



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

April 2023

President's Message



The big news this month is that our branch is now officially a 501(c)3 organization. We can now offer a tax incentive when groups or individuals donate funds to our chapter. We need to thank our committee consisting of Barbara Fieldman, Debbie Gately, Katie Haviland, and Dave Haviland. It is my understanding that Barbara Fieldman

shouldered the bulk of this work. And believe me that it was not easy. Thank you all.

A second important announcement is regarding the week of our General Meeting. It was brought to the Board's attention that many members have a conflict with the week of our meeting. The Women's Democratic Party Organization also holds their meetings on the third Saturday morning of the month. After discussions, the Board agreed to change our monthly General Meetings to the morning of the FOURTH Saturday of the month. This will begin in September and General Meetings will continue to be held at Allamanda Recreation Center.

Last month Barbara Fisler was introduced to the membership at the General Meeting to fill the position vacated by Joanie Schmidt. This month we voted to accept Barbara to fill the co-President Elect position along with Helen Gozdanovic. Thank you, Barbara.

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The slate of candidates for the coming year was presented to the general membership at the March meeting; it will be voted on at the April General Meeting. (See page 3 for the full slate). Thank you to the Nominating Committee: Helen Gozdanovic, Katie Haviland, Diane Starr, and Anne Wilkins. Also thank you to everyone who agreed to serve on our board.

If you were at the March General Meeting, you heard that we have a lot to celebrate this month. To begin, once again the program was excellent. The Leesburg Fire Captain Amanda Stevenson was a prime example of a woman entering a field which was traditionally staffed by men. She entered the profession as the first woman firefighter in the Leesburg Fire Department and has worked her way up through the ranks to her current rank of captain. She is doing this as a young mother and as she continues her college education. After the meeting she was headed to her daughter's first softball game of the season.

Branch members Jan Barone and Espi Walmsley rounded out the panel. Their stories also illustrated how the decks were stacked against them in their careers in law and accounting because of their sex and ethnicity. It is not easy being a pioneer in a male dominated profession.

I worked as a nurse and nurse practitioner in a field dominated by women but at the organizations where I worked, you had to resign when you became pregnant. One of our nurses was fired because she refused to resign and after the baby was born, she sued the agency winning back pay and reinstatement. As with the other ladies on the panel, I assume that most of us have experienced discrimination in our careers. Our personal experiences certainly give us reasons to work for equality in education, leadership, and pay for girls and women which is fostered by AAUW.

Our branch is slowly growing in numbers through members bringing an acquaintance to a meeting and the advertisements we have had in the newspaper. So, remember to carry your AAUW business cards.

Individual members have been connecting with the community to share our message. This month Liz Schweers will be speaking to the Rotary Club which may lead to a donation but will definitely make more people aware of our organization. Cathy Cirrocco is planning a Casino Night fundraiser for next year. She has been given the OK by the Board to proceed with the work to organize the event. Many members are needed to accomplish this event. Please respond to Cathy's requests for assistance.

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

Message from the Nominating Committee

Barbara Fisler was elected to the co-President Elect position at the March 18 General Meeting. Barbara will be continuing as co-President with Helen Gozdanovic for the upcoming 2023-24 term of office.



Also continuing in the position of co-Directors of Finance: Barbara Fieldman and Debbie Gately.

The following Slate of Officers presented at the March 18 General Meeting will be elected by the members at the April 15 General Meeting.

- Co-President Elect: Jennifer Thompson and Irma Mottley
- Co-Secretary: Dee Sherman and Gay Birchard
- Co-Program: Kathy Howe and Cynthia Snavely
- Co-Membership: Leslie Flanders and Terry Slotterback

Special thanks to the above members who accepted Board positions and thanks also to members who offered to serve on committees as needed by the Board or Committee chairs.

We are looking for one or two members who are interested in working on a committee with Finance for the rest of this year and continuing with Barb and Debbie into next year. Please contact Katie Haviland [katiehaviland1@gmail.com; (518) 275-9466] if you would like to volunteer.

Nominating Committee Members:
Katie Haviland, Chair; Helen Gozdanovic; Diane Starr, Anne Wilkins

LEARN

Meetings and Programs

2022-2023 General Meeting Programs

Learning of Self, Learning of Others, Learning of Your World!

