



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

September 2024

Presidents' Message



Greetings! We hope you all enjoyed your summer! We both had a lovely summer but are excited now about moving into our new AAUW program year.

We have some wonderful plans, starting with the interesting General Meeting programs that Kathy Howe and Laura McLaughlin have arranged for us. You will not want to miss our September program which will feature a presentation by Rich Killion from Beacon College in Leesburg. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information. We will continue to move forward with our branch motto of “Learn - Connect - Support.”

One of the ways we are moving forward is the addition of our Lake/Sumter Branch archives and scrapbook. The archives are now fully digital on our website, and plans for the digital scrapbook are progressing. Be sure to visit the Members Pages to access the archives. As you may know, our branch was established in Lake County in 1979. Since then, many branch historians have lovingly maintained our branch history in scrapbooks. These treasures of our past will be available for all members to view on our website. Linda Carpenter, who spearheaded the digital archives project, will be sharing more details about how to access these wonderful materials. Our branch historian, Gay Birchard, will be collecting new photos and keepsakes this year to add to the digital scrapbook.

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Support for our two signature programs, Tech Trek for middle school girls and scholarships for woman completing their college education, was robust this past year. We were able to send 13 girls to Tech Trek and currently we are supporting seven scholarship students. Sue Hanson-Otis will lead Tech Trek this year, and Gretchen Lewis and Susan Gold. will continue to direct the scholarship committee. If you are interested in contributing your talents to these programs, please let them know.

Our members have expressed a desire to make our branch a hub for social activities which will promote new and continuing friendships. You can help us get this started by connecting at the General Meetings with someone new or someone you want to know better. At our September meeting we will discuss having a printed membership directory this year in the hopes of encouraging you to connect with AAUW friends.

Finally, although our Branch was founded in Lake County, now most of our membership lives in Sumter County. A group of our members have created a proposal to help us expand our membership into Lake County, bringing our Branch full circle to its place of origin. Plans are in the works to host one of our General Meetings in Leesburg. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

We are excited about this upcoming year, and we look forward to getting to know all of you better.

Bonnie Weaver & Jennifer Thompson
Co-Presidents 2024-2025
AAUW Lake/Sumter Branch

501(c)(3) and You

The year starts anew! Please contact us about local organizations who are willing to donate to further the scholarship of girls and women. And the IRA distribution option is open year-round. Contact us for information

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



Volunteers Needed for September 28 General Meeting

Looking for an easy opportunity to volunteer? Please contact Bobbie or Ann Marie and volunteer to bring food items such as baked goods (homemade or storebought), fruit, cheese, or other small bites for our September meeting. Thank you.

Bobbie Peters & Ann Marie Lombardi
Hospitality Co-Chairs,



LEARN

Meetings and Programs

September General Meeting

Saturday September 28, 2024

Allamanda Recreation Center

Doors Open at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and conversation

Program starts at 10:00 a.m.



Join us on September 28 for our first meeting after the summer break. We hope to see you there!

The topic of our program is “A World of Difference: Embracing Neurodiversity” featuring speaker Rich Killion, Vice President of Advancement and Strategy at Beacon College. Rich will be sharing his unique story of teaching students with learning and attention issues. Beacon College, located in Leesburg, FL, is a highly ranked college known for social diversity and educating students who learn differently.

To protect members' privacy, we will not be printing contacts' email addresses, phone numbers, or ground mail addresses. Please check the Membership Directory for contact information.

October General Meeting

Saturday October 26, 2024

Allamanda Recreation Center

Doors open at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and conversation

Program starts at 10:00 a.m.



A speaker from the League of Women Voters will be at the October General Meeting with a presentation on the constitutional amendments that are on the November ballot. Come and be ready to make an informed vote.

Also, Woody High from Wildwood Boosters will be in attendance recruiting judges for their annual Science Fair. What a great way to give back to the community!

