



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

**March 2023**

## President's Message



Greetings Members,

How rapidly winter goes by in Florida. A couple of months with chilly weather, a couple of below normal cold snaps and the season has changed. One of the things I enjoy this time of year is the return of my snowbird friends and am enjoying getting reacquainted with our seasonal

members. I invite all of you to make the most of the season by finding an AAUW project to work on for the success our branch.

It was another very impressive General Meeting in February. Jacquie Latzer and her Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team led us through a very informative and engaging program. I left the meeting with much to think about and process in relation to my own daily life. I am proud to belong to an organization that is concerned about DEI and whose members will make room in their lives to discuss and explore these important issues.

We are postponing our March membership drive as we review what needs to be done to make the event a success. Please think about your own role in this project. We need a lot of member participation to achieve our goals and grow our organization.

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I'm looking forward to the "Farewell to the Old Card" Mah Jongg event. I have my table reserved; how about you? This will be a fun way to raise money for our various initiatives.

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

## Nominating Committee



The nominating committee has been busy and the slate is just about complete. It will be presented at the upcoming March meeting.

Something new. We are looking for finance committee members who will work with Barbara Fieldman and Debbie Gately, our current Co-Finance Directors. Committee members can begin this spring and continue next year with Barb and Debbie. Anyone familiar with Quicken or willing to learn it while working along with Debbie and Barb is invited to contact Katie Haviland [katiehaviland1@gmail.com](mailto:katiehaviland1@gmail.com) 518 275-9466.

## LEARN

### Meetings and Programs

#### *2022-2023 General Meeting Programs*

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

- March 18, 2023 – Real women in the real world
- April 15, 2023 – New beginnings: Branch elections
- May 20, 2023 – Celebrating our Branch: Luncheon at Cheers in Stonecrest

*March 18 General Meeting: Real Women in the Real World*

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.

“Learning is not attained by chance; it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence”  
Abigail Adams

Celebrate Women’s History Month!



Our program will feature a panel of three women who will discuss their successes and concerns of being a woman in their profession.

Dr. Heather Bigard, President of Lake Sumter State College, Captain Amanda Stevenson,

Captain of Life Safety for the Leesburg Fire Department, and Esperanza (Espí) Walmsley, a Branch member and accounting specialist will share their unique backgrounds and the choices they have made. There will be time for questions and answers at the end of their presentations.

Please join us for this inspiring program.

Bonnie Weaver  
Carolyn Pasquale  
Co-Directors of Program

*May 20 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 off of 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 March or 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

### *Gender Bias in Schools*

*Attitudes and expectations about how girls and boys perform academically, and behave socially, push children toward certain pathways. It's time to open all roads to everyone regardless of gender.*



### *Why it Matters: Gender Tracking*

From preschool through high school, most children encounter some degree of “gender tracking” that can set them on a lifelong path. Tracking in early education accounts for why so many professions are still highly gendered with women disproportionately in lower-paying fields.

By preschool, most children start identifying gender roles. Teachers and parents consciously and unconsciously convey social cues that influence children’s choices. Subtle messages like “be a good girl” reinforces compliant behavior and “boys will be boys” emphasizes aggressive behavior signaling to children there’s an appropriate way to behave for each gender.

The notion that girls are “good at” certain subjects and boys are “good at” others begins early. Girls are on par with boys in math and science throughout most of their education but girls still tend to be steered away from these fields from as early as the elementary schools years.

### *Girl Stereotypes:*

- ... well-behaved, compliant, polite
- ... believe only boys can be really smart
- ... discouraged from math
- ... exposed to gender role models—female teachers

### *Boy Stereotypes:*

- ... tough, physical, athletic
- ... doing well in school is for “girls”
- ... discouraged from reading and writing
- ... exposed to same-gender role models, e.g., scientists, mathematicians

AAUW supports a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity and diversity including vigorous enforcement of Title IX.

### *Update on the Gender Equity in Education Act (GEEA)*

While the U.S. Department of Education is currently working to strengthen Title IX rules and regulations, passing GEEA would codify protections designed to help students address sex discrimination in all education areas.

AAUW, at a recent Department of Education hearing, provided public comment emphasizing its support for equal and non-discriminatory access to education for all students. Passing the GEEA would:

- Provide additional resources, training and technical assistance to educational entities to ensure Title IX compliance
- Establish an Office of Gender Equity in the U.S. Department of Education to coordinate activities within the Department and among other federal agencies.
- Support the work of thousands of Title IX coordinators by providing annual training and technical assistance.
- Authorize competitive grants to K-12 schools, colleges, local educational agencies or states to support their gender equity work.