- April 15, 2023 – New beginnings: Branch elections
- May 20, 2023 – Celebrating our Branch: Luncheon at Cheers in Stonecrest

March 8 General Meeting Follow-up



Our March meeting was well attended, including guests and new members more than 60 people were there. Jacquie Latzer reminded us of continuing our personal work on diversity and inclusion. Several members shared personal experiences of ways they are striving for these goals in their lives.

The theme “learning of self, learning of others and learning of your world” was reflected in our celebration of Women’s History Month. Our Real Women in the Real-World panel included Jan Barone, a Branch member and an attorney; Captain Amanda Stevenson, of the Leesburg Fire Department; and Espi Walmsley, a Branch member and an accountant shared their stories. They showed us how far women have come in equality but reminded us there is a long way to go. And all three emphasized the importance of education in their ultimate success.

April 20 General Meeting: New Beginnings, Branch Elections

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

Allamanda Recreation Center
1515 St. Charles Place
The Villages

Doors open for hospitality from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
The program will follow.

Our April meeting will see the presentation of our officers for the coming year. Members will actively participate in table discussions evaluating our past year of programs, branding of our name, recruiting members, conducting outreach, and communications. How can we improve in the year to come? What worked and what needs to improve. What goals did we reach? What are the goals for next year?

Thank you to all who have participated in the monthly meetings this year. With the help of many members, our Branch has enjoyed social time and informative learning programs.

Bonnie Weaver and Carolyn Pasquale
Co-Directors of Program

May 20 General Meeting: Celebrating Our Branch Luncheon

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



Stonecrest is on 441 in Summerfield. To get to the restaurant, turn right from 441 after the Summerfield Walmart. The address is:

Cheers at Stonecrest
11560 SE 176 Place
Summerfield

The cost is \$30 for an entrée, dessert, and beverage (coffee, iced tea, or soda).

Please send your check, made out to **Lake Sumter AAUW** to:

Barbara Fisler
[471 Gaskin Lane](#)
The Villages, FL 32162

Or see Barbara at the April General Meeting.

Include your entrée choice in the comment line on your check.

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

Public Policy

Pass the Paycheck Fairness Act

Last week, on March 14, Equal Pay Day, U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) reintroduced The Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that would update and strengthen The Equal Pay Act of 1963 to help close the gender pay gap.

We wrote about this act a few months ago. It would close loopholes that allow employers to justify paying workers unfairly, create more robust remedies for those who have suffered discrimination, prevent employers from retaliating against workers who discuss or disclose their wages, prohibit employers from relying on salary history to set wages, and provide training, technical assistance, data collection, and research.

Our democracy works best when *everyone* fully participates! Be the change you want to see! Become a **2-Minute Activist** by contacting your senators today and asking them to become active in supporting The Paycheck Fairness Act by calling or emailing :

Rick Scott, 202-224-5274, rickscott.senate.gov/contact_rick
Marco Rubio, 202-224-3041, rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact

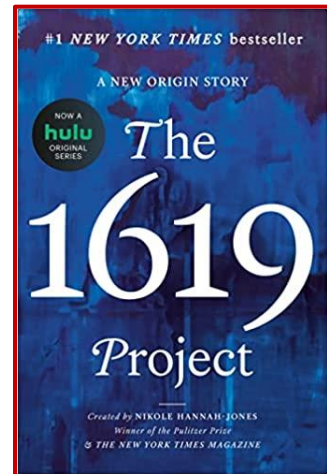
Public Policy Co-Chairs:
Jeannie Hamilton and Susan Gold

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Community Book Study of “The 1619 Project”

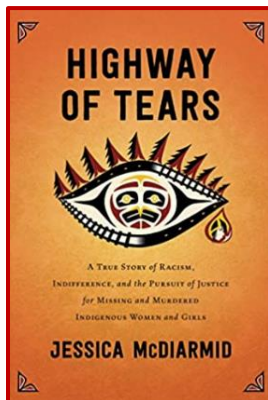
Thursdays, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. beginning Thursday, April 13
on Zoom (a link will be provided after you register).

