



American Association of University Women  
Lake Sumter (FL) Branch  
*Learn – Connect - Support*

**May 2023**

## President's Message



To all our loyal AAUW members,

This has been a challenging year for most of us both personally and in our organization, but we have come through it with flying colors. From the beginning of the year, we have overcome difficulties and achieved so much.

Beginning with the New Members Coffee, held outdoors at the Lake Miona Pavilion, we tried both new and old ways to reach our goals. We held several fundraisers and worked the polls to support Tech Trek and scholarships. These functions included a Pampered Chef Party, the jewelry drawing, and the Mah Jongg party along with our monthly 50/50. Our fantastic General Meeting programs also brought in donations from our guests.

We also have a one-woman fundraiser in Espi Walmsley whose motto, "talk to more people," brought in significant donations. And we can look forward to the anonymous generous donation from one of our members who has donated \$2,000 in matching funds starting this fall.

One of our major accomplishments this year, thanks to Barbara Fieldman and her committee, was obtaining the 501(c)(3) tax status. This was a huge and successful effort. There is already an ad hoc committee working on preparing the way to start utilizing our new tax status.

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I realize and apologize that I must have overlooked other accomplishments but wish to thank all our members who came forward to support our organization. I also thank all of you who have supported me this year. You have helped so very much in enabling me to serve as president.

My final thank you is to the wonderful women who have stepped forward to be our officers next term. Thank you, ladies.

With gratitude,

Anne Sobocinski  
President  
AAUW Lake/Sumter (FL) Branch  
*Learn – Connect – Support*  
(815) 210 - 3450

## 501(c)(3) News

As we have announced at the last few General Meetings and in newsletters, our Branch has achieved 501(c)(3) tax exempt status under Federal and State laws.

A 501(c)(3) status allows us to solicit funds that will be tax deductible for the donors. Lack of tax-exempt status has been a stumbling block to our fundraising efforts, especially soliciting donations from area businesses and associations.



An ad hoc committee is now busy working to set up a committee that will establish policies and procedures and to devise a plan to implement our 501(c)(3) status.

**But We Need Help!** We have a huge need for someone to oversee fundraising efforts. The **Fundraising Director** is a leadership position and a voting member of the Board. The individual occupying the position will not be expected to plan and implement all fundraising events. Rather she will chair the new committee and coordinate our new tax-exempt solicitations and the traditional member-organized fundraisers that we have done in the past. Organizational skills are the most important requirement, but a basic knowledge of fundraising would be helpful.

The new committee will be comprised of a president-elect, a finance director, the communications director, a member-at-large with marketing background, and a member-at-large with 501(c)(3) background. The new Fundraising Director will be working collaboratively with this group and will not be expected to shoulder the entire responsibility herself.

And as a preview of coming attractions: We will be looking for a few members willing to join the solicitation team when the branch is ready for the next step. The Branch will have templates of solicitation letters and fact sheets and will provide training for those

interested in contacting businesses, organizations, financial institutions, foundations, etc.

Please consider where you can fit in and contact Communications Director Beth Hicks ([ethicks71@gmail.com](mailto:ethicks71@gmail.com)) if you have any questions or are ready to “step up to the plate” for the future of our Branch.

Beth Hicks  
Ad Hoc 501(c)(3) Committee Chair

## LEARN

### Meetings and Programs

#### *May 20 General Meeting: Celebrating Our Branch Luncheon*

Our 2022-23 Program Year, guided by the theme of *Learning of Self, Learning of Others, Learning of Your World*, will end with our General Meeting in May.

Our May 20 luncheon will be held at Cheers Restaurant in Stonecrest at 11:30 a.m. See you there!



Stonecrest is on 441 in Summerfield. To get to the restaurant, turn right from 441 into the entrance to Stonecrest at SE 176<sup>th</sup> Place Road; it is just after the Summerfield Walmart. Follow the road around to the Stonecrest Golf Club on the right. Cheers is in the golf club. The address is:

Cheers at Stonecrest  
11560 SE 176<sup>th</sup> Place Road  
Summerfield

There is still time to make your reservation and pre-pay for your lunch. The cost is \$30 for an entrée, dessert, and beverage (coffee, iced tea, or soda). The **deadline is May 10**. Please send your check, made out to Lake Sumter AAUW, to:

Barbara Fisler  
471 Gaskin Lane  
The Villages, FL 32162

Include your entrée choice in the comment line on your check. Entrée choices are:

- Salmon Berry Salad
- Grilled Corned Beef Reuben with French Fries
- Chicken Salad Croissant with French Fries
- Veggie Portabella Sandwich with French Fries

## *Report on the April General Meeting*

*“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.”  
Aristotle*



Members in attendance at our April General Meeting became active as we evaluated the 2022-2023 programs and made suggestions for the new year. Members also indicated how they are willing to volunteering next year. And we heard a review of 2022-2023 progress referenced to the Strategic Plan. More than 50 members worked in groups to complete evaluation forms. Below are some comments and suggestions members offered.

