



American Association of University Women
 Lake/Sumter Branch, Inc.
 Learn – Connect – Support

February 2024

Presidents' Message



February is the month of love, hearts, and valentines. This is a leap year – happy birthday to anyone born on February 29. You get a real birthday this year!

It is also a presidential election year. We dread all those negative and nasty

TV ads. How wonderful it would be if everyone could agree to support his/her own candidate and not trash all the others.

Elections have become an important fundraiser for our branch. Our volunteer poll workers are paid for their hard work assisting voters. They will work for three days this year and the money will be donated to our branch. Many thanks to Jennifer Thompson and her team.

Our February meeting will be at Allamanda Recreation Center on Saturday, February 24. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee will present a program on a history of racism in Florida. And a winner will be drawn for our fabulous gold necklace which was donated by Gold in Art Jewelers. Thank you so much, Richie, and your family for your generous and continued support of our scholarship program. Tickets will still be available at the February meeting. You could be the lucky winner this year.

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It's time to consider our officers for next year. Our nominating committee is working on a slate. We hope you will be receptive when called upon to serve. We have a great branch with intelligent and hard-working women who are passionate about our AAUW mission to elevate women's education and equal pay. When we all pitch in and work together, we can accomplish great things. As always, we thank you for your continued support.

Barbara Fisler and Helen Gozdanovic
Co-Presidents

Nominating Committee

2024 has begun! And with the New Year also comes the AAUW nominating committee!

This year the following offices need to be filled:

- Co-President: one position open
- Co-President-Elect: two positions open
- Co-Programs: one position open to serve with Kathy Howe
- Co-Finance: two positions open
- Co-Secretary: one position open to serve with Dee Sherman
- Co-Fundraising: two positions open

The nominating committee consists of Angela Vickers, Blanche Browne Boyne, Anne Sobocinski, and Jennifer Thompson.

Please notice that all offices are shared by two people. Candidates will not be out on a limb by themselves. There is a cadre of folks ready to help. But we need YOU!!!! Please consider where you can fit in. When one of the Nominating Committee folks calls you, please answer, listen, and volunteer to help.

And be sure to check out the position descriptions for all offices that are in the Members' Pages of our website.

501(c)(3) and You: Donations from your IRA

Are you a member of another group? Do they donate to local organizations?

We are now able to accept such donations for our scholarship and Tech Trek funds to support deserving women and girls.

Give the committee a contact name and we will take it from there!

Beth Hicks
501(c)(3) Implementation Co Chair



Bring your stash of our tri-fold brochures to any General Meeting, and we will give you updated ones with stickers announcing our 501(c)(3) status and new meeting dates!

LEARN

Meetings and Programs

February General Meeting

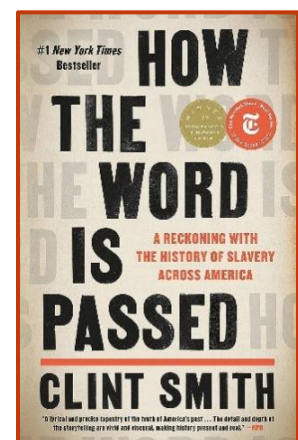
Saturday, February 24, 2024
Allamanda Recreation Center
Doors open at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and conversation
Program starts at 10:00 a.m.

Join us for the General Meeting on February 24 when the DEI Committee will host a commemoration of Black History Month. Historian and retired history teacher Andrew Sorbo will present *A History of Racism in Florida*. Discussion will follow. All visitors are welcome.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Banned Books Reading Group

The next meeting of the Banned Books Reading Group will be February 11 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. We will be reading *How the Word is Passed* by Clint Smith. This book focuses on sites where slavery is remembered...and misremembered as Smith reports and reflects on visits to plantations, prisons, cemeteries, and other locations that figured heavily in the slave trade in this country. It has been challenged by parents and community members attempting to keep it out of high school classrooms. It is included in a list of five must-read banned books by Black authors (<https://www.outspokenagency.com/blog/2022/2/14/five-must-read-banned-books-by-black-authors>) and appears frequently on lists of banned books. Contact Linda Carpenter to register by



February 7; she will give you the location and directions, if needed. There will be light refreshments, but please BYOB.

DEI Movie Night

Sixteen people viewed *Driving While Black* at the first DEI Movie Night on November 12. All participants found the movie to be excellent and provocative, and it triggered lively discussion during the dinner.



