

**January Branch Meeting**

**Saturday, January 9, 2021, 10:00 a.m.**

**ZOOM MEETING**

**Implications of the November Elections**

**Mark Medish**

The election of Joe Biden as well as Senate and House elections have profound implications for the US and the international community. Mark Medish will share his insights into the upcoming Biden presidency from an international perspective. He has a unique view on US foreign policy. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Affairs.

He is a founder of Keep Our Republic, a non-partisan civic action group dedicated to election and transition integrity.  Medish worked with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where he served as Vice President for Studies focusing on Eurasia and China. Medish was educated at Georgetown, Harvard, and Oxford. He has held Fulbright, Luce, Mellon, and Shintaro Abe scholarships.

**The Zoom connection will be sent prior to the meeting**.

Message from the President:

New Year’s Greetings

At the end of the year, one often engages in introspection and reflection. There are many questions – mundane and AAUW-related that comes to mind: What was the last social event I attended? When was the last branch meeting? (On Feb. 2020, Nicole Drew, Esq. President of the Montgomery County Commission for Women presented an overview of the Commission’s work.) Is there enough toilet paper? How do I access a ZOOM meeting? How can I tolerate another day home-bound? When can we resume in-person branch meetings?

One question and answer that is evident is the ability of branch members to adapt to the virtual world arising out of the restraints and challenges of the pandemic. Many talented and dedicated members have planned and conducted informative and thought-provoking meetings, and have continued to discuss current events, books and speak French.

Soon, we will toast in the New Year and the hope it offers us to hug our friends and family, as well as meet in person at branch meetings, luncheons and holiday gatherings. Whether virtually or in person, AAUW branch members will continue to learn about the world around us, to strive for economic security and educational opportunities for women and advocate for a brighter future for our children. Here’s to sharing our dreams, our hard work and our hopes for 2021.

On December 13, the Bethesda-Chevy Chase and Kensington-Rockville branches held a joint virtual holiday party attended by approximately 30. There were inspiring short presentations from branch scholars and fellows. Janet Crampton provided background on the collaboration between AAUW Kensington Rockville and Montgomery College which goes back to 1985 and has assisted 53 returning scholars. She introduced the two current Montgomery College scholarship recipients: Jessica Moskowitz and Rosa Choi. Jessica is studying Medical Technology and plans to specialize in echo cardiology. Rosa is studying Nursing with a focus on Mental Health issues. Francene Walker, Director of Transformational Giving and the Montgomery County Foundation also spoke briefly on the collaboration between AAUW and Montgomery College.

Dian Belanger then introduced the AAUW International Fellow, Ashwag Alasmari, from Saudi Arabia. She is working for her PhD at the University of Maryland, Baltimore in the field of Computer and Information Sciences, or, as she puts it: Information Systems: Human-centered computing. She promotes women in her specialty; and she cofounded Saudi Arabia’s chapter of Arab Women in Computing.

Ashwag's 2020-2021 support is funded ("sponsored") by the Maryland State Division I and Dian Olson Belanger international fellowships.

The get-together concluded with the opportunity for attendees to chat about topics of their choice in small break-out rooms. Thanks to Pat Stockton who mastered the required technology.

Ruth Spivack

**AAUW Fellowships and Grants:**

**A Few Highlights**

1881—AAUW founded, as the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (ACA, becoming American Association of University Women in 1921 after mergers).

1888—first fellowship ($350) awarded, to Ida Street for PhD completion in American Indian history, University of Michigan.

1890—first European fellowship conferred.

1917)—inspired by World War I, Latin American fellowships program established, soon broadened to International Fellowships. Since then, women from 150 nations funded.

1920—$100,000 raised, for one gram of radium for Marie Curie’s research; additional $56,000, eventually funding a Marie Curie Fellowship for a French or American woman studying chemistry, physics, or radiology.

World War II—advocacy pursued, and money raised, to help Jewish women academic scholars escape Nazi-occupied Europe. Correspondence confirms requests of and collaboration with Albert Einstein, who was similarly engaged.

