

LAKE/SUMTER NEWSLETTER

September 2021



Lake/Sumter branch of AAUW is committed to a diverse community that stimulates a culture of learning and understanding and enhances a member's experience. We aspire to create an inclusive and equitable branch that represents, supports, and celebrates diversity of all kinds.

President's Message



Welcome to what we hoped was the Post Covid World!! It has been a long 14 months of not meeting in person. And it looks like we will have to wait for a few more months for in-person meetings. This year Katie Haviland has agreed to continue as co-President, serving with Gay Birchard this time around. It is nice to have someone at my back and coaching me.

During the past year Covid took over our world, but our AAUW group didn't miss a beat. We bought the Zoom software and formed a team of Computer trainers led by Carolee Litwinka and Peg Tabor, who trained our members to use Zoom. Ann Marie Lombardi and her helpers got the meetings on Zoom. We held our board meeting, book discussion group, and Diversity Committee on Zoom each month. Diane Jacobson created a fund raiser with people addressing STEAM topics on Zoom for us.

This year we had hoped to have our meetings back in Allamanda Recreation Center on the third Saturday. **However, COVID is back, and the board has made the decision to go virtual through at least November. The first meeting will be September 18; look for the invite to the Zoom meeting in the week before the meeting.**

We are supporting three women with Scholarships. We can support an additional student because of a gift from the family of Carolyn Johnson. We supported four students who attended the virtual STEM Camp this summer.

Ann Marie Lombardi and Diane Jacobson have planned interesting meetings for us to enjoy. It will be great to see all of you again.

The lack of face-to-face meetings made it hard for newcomers to volunteer to help with our many committees. We need your help! The past board did a tremendous job keeping us as a cohesive group, but they are looking for new faces to help. As with any challenge, a successful outcome is multiplied by the participants taking on a vested interest and being involved. In a word, we need YOU!

Throughout the pandemic, the newsletter has helped us to maintain a strong, vibrant, connected branch of AAUW. Meet the Members Who Make our Branch Run is a new feature that will highlight the many opportunities for involvement in supporting our mission ... you can see who these members are, what it takes, and why members step up and take on a more active role. We encourage you to read the monthly interviews about different leadership positions and committee participation. We invite you to picture yourself in one of these roles.

Our core mission and basic purpose is to advance equity/equality for women and girls through scholarships, tech trek, and diversity awareness. Help us keep the work moving forward.

Gay and Katie
Co-Presidents

Members Who Make our Branch Run

Programs

Our programs are the glue that holds our meetings together. Diane and Ann Marie have worked together to plan the monthly programs. They arrange for our speakers and take care of any needs they might have to present their topics. Much of the planning work takes place in the summer, and the follow through happens each month.

This year Diane Jacobson and Ann Marie Lombardi will keep us informed and entertained each month. Please ask questions if you have ideas or would enjoy helping with our monthly programs.



Diane Jacobson was born in a town called Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, and grew up in the neighboring town, Morgan. As an adult she lived in the Minneapolis area. She had several jobs but never a career while raising her family as a young woman. Because of finances and circumstances, college and university classes were limited to one or two a year; she earned a BA in 1993. Because she always loved classes and the learning experience, Diane decided to pursue a MA degree and completed that in just 4 years. She is passionate about what we do at AAUW. Education is the door to opportunity, and supporting women and girls is an opportunity that we cannot overlook. Florida has been her home since 2002 where, besides AAUW, she became part of the saxophone section of the Concert Band.



Ann Marie Lombardi is from the Boston area, where most of her family still lives. She started her career at Ernst & Young, and stayed for 25 years, fleeting up to Marketing Director of Global Sponsorships including the World Economic Forum, Baseball as America Hall of Fame traveling exhibits, and US Olympic Ski and Snowboard teams. She eventually retired to The Villages. After a few years of retirement fun, she needed a purpose, a connection to the community, a way to support the power of higher education. A neighbor brought her to an AAUW meeting, and the rest is history! There are so many opportunities in our Branch to volunteer; the one thing she learned this past year is that you never have to go it alone...members always answer the call to help...so step up, volunteer, and cultivate lasting friendships along the way.

Membership

If you have not yet renewed your AAUW membership, please check with Membership Chair Karen Pickelsimer to get the job done!