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 urging them to stand up for equity in education and cosponsoring GEEA.

- Rick Scott, 202-224-5274, [rickscott.senate.gov/contact\\_rick](http://rickscott.senate.gov/contact_rick)
- Marco Rubio, 202-224-3014, [rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact](http://rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact)

Susan Gold & Jeannie Hamilton  
Public Policy Co-Chairs

## **Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**

In February the Diversity Committee provided a program focused on Black history with a theme of past, present, future. In the presentation, we looked at race relations from the perspective of Race Amity. We identified Race Amity as cooperation, collaboration, respect, and friendship between the races and provided examples.

The Committee offered a challenge for all of us going forward with a few questions to think about:

- *What cross-racial experiences have you had where cooperation was active, and friendships formed?*
- *If you have not had any, might you consider pursuing such experiences? How might you do that?*
- *How will you use your influence and connections to further racial amity?*

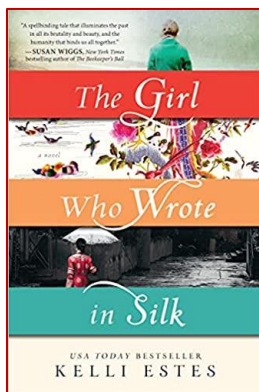
At the beginning of our General Meeting on March 18, we will take a few minutes to consider these questions.

When people from diverse backgrounds work together in initiatives that contribute to the progress of their neighborhoods, they encounter perspectives different from their own, build close bonds of friendship, and become more conscious of the discrimination faced by their neighbors.

Our Committee would be interested in hearing your thoughts and plans. The Committee can be reached at: [divcomaauw@gmail.com](mailto:divcomaauw@gmail.com)

### *Great Read from the Diversity Committee*

#### *The Girl Who Wrote in Silk* by Kelli Estes



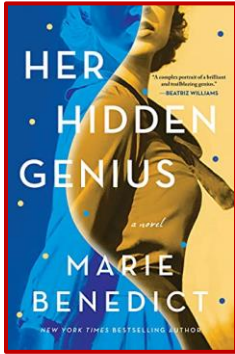
*The Girl Who Wrote in Silk* is a dual-time period novel that explores how a delicate piece of silk interweaves the past and the present. Inspired by true events, this brilliant debut novel is a poignant tale of two women determined to do the right thing.

While exploring her aunt's island estate, Inara Erickson is captivated by an elaborately stitched piece of fabric hidden in the house. The truth behind the silk sleeve dates to 1886, when Mei Lien, the lone survivor of a cruel purge of the Chinese in Seattle, found refuge on Orcas Island and shared her tragic experience by embroidering it.

As Inara peels back layer upon layer of the centuries of secrets the sleeve holds, her life becomes interwoven with that of Mei Lien. Through the stories Mei Lien tells in silk, Inara uncovers a tragic truth that will shake her family to its core—and force her to make an impossible choice. Should she bring shame to her family and risk everything by telling the truth, or tell no one and dishonor Mei Lien's memory?

Synopsis provided by Sourcebooks Landmark and Amazon.com

## Book Club



The Book Club will meet at 10:30 a.m. on March 15 to discuss *Her Hidden Genius* by Marie Benedict.

All book club meetings begin at 10:30 a.m. and are held at the 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>
3/15/23	<i>Her Hidden Genius</i>	Marie Benedict	DNA Scientist	TBA
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

## CONNECT

### Membership

Welcome to our two new members.

**Joanne Fillwock**  
631 D'Angelo Drive  
The Villages, FL 32162 (Mission Hills)  
(517) 927-1213  
[jfillwock@aol.com](mailto:jfillwock@aol.com)  
Michigan State University BA Education



**Fern Gleason**

2296 Clearwater Run (Bridgeport at Miona Shores)

The Villages, FL 32162

(610) 613-2463

[fngleason@comcast.net](mailto:fngleason@comcast.net)

Trenton State University, BS; West Chester University, MED; Immaculata University, EdD

*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](http://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](mailto: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)

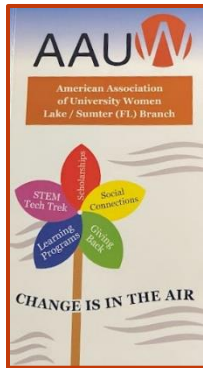
Members can also send a photo to go with their entry. The photo should be a headshot in .jpeg format; it can be sent as an email attachment. Email Linda with any changes to your entry.

