

# LAKE/SUMTER NEWSLETTER

January 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



The end of 2020 is fast approaching. As your co-Presidents, we want to express our thanks for your continuing involvement with AAUW through these challenging and unique times as we look forward to a new year full of hope and promise.

The creative holiday event, hosted by Ann Marie Lombardi and her behind-the-scenes elves, was another testament to your support. Your participation provided a venue for our presenter to make her business known to an active group of women. At the gathering, Jody Nelson (Owner) and Stephanie Kreig (Manager) of Spice and Tea Exchange in Brownwood, offered cooking tips for preparing Tourtiere, via a video shared over Zoom. This traditional French-Canadian dish, served on Christmas eve, was easy to make and offers a delicious twist on the taste using unique spices, that made this meat pie different from similar recipes. (Check out the pictures on page 3 of this newsletter.) The video was a first for Jody and Stephanie and encouraged them to try new and different ways of showcasing their business. AAUW members joined in the Q & A with their own cooking ideas. Espi Walmsley travels around the world virtually by selecting a country and preparing a meal from there...Thailand, China...wherever she fancies going as she looks forward to actual visits, hopefully next year.

The Diversity Committee continues to embrace the concept of life-long learning, growing, and opening minds. We are most appreciative of the time and research that goes into the presentations they offer and to their community involvement by inviting both AAUW members and the public to participate.

The STEAM Lecture Series fundraiser (see page 7), coordinated and organized by Diane Jacobson and scheduled for February and March, promises to offer a creative way to continue to support our mission of providing scholarships for young women and girls. Check your December 12<sup>th</sup> email from Carolee as well as information in this newsletter for specifics.

Our wish for you during these holidays is to join family and friends, in whatever ways are most safe and comfortable for you, as you celebrate life.

Good health, a sense of peace and joy to all, as together we lift a glass of good cheer.

Anne Wilkins & Katie Haviland, Co-Presidents

## Nominating Committee

AAUW Lake- Sumter Branch has several positions open for next year. They are as follows:

- 2 co-Presidents-elect
- 1 co- Secretary
- 1 co Finance Director
- 1 co-Program Director
- 1 co-Membership Director



No experience is necessary for any of these positions, but of course if you have some experience or training in any of these areas, it is always helpful.

You will work with your co- officer who has held office for a year and can train you and mentor you through all the intricacies of the job.

You need not be concerned if you are a part-time Villager, or “snowbird.” Since you will be working together, you trade off time when either of you is here to do the job. That is a very modern employment concept called job-sharing.

If you are interested in applying for any of these positions, please call one of the ladies on the Nominating Committee. They are Judy Bonn, committee chair, 352-217-0319, Susanne Beason, 352-573-5744, Blanche Brown Boyne, 352-874-8740, and Kathy Mason, 850-556-7986. We look forward to hearing from you very soon.

If you don't call us soon, we will be calling you.

## Membership

Karen Pickelsimer, branch Membership Chair, wishes everyone an essential, socially-distanced, unprecedented, happy, and healthy holidays.

## Membership Booklets

Send any changes you would like to make from the 2020-2021 Membership Booklet to Diane Jacobson ([chasanddi@embarqmail.com](mailto:chasanddi@embarqmail.com)). Also, if you don't have a picture included with your information or if you would like to update your present picture, please send a head shot to Diane to add to our picture gallery.

## Programs

### December Holiday Event

A special thanks to Spice and Tea Exchange of Brownwood for their wonderful support of AAUW. Please stop into the shop to thank Jody and Stephanie for the great cooking demonstration that substituted for our annual Holiday Luncheon during these days of COVID. What a fun event for those in attendance! Please stop by, call the shop (352 633-4780) or email [tstebrownwood@spiceandtea.com](mailto:tstebrownwood@spiceandtea.com) your thanks. Also, please support this local business.