Tri-County Unitarian Universalists’ minister, Rev. Cynthia Snavelly and lay leader Cindy Grossman will lead a community book study of *The 1619 Project*. *The 1619 Project* is a long-form journalism endeavor developed by Nikole Hannah-Jones, writers from The New York Times, and The New York Times Magazine which “aims to reframe the country’s history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of the United States’ national narrative.”



The book chapters are divided into distinct topics, including Democracy, Capitalism, Citizenship, Punishment, Medicine, Church, Music, Healthcare, Progress and Justice. We will discuss one chapter per week. (No discussions on April 27 and June 29.) Although the book has been banned in Florida schools, Nikole Hannah Jones did win the Pulitzer Prize for her contribution to this series. Please come and make up your own mind about the validity of this work. Participants are asked to try to come to as many weeks as possible. [Register here](#) or call Rev. Snavelly at 240-475-2111 or email CSnavely@uuma.org.

Great Read from the Diversity Committee



Highway of Tears: A True Story of Racism, Indifference, and the Pursuit of Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
by Jessica McDiarmid
Synopsis courtesy of Amazon.com

For decades, Indigenous women have gone missing, or been found murdered, along an isolated stretch of Highway 16 in northwestern British Columbia. The highway is known as the “Highway of Tears,” and it has come to symbolize the ongoing failure to provide justice for these women and their families.

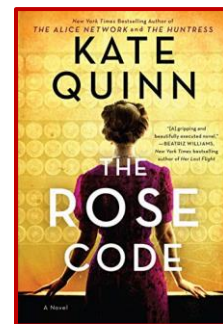
Through interviews with those closest to the victims--mothers and fathers, siblings, and friends--investigative journalist Jessica McDiarmid offers an intimate, first-hand account of the devastating effect these tragedies have had on the families of the victims and their communities, and how systemic racism and indifference have created a climate where Indigenous women are over-policed, yet under-protected. Examining the social and cultural tensions between Indigenous and other people in the region, McDiarmid links these cases to others across Canada--now estimated to number up to 4,000--in a broader context of the undervaluing of Indigenous lives.

Book Club

The Book Club will meet at 10:30 a.m. on April 19 to discuss *The Rose Code* by Kate Quinn. Joannie Schmidt will be our discussion leader.

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>
4/19/23	<i>The Rose Code</i>	Kate Quinn	WWII Code Breakers	Joanie Schmidt
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	TBA

Day Trip to Crystal River Plantation

On Friday, March 10, seven AAUW members traveled to the Crystal River Plantation for a boat ride to see the manatees as well as the local wildlife, and to enjoy a luncheon at the Plantation. Participants included Helen Gozdanovic, Ginger Ryan, Terri Slotterback, Gay Birchard, Carolyn Pasquale, Angela Vickers, and Kate Manion. The outing was planned by the day trip planning committee: Angela Vickers, Carolyn Pasquale, and Kate Manion.

Great Decisions

Great Decisions 2023 is over. Twenty-eight people ordered books, and we met in two groups every Monday morning from January 23 to March 13. Our textbook covered one topic a week for eight weeks. The topics for 2023 were: Energy Geopolitics, War Crimes,

China and the U.S., Economic Warfare, Politics in Latin America, Global Famine, Iran at a Crossroads, and Climate Migration. Although none of these titles included the word “Ukraine,” most of them were informed by the war in Ukraine. During our meetings we discussed our reactions to the weekly reading, shared relevant experiences with the topics, and watched the topic videos prepared by the Foreign Policy Association.

The consensus was that it was a worthwhile endeavor and that we should continue this program next year. Look for information in the newsletter next fall about the 2024 program of – Great Decisions.

Christine Loken-Kim
Great Decisions Coordinator

CONNECT

Membership

New Members

Please welcome our newest members. Their contact information also can be found in our online Membership Directory.