### ***Comments about Programs***

- **September** – Organization – good start to the year, good introduction to Branch activities, everyone involved, reviewed purpose of our organization.
- **October** – Education in our Backyard (Lake Sumter State College) – learned so much about our local college, great local opportunities.
- **November** – Scams and scares – excellent to be reminded to be safe, timely information.
- **December** – Lunch at The Oaks on 44 – nice setting and good location, enjoyed the piano music, add more diversity in religious groups.
- **January** – Tech Trek presentation by the Committee – always a favorite, talented young women, inspirational; invite interested parties and stakeholders (women now working in STEM fields, school administrators, school board members, teachers) to attend the meeting.
- **February** – Diversity Committee – great! With monthly follow up activities, thought provoking, motivational, good information, interactive, good video.
- **March** – Women’s History Month – we have come a long way, great presentations, amazing women, how career choice affects opportunities; continue to showcase our members.

## ***Suggested Programs for the Coming Year***

Listed below are topics members suggested for future General Meeting programs. The order of appearance corresponds (roughly) to the frequency the topic was suggested.

- Health
  - In-home care/assistance
  - Available facilities (independent, assisted)
  - Safety in the home
  - End of Life
- Travel
  - Travel safety
- Financial Information
  - Gender pay gap
  - Scams
- Legal Documents
- Election and Voting Issues
- Education for Seniors
- Entertainment

## ***Volunteers***

Many members signed up to be volunteers and expressed an interest in our Branch Committees. Their names will be sent to the leaders of these groups.

## ***Strategic Plan***

Linda Carpenter reviewed the progress referenced to the strategic plan. See the Members' Pages of our website for the full strategic plan; the progress report will be posted shortly. We made progress on all goals, but the expected achievement may have been ambitious, especially in light of woman-power challenges. Nevertheless, we should keep these goals in mind for all we do in the coming years and for programs offered at every General Meeting.

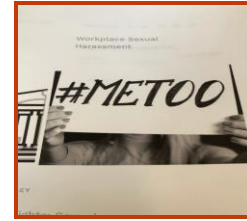
Thank you for participating, volunteering, and leading our Branch through another year of "learning of self, learning of others, and learning of your world!"

Bonnie Weaver & Carolyn Pasquale  
Programs Co-Directors

## Public Policy

### *Workplace Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment has long been a significant problem for women workers. Sexual harassment is not simply about sex. It is often a tool wielded to assert power and dominance.



In 2019, AAUW conducted an analysis of data of sexual harassment charges filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and a survey of AAUW members and their networks about their experiences with workplace sexual harassment. The full report and executive summary entitled *Limiting Our Livelihoods: The Cumulative Impact of Sexual Harassment on Women's Careers* can be found and downloaded from the AAUW website at AAUW.org. This study reports the impact of sexual harassment on women's economic security across their lifespan and career trajectories.

Workplace sexual harassment can take a toll on women's physical and mental health, with consequences such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and increased risk of physical health problems. It can limit their job choices, reduce prospects for on-the-job-training and career development and even force them out of the workforce. These negative effects compound over time, reduce women's lifetime earnings and contribute to both the gender and retirement wage gaps.

The report also details the limits of legal remedies which can discourage people from reporting issues. Barriers to justice include a limited time frame for bringing charges, onerous standards of proof, and narrow standards about the kinds of employers covered by existing laws.

### *How Can the Problem Be Solved?*

Employers can outline a comprehensive harassment policy, offer employee and manager training, and create a complaint procedure with a variety of reporting methods. State policymakers should pass bills to stop workplace harassment and close the gender pay gap.

On the Federal level, pass the **Be HEARD** Act (**B**ringing an **E**nd to **H**arassment by **E**nhancing **A**ccountability and **R**ejecting **D**iscrimination). This act would build on existing civil rights laws to provide new protections against harassment.

