



The purpose of the AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

March 1, 2021

It is hard to believe that almost a year ago we had our very last in-person General Meeting in the Trinity Presbyterian Church. On March 13, 2020 we were planning for the State AAUW Conference in Asheville and there was some word about a Chinese virus. A few people even met for lunch after that meeting. What happened? All of a sudden, we were forced into masks, social distancing and an OCD level of handwashing! Then we were warned that, as a highly susceptible group of seniors, we needed to isolate ourselves in order to not catch the virus or spread it unknowingly. What's next? Right now, it's just a matter of waiting and watching. While the Federal Drug Administration and local departments of public health encourage the need for us to be vaccinated, not everyone is ready to step forward immediately. Nevertheless, until everyone is vaccinated and the numbers improve, we must continue to follow protocol and keep ourselves safe.

While the ZOOM meetings may not be what you want to do, this is the "new normal" for how we conduct business for the foreseeable future. In the past couple of months, we have even scheduled General Meetings via ZOOM with excellent topics and speakers. However, attendance by the general membership has been less than we expected. For those members who are not comfortable with the computer, Mary Ann Bents has offered to do one-on-one training. Her invitation appears in this newsletter. Please take advantage of this opportunity to learn something new.

Calls to individuals over the past couple of months revealed that many members feel disconnected from our group because of the lack of socialization. Some people even wanted to come to Board Meetings. While this is perfectly acceptable (with some limitations) members should consider volunteering for the open positions available. Sandi and I would be happy to talk to you about joining the Board by filling any one of these positions:

- * STEM Coordinator
- * Fundraising Coordinator
- * Chair/Co-Chair Nominating Committee
- * Archivist
- * Publicity Chair
- * Interest Group Chair

(See Presidents' Letter, Continued Page 5)



March 12 General Meeting: Our Experiences In Publishing

We are thrilled that the same three local women authors who were scheduled to present in April, 2020 will join us for our March 12 Zoom meeting, 10:00 am. They will share information about writing and publishing their books, including their motivations, what they learned in the process, and advice they have for other women who are thinking about writing a book.

The panel will include:

Georgia Bonesteel, longtime author of books on the craft and art of quilting. In 2003, she was inducted into the Quilters Hall of Fame. Her most recent book, *Scrap Happy Quilts* by Georgia Bonesteel, is both a memoir of her life in quilts and new fun and inspiring projects and patterns for quilters of all skills. Learn more here: <https://www.georgiabonesteel.com>



Ann B. Ross, longtime author of the Miss Julia novels, which present a picture of Southern culture that challenges preconceived notions of a monolithic and unchanging region. *Miss Julia Happily Ever After*, the final installment of the New York Times bestselling series, was released last spring. Learn more here: <http://www.missjulia.com>

AAUW-HVL branch member **Zsofi Teleki**, new author, whose 2018 book, *Sunlight on Shadow: Memoir of a Forgotten Place and People*, portrays the struggles her family and other people in Hungary faced during World War II and its aftermath. Learn more here: <https://www.streetinsider.com/dr/news.php?id=14211602>



Cathy Veal, 1st VP for Program, will facilitate the panel which will end with Q&A time. Be thinking of good questions to ask them!

Open ZOOM Test Sessions For New Users

AAUW Hendersonville plans online Zoom General Meetings with Guest Speaker events and monthly book club sessions during the next few months. AAUW of North Carolina also hosts some online Zoom events including the upcoming 2021 Annual Meeting. If you are interested in participating in any of these Zoom events, you may want to 'test drive' using Zoom to ensure that the video and audio work as expected with your computer. Mary Ann Bents has scheduled two Zoom Test Sessions: Tuesday March 2 at 1 PM and Monday March 8 at 10 AM. Please contact Mary Ann at mabents@verizon.net or 667-967-0147 so that the Zoom log-in information can be sent to you in advance for the date/time that you prefer.