**Need the password  
to fully access our website?**

***Contact Linda Carpenter!***



## March 8th Open House: *Postponed*



Unfortunately, mainly due to low registrations at a critical milestone, we decided to postpone our Open House before the deadline to realign our Daily Sun ad investment and before cancellation fees incurred for the Waterlily Recreation Center rental. The ad investment now allows us to support General Meeting programs into next year.

On behalf of our planning team Anne Sobosinski, Helen Gozdanovic, Cathy Cirocco, Linda Carpenter, Karen Pickelseimer, Gay Birchard, and Beth Hicks, I want to thank everyone who worked so diligently to organize and promote our special event.

There are many ways to continue to promote our Branch and enroll new members, as well as repurpose the work already done, such as:

- Continue to be a Branch ambassador, hand out your customized business cards and our brochure to prospective members.
- Commit to bring a friend to each monthly meeting...get creative and host a special friends table...we can help make your table fun and interactive.
- Volunteer to host a friends/neighborhood gathering at your home with promotions such as our new narrated Branch video, fun swag bag giveaways, and invite a few members to share their enthusiasm and knowledge.
- Display our new photo montage video during socializing time at the beginning of each monthly meeting as a Visual Welcome and keep it updated with new photos
- For September, go back to our roots and host our traditional kick-off meeting as an opportunity to showcase key initiatives Display Tables and encourage members to volunteer to be on a committee, a team project, or a one-time need.
- Showcase Display Tables to support program themes at monthly meetings, especially those that draw many guests.

Thank you for continuously promoting our Branch and encouraging new members to join!

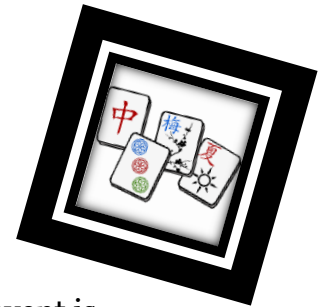
Ann Marie Lombardi  
Membership Drive Chair

# SUPPORT

## Fundraising

### *Mah Jongg*

March 22, 2023  
6:00 – 8:30 p.m.  
Allamanda Recreation Center Card Room



Farewell to the Old Mah Jongg Card! We fully funded a scholarship last time in 2019. We have hopes that we can do the same again. **Time is running out to sign up!**

See the flyer on page 11 of this newsletter and plan your table! This event is open to Villages Residents and those with a Villages ID only. Get your table together, then go to the AAUW website (<https://lakesumteraauw.org>) and download the registration form! Send in your registration form along with \$ to reserve your place!

## Tech Trek

The Tech Trek Committee--Leslie Flanders, Katie Haviland, Nancy Hartshorn, and Liz Schweers—have just finished interviewing students at Wildwood Middle School, South Sumter Middle School, The Villages Charter Middle School, and Umatilla Middle School for Summer Tech Trek 2023. Once again, we are so impressed at the caliber and enthusiasm of the girls. Out of 17 nominated girls, 6 girls completed and submitted their applications which included an essay. We are in the process of ranking these girls and should be able to inform the AAUW membership soon. We are also very appreciative of the middle school staffs which facilitated the process. Meanwhile simply by sharing the story of Tech Trek and the amazing girls, we are generating interest and even a few donations so whenever you have an opportunity, tell your friends and neighbors. They are amazingly generous.

Liz Schweers  
Tech Teck Chair

## Scholarship

Congratulations is our 2023 jewelry winner Beth Hicks. No picture yet as Beth was on a cruise and not at the meeting. The handover will happen soon. However, the big winners are the women we support with scholarships. Special thanks to the 52 members who bought tickets and added. \$2,500 to the scholarship fund. And thanks to Gold in Art Jewelry for their generous donation of the jewelry. Stop in and tell them as an AAUW member you appreciate their support. And perhaps you can support the shop, too.



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

**Location:** Allamanda Recreation Center, Card Room  
**Date:** Wednesday March 22, 2023  
**Time:** 6:00 -8:30 p.m.  
Doors open at 5:50 p.m.  
**Cost:** \$25.00 per person; \$100.00 per table

**All proceeds will go to Lake/Sumter AAUW  
College Scholarships  
(Not a Tournament. Cannot Play for Money)**

- Pre-registration is required by March 15, 2023
- Mah Jongg sets will be provided; BYO Pusher and 2022 card
- Water and coffee will be provided; BYOB
- 50-50
- All participants must have a Villages ID or guest pass

For more information, contact Beth Hicks  
ethicks71@gmail.com



**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 April issue will be March 20. Please continue to use the newsletter email address.

Editor: Beth Hicks  
[aauwsnews@gmail.com](mailto:aauwsnews@gmail.com)

AAUW Websites

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