Great Decisions

We are planning to hold the Great Decisions discussion group again this year. This is an activity prepared every year by the Foreign Policy Association in New York, a non-partisan association which analyzes issues from a geo-political and historical perspective. We use their prepared text and read one chapter per week on the topic of the week. During our meetings, we discuss the reading and watch a video lecture on the topic which expands on the readings. Members of the group in past years have found the experience very worthwhile and often a real stretch from how we have thought of the issues in the past.



We will be having two groups on different days. Our schedule will be 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on either Monday or Tuesday (your choice) for 8 weeks. Our meetings will begin on Monday January 20 (yes, I know that's MLK day) and Tuesday, January 21. The meetings will run for 8 weeks and end on March 10 and 11.

Our meeting place will be The Sumter Country Villages Annex Conference Room at 8033 East CR 466 near the corner of Morse Blvd.

Great Decisions 2025 Topics

- American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads
- U.S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy
- U.S.-China Relations
- International Cooperation on Climate Change
- The Future of NATO and European Security
- AI and American National Security
- India: Between China, the West, and the Global South
- After Gaza: American Policy in the Middle East

We had a very active group last year and we would like to have even more participants this year. Please encourage your friends and significant others both in and out of the AAUW group to join us.

For me to plan for the course and order the books, I need to know who is planning to participate, which day you would like, and a check (made out to me, Christine Loken-Kim) by October 25, 2024. The cost for the book will be \$40. An extra participation fee of \$20 will be charged for non-AAUW members who would like to join us.

Please email me with your name, contact information, and your choice of Monday or Tuesday. Then either mail me your check or give it to me at the AAUW meetings. My contact information is in the Membership Directory, which is online in the Members' Pages of our Branch website (<https://www.lakesumteraauw.org>).

If you cannot make the October 25 deadline, you may still participate, however, you will need to order the book online from the Foreign Policy Association yourself. Since this activity is also a fundraiser, I would like people to try to decide before October 25 so I can order at the bulk rate.

See you there.

Christine Loken-Kim
Great Decisions Coordinator

Public Policy



“I vote because if you are not at the table, you are on the menu.” (Ann Richards) AAUW encourages everyone to exercise their right to vote. When women vote, we change the conversation! You can check your voter registration status at this link: <https://www.nass.org/can-I-vote/voter-registration-status>.

AAUW has published a non-partisan 2024 Voter Issues Guide, which will help you learn about key issues so you can cast your ballot for candidates who share your values, including on issues of pay equity, paid family and sick leave, reproductive rights and abortion access, voting rights, gender issues in schools and higher education, college affordability and student debt, and the equal rights amendment. You can find the Voter Issues Guide at: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/get-involved-in-elections/#voterguides>,

AAUW of Florida is sponsoring a series of free monthly Public Policy Education Forums online. The next forum is on Thursday, September 5, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. about the proposed Education and School Board Constitutional Amendment that will be on the November ballot. The League of Women Voters will update on the outcomes of the Florida 2024 legislative session regarding its impact on education and what we might expect in the 2025 session, along with an overview of the upcoming ballot amendment

to make board elections partisan. You can register for the September forum at: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZovceGoqjMrGtVdrEFHLt65ahkBb89HmQXQ#/registration>

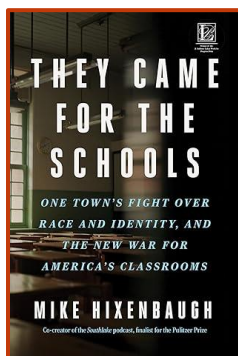
At the Forum on October 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., you can join a conversation with Clark University Professor Abbie Goldberg when she shares some findings from her research on the impact of Florida's Don't Say Gay bill on LGBTQ+ parents in Florida; and we discuss next steps about research and collaborations on this important issue. You can register for the October forum at: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlPfgQzmqGdAzRKVPQ96IXiXAn5cp9e7Z#/registration>

Additional Forums are scheduled in November, January, February, March, and April. Visit our Branch website for a complete listing of Forum topics and registration links (<https://www.lakesumteraauw.org/public-policy>).

