



## *Bennington Branch News*

*American Association of University Women*  
*Bennington, Vermont March 2018*

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### **Social Luncheon**



Our main event this month is the Social Luncheon at the Wilburton Inn in Manchester on **Saturday, March 3 at noon**. (See directions on p. 2.) The annual luncheon gives members an opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones as we look forward to Spring.

This year, members will also have the opportunity to meet three recent scholarship recipients who will be our guests: Wendy Lyons, in her second semester toward an Associate's Degree in Business Management; Jennifer Davis, who is taking classes toward her goal of being a registered nurse; and Desiree Walker, who is working on an Associate's Degree in Human Services. All three women are attending CCV this winter.

### **Exploring the AAUW Website - A Small Group Workshop**

This session on **Monday, March 12 at 2 pm** in the **Wills Room** of the **Bennington Library** will give members time to discover an array of tools and resources on the AAUW website (aauw.org) such as current and previous issues of *Outlook*, the AAUW magazine and the Two-Minute Activist, an online tool for contacting legislators on various issues. See Calendar on p. 2 for more information.

### **First Mondays Event: Fires, Floods, and Catastrophes in Bennington**

On **Monday, March 5, 2018 at 12:00 noon**, Ted Bird, a local history buff, will talk about the fires, floods, and other catastrophes that devastated the town of Bennington over the last 200 years. There will be pictures of a flood in 1869, mill explosions, various downtown fires (the Opera House and Home Furniture were two), and the October snow storm of 1987. Ted has been taking pictures of Bennington especially Main street for over 50 years and in his archive are pictures of many of the buildings that have been destroyed by fire. See Calendar on p. 2 for more information.

### **Coming in April ...**

#### **Turkey: Academics Under Fire**

When 1,128 Turkish academics signed a Peace Petition in January 2016, they called for an end to the Turkish government's violations of human rights in the country's Kurdish provinces. Since then, the petitions' signatories have come under sustained attack by the state, including investigation, imprisonment, and solitary confinement along with widespread dismissal of professors and expulsion of students.

At our April public meeting on **Tuesday, April 10 at 7 pm**, we will meet one of the Turkish faculty

members who signed that petition, Burcu Şeyben. After being interrogated, she fled the country. She is now a visiting faculty member in Bennington College's drama department.



## ***AAUW Calendar***

Wednesday, February 28, 2018, at 1:00 pm  
Scribble Sisters Meeting at the home of Nancy Schoerke, 212 Middle Road, Shaftsbury. RSVP to Nancy at 802-447-0829.

Saturday, March 3, 2018 at 12:00 noon  
Social Lunch at the Wilburton Inn, Manchester (see directions in right hand column).

Monday, March 5, 2018 at 12:30 pm  
First Mondays Meeting at the Federated Church of East Arlington. Bennington native, Ted Bird, will speak about Fires, Floods, and other Catastrophes in Bennington. RSVP to Selma Milchen at 447-0521.

Monday, March 12, 2018 at 2:00 pm  
Workshop on "Exploring the AAUW Website" at the Bennington Library in the Wills Room (2<sup>nd</sup> floor). If you have a portable computer, tablet, or iPad, please bring it with you. If you do not have a computer, you'll be able to share with another member. Also, we'll have time to use the library's computers if we wish. RSVP by March 10 to Suzanne Kirkpatrick at suzykirkpa@gmail.com or 314-496-5628 (cell).

Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 1:00 pm  
Scribble Sisters Meeting at the home of Margaret Howland, 311 Chester Knoll, Bennington. RSVP to Margaret at 681-7555.

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at 12:00 noon  
Book Group Meeting at the Martha Canfield Library in Arlington. *The Gilded Years* by Karin Tanabe. Information: Mary Feidner at mfeidner@comcast.net or 802-442-7845.

Wednesday, March 28, 2018 at 1:00 pm  
Scribble Sisters Meeting at the home of Suzanne Kirkpatrick, 6 Garbrooke Dr. Bennington. RSVP to Suzanne at 314-496-5628 (cell).

