

Lake/Sumter Hi-Lites



Presidents' Letter

Wow, 2014 has come to a close, and we are staring 2015 in the face! For you, we hope it will be a “smiling face.” But it’s that time of year to reflect, celebrate, and look ahead. In that spirit, we would like to recognize the hard work and contributions of some of our AAUW members. Space will not allow us to reflect on the many contributions of all members, but please know we appreciate all of you.

Currently we are basking in the tremendous success of the recent holiday fashion show and luncheon. Carmel Leese did a fantastic job of organizing and executing the many facets of the project. A very special thanks to her and committee chairpersons: Olivia Gombar, gift baskets; Marilyn Milne, models coordinator; and Jacquie Latzer, narrator. We also enjoyed and thank member Sheryl Genco, violinist, who performed during the style show. (See page 2 for a recap, page 7 for a financial summary, and page 8 for some photos from the event.)

Membership co-Chairs Priscilla Millier and Connie Konatsotis are adding new members. . .seems like daily, and we end the calendar year with over 130 members in our branch. As we look to the second half of our program year, Finance co-Chairs Barbara Fislser and Carolee Litwinka have our branch finances in good order, ensuring that we can meet our philanthropic obligations; co-Secretaries Jan Barone and Anne Wilkins serve our branch well by keeping minutes up-to-date as well as handling correspondence; and Tech Trek committee members Judy Bonn, Linda Carpenter, Cathy Cirocco and Carmel Leese are already hard at work to begin the process of selecting girls for the July STEM-focused summer camp.

As always, we are proud of the accomplishments of our scholarship recipients, selected by Rosella Valentine and committee members Joyce Tisovec and Patti Weasel. At the graduation luncheon held at a Leesburg restaurant in December, Evelyn Guzman, Ana Ruiz, and Michelle Benghttt announced they each will begin jobs this month in their areas of study. We are pleased to continue to celebrate their achievements and our branch efforts at the local level. (See page 6 for more about the graduation luncheon.)

Ginger Ryan and Linda Ferens, Program co-Chairs, have once again planned an excellent program for the January 17 meeting. We look forward to seeing you at Allamanda Recreation Center at 10:00 A.M. where committee chairs will also update you on current branch activities.

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Co-Presidents Margaret Kaufman (L) and Beverly Grappy

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Presidents' Message *(Continued from page 1)*

As we welcome 2015, we recognize the time and energy you devote to AAUW activities, and we appreciate each of you. We wish you good health and happiness, better than last year, and not as good as the next.

Happy New Year to you and yours.

Beverly Grappy and Margaret Kaufman

Co-Presidents

Meetings and Programs

January General Meeting: A Civil War Spy



Come to Allamanda Recreation Center in The Villages on January 17 for the first General Meeting of the new year and hear Donald Wyman speak about Elizabeth Van Lew, who was a Union spy during the Civil War. The meeting will start at 10:00 A.M. and no reservations are required. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

Directions: Allamanda Recreation Center is located at 1515 St. Charles Place, The Villages. It is north of 466A and south of Lake Sumter Landing. From either north or south, take Buena Vista Boulevard to St. Charles Place at the Village of Liberty Park gate; Allamanda will be on the right.

December General Meeting Follow-Up

A message from Carmel Leese, chair of our Holiday Luncheon and Fashion Show:

What an event! I am pleased to say our Holiday Luncheon and Fashion Show was a phenomenal success. It was all due to the great team of people who expertly organized all aspects of the event. Our models were entertaining and chose wonderful ensembles that were flattering and gorgeous. Jacqui Latzer's talent as a Master of Ceremonies was wonderful and I'm sure will be requested at future events. And Sheryl Genco's violin accompaniment added just the right "note" of elegance to the fashion show.



Our models: Albina Grignon, Cathy Cirocco, Christine Thompson, Evelyn Guzman, Francis Aaron, Gail Braman, Judy Bonn, June Love, Kay Bogolin, Linda Carpenter, Margaret Kaufman, Pam Sabo, Rosella Todd Valentine, Susan Gold and Janice Broadbent deserve special thanks. This could not have been done without you. Marilyn Milne and Beverly Grappy were the co-leads for this effort and did a great job. They were assisted by Ana Ruiz and Kate Manion, who helped the models change outfits and leave the stage safely.