More Important Events Coming In March:

AAUW NC 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

Be sure to save these dates:

**March 19 and 20, Friday evening and Saturday morning
for the AAUW NC Annual Meeting.**

Kim Churches, Chief Executive Officer of AAUW, will be the opening speaker Friday at 7:30 pm. She will bring us an update of what is happening with our national organization. Kim began her work with AAUW about a month prior to the national conference in Washington DC in 2017. This is the first time in recent years that the Chief Officer of AAUW has been the featured speaker at our annual meeting. We are pleased that our members have this opportunity to hear from Kim Churches directly. Registration will open for this Zoom meeting after Feb 28th. Look for more information in **CONNECT** and on the state website at that time.

League of Women Voters Henderson County Program on the National Popular Vote

The League of Women Voters of Henderson County and AAUW Hendersonville Branch will host a virtual program on the National Popular Vote on **March 22nd at 6:30 pm**. The National Popular Vote (NPV) is a bipartisan effort supported by the League of Women Voters, Common Cause, and other organizations committed to ensuring that the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes across the country will become president. The NPV preserves the Electoral College, state control of elections, and the power of the states to control how the president is elected. The NPV ensures that every vote counts equally and that every state will receive attention from the candidates. So far the bill has been adopted by 15 states and has passed one chamber in North Carolina.

Eileen Reavey, National Grassroots Director of the National Popular Vote, will be the guest presenter. Co-sponsors of the program along with LWVHC are LWV Asheville-Buncombe, AAUW, Carolina Jews for Justice, Interfaith Initiative for Social Justice, DemocracyNC, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Hendersonville, and El Centro. The event is free and open to the public. LWVHC celebrates Diversity, Equity and Inclusion by welcoming all members of our community. For more information and to register for this Zoom event, please go to the Events tab at the website www.lwvhcnc.org.

**AAUW – HENDERSONVILLE BRANCH
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2021
(via ZOOM)**

The meeting was called to order by Co-President Norma Treadwell at 10:05 a.m.

Cathy Veal, Vice President for Programs, introduced the speaker, Carrie Ann Chandler from **Start Smart**, a non-profit located here in Hendersonville. Carrie Ann and her team of all women (all with Masters' degrees) work to prepare children for entering school by developing their reading skills. Through a combination of grants, federal funds and the United Way, their organization arranges for books to be sent to children's homes at the appropriate reading level each month. These books are retained by the recipients. **Start Smart** also places extra books in physicians' offices to encourage children to read.

In cooperation with other local agencies, **Start Smart** will direct families to get assistance they may need. Carrie Ann described volunteer activities that can be done from home (placing labels in books) or via ZOOM (reading aloud). They would like to do a fundraiser in the future. Used children's books in good condition are welcome donations, too. The program was well received,

Following the presentation, several things were discussed with the members attending.

National dues will increase by \$3.00 beginning with Fiscal Year 2022-2023; For the next two fiscal years dues will increase again by \$5.00 each year.

There will be a national vote on the issue of changing membership requirements to allow non-degreed individuals to join. This will be an online vote between 4/7/2021 and 5/17/2021. While this was voted on previously and rejected, National feels that in the interest of inclusion and equity (also for obtaining Federal grants) it is time for a change (see the AAUW website for more information.)

Our branch has agreed to co-sponsor and publicize a discussion lead by the League of Women Voters regarding the National Popular Vote (Sandi Lancaster is coordinating this.)

Susan Murphy will be moving to be closer to family in about 3 months – a drive-by farewell is being planned.

Mary Ann Bents has offered to do one-on-one training for any member who is not comfortable using ZOOM and therefore is being "left out" of our limited interactions. An invitation will be in the next newsletter.

The NC. State Conference will be virtual this year and will be a Friday evening and Saturday morning event (3/19 – 3/20/2021). Registration should be open by March 1, 2021 (see State website for more information).