Customized Name Badge with AAUW Logo

You can now purchase the same name badge that the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW staff wear when they are out representing AAUW. Each durable (and wipeable), plastic 3" by 1.5" name badge comes standard with a pin clasp, but you can order one with a magnetic clasp for an extra \$2.00. Get yours today!

Your customized name badge arrives by US mail in about 7-10 business days after you order it. The badge will ship separately from any other Shop-AAUW items ordered.

Pin Back \$9.00

Magnetic Back \$11.00

If you sign on to the AAUW.org site, in the SEARCH window you need to type Shop AAUW

OR in Google type: aauw.source4.com

Also, Karen has another source locally and the price depends on how many are ordered. It is like most club badges here in The Villages. He charges for the logo and you could only have your name, town and state. Degrees would be extra. Please see Karen if you are interested in getting this type of badge.

Diversity Committee

For the past year, our branch Diversity Committee has been hosting an online Racism Discussion Series; many of our members have participated in the program. The committee had planned to resume the series in September; unfortunately, serious health challenges to committee leadership and their families have forced us to change our plans.

The committee is deeply committed to this project. It has been an effective way to help people talk about difficult topics, and we regret having to step away from it now. But we would like to see it stay in the AAUW family. So, at this time, we are offering the project to any other AAUW state affiliate or branch that might be interested in hosting the series. While our branch started the series, we can see others enhancing the project and advancing it into the future. In the interim, our committee will be on hiatus.

Meetings and Programs

April Meeting Follow Up

Lake and Sumter County Teachers of the Year- Donations Collection

As you may recall, during our program last April, which featured Lake County Teacher of the Year Shannon Clark and Sumter County Teacher of the Year Brittany Brown, we expressed our desire to help support students and classroom needs.



- Shannon’s students need pencils, eraser blocks, glue sticks, dry erase markers, pencil pouches/boxes, post-it notes, pocket folders, and composition notebooks and water bottles. She also mentioned shoes, backpacks, and reusable water bottles (because of the pandemic, water fountains are shut off).
- Brittany, who has just been promoted to Vice Principal, knows that the 3rd grade reading students need new books such as *Harry Potter*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Babysitters* - including the graphic ones (pictures, high interest low reading ability), *Magic Tree House*, *Whatever After*, *Rainbow Magic*, *Dork Diaries*, *The Kick Series* by Alex Morgan, *Judy Moody*, *Geronimo Stilton*, *Thea Stilton*, and *Whew*.

We will collect these materials in January to start their second semester with new “stuff”. Thank you for your support of these two amazing teachers who are so dedicated to communities we serve.

GENERAL MEETINGS
SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER 2021
WILL BE VIA ZOOM
AS WE CONTINUE TO BATTLE COVID

General Meeting: September 18 on ZOOM



Please join us on Saturday, September 18, as we meet once again on Zoom. Member health and well-being continue to be our most important priority, so we will be having virtual General Meetings until at least November.

This will be our first program for the new fiscal year. Highlights include Branch updates on key initiatives, volunteer opportunities, open leadership positions, and Special Interest

Group happenings.

Look for the Zoom invite email about a week before our event. Please plan to join us beginning at 9:15 a.m. to sign in and enjoy social time to greet new members, friends, and guests. The meeting will start at 10:00 AM.

Looking forward to welcoming you back!

Summer Scenes



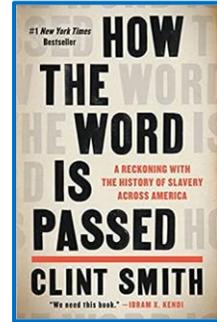
Members of the Singles Group went on a day trip to Silver Springs. They rode on the Glass Bottom Boat and wandered this piece of “Old Florida.”

On Friday, July 23, 14 members of the AAUW singles group, plus a prospective AAUW member, gathered at the VKI Japanese Steak House in Lake Sumter Landing to enjoy a Japanese dinner and the entertainment provided by the chefs who cooked at the hibachi tables.



Great Read from the Diversity Committee

This month's Great Read is How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America by Clint Smith. The following information is drawn from the book's publisher, Little, Brown and Company.



Beginning in his hometown of New Orleans, Clint Smith leads the reader on an unforgettable tour of monuments and landmarks—those that are honest about the past and those that are not—that offer an intergenerational story of how slavery has been central in shaping our nation's collective history, and ourselves.