There were 13 baskets for our Chinese Auction and what a buzz there was! Congratulations to all those lucky winners. Special thanks to Olivia Gombar, Kay Bogolin, Mary Ann Swisher, and Emily Holman for creating these treasures; it was a job well done. Thank you to all the members for donating the items that made this a success.

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Meetings and Programs *(Continued from page 2)*

La Hacienda Catering and Colony Cottage Recreation Center personnel did an excellent job setting up the room. It was elegant and festive, creating a cheerful atmosphere. Although we once again had problems with the PA system, it seemed to be worked out for the fashion show.

I am proud to have been given the opportunity to bring this event to reality. What a wonderful group of people in AAUW and all the volunteers who assisted me. You guys make this seem so easy. I encourage everyone to grab an opportunity and go for it. (See page 7 for a financial summary of the event, and page 8 for photos).

April General Meeting: Get Your Tickets Early



The April General Meeting will be held on Tuesday. . .yep, Tuesday. . .April 21 at the Polo Club, and tickets for the event will be available at the January meeting. You'll want to be there for *Polo 101*. Reservations are required, and the \$16 tickets are an outstanding value for members, family, and friends!

Your ticket entitles you to the *Polo 101* lesson after our meeting at the Polo Club and a turkey or ham + beverage box lunch. . .PLUS, 2015 membership in the Polo Boosters! Polo Boosters are eligible to attend any of the four polo lessons and the opening and closing parties offered during both the Spring and Fall Polo sessions for a nominal charge.

So buy as many tickets for family members and friends as you like. This is a truly "the more the merrier" event with an opportunity to learn about the sport of Polo and the care and feeding of its beautiful animal athletes.

Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Lake / Sumter Executive Board will be from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon on Monday, January 12, 2015, at the Sumter County Sheriff's Annex, which is at the corner of 466 and Morse Boulevard. Board meetings are open; all members are welcome to attend.



Special Interest Groups

Bridge Groups

Lake / Sumter AAUW offers two Special Interest Bridge groups:

- ◆ The Monday Bridge group plays on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 1:00 P.M.; it is open to any interested member who wishes to play regularly. Location is scheduled on a date-to-date basis, with members volunteering to host in their homes. New members are welcome! And the group would appreciate hearing from those who might want to be substitutes. To join this group, as a regular player or as a substitute, contact Mary Ann Swisher at mswiper@mindspring.com or 352-259-3739. The Monday Bridge Group will play this month on January 12 and 26. Hosts will be announced before the meetings.
- ◆ The Thursday Bridge group meets on the first and third Thursdays every month at 1:00 P.M.; this month, they will play only on January 15 due to the holiday on January 1. The group is comprised of 12 regular members. Currently they have openings and are always in need of substitutes. If you would like to join the group or substitute, please contact Carolyn Johnson at cgljohnson@comcast.net or 352-751-4103.



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Special Interest Groups *(Continued from page 3)*

Diversity Book Club



The Diversity Book Club meets the third Wednesday of the month at 10:30 A.M. at Freedom Pointe. This month's meeting is on January 21, and the book will be *Moloka'i* by Alan Brennert. For more information, contact Pat Bays at 751-3777 or stanbays@embarqmail.com.

Because all visitors to Freedom Pointe must sign in, Pat has asked that club members arrive no later than 10:25 A.M. She will meet the group in the lobby to escort them to the meeting area. Parking may also be a challenge, so carpooling is encouraged. Club members often go out for lunch after the meeting.

Conversational Mah Jongg

The Conversational Mah Jongg group — it's relaxed and talking is permitted — plays at 1:30 P.M. on the first and third Mondays of each month. This month, the group will play on January 5 at the home of Anne Schlick (17301 SE 82nd Pecan Terrace, 750-1027) and January 19 at the home of Margaret Kaufman (2507 Beaumont Terrace, 750-4658). Please call the hostess prior to game date to advise her of your attendance. Contact Anne Schlick (aroyrogers@centurylink.net, 750-1027) for more information about this group.



Finger Food and Fun



Finger Food and Fun will be Sunday, January 4, from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M. at the home of Diane Jacobson in Mallory Square. If you plan to attend the event, notify Diane (chasanddi@embarqmail.com) ASAP, if you have not already done so. Those attending need to bring an appetizer to share; BYOB for your own consumption, although soft drinks will be available. And wear your favorite name tag!