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Next General Meeting is Friday, March 12, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Peg Holmes
Recording Secretary – General Meetings

Happenings In the Branch:

The First Thursday Book Group will meet, via ZOOM, on March 4th at 1:30 PM. This month's book is by Amy Bloom. Anne Hartig will be our discussion lead. In the novel *White Houses*, journalist and "First Friend" Lorena Hickok chronicles the vagaries of her love affair with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

Books have already been selected for the next couple of months. Here is the list:

April 1, 2021: *Little Fires Everywhere: A Novel* by Celeste Ng, Susan Huff discussion lead

May 6, 2021: *The Mercury 13: the Untold Story of Thirteen American Women and the Dream of Space Flight* by Martha Ackmann and Lynn Sherr, Mary Ann Bents discussion lead

All members are invited to join for one session or as a member of the group. To receive an invitation contact Mary Ann Bents at mabents@verizon.net or (667) 967-0147. If you are unfamiliar with ZOOM, Mary Ann will walk you through the procedure. At the completion of this series, we will be selecting more books to take us through the end of the year. Be thinking of your special favorites or books you have always wanted to read and discuss. More information on how to submit your candidates will be forthcoming.

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Member Calls: Diana Bagwell and Barbara Beckerman (membership co-chairs) initiated a project in order to communicate with members during this challenging time. Names from the branch directory were divided among several members of the Board in order to make phone calls. Feedback from 62 out of 65 of our members was reported and analyzed. Follow up will be discussed at the next Board meeting. It is felt that the communication was appreciated, as much of our regular programming has been impacted this year. There are also many members who do not use Zoom and this does affect our contact with others. Mary Ann Bents (mabents@verizon.net) is available to assist anyone who would like to learn how to use or have questions about Zoom. She is a good instructor and has much patience. There are also phone numbers that are attached to the Zoom link that members could use for access. We are hoping that programming will get back to normal in the coming AAUW year.

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Presidents' Letter Continued (from Page 1)

In March we have the "virtual" NC State Conference which has excellent speakers scheduled (check out the state website). In April we have a national vote to change the membership policies in order to expand and diversify our membership (check out the National website). Just because we are in a pandemic situation, the business of AAUW continues with the help of a lot of dedicated women (and men). Join us for the next General Meeting on March 12, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.!

Sandi Lancaster and Norma Treadwell

Co-Presidents – AAUW Hendersonville Branch

Public Policy Committee Report

At our meeting via Zoom on 2-23-21, we reviewed recent information on a variety of subjects. Concern was expressed about students who are absent from our school system and the difficulty providing education for them. There may be a place for AAUW members to provide some tutoring as the pandemic comes under control, and we can assist the school system. This issue requires more investigating.

Early childhood education is important and should be funded by our Legislators.

Dr. Margie Maddox, Chair AAUWNC Public Policy Committee, provided us a list of what AAUWNC supports, and we expressed interest in knowing more and writing our legislators in order to see change.

We consider the expansion of Medicaid in North Carolina as necessary to further extend the availability of people to health care.

The Paycheck Fairness Act is supported by AAUW and needs our support to pass. We are all encouraged to write of NC Legislators to support this issue.

We will monitor and work with other organizations on North Carolina's redistricting issues and the matter of voter suppression in NC. AAUW members are invited to join us as we move forward.

Sue Hammer, Chair

Proposed Membership Requirement Change

This spring AAUW members will vote on proposed changes recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would eliminate the degree requirement for membership. All comments or proposed changes submitted during the comment period, which ended February 7, will be reviewed by AAUW's staff and the AAUW Governance Committee. Debate on open membership will take place in national town halls and state and branch meetings this spring. **Voting will begin April 7.**

Rationale (from AAUW website)

"AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. The membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. This is simply the right thing to do."



Membership Renewals will be coming in the mail this month! Please be prompt in your response and note the changes that have occurred. Questions? Contact Diana Bagwell or Barbara Beckerman.