Our next movie night will be Sunday, March 10 from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. We will be viewing and discussing the documentary *The Chinese Exclusion Act*. A light supper will be provided, but BYOB. Contact Jacquie Latzer to reserve your space and learn the location.

The Chinese Lady

We heard rave reviews of *The Chinese Lady* when it played at The Studio Theatre last year. If you missed this powerful story of the first Chinese woman in the United States, it will be playing in St. Pete at the American Stage on the campus of Eckerd College. The show will run from January 31 through February 25 and includes matinees.

The DEI Committee has reserved 20 tickets for the 2:00 p.m. matinee on the 25th. We have a group rate, so tickets are \$33 per person (vs \$55 regular price). We will be carpooling from Brownwood, and each passenger will pay the driver \$15. We need additional drivers, so the theatre is providing us with complimentary tickets to those who drive to the performance. Those interested in attending and/or driving should contact Judy Reinhardt before February 1, when tickets will be confirmed and paid for....on Judy's credit card.

MLK, Jr. Scholarship Breakfast

Lake/Sumter AAUW was well represented at the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship Breakfast. Several members, including DEI committee members, shared a table with Baha'i friends. Pictured at right (l-r) are Diane Starr and Christine Loken-Kim, DEI Committee members, Lynn Hunter, Baha'i friend; Jacquie Latzer, DEI Committee Chair and Baha'i; Liz Schweers, Tech Trek Chair; Angela Vickers, Day Trips Co-Chair, and Jim Schear, Baha'i friend and MLK, Jr. Scholarship Committee member.



Linda Carpenter, DEI Committee member, took the photo. The room was packed, but we also noticed DEI Committee member Rev. Cynthia Snavely, Scholarship Co-Chair Gretchen Lewis, and member Mary Hudson at other tables.

Our Mantra

How have you or will you use your influence and connections to enhance racial harmony?

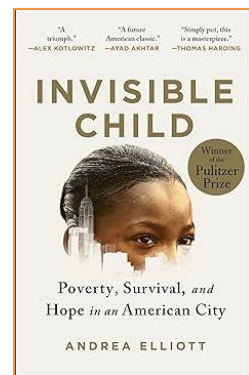
Great Reads from DEI

The Committee recommends two books this month to commemorate Black History Month

Invisible Child: Poverty, Survival, and Hope in an American City by Andrea Elliott*

2022 Pulitzer Prize Winner *Invisible Child* reads like a page-turning novel. It is an astonishing story about the power of resilience, the importance of family, and the cost of inequality—told through the portrait of one remarkable girl.

Acclaimed journalist Andrea Elliott follows eight dramatic years in the life of Dasani, an indomitable girl whose imagination is as soaring as the skyscrapers near her Brooklyn shelter. In this sweeping narrative, Elliott weaves the story of Dasani's childhood with the history of her ancestors, tracing their passage from slavery to the Great Migration north. As Dasani comes of age, New York City's homeless crisis has exploded, deepening the chasm between rich and poor. She must guide her siblings through a world riddled by hunger, violence, racism, drug addiction, and the threat of foster care. When she finally escapes city life to enroll in a boarding school, she faces an impossible question: What if leaving poverty means abandoning your family, and yourself?

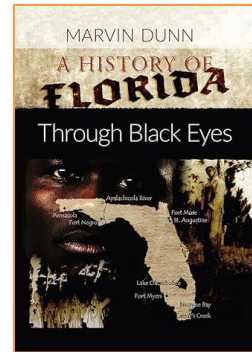


*Andrea Elliott is an investigative reporter for The New York Times and a former staff writer at The Miami Herald. In 2015, she received Columbia University's Medal for Excellence, given to one alumnus under the age of forty-five. She lives in New York City. This is her first book.

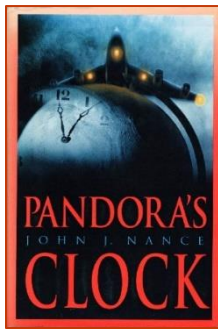
Book and author information courtesy of Amazon.com

A History of Florida Through Black Eyes by Marvin Dunn

FL-AAUW’s Public Policy Committee recently hosted a Zoom presentation by Dr. Marvin Dunn on public education in the state of Florida. The one-hour session was recorded and is available on the Florida AAUW website. Dr. Dunn retired as chairman of the Psychology Department at Florida Atlantic University in Miami. He is the author of *A History of Florida Through Black Eyes*. People of African descent have been in Florida since the arrival of Ponce de Leon in 1513, yet their presence in the state is largely missing from history books. As a lifelong resident, Dunn is uniquely qualified to relate many of the untold stories of Blacks in Florida.