Foreign Policy Association Great Decisions 2015

The Great Decisions interest group is scheduled to run from January 20 until March 10. Diane Jacobson has placed the guide book order and has sent an email to all who signed up and are participating in the group with details regarding the sessions. Carol Richardson will be facilitating the sessions, and Joyce Swaffield is taking care of the book distribution once the books arrive. The sessions promise to be enlightening as the group explores the eight different foreign policy topics.



Golf Anyone?



The golf group plays weekly on Fridays. Our requested time is 9:30 A.M., with a window of 9:30 to 1:30 P.M. Golf courses we play alternate weekly between those north of Hwy 466 and those south of Hwy 466.

The group will resume play for 2015 on January 9; other dates this month are January 16, 23, and 30. The reservation is entered into the tee time system on Sunday, six days prior to our play day. If you are interested in playing, please let Carmel Leese (crleese@gmail.com; 352-71-0119) know by Saturday evening so you can be included in the reservation for the following Friday. If you haven't participated in the past, also please include your Villages ID since this is needed for entry into the tee time system. You can participate weekly or when your schedule allows as there is no weekly commitment required.

Branch News

Spotlight on Philanthropy: Tech Trek



STEM education stands as a major AAUW initiative, intended to build a pipeline to STEM fields for women and girls. One program associated with the initiative is Tech Trek, a weeklong STEM residential camp for girls going into the 8th grade. This camp is designed to develop interest, excitement, and self-confidence in the young women who are nominated by their science, math, and/or technology teachers.

The Tech Trek Program began 15 years ago in California and has since spread to several other states, supported in part by grants from AAUW National. Florida held its first Tech Trek camp in 2012 and that experience was followed by an extraordinarily successful camp last summer. Work is now under way for Tech Trek 2015, which will be held at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg from June 27 through July 3, 2015. In each of the past two years, 40 girls from all over Florida were selected to participate in the camp, and the plan is to recruit 40 girls for 2015 as well. Eventually, however, AAUW Florida would like to host three camps across the state: north, central, and south.

All three years of AAUW Florida's Tech Trek camps have been supported by \$10,000 grants from National, but it costs approximately \$1,000 for each girl who attends the camp. From a philanthropy perspective, this requires extensive fundraising. Our branch contributes a substantial amount annually, and AAUW Florida is happy to accept donations from individual members as well. In addition, AAUW members can volunteer to help during the camp as dorm monitors, field trip chaperones, or teachers/presenters if they have STEM background.

Lake / Sumter AAUW Branch actively supports Tech Trek. Cathy Cirocco, Linda Carpenter, Judy Bonn, and Carmel Leese are conducting our branch's activities to recruit campers for the upcoming season. (See page 7 for an update on the committee's work). Their work will continue during the next couple of months. So be thinking how you can help — financially or by volunteering your time and talent! Contact Cathy Cirocco (cciroc@gmail.com; 352-753-7720) to become involved.

Scholarship Fundraiser

The Lake / Sumter Branch of AAUW awards four \$1,000 college scholarships each year to women of Lake or Sumter County who are completing a two-year program at Lake-Sumter State College (LSSC) and plan to continue their education towards the Bachelor's Degree at a four-year college or university. AAUW is committed to empowering women and advancing equity through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. This financial commitment requires robust fundraising.



Over the past few months, many of you have been kind enough to take tickets for the ring (pictured at left) to sell in order to support our local scholarships. We thank you for that! Now, however, it's time to return those sold tickets and your check for \$50 to Rosella, Joyce, or Patti from the Scholarship Committee. We need to get all the tickets and money in soon as our drawing for the ring will be Valentine's Day (February 14) at our General Meeting.

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Branch News *(Continued from page 5)*

To all of you who have taken tickets, sold or purchased them, and returned the tickets and money to us. . .THANK YOU! It's because of you that we are able to provide four college scholarships each year to women of Lake or Sumter County. The support of all our members means so much to us. And, because of you, we're changing lives. . .one scholarship at a time!

AAUW Graduation Luncheon



On Monday, December 15, Lake / Sumter AAUW hosted a graduation luncheon at Habañero's Mexican Grille in Leesburg to honor three of our branch's scholarship recipients who earned baccalaureate degrees on December 12. Graduates (pictured at left, L-R) include Evelyn Guzman, who earned a BS degree in Elementary Education from UCF; Ana Ruiz, who earned a BS in Nursing from UCF; and Michelle Bengtht, who earned a BS in Women's Studies and International Studies from USF. All three women have jobs in their fields and will begin work this month. Congratu-

lations!