XIX

by Jacqueline Lawton



Saturday, March 20, 2021

10:30 am – noon

Dramatic reading and discussion of *XIX*

XIX is a play about the role of Black women in the suffrage movement that led to the 19th amendment; written by Jacqueline E. Lawton, faculty member in the Department of Dramatic Art, UNC-Chapel Hill

Synopsis of the Play

In 1920, while many in North Carolina favored granting women the right to vote, there was fear the 19th Amendment would open the doors to greater rights for the state's Black citizens.

Set in Raleigh, North Carolina, *XIX* follows Adelaide, a black suffragette and newlywed into the wealthy, white Germaine family. With access to the political and social elite of Raleigh, Adelaide plans to use her position for the betterment of the black community. She recruits her best friend, Florence, to enlist black women in the fight for suffrage as states across the country ratify the 19th amendment. On the night of North Carolina's historic (and unsuccessful) vote, Adelaide learns that her sister - and mother-in-law have been working quietly to undermine her efforts. In the aftermath of this betrayal, Adelaide must choose between her marriage and her activism. Jacqueline E. Lawton's socio-political drama focuses our attention on the women of an early twentieth-century multi-racial family as they navigate the fight for equality, the compromises of coalition building, and the limits of "family" love across racial and class divides.

Register here to join the meeting via Zoom:

<https://tinyurl.com/AAUWODCMar2021>

Sponsored by the AAUW ODC and the UNC-CH Carolina Women's Center

Susan Huff, Editor/Publisher
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What do you hear about members who need a caring response?

- Illness
- Loneliness
- Loss of a spouse or family member—including beloved pet
- Marriage
- Move
- Promotion
- Grandchild birth—or graduation

Remember to call Nan Hess, Care-Giving Chair, at 828 (697)3679.

In Memorium

We have been advised of the lost of two long-time members since the end of the year:

Ruth Bird was a trailblazer, a woman before her time who worked for some 33 years as a nurse while she was also a mother and wife. Not many women in those days were able to do that, as they were expected to get married when they graduated and raise children, thus aborting any career aspirations. She joined the AAUW in 1947 after she received her Masters' degree and was a member for 73 years. She has been an Honorary Life member since 1997. Not many current AAUW members may remember Ruth, as she left Hendersonville 9 years ago, but there aren't many of us who can conceive what obstacles there were to overcome in order to juggle achieving an advanced degree and maintaining a professional career and a family that long ago.

Ruth was a very modest, busy person who, while she lived in Hendersonville, led a full life volunteering at Pardee Memorial Hospital, as a Four Seasons Home Care Registered Nurse, at Camp Kanuga in the summer, and in a chiropractic clinic. She was involved in church activities most of her life, active in the altar guild of her previous church and a member of the choir at St James Church, where she also was an enthusiastic hand bell ringer.

She managed to find time to travel with her husband, attend music and theatre performances, and host families of foreign students. She left Hendersonville in 2013 and moved to Minnesota to be near her family. Ruth continued to be involved in the activities where she lived until the end of her life. She was a member of AAUW Hendersonville Special Interest Music Group and was in charge of making arrangements for and supervising the set-up of general meetings. Continually active and doing, seeming inexhaustible, Ruth Bird stands as a role model to us all. (Prepared by Mary Scott)

Sibyl Lange graduated from Mount Holyoke College and received her Masters in Education from the University of Virginia. She was a teacher and also served as an accountant with H&R Block for 20 years. She and husband of 57 years, Jack, ran large cattle farms in Virginia and travelled internationally.

Sibyl was committed to helping people. In addition to raising five children, she was a scout leader and foreign student host to dozens of students. She was active in AAUW and served as Hendersonville Branch president from 2000-2002. She also supported her alumnae association. Community service included St. Johns in the Wilderness altar guild, the Book Exchange, Four Seasons Hospice, and Habitat for Humanity. As her legacy, she leaves her extensive family, beloved friends, and foreign students from around the world. Yet another pioneering woman, Sibyl was not to be denied the ability to live a full and complete life, successfully blending the desire to use her intellect while in service to her family and her community.