Branches in the
Northwest District. Our first
District Meeting, and opportunity
to welcome Fredericksburg will
be held via Zoom in January.
Since our branch will be hosting
the meeting via Zoom so we
don't have to venture out in the
cold and unpredictable weather
conditions, PLEASE make an
extra effort to attend.

#### **Voter Registration Drive**

Rebecca Gibson from the Center for Civic Engagement sent an invitation asking us to participate in SU's September 17, 10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., voter registration drive. If anyone would like to help with the voter registration drive, please contact <a href="mailto:rgibson@su.edu">rgibson@su.edu</a>.

Dear Rosemary and other AAUW friends,

The Center for Civic Engagement's Voter Education team is hard at work preparing for the upcoming election season. We are hoping to get as many students registered to vote as possible, not just our incoming first year students but all students, including those of historically marginalized communities who may face obstacles to registration and voting, such as Black, Latinx or Indigenous American students. One of our events this year will be a huge voter registration drive on National Voter Registration Day, September 17, from 10:30 am to 3:00 p.m. We plan to set up voter registration tables at multiple locations on our main campus, hoping to connect with students of all backgrounds, academic majors and areas of interest. We would love to invite you to partner us on this day by sending some members of the AAUW Winchester Branch to help manage one of our registration tables. While there engaging with students, you would be welcome to advertise your organization and connect with students about potential participation.

If you are interested in joining us for this voter registration drive, please let me know, and I will share more details with you and answer any questions you may have. We look forward to working with you again!

Thank you so much, as always, for your interest in engaging with Shenandoah students!



Rebecca Gibson she | her Director of Civic Engagement Division of Student Affairs 540-665-4862| su.edu/campus-life Brandt Student Center, Room 119 1460 University Dr., Winchester, VA 22601

#### **Patricia Depew Wirth**

Pat Wirth is an internationally recognized, award-winning business leader who spent a decade in corporate America and then became an entrepreneur in the Automotive Service industry for 30 years. She served on the board and as president of her international trade association, AOCA, for many years. Both she and her business were the recipients of numerous environmental and business awards. After she sold her company in late 2013, she followed her heart full-time into the non-profit sector as a certified non-profit specialist.

Pat joined the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association in 2012 and was recruited to serve as its CEO in 2014 where she successfully directed its operations and fundraising efforts. Under her leadership it fulfilled its mission to build our country's sole, national memorial that recognizes all

suffragists and tells the seven-decade story of the movement. Pat now serves as the memorial's Docent-Coordinator for the numerous tour groups who visit from around the country and abroad.

In 2021, Jeff McKay, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County, appointed Pat to serve on the board of directors of the Fairfax County Convention and Visitors Corporation, (aka Visit Fairfax). Her expertise is in county historic sites as tourist destinations.

In 2023 she co-founded the League of Women Voters of the Northern Shenandoah Valley. It serves the counties of Frederick, Clarke, Warren, Shenandoah, and Rockingham for which it organizes community, college and high school voter registration drives and is a resource for voter processes. Collectively these counties include 25 different local governments for which the League maintains an electronic Voter Guide for each election.

#### From National

#### In Conversation with Dr. Tiya Miles

#### Thursday, September 5, 2 p.m. EST

Join CEO Gloria L. Blackwell for a conversation with AAUW Community Action Grantee, Tiya Miles. Ph.D., about her book "Wild Girls: How the Outdoors Shaped Women Who Challenged a Nation."

#### REGISTER TODAY

September 22

Gloria and Dr. Miles will discuss her latest work that puts girls of all races — and the landscapes they loved — at center stage and reveals the impact of the outdoors on women's independence, resourcefulness, and vision. It focuses on trailblazing women of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries — from Harriet Tubman to Louisa May Alcott to



Dolores Huerta. Navigating the woods, following the stars, playing sports, and taking to the streets in peaceful protest were not only joyful pursuits, but also techniques to resist assimilation, racism, and sexism. Wild Girls evokes landscapes as richly as the girls who roamed in them — and argues for equal access to outdoor spaces for young women of every race and class today.

	CALENDAR
September 14	September Meeting, American Suffragist Movement, 10 a.m., Bowman Library
September 16	Book Group, Amy Tan's Circle of Women, Westminster-Canterbury, 6 p.m.
September 20	Deadline for October issue of <i>Words to the WISE</i> <sup>2</sup>
September 23	CLEO, Los Toltecos Mexican, 1046 Millwood Pike, 6 p.m.
September 25	Board Meeting via Zoom, 6 p.m.
September 13-1	5, 20-21 AAUW Adventure, <i>Ruth's Tea Room</i> , 7 p.m9 p.m., Laurel Ridge

September 14 AAUW Adventure, *A Civil War Tale*, 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m., Handley Library

AAUW Adventure, Anne & Emmett, 6:30 p.m., Winchester Little Theatre

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