It is the story of the Monticello Plantation in Virginia, the estate where Thomas Jefferson wrote letters espousing the urgent need for liberty while enslaving more than four hundred people. It is the story of the Whitney Plantation, one of the only former plantations devoted to preserving the experience of the enslaved people whose lives and work sustained it. It is the story of Angola, a former plantation-turned-maximum-security prison in Louisiana that is filled with Black men who work across the 18,000-acre land for virtually no pay. And it is the story of Blandford Cemetery, the final resting place of tens of thousands of Confederate soldiers.

A deeply researched and transporting exploration of the legacy of slavery and its imprint on centuries of American history, How the Word Is Passed illustrates how some of our country's most essential stories are hidden in plain view—whether in places we might drive by on our way to work, holidays such as Juneteenth, or entire neighborhoods like downtown Manhattan, where the brutal history of the trade in enslaved men, women, and children has been deeply imprinted.

Informed by scholarship and brought to life by the story of people living today, Smith's debut work of nonfiction is a landmark of reflection and insight that offers a new understanding of the hopeful role that memory and history can play in making sense of our country and how it has come to be.

Beyond its historical value, this book is beautifully written. Mr. Smith's rich descriptions of the sites he visited made me feel like I was there with him. Another great read with lots to talk about.



Linda Carpenter

Scholarship News



We are excited to introduce the gift Richie Kluesener of **Gold in Art** donated for our scholarship fundraiser. It is a stunning multi-color gemstone necklace in 14 Karat yellow gold. Valued at \$4,000 the necklace highlights a bezel set natural pink tourmaline, an emerald, and a round brilliant cut diamond on an 18" sparkling chain. Tickets will be distributed for your donations and chance to win this beautiful necklace. We thank you in advance for your generous contributions. This money supports our Scholarship fund, which helps women complete their university degrees.

Office Depot / Office Max Purchasing Card

Several years ago, AAUW National stopped making hard copies of brochures and other printed materials available to the branches. Instead, they offered materials on their website and granted permission to branches to download and print them as needed. To offset branch printing costs, National arranged for members to receive discount purchasing cards for use at Office Depot and Office Max stores. At the time, the discount on copying was up to 80%.



Initially, members received the cards in the mail. Although members have not received cards in recent years, the program is still in operation. Now, members can print their own cards at <http://officediscounts.org/aauw.html> and save up to 75%. In addition to printing your own in-store card, there are also links and codes for using the card for online purchases.

Please note...this discount is available to you for any personal printing needs that you have, not just AAUW material!

ACTIVITIES

Educated Palates, Dine Around, and Finger Foods and Fun

As we begin to think about activities for the 2021-2022 AAUW Lake Sumter year, and plan for activities that provide opportunities for socializing among our members and,

often, significant others, it seems a good time to bring back Educated Palates, Dine Around, and Finger Foods and Fun. We need volunteers to help organize and implement each activity. Of course, we must bear in mind that concerns about COVID will be taken into consideration in holding all of these activities.

Educated Palates is a dinner activity hosted at a member's home, usually attended by 10-20 people. At times we have two hosts. Singles, spouses, and significant others are all welcome. Usually, we have three dinners a year...Fall, Winter, and Spring. Before each dinner, the chairperson calls a meeting of a committee/interested participants to determine a theme, what part of the meal each person will bring (appetizer, main course, veggies, dessert), and the date for the meal. The host provides glasses, place settings (from plastic to silver). The attendees bring the food as agreed upon and their choice of wine. Interested? Contact Anne Wilkins 352-430-0964 or ancwilk@yahoo.com.

