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## 2020-2021 Leadership

### **Co-Presidents**

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### **Branch Meeting Secretary**

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## **Attend the May meeting!**

Celebrate Spring! Visit with AAUW colleagues!

Plan to attend the May 1 AAUW Branch meeting, the last one for 2020-2021. You have the option of attending in person at the Cross Creek Café (1221 Cross Creek Pkwy NW # A, Atlanta, GA 30327) or attending via Zoom.

The meeting will begin at 11 am. And our guest speaker is Jeff Graham, Executive Director of Georgia Equality. Members attending in person will be ordering from the menu. We hope many of your will join us in person, but you will also be welcome via Zoom.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/94382146574>

*Note:* there is no passcode to join. Members who have RSVP’d on the Evite for Zoom will get an email from our communications intern with the link closer to the date as a reminder.

**Attention:** If you have not done so, please vote in this year's Branch election. Ballots must be received by April 25.

## **Co-President’s Message**

*By: Cele Covatta*

Whenever queried as to “What does AAUW do?”, I always answer, “Well, we have been empowering women and girls since 1881.”

Recently, as I was taking a closer look at the issues National has set forth for voting, I encountered Strategic Plan 2.0. I strongly recommend that each of you read the plan thoughtfully.

The last strategic plan was developed in 2018. However, the rigors of the pandemic and what is developing as a sort of new world order emerged, and renewed thought was given to “what do we do”. In reviewing Strategic Plan 2.0, I find that our mission remains clear.

## *Leadership continued*

### **Diversity**

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What is under very rigorous scrutiny is the manner in which we will carry out that mission.

AAUW-Atlanta has deep challenges ahead, and we must develop new and vigorous strategies. We need your input!! Because it will not be an easy set of tasks, help from you all is needed and is sincerely solicited.

As this most unusual club year draws to a close, things do seem a bit brighter. We have several new members and sufficient funds to award scholarships thanks to the tireless work that goes on in our Book Room. We are looking forward to our first in- person meeting of the year, and our speaker, Jeff Graham, Executive Director of Georgia Equality, is pitch perfect to address the issues which inform our mission.

Voting on the changes to AAUW national bylaws has begun and will close May 17, 2021 at 5:00 pm EST, so please let your voice be heard.

It will be quite wonderful to see old and new friends as we meet in person again.

—Cele Covatta, Co-President

## **THINKING ABOUT SOLUTIONS**

*By: Mary Lynn Merkle*

The conversation about systemic racism and white supremacy is a hot topic, with headlines of police brutality, mass shootings which may be related to ethnicity, and rioting and looting. Perhaps you, like me, have recently had the opportunity to share experiences or beliefs about systemic racism with family members or friends. Perhaps, like me, you were surprised/disappointed to discover that you and they were not of one mind on this issue. So how do we move this conversation forward?!

Conflict is not necessarily a negative. However, if progress is to be made, these guidelines are essential:

1. Establish the beliefs that are held in common as a baseline for continuing. Here is one example might be: There is never a valid reason for rioting and looting.
2. Respect the right to differing viewpoints.
3. Actively listen as experiences and resulting beliefs are shared.
4. Be open and honest about your own experiences and beliefs without apology.
5. Appreciate the openness and honesty of others--it is a gift.
6. Stay positive in your relationship. Anger or ending the relationship benefits nothing.

We understand that solutions to today's racial unrest will not be easily achieved; but if we don't think/talk about it, change will not occur. AAUW is fully committed to equality and respect for all. The national organization has completed a Diversity Toolkit which is available to everyone on the national website. Some of the guidelines listed above are from that toolkit. And there's so much more to read and contemplate. I invite you to go to the toolkit and read AAUW's statement about our commitment to inclusion and equity.

You'll be proud to be a member!

## **MEMBERSHIP News**

*By: Phyllis Miller and Marge Anderson*

The Atlanta Branch membership campaign is in full swing as current members are rejoining for the July 1, 2021 Fiscal Year. Thank you for staying with the Atlanta Branch as we all deal with the coronavirus pandemic. We have great plans for the coming year.

AAUW National reports for the FY21-22 dues collection year national dues will be \$62, of which \$59 will be tax deductible. This is an increase of \$3.00.

