



Newsletter – May 2020

**Supporting National AAUW Action
During the Time of COVID-19**

by Cathy McClure, LAF/PP Chair,
AAUW Bennington Branch

Although in the past, we have tied our fundraising for the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) to the Social Luncheon, this year we will make two changes as announced by President Kathy Wagenknecht:

1) The Board decided at the last Board meeting to split our donations between AAUW’s Legal Advocacy Fund and AAUW’s Public Policy Fund based on a request from National AAUW.

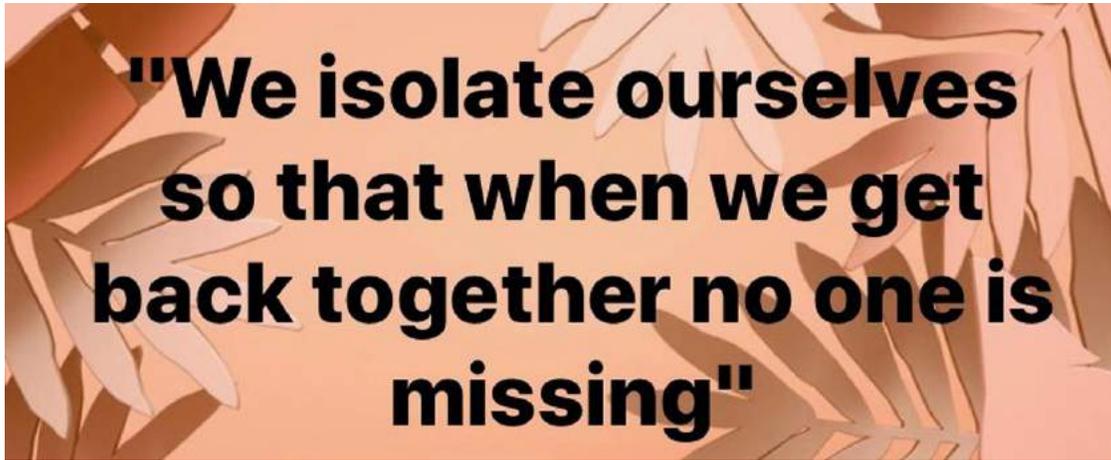
2) We ask you to donate to the funds (without the reward of the luncheon) by mailing your check to our treasurer Norma McShane, 329 Elm St., Bennington, VT 05201. Please write the check payable to AAUW with LAF/PP in the memo space to indicate the purpose of the payment. **The extended deadline is May 8, 2020.**

AAUW national staff are taking action to ensure women’s financial future. As part of AAUW's 2020 Gender Policy Agenda, AAUW is partnering with other organizations to advocate for paid sick leave for public health emergencies (S. 3415/H.R. 6150). Women

must be able to care for themselves and their loved ones without loss of paychecks or retaliation from employers. Consequently, AAUW has signed with other organizations a letter to members of Congress urging a swift passage of the Paid Sick Days for Public Health Emergencies and Personal and Family Care Act (S. 3415/H.R. 6150). Also, National AAUW's support for court challenges to sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace (Legal Advocacy Fund) continues.

We can support National AAUW action for policy and legal advocacy by continuing our spring collection of funds. The cancellation of our spring luncheon need not impact our support of National AAUW action. This financial support for AAUW advocacy is one of our AAUW Branch’s strengths. Please give as you are able as we attempt to meet our yearly average of just over \$600.

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Group Isolation Activities

Isolation Book Discussion #2 via ZOOM

Thursday, May 21, 2020 at 1:00 pm

The book to be discussed will be *Greek to Me* by Mary Norris. If you would like to participate, please contact Kathy Wagenknecht at calmdogs@gmail.com or 1-501-352-9473. Kathy will send you a link to join the discussion. (The first book discussion took place on April 23 with 8 members participating.)

Isolation Scribble Sister Meetings

Contact Suzanne Kirkpatrick or Kathy Wagenknecht for the ZOOM meeting schedule and links.

Take a Walk with an AAUW Member

Meet one or more people at a specific spot and take a walk while enjoying a conversation. You can also have a sing-a-long outside and it doesn't matter how off-key anyone is. Social distancing is easy outside.

Individual Isolation Activities

Contact Your Friends by Telephone

They are likely to be home and you don't need to play telephone tag or use email.

Watch Animals of all Sizes

Many of us can see small animals out of our kitchen or living room window – such as squirrels, rabbits, and chipmunks. Watch their antics and take some photographs.

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“These taste better than the seeds in the dirt!”

Individual Isolation Activities (continued)

Read an Article about 9 SheHeroes during the Coronavirus Pandemic in MS Magazine

<https://msmagazine.com/2020/04/14/nine-sheheroes-that-have-emerged-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Learn More about Suffrage Celebrations

<https://www.suffragecentennials.com>

Watch Suffrage Programs on YouTube:

The Surprising Road to Women's Suffrage

https://youtu.be/E5oB7-o_vzM

Fighting for the Vote Part 1

<https://youtu.be/Df5EGJysrq4>

Fighting for the Vote Part 2

<https://youtu.be/VAhh-y0VCNs>

By One Vote

<https://youtu.be/sxZAE6fopjU>

Watch an Opera Live-Streamed from the Met

A different opera is available every night at 7:30 and is available for watching for the next 23 hours. You start watching when you want to by clicking the link on the MetOpera home page.