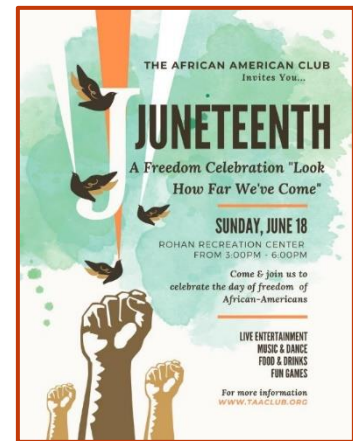
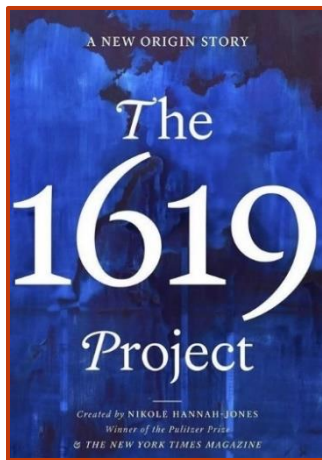
Support the **EMPOWER** Act (**E**nding the **M**onopoly of **P**ower **O**ver **W**orkplace Harassment through **E**ducation and **R**eporting). This act would make it easier and safer for people to speak out when they experience workplace harassment and make it harder for employers to avoid accountability.

Jeannie Hamilton & Susan Gold  
Public Policy Co-Chairs

## Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

How smart we are to have chosen to be AAUW members where we are encouraged to continue to learn and stretch ourselves (if not physically, then mentally) and remain vibrant. The Diversity Committee is here to assist in that process as we continue to encourage ways to nurture Race Amity, which, as we have shared before, embraces cooperation, collaboration, respect, and friendship between the races and embodies the spirit of elimination of prejudice of all kinds.

Some of you have shared steps you have already taken to further your journey in this direction. Here are three activities you might consider as you move forward.



### *The Study of the 1619 Project*

This online (via Zoom) discussion group began on April 13, and we were informed that the response has been so overwhelming that spaces may already filled. But check back to our March Newsletter for more information.

### *Race Amity Day Events*

- Proclamation – On May 23, 2023, the Sumter County Board of Commissioners has scheduled to issue the Proclamation naming June 11 Race Amity Day in Sumter County. This will take place at Everglades Recreation Center in The Villages. The meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. but the presentation may take place later in the meeting. Please join us if you would like to support this effort. For more information call Jacquie Latzer, 704-451-9886.
- Race Amity Day – A local observance will be on Saturday, June 10 from 1:00-5:00 p.m. at the Pinellas Library on Powell Road and 466A. There will be displays, balloons, the showing of the full video, *Race Amity: The Other American Tradition*, and the Proclamation from the Sumter County Board of Commissioners. Come visit.

### *Juneteenth Celebration*

A local commemoration of June 19, 1865, the date on which enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, finally received the news they were free, will be held on Sunday, June

18 at Rohan Recreation Center from 3:00-6:00 p.m. and is sponsored by the African American Club. There will be entertainment, food, music, and games. For more information contact: [www.taaclub.org](http://www.taaclub.org)

Invite your friends to join you and visit events as you continue to answer the question: How will you use your influence and connections to further Racial Amity?

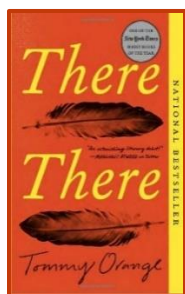
### *Great Summer Reads from the Diversity Committee*

Described below are works of both fiction and non-fiction to help you continue your journey of cross-cultural understanding and racial amity. Descriptions are courtesy of Amazon.com.

#### Fiction

*Memphis* by Tara M. Stringfellow

As young Joan comes of age at her mother's ancestral Southern home, she looks back on decades of her family's complex history for guidance. *An NPR Best Book of 2022 and a Read with Jenna Book Club pick.*



*There There* by Tommy Orange

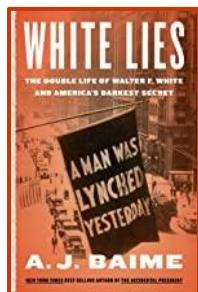
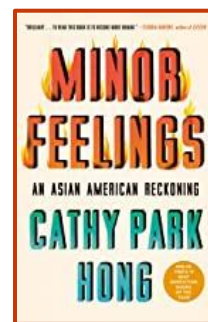
This revelatory novel follows 12 people from Native communities as they travel to the Big Oakland Powwow in Oakland, California. All of them have their reasons for attending the powwow — some inspiring, some heartbreaking — and they are all connected in different ways. *There There* highlights the painful, complicated history of urban Native Americans searching for family, identity, and home.

#### Nonfiction

*Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning* by Cathy Park Hong

In this fierce and candid memoir, poet Cathy Park Hong details her experiences as the daughter of Korean immigrants, giving voice to a generation of Asian Americans who have wrestled with the dissonance of family, identity, culture, and belonging.