1963—African Educators’ Program established, for African teachers to study in USA, later becoming teachers exchange program (Jean Colburn a participant in Sierra Leone).

1968—Coretta Scott King scholarship created, after assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., for African American women to study their history and culture, civil rights, and peace.

1974—Research and Projects Grants, for branches, and Project RENEW Grants, for members up-dating education or retraining for professional goals, initiated (1980 recipients: Dian Belanger and Marge Turgel).

1976—Maryland Endowment I (for International fellowships) operational after ten-year effort; fundraising for Maryland Endowment II (American fellowships) begun.

1986—Maryland Endowment III (International) approved and undertaken.

1986—Judith Resnik American Fellowship funded, by member donations pouring in nationwide following the death of the former American Fellow and second woman astronaut in the *Challenger* tragedy.

1996—Maryland Endowment IV (American, approved 1992) changed to Jean H. Colburn American Fellowship; completed in 2002.

2004—Dian Olson Belanger International Fellowship (5th AAUW MD) begun; stipend-producing since 2010 for scholars from South Korea (2), Bulgaria, Vietnam, Nigeria, Cameroon, Egypt (2), Nepal, India, and Saudi Arabia.

2020—branch guest Ashwag Alasmari, International Fellow from Saudi Arabia, sponsored by Maryland I and Belanger fellowships for 2020-2021.

Dian Belanger

**It’s Holiday Season: A Time for Giving *It’s not too late***

**\*Maryland Women of Distinction Fund, #4355.** For the past decade AAUW Maryland has been Platinum Sponsor of this signature event of AAUW’s annual **National Conference for College Women Student Leaders** **(NCCWSL)**. We are short $6300 of the $20,000 needed to qualify for the 2021ceremony, our major national project. The deadline is 1 April 2021. Please see the September 2020 *Marylander* for more about NCCWSL and why we support this life-changing experience.

To donate: Go to aauw.org. Click on Donate at upper right. Near the bottom, in smaller print, click on NCCWSL, then on Maryland Women of Distinction Fund (#4355, if numbers are given). Insert your dollar amount below that and click Donate button below. You’ll need your credit card information. Or, write a check to AAUW, Maryland Women of Distinction Fund #4355. Write “Credit Kensington-Rockville (MD) Branch” in the memo line. Mail to AAUW Development Office, P O Box 98045, Washington, DC 20090-8045. Contact AAUW staff at [development@aauw.org](mailto:development@aauw.org) or call 202-728-7629 if you need more information.

**\*Greatest Needs Fund, #9110**. This general fund is for unrestricted gifts, which are used when and where they are most needed, thus providing flexibility to respond to new and emerging challenges facing women and girls.

To donate: Start with aauw.org. Then click Donate. Greatest Needs will be at the top of the list of donation choices. Use your credit card, or write a check, as above, designating your preferred fund(s). If you do not state a preference, your gift will go to Greatest Needs.

\***Montgomery College Foundation**. Gifts support scholarships for women returning to school, while supporting themselves and dependent(s).

To donate: Give online with credit card at <https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/alumni-friends-donors/foundation/donate.html/>. Or write check payable to Montgomery College Foundation, with “AAUW Kensington/Rockville Scholarship” in the memo line. Mail to Montgomery College Foundation, 9221 Corporate Blvd, 3rd Floor, Rockville, MD 20850.

**Notes from our Members:**

**Linna Liberchuk:** Linna, is our member in St. Petersburg Russia for the duration of COVID lockdown and quarantine. She has joined the branch meetings by wonder of Zoom. What a world we now live in. Linna is a philologist, those who study of literary texts and written records and languages. She has been very prolific while in lockdown having 3 papers published in Russian literary publications. Linna is recommending the attached The New Yorker magazine article about V. Nabokov **“Nabokov, Steinberg and Me”** by Jan Frazier. V. Nabokov is a great example of an intellectual: he was a novelist, poet, translator, and entomologist. He was born in St. Petersburg in 1899 in ***the town house*** where his family had lived, they left Russia in 1918. It is now a museum. The family spoke Russian, English, and French, and Nabokov was trilingual from an early age. The museum offers a virtual tour at the museum site: [www.nabokov.museums.spbu.ru](http://www.nabokov.museums.spbu.ru).