Book Club



The Book Club will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 21 to discuss *Pandora's Clock* by John J. Nance. The meeting will be in the conference room at the Sheriff’s Annex located at the corner of Morse Blvd. and Rt. 466. All members are welcome to attend.

Below is the schedule of books for the remainder of the 2023-24 program year, including discussion dates and leaders. Visit the Learning Programs page of our website and scroll down to Book Club for a link to the descriptions of each book.

2023 – 2024 Book Club Selections			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Discussion Leader</i>
2/21/24	<i>Pandora’s Clock</i>	John J Vance	Cathy Cirocco
3/20/24	<i>The Warmth of Other Suns</i>	Isabel Wilkerson	Katie Haviland
4/17/24	<i>Babylon’s Ark: The Incredible Wartime Rescue of the Baghdad Zoom</i>	Lawrence Anthony	Kate Manion
5/15/24	<i>Lessons in Chemistry</i>	Bonnie Garmus	Marge McQueston
6/19/24	<i>The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek</i>	Kim Michele Richardson	Anne Sobocinski
7/17/24	<i>Ordinary Grace</i>	William Krueger	Helen Gozdanovic
8/21/24	<i>The Girl Who Wrote in Silk</i>	Kelli Estes	Judy Reinhardt

Day Trips

AAUW Spring Day Trip: April 10, 2024

Join us for our upcoming AAUW Spring Day Trip. We will be heading out on April 10 for a day of fun, joining a Senior Adventures Bus Trip to the Calypso Breeze Boat and Buffet. The day will include Maderia Beach, John's Pass Village, the Marketplace, and Boardwalk.

The bus will leave at 10:00 a.m. from Recreation Plantation, 609 County Road 466 in Lady Lake, and will return about 7:00 p.m.

Total Cost is \$102 which includes bus, boat, buffet, and buffet gratuity.

Call 352.753.5404 for reservations.

Questions? Call Kate Manion 352.801.0901 or Carolyn Pasquale 716.485.1227

CONNECT

Membership

Membership Update

- As of today, our branch has 101 paid members according to the national AAUW roster. Two of those appear to be state organization members who do not live anywhere near The Villages.
- Long-time member **Linda Macleod** has relocated to North Carolina to be closer to family. Here is her new address:

54 East Umbria Court
Clayton, North Carolina 27527

Her phone number is the cell she had here in Florida: (352) 299-6273

- We welcome back returning member **Sarah Reagan**. After 42 years in the Washington, DC, metro area, the last 20+ in Arlington, VA, we moved to The Village of Winifred. My interests include reading mostly nonfiction, travel, golf, and other outdoor activities.
- We also mourn the passing of member **Pam Sabo**

Leslie Flanders and Terri Slotterback
Membership Co-Chairs

We've Got a Secret...

...and it is Lake/Sumter AAUW, the best-kept secret in The Villages! Now, it is time to spread the news of AAUW to others. They want to know about us. So, plan a coffee or a wine-and-cheese party, invite every eligible woman you know, and tell them about AAUW, who we are, and what we do. We'll reimburse you for up to \$50 of receipted expenses. Yes, we'll pay you to have a party. Get an AAUW friend to host it with you.

Call Leslie Flanders if you want to help increase our membership. Only 10 of these opportunities are available, so call now!

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 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.

Downloading the Directory and Saving to your Desktop

Now that you have the password, you can access the Members' Pages of our website (<https://www.lakesumteraauw.org>) and download the current directory. If you are an Apple user, follow the instructions Leslie handed out at the September General Meeting for saving the directory to your computer's desktop. If you are not an Apple user, a similar set of instructions is also available for you. Both sets of instructions are posted in the Members' Pages.

International Women's Day Celebration March 8, 2024

Come join the celebration of International Women's Day at Bridgeport Recreation Center from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on March 8, 2024.

Wear purple if you can!

Social Interest Groups

Mah Jongg

Please contact Lois Venus (loisvenus@gmail.com) for MJ. The group plays the second and fourth Wednesday of the month and is always looking for more players.

Bridge

Please contact Barbara Fisler if you are interested in joining the bridge group.