Monday, April 27, 2020 Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*

Tuesday April 28, 2020 Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*

Wednesday, April 29, 2020 Donizetti's *Roberto Devereaux*

Thursday, April 30, 2020 Muhly's *Marnie*

Friday, May 1, 2020 Viewer's Choice Verdi's *Aida*

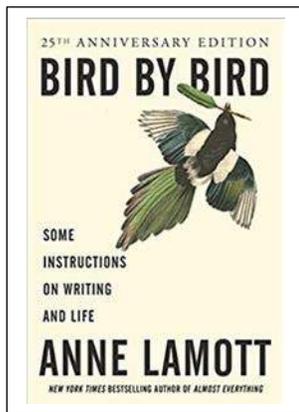
Saturday, May 2, 2020 Verdi's *Louisa Miller*

Sunday, May 3, 2020 Borodin's *Prince Igor*

Watch a Gardenia Bud Uncurl Itself

It takes several days.





Writing and reading decrease our sense of isolation. It's like singing on a boat during a terrible storm at sea. You can't stop the storm, but singing can change the spirits of the people who are together on that ship.

From Bird by Bird by Anne Lamott

Recommended by Ruth Olsson, Kathy Wagenknecht, and Dawn Rodrigues. Dawn used it while teaching writing as an English professor.

Book Recommendations

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

Count Rostov, a Russian aristocrat, is sentenced by a Bolshevik tribunal to live the rest of his life within the Metropol Hotel near the Kremlin. Count Rostov's lack of bitterness and many interests and people skills make this an absorbing book. Recommended by Ruth Olsson, Judy Murphy, and Gudrun Hutchins

Stones from the River by Ursula Hegi

This beautifully written book allows the reader to understand how Hitler gained power in Germany. Trudi, the narrator is a dwarf and therefore an outsider who watches these events unfold. Recommended by Suzanne Kirkpatrick and Gudrun Hutchins. Both have kept the 25-year-old book and reread parts of it from time to time.

No Stopping Us Now by Gail Collins

The New York Times columnist writes about "The Adventures of Older Women in American History," as only she can. Starting with the colonies, each chapter is a separate period, working its way through critical eras and decades to the present. Recommended by Madeline Kennedy.

The Feather Thief by Kirk Wallace Johnson

Recommended by Ruth Botzow who found the intersection of natural history, bird theft, fly tying, travel, and moral questions fascinating.

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony

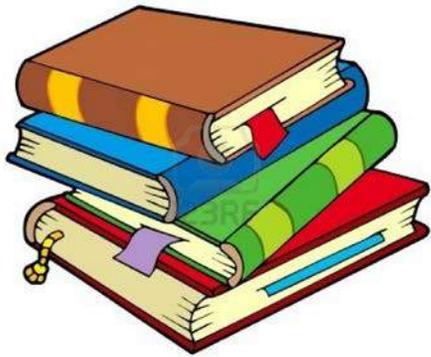
Doerr A blind French girl, an orphan German boy, and beautiful writing set in WWII, but not a traditional war story. Justifiably a Pulitzer Prize winner. Recommended by Kathy Wagenknecht.

The Shipping News by Annie Proulx

Set in Newfoundland, a newspaperman, his aunt, and 2 daughters resettle the family home. Quirky characters, darkly comic, transformational plot beautifully told. Recommended by Kathy Wagenknecht.

Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

A story about 2 families whose paths cross during a difficult time. One mother is Mrs. Perfection (just ask her). Mother of four, beautiful home, etc. The other mother is single, a wandering artist who settles nearby and hires on as cook/cleaner. She has a 15 year old daughter roughly the same age as Mrs P.'s sons. Recommended by Margaret Howland and Suzanne Kirkpatrick.



Seven Days of Us by Francesca Hornak

A family is in 7-day quarantine because a daughter comes home to England for the Christmas Holidays from Liberia, where an epidemic is raging. Recommended by Margaret Howland.

Come, Tell Me How You Live by Agatha Christie Mallowan

This non-fiction book is a memoir of the years Agatha spent on archeological digs in Syria and Iraq with her second husband Max Mallowan, an expert in ancient pottery. It gives an excellent picture of a British archeological expedition of the 1930's. Recommended by Gudrun Hutchins.

Winter's Tale by Mark Helprin

A long, evocative and slightly magical story set in New York City both in the late 19th and late 20th centuries. There's a flying horse, among other marvels. The movie plucked out one slim thread and, being a movie, gives no sense of the wonder of Helprin's prose. Recommended by Fronia Simpson.