**Dr. Anna Palmisano:** Anna has established Breathe Free Montgomery to advocate for residents of Montgomery County. She previously established Marylanders for patient Rights which has been signed into law by Governor Hogan. Breathe Free Montgomery is a new advocacy group for people living in Montgomery County, Maryland with respiratory ailments including asthma, COPD, lung cancer, chronic bronchitis, and those recovering from lung damage from COVID-19. Over 200,000 residents of Montgomery County suffer from respiratory ailments, some of which are life threatening. The incidence of respiratory ailments is highest among the elderly, minorities, and young children.  The mission of **Breathe Free Montgomery** is to advocate with the County, State and federal governments to support actions and legislation to protect all residents by promoting clean air and reducing air pollution including smoke and exhaust fumes. Everyone should have the right to breathe clean air! Please contact Dr. Anna Palmisano at [palmscience@verizon.net](mailto:palmscience@verizon.net) if you are interested in learning more.

INTEREST GROUPS

***Literature Group***

Margaret Schweitzer [margaretsfchweitzer@gmail.com](mailto:margaretsfchweitzer@gmail.com)

Literature group will meet via zoom on Tuesday January 19 at 1 p.m.  We will be discussing The Soul of America by Jon Meacham.  Karen Braun will be leading the discussion.  All are welcome to come.    The URL will be sent prior to the meeting.

Contact Anita for details.

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**Le Groupe Français**

Ruth Spivack [raspivack@gmail.com](mailto:raspivack@gmail.com)

  Please contact Ruth Spivack for the URL.

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**GREAT DECISIONS**

Anita Rosen

[anitarosen123@gmail.com](mailto:anitarosen123@gmail.com)

Bobbe Mintz

[Bobbeandherb@comcast.net](mailto:Bobbeandherb@comcast.net)

The Next Great Decisions Group is January 15, 2021 2:00 p.m. **Chapter 1 of the new book. – *Global Supply Chains and National Security***

For questions and further information, contact Anita or Bobbe.

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They will send the URL prior for the meeting and hopefully a video link.

Contact Anita for details.

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**Upcoming Meetings:**

January 16, 2021 AAUW Maryland Winter Board Meeting Via Zoom, 10:00 a.m. - Noon

January 31, 2021 Women’s Legislative Briefing, presented annually by the Montgomery County Commission for Women, will be held virtually.

February 4, 2021 AAUW MD Advocacy Day Details to come

February 13, 2021 at 10:00 am Branch Meeting.

**Activism and Youth:  March for Our Lives**

The program moderated by Jeri Rhodes will be about young people’s reaction to school shootings and the platform and activities of March for

Our Lives.   Invited guest speakers are young people who are actively engaged in gun violence prevention work. Members are encouraged to invite high school-aged children, grandchildren and others to learn how young people are engaged in advocacy about issues that directly affect them.

 May 22 AAUW MD Spring Meeting (tentative)

**Deadline for the February Newsletter is January 20**

**Newsletter Editor Circulation Editor**

Margery Sullivan Ruth Spivack

[msullivan@niaid.nih.gov](mailto:msullivan@niaid.nih.gov) [raspivack@gmail.com](mailto:raspivack@gmail.com)

**AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.**

***The Afternoon Literature Group***

Judy Burr [judyb429@verizon.net](mailto:judyb429@verizon.net)

October 17, 2017, the group will be discussing My Brilliant Friend by Elena Ferrante

**AAUW Vision Statement: *AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.***

**AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For more than 135 years, we have worked together as a national grassroots organization to improve the lives of millions of women and their families.**

**In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks and inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.**

**AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch**

**6540 Wiscasset Rd**

**Bethesda, MD 20816-2113**