Barbara Combs

1234 Reading Road, The Villages, FL 32163
501 542 0327
University of Kentucky: BCS

Paul
Dunedin
bscombs0723@gmail.com

JoAnne Fillwock

631 D’Angelo Drive, The Villages, Fl 32162
(517) 927-1213
Michigan State University, BA

Mission Hills
jfillwock@aol.com

Carol Gannon

2133 Markridge Loop, The Villages, FL 32162
(484) 410-9524
West Chester University: BA, BFA; Kutztown University, ME

Bob
Pennecamp
carol@carolgannon.com

Susan (Sue) Hanson-Otis

2212 Ben Hogan Place, The Villages, FL 32162
(262) 993-9688
Marquette University: BS; Cardinal Stritch University, MEd

Tamarind Grove
sue.hansonotis@gmail.com

Peggy Irwin

725 Agua Way, Lady Lake, Fl 32159
(352) 205-3248

Marshall University, BA, MA; University of Sarasota, EdS; Argosy University, EdD

El Cortez

irwin.peggy7@gmail.com

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), 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) 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

Mah Jongg

The group will meet on Wednesday, April 12 at the home of Kathy Howe (kamphowe@aol.com), and on Wednesday, April 26 at the home of Beth Hicks (ethicks71@gmail.com). Games begin at 1:00 p.m. Members wishing to play should notify the hostess well in advance of the game date.

SUPPORT

Fundraising



The Branch held a successful Farewell to the Old Card Fundraiser on March 22.

Thanks to all members who gathered their friends for a fun evening of MJ. We were able to raise \$1,250 for the scholarship fund! Well done ladies!

Tech Trek

The Lake/Sumter Trek Committee is waiting to hear if the six summer 2023 applicants we selected have been approved by the Florida AAUW Tech Trek Committee.

Meanwhile one of last summer's virtual campers, Abby Lacayo, together with her parents as well as committee members Leslie Flanders and Liz Schweers, were recently guests at The Villages Evening Rotary Club. Abby spoke about her journey dealing with the loss of her pancreas and gall bladder as a 9-year-old and how that experience has inspired her to research enzymes which she must take daily to survive. Last year and continuing to this year Abby based her Science Fair project on pancreatic enzymes. Last year she won the State Science Fair in her division; this year she placed 3rd at State. She has been invited to attend a STEM science camp at Nova Southeastern University for aspiring doctors. As she did when she presented her research to our January General Meeting, at the Rotary Club she was able to impress her audience with her perseverance and academic excellence.

Meanwhile she has now been chosen to be on the varsity cheer squad at Wildwood High School. Way to go, Abby!

Liz Schweers
Tech Teck Chair

Scholarship

As the Scholarship committee is working to finalize our new recipients, it is time to catch up with one of our previous winners, Jordan Threlfall.



“The past year has been filled with exciting opportunities and unforgettable experiences. In August of 2022, I started my third year at the University of Central Florida, majoring in Computer Engineering and minoring in Intelligent Robotic Systems. I also began my position as President of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) at UCF. After working very closely with my team, our SWE kicked off the semester with 175+ students in attendance at our first General Body Meeting. This started our semester off with exciting events, workshops, and networking sessions.

“In October, we brought 20 SWE members to Houston, Texas for the WE22 conference. This event consisted of an exciting (and largely populated) career fair, professional workshops, and a fun networking opportunity. At this fair, I received an internship for Spring 2023 as a Technical Intern with Universal Creative and an internship for Summer 2023 as an Embedded Engineering Intern with Lutron.

“Following this, I started the spring semester at Universal Creative, working on their Advanced Technology Interactives/Research & Development team. This exciting group has given me experience working with advanced technologies in themed environments. My current career goal is to work as an engineer, integrating new technologies into themed environments, so this experience has been beyond inspiring.

“As the spring semester comes to an end in May, I will be preparing to move to Boynton Beach for my internship with Lutron. All my accomplishments have been made possible because of the support I have been given. The American Association of University Women has given me the opportunity to pursue my goals through their generous support. I am beyond grateful for this inspiring group, and I look forward to continuing my involvement in the future.”



**American Association of University Women
Lake/Sumter (FL) Branch**

Learn – Connect - Support

So many exciting things happening with our branch. See where you fit in and volunteer! Deadline for the May issue will be April 20. Please continue to use the newsletter email address.

Editor: Beth Hicks
aauwsnews@gmail.com

AAUW Websites

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