*NYT bestseller, Pulitzer Prize finalist, and one of the Best Books of 2020 by The New York Times, The Washington Post, and NPR.*



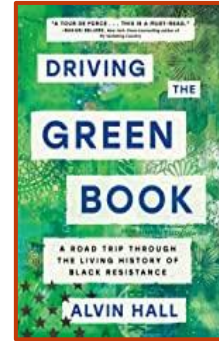
*White Lies: The Double Life of Walter F. White and America's Darkest Secret* by A. J. Baime

Born mixed race and with very fair skin and straight hair, Walter F. White was able to “pass” for white. He led two lives: one as a leader of the Harlem Renaissance and the NAACP in the early 20th century; the other as a white newspaperman who covered lynching crimes in the Deep South. His life was fraught with internal and external conflict—much like the story of race in America. *Recommended by Beth Hicks*



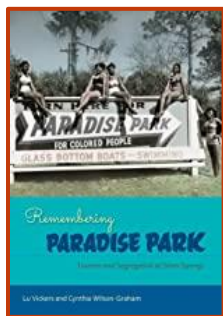
*Driving the Green Book: A Road Trip Through the Living History of Black Resistance* by Alvin Hall

From 1936 to 1967, millions of Black Americans relied on *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, the definitive guide to businesses where they could safely rest, eat, or sleep. Award-winning broadcaster Alvin Hall drove from New York to Detroit to New Orleans, visiting motels, restaurants, shops, and stores; exploring historical and cultural landmarks; and gathering memories from some of the last living witnesses for whom the Green Book meant survival. *Recommended by Linda Carpenter*



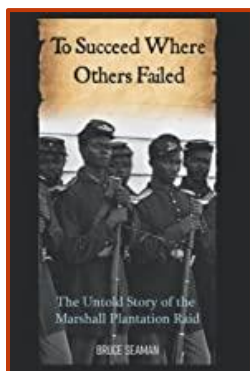
Local Interest

Rev. Cynthia Snavely has recommended two books that focus on our local area and one that views Black history broadly and is the subject of a discussion group.



*Remembering Paradise Park: Tourism and Segregation at Silver Springs* by Lu Vickers and Cynthia Wilson-Graham

Paradise Park was the “colored only” counterpart to Silver Springs, a central Florida tourist attraction famous for its crystal-clear water and glass bottom boats. Together the two parks comprised one of the biggest recreational facilities in the country before Disney World. From 1949 to 1969, boats passed each other on the Silver River—blacks on one side, whites on the other. Full of vivid photographs, vintage advertisements, and interviews with employees and patrons, this book portrays a place of delight and leisure during the painful era of Jim Crow.



*To Succeed Where Others Failed: The Untold Story of the Marshall Plantation Raid* by Bruce Seaman (a retired Presbyterian minister who has lived in Marion County for over 25 years)

In March 1865, a 30-man team of Union soldiers traveled behind enemy lines, south from Jacksonville, Florida, to conduct a daring raid in Marion County. Then they had to return on foot to St. Augustine, 80 miles from the raid site, knowing that an accomplished Confederate cavalry unit would be hot on their trail. Why? Everyone knew that the war was almost over. The mostly Black raiders planned the operation, seeking to succeed where others had failed. A range of sources reveal a clear story of courageous men determined to gain acceptance, parity, and respect in the White man’s army.

*The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* by Nikole Hannah-Jones, et al.

This book reframes our understanding of American history by placing slavery and its continuing legacy at the center of our national narrative. The 18 essays, along with 36 poems and works of fiction, show how the inheritance of 1619 (the arrival of 20-30 enslaved people from Africa) reaches into every part of contemporary American society.



*#1 New York Times Bestseller; NAACP Image Award Winner; Finalist for the Kirkus Prize; Best Books of the Year for The Washington Post, NPR, Esquire, Marie Claire, Kirkus Reviews, & Booklist*

A television documentary mini-series of 6 episodes is now available to stream on Hulu.

## Book Club

The book club will be meeting throughout the summer. On May 17 Cathy Cirocco will lead the discussion of *The Lions of Fifth Avenue* by Fiona Davis; on June 21, Kate Manion will lead the discussion of *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys; and on July 19 we will discuss *The World Played Chess* by Robert Dugoni. Then, on August 16, we will select our books for 2023-24.

All book club meetings begin at 10:30 a.m. and are held in the Faith Room at Northlake Presbyterian Church. All AAUW members are welcome to attend.