Rosella's Mailbox

Rosella Todd Valentine, chair of our Scholarship Committee, received the following messages. The first is from Dr. Charles Mojock, President of Lake-Sumter State College, in response to her invitation to the Graduation Luncheon. And the second is from scholarship recipient Ana Ruiz.

Dear Rosella and AAUW Members:

Thank you so much for your support of our students. Your scholarships truly are changing lives and helping you meet your mission of empowering women and advancing equity.

I regret that my schedule did not allow me to attend and personally give my thanks to you and my good wishes to the graduates. We are so proud of our alums and congratulate them on their achievement!

Happy Holidays to you!

*Charles R. Mojock. Ed.D.
President
Lake-Sumter State College*

Hi Rosella,

Thank you for organizing the graduation luncheon. I am thankful for people like you and Beverly that encourage and support young woman to pursue an education. I am glad to be a part of this great organization. I want to be a lifetime member of AAUW. I plan to one day give back and provide some financial assistance to students that have a desire to better themselves.

Thank you for all that you do Rosella!

Ana Ruiz

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Branch News *(Continued from page 6)*

Luncheon and Fashion Show: Financial Report



Thanks to Carmel Leese and her committee for a lovely and profitable event. We sold 219 luncheon tickets for a total of \$5,475 and took in \$930 on tickets for the basket raffle. Gross income was \$6,405. Expenses were \$445.12 for the room rental and \$2,877.60 for La Hacienda Catering. We ended up with a profit of \$3,082.28.

Many thanks to all who participated!

Angel Books

Thank you to all our AAUW members, and to the Mira Mesa ladies, for donating 240 books to the Angel Book project. A variety of titles and reading levels were divided evenly between Lake and Sumter County Schools, and Emily Holman, Doris Paillet, and Mary Ann Swisher had the honor of delivering them. Your overwhelming generosity has, once again, provided a happy holiday for many children.



Change in Email Account



Although email messages to Lake / Sumter AAUW members have been sent from a member's personal account, beginning in mid-January, members will receive messages from a new account, established just for the branch. The address for the account is lakesumterAAUW@gmail.com, and that is the "name" you will see in the sender line on messages. If your email account has a block on it for messages from unknown addresses, please put this address on the list of those accepted.

Member Updates

Please make the following change to your membership booklet:

- ◆ Kathleen Manion's correct email address is kmanion52@gmail.com — not aol.com, as printed in the September 2014 issue of this newsletter.

State and National News

Tech Trek 2015



Lake / Sumter AAUW's Tech Trek committee has been busy soliciting nominations for the coming year's camp. By the December 15 deadline, the committee had received a total of 59 nominations from four schools: Carver Middle School and Oak Park Middle School in Lake County and Wildwood Middle-High School and The Villages Charter Middle School in Sumter County. Applications have been sent to all nominated girls and the committee will review forms submitted by the January 15 deadline. The next step will be to interview applicants and their parents to derive a final list of 5 to 10 girls, which will be forwarded to AAUW Florida for final selection.

Policy

As we prepare for 2015, one thing we know for sure is that AAUW members will need to be particularly vocal and visible to defend and advance our priorities at all levels of government. We need to start preparing for Equal Pay Day, which is April 14, remembering that women earn .78 compared to men's 1.00.



Holiday Fashion Show Highlights



December 6, 2014



Empowering Women
Since 1881



Send questions, comments, and suggestions
about the newsletter to the editor, Linda Carpenter, at
Linda.J.Carpenter@gmail.com

January 2015 Calendar of Events (clip and save)

Finger Food and Fun	January 4	5:00 P.M.	Host: Diane Jacobson
Golf	January 9	TBA	Course: TBA
Board Meeting	January 12	10:00 A.M.	Sumter County Sheriff's Annex
Monday Bridge	January 12	1:00 P.M.	Host: TBA
Thursday Bridge	January 15	1:00 P.M.	Host: TBA
Golf	January 16	TBA	Course: TBA
General Meeting	January 17	11:00 A.M.	Allamanda Recreation Center
Great Decisions	January 20	10:00 A.M.	Sumter County Sheriff's Annex
Diversity Book Club	January 21	10:30 A.M.	Freedom Pointe
Golf	January 23	TBA	Course: TBA
Monday Bridge	January 26	1:00 P.M.	Host: TBA
Great Decisions	January 27	10:00 A.M.	Sumter County Sheriff's Annex
Golf	January 30	TBA	Course: TBA