Atlanta Branch dues remain the same for members at \$18.00 and State dues remain \$10.00. Make checks payable to AAUW Atlanta Branch. So, total dues will be \$90.00, reflecting the national dues increase. If you are a past president over 65, you have the option of not paying branch dues, and your total dues would be \$82.00, with thanks for your service and dedication.

AAUW Atlanta Branch membership was activated with a personal letter of invitation sent to everyone. Please look for this in your inbox and thank you again for your continued membership.

There is an opportunity to become a Life Member of our Branch. Current AAUW members can upgrade to paid life membership for \$1,240. This one-time tax-deductible gift exempts you from any future national dues. A member may want to make this choice now instead of joining today. Paid life membership allows you to put your values as a leader for gender equity into action for a lifetime.

And great news from National: prospective members who attend a Branch meeting can join for half-price with a Shape The Future offer. Please consider inviting friends, family, acquaintances to join us in a meeting to take advantage of this deal. The offer allows new members to pay dues of \$59.00 for the upcoming fiscal year (\$31.00[national], \$10.00{state}\$18.00 {branch}). Members, please invite a friend to join us!

## **Contemporary Literature Meeting**

*By: Kay Collins*

This group will meet via Zoom on Monday morning, 10:30 am, May 3. We'll discuss "The Splendid and the Vile" by Erik Larsen. If you would like to receive the Zoom notice to log in or have questions, contact Kay Collins.

## **WE STILL LOVE BOOKS!**

*By: Mary Lynn Merkle, Bookfair Steering Committee chair*

The Bookfair Steering Committee met on April 21st. Realizing after the 2019 Bookfair that a huge week-long annual sale held in a mall had large expenses and limited profits, we needed to look at our path forward.

We continue to get lots of books—good books, valuable books. We place many of these on Amazon. Those that we feel will not sell profitably on Amazon we send to Thrift Books of Atlanta. They give us 50% of the profits from the sale of the donations (not a small amount of our profits in 2020 and so far in 2021). And then there are those books that are in good condition which don't fit the parameters of either Amazon, Thrift, or other possible sales opportunities. One of our thoughts is to set a time to invite several of our well-known booksellers into the bookroom for a “showing” and sale.

The Steering Committee feels strongly that to whatever extent possible our donated books should primarily fund our philanthropic projects. Secondly, we want to put those left-over books into hands and places where they will be read and valued. We are sharing these books with Senior Centers, schools, prisons, AND small box libraries. Can you think of groups or places that would like our books? Can you help deliver them? Just let us know if and how you're willing to help.

And that brings to mind another opportunity for your help. We plan to have a booth at the Scott's Antique Market (located at 3650 Jonesboro Road, SE, Atlanta) the second weekend in May. We will need lots of volunteer assistance from Wednesday, May 5th through Sunday, May 9th. If all goes well, a regular stint at Scott's may provide us with a profitable regular sale.

When you get the invitation via email, we hope you will be able to donate a few hours to help put books and items together in the book room prior to Wednesday, to deliver items to the Scott's site on Wednesday morning, to help set up the booth, to be our sales agents during the open hours of the Market, to help with the teardown, and to deliver unsold books and display items back to the bookroom on Sunday afternoon. We are particularly in need of people who can use the credit card machine to help during the open hours. In other words, we call on YOU to help!

By continuing to sell our donated books, we can fund scholarships and fellowships, and our many other philanthropic projects.

We need ALL of you to make these efforts successful!

## **Book Drop Update**

*By: Betty Slater*

The book drop located at the Peach (2900 Peachtree Road, NE; Atlanta, 30305) is a very busy site. A Publix employee noted that the letter A had fallen off and agreed to fix it. But it disappeared after several weeks. A friend of Betty Slater, John Howells, is a woodworker and made an A that could be placed on the book drop.

The Branch extends thanks to John and the members who pick up books at the Peach site: Rose Cannon, Huiping Du, Fran Russell, and Betty Slater.



### **Quote of the month:**

“I would like to be remembered as someone who was not afraid to do what she wanted to do, and as someone who took risks along the way in order to achieve her goals.”

– Sally Ride

[aauwatlanta.org](http://aauwatlanta.org)