Remaining 2022-23 Book Club Selections				
<i>Date</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Summary</i>	<i>Discussion Leader</i>
5/17/23	<i>The Lions of Fifth Avenue</i>	Fiona Davis	New York Library and living there	Cathy Cirocco
6/21/23	<i>Salt to the Sea</i>	Ruta Sepetys	WWII German escapees on the Wilhelm Gustloff	Kate Manion
7/19/23	<i>The World Played Chess</i>	Robert Dugoni	Story of a young man and Vietnam veteran	TBA
8/16/23	Book Selection for Next Year			

# CONNECT

## Membership

### *Did You Know?*

Our membership total (103) makes us the third largest Branch in the state...behind Venice (168) and Vero Beach (107). Nobody else is even close.

AAUW National plans to send three reminders to each eligible member informing them that it is time to renew. The language in the renewal notification informs members that they can renew online with a credit card or follow the instructions the Branch provides, in case they have been advised to pay by check.

### *Online Membership Directory*

Our directory is updated regularly as we welcome new and renewing members to our branch. Please check your entry in the directory, located in the Members' Pages of our website ([www.lakesumteraauw.org](http://www.lakesumteraauw.org)), to make sure your information is correct and complete. If you need the password for the Members' Pages, email Linda Carpenter ([linda.j.carpenter@gmail.com](mailto:linda.j.carpenter@gmail.com)) to request it.

Here is the information needed for all member entries in the directory:

Name  
Street address  
City, State zip code  
Village (if applicable)  
Phone  
Email  
Partner/Spouse/Significant Other (if applicable)  
Village (if applicable)  
School(s) and Degree(s)

Members can also send a photo to go with their entry. The photo should be a headshot in .jpeg format; it can be sent as an email attachment. Email Linda with any changes to your entry.

**Need the password  
to fully access our website?**

**Contact Linda Carpenter!**  
[linda.j.carpenter@gmail.com](mailto:linda.j.carpenter@gmail.com)

# SUPPORT

## This important AAUW fundraiser needs your immediate attention!

We have a wonderful opportunity in 2024 to earn \$7,500 for our Tech Trek and scholarship programs.

The Sumter County Elections Office will pay our local AAUW branch \$2,500 per election to provide volunteers to staff the precinct at Seabreeze Recreation Center in The Villages. We need to submit a list of 15 volunteers to the Elections Office by June 1, 2023, so please do not wait until the last minute if you think you can volunteer. Spouses, friends, and neighbors of AAUW members are welcome to volunteer as well.



Volunteers need to be Sumter County residents and willing to work some, if not all the dates below:

- March 19, 2024: Presidential Preference Primary
- August 20, 2024: Primary Election
- November 5, 2024: General Election

Also, there will be training in January, June, and September 2024 for new volunteers.

Contact Jennifer Thompson at 678-777-5256 or [forrestgt@hotmail.com](mailto:forrestgt@hotmail.com) if you can volunteer. **The deadline for submitting all necessary information is June 1, 2023.**

## Tech Trek

Great News! Lake/Sumter Branch will be sending six girls to Tech Trek camp this summer. Here are the girls who were nominated, applied, and were selected:

- Wildwood Middle School: Olivia Sokol
- The Villages Charter Middle School: Catherine Hampton, Claire Hampton
- South Sumter Middle School Savannah Causey, Hayley Mercier
- Umatilla Middle School: Alayna Bensinger

This was a team effort to connect with sponsors and school administrators and to interview and evaluate the girls. Thank you to committee members Leslie Flanders and Katie Haviland as well as non-committee member Nancy Hartshorn for your assistance in the nomination and selection process.

All 17 nominated girls will be recognized at their respective schools with an AAUW-Florida Award certificate.

A footnote: One of last summer's virtual campers, Abby Lacayo, has placed third in the State Science Fair. She has been invited to another summer tech camp designed for future doctors and scientists. There are some very smart girls out there; isn't it wonderful that AAUW Lake/Sumter can boast that we were able to help some of them be identified and hopefully headed to future STEM careers!

Liz Schweers  
Tech Teck Chair

## **Scholarship**

The Scholarship Committee is busy interviewing and selecting recipients for our scholarships! More information in the fall!



**American Association of University Women  
Lake/Sumter (FL) Branch**  
*Learn – Connect - Support*

And this puts a wrap on a very busy and productive year! Next issue will be in September. And there are so many exciting things to do in the future with our 501(c)(3) status. Plan what you can do to help! Enjoy the summer. See you in the fall.

Editor: Beth Hicks  
[aauwsnews@gmail.com](mailto:aauwsnews@gmail.com)

AAUW Websites

Local: <https://lakesumterraauw.org>  
State: <https://aauw-fl.aauw.net>  
National: <https://www.aauw.org>