Monday, April 2 at 11:00 am  
First Mondays – Field trip to Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) and lunch afterward. We'll meet at WCMA in the Aaron Gallery for the exhibit "Suspended Gestures – A Photo History Collaboration Between Martha Graham and Barbara Morgan."

This visit will be followed by a 1 pm luncheon at Sushi Thai Garden, 27 Spring Street, a short distance from the museum. Parking is limited in front of the museum. We suggest that you park on Spring Street. Please RSVP by March 28 to Nancy Schoerke: nts1016@comcast.net or 802-447-0829

Tuesday, April 10, 2018 at 7:00 pm  
In this installment of our international lecture series at the UU Meetinghouse, Burcu Şeyben from Bennington College will give us a look at academic freedom under fire. See story on p. 1.

Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 12:00 noon  
Book Group Meeting at the Martha Canfield Library in Arlington. *The Last Thousand: One School's Promise in a Nation at War* by Jeffrey E. Stern. Information: Mary Feidner at mfeidner@comcast.net or 802-442-7845.

Wednesday, May 16, 2018 at 12:00 noon  
Book Group Meeting at the Martha Canfield Library in Arlington. *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann.

### **Directions to the Wilburton Inn**

257 Wilburton Drive, Manchester Village

#### **From Bennington:**

Drive north on Route 7 to the Arlington exit. Turn left and drive west on route 313 through the blinking light to route 7A.

Turn right on 7A and drive north for approximately 9 miles until you reach River Road. (If you reach the Equinox Hotel, you have gone too far north.)

Turn right onto River Road and continue for about 0.7 miles. Take a slight left onto Wilburton Drive. Your destination is on the left.

**Passenger Drop-Off:** Drive around the circle and drop your passengers off under the portico. Use the ramp toward the right side to avoid steps. Then continue toward the parking areas.

## Branch President's Column

By Ruth Botzow

March 2018

Last month I wrote about AAUW's advocacy for equal pay and introduced you to the legislation currently in the Vermont House and Senate. Since then, I've gone to Montpelier to listen to testimony on these bills and Julie Mackaman has testified before the committee by telephone.

The House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs heard testimony on at least four days. Both the House bill (H. 294) and the Senate bill (S. 275) were discussed, though many of the witnesses focused attention on the provision that would prohibit employers from requiring prior salary history as part of an employment application. On the day I heard testimony, the first witness was Beth Fastiggi, Commissioner of Human Resources. In her testimony she said that HR was generally supportive of the legislation. This is important because it signaled that the Administration did not object to the bill. The committee heard from Julio Thompson, Director, Civil Rights Unit, Office of the Attorney General who had concerns about enforcement, especially in the provisions in the Senate bill. Other witnesses, including Ashley Moore from Main Street Alliance, were supportive.

The next day, additional witnesses were heard, though I had returned home by that point. Julie Mackaman's telephone testimony lasted about 20 minutes including a few questions she fielded from Representatives. Her testimony was personal and authentic and I'll share a sample: "You have heard from others who have testified before me about how protecting job seekers from having to disclose their salary history is a crucial step toward fair pay.

Banning the use of this practice will give all workers a chance to take home a paycheck based on the work they're doing today instead of work they did yesterday.

You've heard that since pay discrimination starts early in women's careers, relying on prior salary as a marker for future pay only compounds the problem, especially for women and people of color." Her complete testimony can be found on our state and branch website at [www.aauwvt.org/testimony.pdf](http://www.aauwvt.org/testimony.pdf) and I encourage you to read it. Her testimony was also mentioned in AAUW's Washington Insider weekly e-bulletin .

A bill goes through a long process before passage. The House General Committee passed the bill with no dissenting votes (one member said it was Mackaman's testimony that persuaded her to vote in the affirmative) and it passed the House on a roll call vote 137-0. The bill was messaged (sent) to the Senate on February 16th. The bill will go through a similar process in the Senate, though it may get combined with other Senate bills, or amended with Senate provisions. If the bill is changed in the Senate, and passed out of the Senate committee and full Senate it would then go back to the House. Eventually both chambers would have to agree on the bill before it goes to the Governor.

I remain optimistic that this bill will make it through all stages of passage this session. It is one more step on the ladder to pay equity for all.