Susan Laluk & Elizabeth White
Public Policy Co-Chairs

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Great Reads from DEI



They Came for the Schools: One Town's Fight Over Race and Identity, and the New War for America's Classrooms (May 14, 2024) by Mike Hixenbaugh

Award-winning investigative reporter Mike Hixenbaugh delivers the eye-opening story of Southlake, Texas, a district that seemed to offer everything parents would want for their children—small classes, dedicated teachers, financial resources, a track record of academic success, and abundant school spirit. When a series of racist incidents occurred following the election of Barack Obama, a plan to promote inclusiveness was proposed—and a coordinated, well-funded backlash erupted.

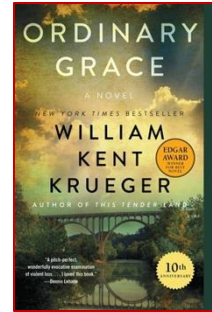
A school board win for the conservative right in this suburb of Dallas-Fort Worth inspired a Christian nationalist crusade to ban books, rewrite curricula, limit rights for minority and LGBTQ students, and impose biblical values on American society through school privatization.

The book traces the rise of a new resistance led by a diverse coalition of student activists, fed-up educators, and parents who are beginning to win battles of their own. Their hope is to gain inclusive and civil schools for all and to stop the movement now threatening to undermine public education in America. As foreshadowed by the words of Justice Thurgood Marshall, “For unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together and understand each other.”

Summary courtesy of Harper Collins Publishers

Book Club

The book club will open its year on Wednesday, September 18 with a discussion of *Ordinary Grace* by William Krueger. The club will meet at 10:30 a.m. in the conference room at the Sheriff's Office Annex located at the corner of 466 and Morse Boulevard. All members are welcome to attend.



2024-2025 Book Club Selections			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Discussion Leader</i>
9/18/24	<i>Ordinary Grace</i>	William Krueger	Helen Gozdanovic
10/16/25	<i>The Women</i>	Kristen Hannah	Katie Haviland
11/20/95	<i>Babylon's Ark</i>	Lawrence Anthony	Kate Manion
12/11/24	<i>Holiday Luncheon</i>		
1/15/25	<i>Tom Lake</i>	Ann Patchett	Anne Wilkens
2/19/25	<i>The Girl Who Wrote in Silk</i>	Kelli Ester	Judy Reinhardt
3/19/25	<i>The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir</i>	Kao Kalie Yang	Linda Carpenter
4/16/25	<i>An Unfinished Love Story</i>	Doris Kearns Goodwin	Katie Haviland
5/15/25	<i>Remarkably Bright Creatures</i>	Shelby Van Pelt	Marge McQuestion

Day Trips

AAUW Fall Trip: November 2024



The AAUW Day Trip Committee signed up in April 2024 on a wait list to tour the Ma Barker House in Ocklawaha. The tour booking dates will not be announced until the first week in September. We have requested a day during the first two weeks in November. We are guaranteed a tour day, but the actual day trip date will not be known until then. We know this is challenging, but it is what it is.

Some say the house is haunted! It was the home of gangster Ma Barker and the location of an historic FBI shootout. It will be like planning the birth of your grandchild. Plan to attend. We will give you the exact date as soon as we have it! We will have sign-up sheets at the September AAUW meeting. Also, once we have the date, you can make

reservations through Angela Vickers; her contact information is in the Membership Directory.

Reservations are required. We will carpool from Colony Cottage, meeting at 9:00 a.m. We need 20 participants to qualify for this group tour. Wayne, the tour guide, can hold no more than 25 participants. We will catch the tram about 40 minutes from Colony Cottage at 13275 SE 115th Avenue, Ocklawaha, Florida.