Dine Around brings members, single or with spouses or significant others, together at a restaurant. The coordinator and committee select the date and restaurant and determine the number of people the restaurant can accommodate. Notices indicating date, place, time, and number of participants are e-mailed and placed in the newsletter. There is nothing to bring except your appetite! Just show up ready to enjoy a dinner with new and old friends. Interested members respond to Judy, who sends out a confirmation after sign up is over. Then you just show up! Interested? Contact Judy Anderson 352-751-4954 or JCDUKEIRL@aol.com

Finger Foods and Fun is another social activity that brings members, single or with spouses or significant others, together in a member's home occasionally throughout the year. The coordinator locates a volunteer to host the gathering, which is usually held for about two hours in the late afternoon or early evening. The host provides glasses, napkins, and small plates. Members bring their own choice of wine and an appetizer. Great opportunity to mingle with old friends and meet new ones! Interested? Contact Judy Anderson 352-751-4954 or JCDUKEIRL@aol.com

And if you'd like to *volunteer* to help, contact Anne or Judy

Singles Group

The Singles group has continued to meet monthly, thanks to the many members who have organized a variety of activities. In August, several of us travelled to Winter Park, FL, to attend a very entertaining musical program of Gershwin hits. Afterward, we enjoyed a delicious meal at a nearby restaurant followed by a quick trip to Trader Joes. Thank you, Nancy Hartshorn and Barb Fieldman, for organizing this delightful event.

Coming on September 29, 2:00 pm, is a lunch tasting at the Spice & Tea Exchange in Brownwood Town Square. Contact Kate Manion, 352-801-0901, for reservation information.

October 17 we will gather at the home of Jan Barone for a covered dish social. Please call Jan, 352-552-4981, about the dish you will bring.

Ideas for November? Just give Dorothy Dobbs, 205-527-3000, or Liz Schweers, 850-247-9489, a call. Available months going forward are December, March 2022, and beyond.

Bridge

Bridge is in a holding pattern with the resurgence of the Covid virus. We hope more information is available at the September meeting.

Mah Jongg

Anne Schlick and June Love look forward to members joining the Mah Jongg group. Details of meetings and sign-ups will be available at the September meeting.

Diversity Book Club

On Wednesday, August 18, we met at Diane Jacobson's home to select books for the upcoming year that begins in September. The books selected are shown in the first table. Recommended but not selected books are in the second table.



On Wednesday, September 15, the Book Club will again meet in the Peace Room of the North Lake Presbyterian Church on Rolling Acres Road behind Home Depot. We will also set up Zoom for members who cannot attend the meeting. Our First Book is *Djinn Patrol and the Purple Line*, led by Diane Jacobson.

The group meets from 10:30 am until about 11:45 am and then adjourns for lunch at a nearby restaurant. All AAUW members are welcome. To join the Book Club, contact Kate Manion at kmanion52@gmail.com.*** **

Date	Book	Author	Discussion Leader
Sept. 15	<i>Djinn Patrol on the Purple Line</i>	Deepa Anappara	Diane Jacobson
Oct. 20	<i>The Midnight Library</i>	Matt Haig	Peg Tabor
Nov. 17	<i>The Dictionary of Lost Words</i>	Pip Williams	Jeannie Hamilton
Dec. 15	HOLIDAY LUNCHEON		

Jan. 19	<i>The Four Winds</i>	Kristen Hannah	Barb Blatchford
Feb. 16	<i>The Life She Wished to Live: A Biography of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings</i>	Ann McCutchan	TBD
Mar. 16	<i>The Barbizon</i>	Paulina Bren	Linda Carpenter
Apr. 20	<i>The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell</i>	Robert Dugoni	Peg Tabor
May 18	<i>Klara and the Sun</i>	Kazuo Ishiro	Blanche Boyne
June 15	<i>The Personal Librarian</i>	Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray	Mary Place
July 20	<i>The End of the Ocean</i>	Maja Lunde	Christine Lokem-Kim
Aug 17	SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR 2022-23		

Recommended but not Selected Books

Book	Author
<i>Hamnet</i>	Maggie O'Farrell
<i>The Vanishing Half</i>	Britt Bennett
<i>Eleanor</i>	David Michaelis
<i>How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America</i>	Clint Smith
<i>The Lost Girls of Paris: A Novel</i>	Pam Jenoff
<i>The Women of the Bible Speak</i>	Shannon Bream
<i>Between Two Kingdoms</i>	Suleika Jaouad
<i>Dream State</i>	Diane Roberts



Welcome Back! Here is hoping that we can start up our activities in person! A personal thank you to Linda Carpenter who has been my editor/mentor the past few years. And a thank you to Ginny Rivera who has volunteered to take up the editing of my work. Welcome Ginny! Submissions for the October newsletter are due September 20.

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AAUW Websites

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