*Keep the book recommendations coming!
We will list more in the June newsletter.*

When Breath Becomes Air by Paul Kalanithi

At the age of 36, on the verge of completing a decade's worth of training as a neurosurgeon, Paul Kalanithi was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer. This book chronicles his transformation from a doctor treating the dying into a patient and new father confronting his own mortality. Recommended by Margaret Howland.

Gilead by Marilynne Robinson

A letter from an elderly Methodist minister to his young son. A quiet meditative look at fatherhood and faith. Pulitzer Prize Winner. Recommended by Kathy Wagenknecht.

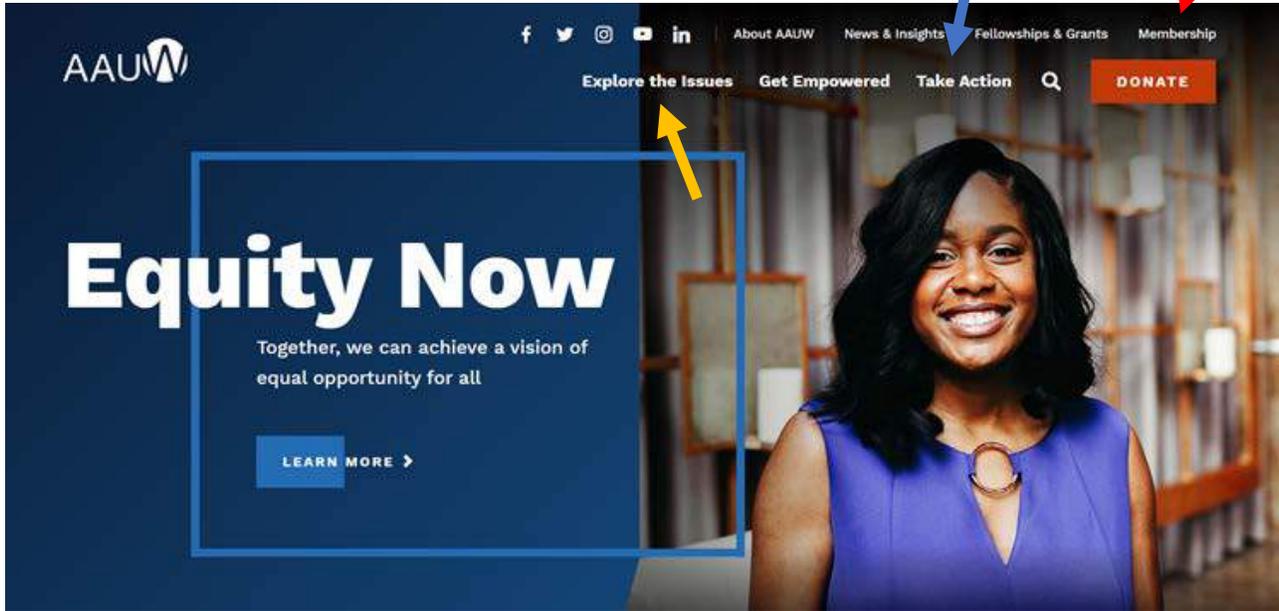
Moon Tiger by Penelope Lively

A woman looks back on her life, especially a love affair during World War II. As always with Lively, one reads about people in almost shattering detail. For me, her books underscore the complexity of being human. Recommended by Fronia Simpson.

Becoming by Michelle Obama

This readable book records Michelle's life from her early years as she grew up in south Chicago through the last year of the Obama presidency. The story of her parents and her early quest for an education, her love for her daughters and her focus on trying to keep their world normal, and her admiration of her husband's ideas and actions add up to a satisfying book.

Check Out AAUW's New Website!



AAUW's new website (www.aauw.org) is more colorful, and easier to navigate. Most of the tiny print has been eliminated so that it is much easier to read on smaller devices such as iPads, tablets, or even smart phones with a relatively large screen.

Let's look at a few of the sections indicated by arrows above so that you can see how it is organized. Click "Explore the Issues" (yellow arrow). You will see a menu of this section of the website that you could explore in greater detail.

Return to the home page by clicking the arrow pointing to the left in the upper left corner. Now click "Take Action" (blue arrow). You will see a menu of action items.

Click the central item in the menu on the right side called "Two Minute Activist." Scroll down to see a "wish list" of items that AAUW would like Congress to pass and some information about them. Many of these items have already been passed by the House but are stuck in the Senate.

Scroll down to the very bottom of the page past the photograph of Kate Nielson. You will see a blue box to sign up for the Two Minute Activist. They need your zip code to select the right Senators or Representative to notify when a particular piece of Legislations reaches the floor. AAUW will write individual letters in support of that legislation and address it to our Senators as well as our Representative if it needs to be passed in the House. You will finish the letter, personalizing it a bit if possible, and send it off. Often you will receive a reply from the Senator's office within a day or two. Don't expect anything to happen real soon. Members of Congress are not in Washington right now but are isolating at home like the rest of us.

Now Scroll down to the very bottom of the same page. You will see a light gray square in which you can sign up for an email newsletter called "Mission in Action."

Go back to the home page and click "Membership" (red arrow). This section has everything that is for members only such as looking at the membership data base or voting.