The tickets for the tour are \$10. Riders will contribute \$5 to drivers, and a \$3 tip for Wayne would be appreciated. The tour will run from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., or noon, if we ask a lot of questions. We will order lunch off the menu at Gator Joe's Beach Bar and Grille which is about 5 minutes away at 12431 SE 135 Avenue, Ocklawaha. There are display cases with more about the Ma Barker House. We should be back in The Villages by 3:00 p.m. This should be a fun and interesting outing.

CONNECT

Membership

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.

Website

Over the summer, we have updated the Members' Pages of our Branch website (<https://www.lakesumteraauw.org>). Here is what you will find when you visit:

Branch Administration

- 2024-25 Branch Leadership
- Branch Foundation Documents
- Current Membership Directory
- 2024-25 General Meeting Minutes
- Board Handbook
- Forms and Templates

Leadership Resources

- DEI
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Position Descriptions
- Tech Trek

Branch Archives

- Early Bylaws
- Goals and Strategic Plans
- General Meeting Minutes Archive
- Board Meeting Minutes Archive
- Membership Directories Archive
- Historical Lists
- Lifetime Members

These are not static entries. We envision adding to these materials as new programs and events are planned and implemented. Our intent is to provide readily accessible resources so future leaders won't have to start their work from scratch. In that regard, Finance Resources will be coming soon.

In addition to these updates that only members can access, we have made some changes to the public pages of the website as well. The Newsletter Archives offer access to Branch newsletters back to 1982, the Support page now includes links to separate pages for Tech Trek and scholarships, and the Public Policy page now links to AAUW-Florida's Public Policy Forums.

Work will now begin in earnest to design our digital scrapbook, which will highlight for the public the programs, activities, and accomplishments of Lake/Sumter AAUW. If you would like to work on this project or have suggestions about digital scrapbooking, please contact me...I'd love to hear from you.

Downloading the Directory and Saving to your Desktop

Once you have the password, you can access the Members' Pages of our website and download the current directory to your computer's desktop. Instructions for downloading the directory are posted in the Members' Pages.

Linda Carpenter
Webmaster

Social Interest Groups

Bridge

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

SUPPORT

Fundraising

Adopt-A-Precinct Program



Once again, an AAUW Adopt a Precinct group was busy! They worked the August 19 primary and earned another \$2,500 for our Tech Trek/Scholarship funds.

We want to thank you for your hard work raising money for Tech Trek and serving your community. There is one more election this year and if any of you are interested in working, please see Jennifer Thompson for more information.

On to the November election!!!!!!

Tech Trek



Hooray! For summer camp 2024 from our branch, 19 girls were nominated by their science and math teachers; 13 girls applied; ALL 13 girls were selected and attended Tech Trek 2024 summer camp in June.

The Board would like to welcome our new Tech Trek Coordinator, Sue Hanson-Otis! Welcome! Contact her if you would like to be on the committee.

Scholarships



During the summer break, our Scholarship Committee members have been in touch with our four new scholarship winners to support them as they transition from their sophomore to junior year in college. All of them have appreciated our communication with them as they begin their new school year.

Once again Ritchie Kluesener, owner of Gold in Art, has given our branch a beautiful piece of jewelry to support our fundraising efforts. Please support the scholarship committee by asking your friends and neighbors to participate in our drawing. See the picture below of the beautiful 18 karat yellow gold bracelet consisting of 9 1/4" rope textured circles within 9 highly polished circles. The retail value of the bracelet is \$3,600.00.



We will be highlighting one student each month so you, our Branch members, can get to know them better and feel more connected to the scholarship process. Please let any of the following Scholarship Committee members know if you would like to be part of our committee.

- Susan Gold
- Gretchen Lewis
- Dotty Sasmor
- Arlene Stein
- Carolee Litwinka
- Marge McQueston
- Anne Wilkins



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

Learn – Connect – Support

Welcome back! Let's gear up and make this a special AAUW year. There will be a place for everyone. See you in September!

Editor: Beth Hicks
aauwsnews@gmail.com

AAUW Websites

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