SUPPORT

Fundraising

Farewell to the Old Card

It's back! Farewell to the Old Card MJ gathering will be on Monday March 25 from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at Bridgeport Recreation Center. **Details are in the flyer and registration form attached to the end of this newsletter.** Time to gather your players and get your table together. See you then!



Support the 2024 Adopt-A-Precinct Program



We have a wonderful opportunity in 2024 to earn \$7,500 for our Tech Trek and scholarship programs. Contact Jennifer Thompson for more information. She is still recruiting interested members!

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. In addition to our members, spouses, friends, and neighbors of AAUW members are welcome to work for our Branch at the precinct as well. All 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

Tech Trek



Tech Trek winners made our January meeting so special. Those lucky enough to be in attendance saw that the future is indeed bright. Monetary contributions come in and the excitement is building for the upcoming summer. Interviews will be starting soon. Please contact Liz Schweers if you can assist.



Four of our six campers from 2023 were at the January meeting to share with us their experiences at Tech Trek. Pictured are (l-r) Olivia Sokol, Wildwood MHS; Savannah Causey, South Sumter MS; Claire Hampton, TVCMS, and Catherine Hampton, TVCMS.

After their week in camp, all four girls entered local science fairs. Three of the four placed first and will be going on to the regional science fair.

Scholarships

Here is an update from past scholarship awardee, Kayla Stryker:

Kayla graduated from Lake Sumter State College in December 2023 with an AA degree. Prior to that she attended Tavares High School where she was a member of the National Honor Society and also a member of the girls' golf team. Her teachers used the words resilience, natural leader, mentor to others, conscientious, and thoughtful when describing her.

Kayla had decided to remain at Lake Sumter State College as she enters her third year of college this semester. She plans to pursue a degree there in Strategic Leadership with a Concentration in Organizational Management. With this business degree, she hopes to own a small home improvement business or possibly something in the field of physical therapy/nutrition.

Kayla is grateful to the members of AAUW for this scholarship and hopes to meet many of you at a meeting this spring.



Jewelry Drawing

In support of our scholarships, Gold in Art Jewelers has again gifted us with a beautiful piece of jewelry for our fundraiser. The necklace (pictured at right) has a retail value of \$3,800. Gretchen Lewis, our Scholarship Committee Co-Chair said, "I continue to be amazed at and grateful for their generosity."

You can bring your checkbook to the February meeting for your last chance. The winner will be picked at the end of this meeting.



The proceeds from our drawing enable us to award scholarships to very worthy women to help them finance their college educations.

And if you stop by Gold in Art, be sure to thank Richie Kluesener for his generous donation to our Branch.



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

Learn – Connect – Support

This is a busy time of year all around the area. Many snowbirds are here and all the activities are at a frantic pace. Take the time to relax and find a place to help AAUW! Deadline for the March edition will be February 20. KEEP SCROLLING THERE IS INFORMATION ABOUT OUR MJ FUNDRAISER ON THE NEXT PAGES.

Editor: Beth Hicks
aauwsnews@gmail.com

AAUW Websites

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



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

Farewell-to-the-Old-Card Mah Jongg Celebration

Location: Bridgeport Recreation Center, Card Room
Date: Monday, March 25, 2024
Time: 6:00 -8:30 p.m.
Doors open at 5:50 p.m.
Cost: \$25.00 per person

**Proceeds will support the work of
Lake Sumter AAUW**

(Not a Tournament. Cannot Play for Money)

- Pre-registration is required by March 18, 2024
 - Mah Jongg sets will be provided; BYO Pusher and 2023 card
 - Water and coffee will be provided; BYOB
 - 50-50
 - All participants must have a Villages ID or guest pass
- For more information, contact Kathy Howe at
kamphowe@aol.com

Farewell-to-the-Old-Card Mah Jongg Celebration
6:00 p.m. – March 25, 2024 Bridgeport Recreation Center
Registration Form*

Please Print Clearly

Registration Deadline: March 18, 2024

Send registration and payment to:

Kathy Howe
1391 Eagle Ridge Drive
The Villages, FL 32162

Make Checks Payable to: **Lake / Sumter AAUW**

Please register as a table of four so you can play with your friends. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to arrange a foursome for individual registrants.

Name of Primary Contact for the Foursome: _____

Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

All participants must have a Villages ID or a guest pass.

For more information, contact Kathy Howe at kamphowe@aol.com