Thanks also to all who worked so hard for us to get into the holiday spirit. We are all ready to prepare our own Christmas Eve Tourtiere,



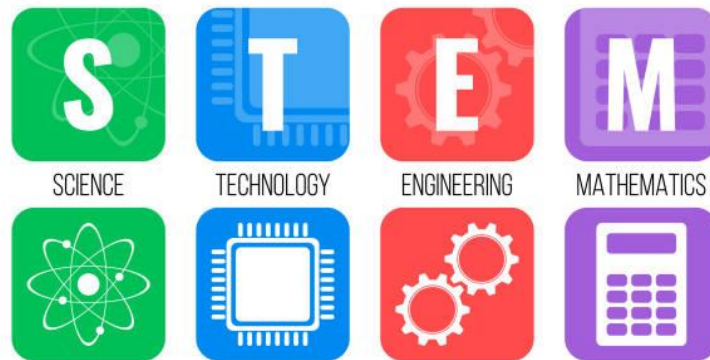
← Katie Haviland cooked along with Jody and Stephanie's demo...

...Anne Marie also cooked and had the Tourtiere and it was a great meal! →



← Although 34 members, friends, and relatives enjoyed the demo, only 25 can be seen on this screen shot.

## January General Meeting



Our January 16<sup>th</sup> General Meeting will feature guest speaker Peter Irwin, who will present a unique focus on the “S” in STEM:

### ***Understanding Understanding – The Science of Understanding***

Peter will discuss behavior, brain science, and philosophy to provide insights into how they integrate when trying to appreciate the notion of “understanding.”

Knowing our higher-education backgrounds and multi-dimensional experiences, Peter is looking forward to a robust discussion and Q&A.

And a very special thank you to Angela Vickers for volunteering to moderate the Q&A. We are confident she will do a great job!

Want to prepare a few questions/discussion points ahead of time? Simply enter “understanding” into a web browser and many interesting reference links will pop up...click through and you’ll find many varied perspectives.

### ***More about Peter Irwin***

Peter is a frequent speaker with the Civil Discourse Club. He has a BA in literature with a minor in philosophy and 120 credits in post-graduate studies including pre-med, pharmacology, computer science, and applied statistics.

Additionally, he spent 14 years in academia quantifying drug effects on electroencephalograms and 31 years in the pharmaceutical industry designing and conducting trials of drugs for treating brain illnesses. He is published in over 40 publications in scientific journals and numerous presentations at scientific meetings.

Please plan to attend and prepare to participate in what is sure to be an interesting and thought-provoking topic.

See you on Zoom January 16<sup>th</sup>!

## Racism Discussion Series

*December: Session #5.* The Diversity Committee's Racism Discussion Series met on December 2 for a November/December session which accommodated the holidays. Thirty-six people participated in a discussion of post traumatic slave syndrome and the endurance and persistence of black people in the face of centuries of oppression. The session ended with a viewing of a slide show that highlighted achievements of African Americans; the slide show was accompanied by a recording of Maya Angelou reading her poem, *Still I Rise*.

The recording of the session will be available through a link to the Zoom cloud until January 1; request the link at [divcomaauw@gmail.com](mailto:divcomaauw@gmail.com). After January 1, recordings will be on YouTube.

*January: Session #6:* In January 2021, the Racism Discussion Series will return to its 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month schedule; January's session will be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Zoom. The topic will be microaggressions: what they are and how to respond to them in an anti-racist manner.

Announcements for the session along with the link to register and the suggested preparatory materials will be out in early January. If you have already registered for at least one session, you will receive an announcement automatically via email. If you would like to join the discussion but have not registered before, send an email to [divcomaauw@gmail.com](mailto:divcomaauw@gmail.com) to request the registration link.

This series is free and open to the public. So, feel free to share announcements, registration materials, and video links with friends and family around the country.

*Survey.* In early January, the Diversity Committee will send a link to a Survey Monkey questionnaire designed to evaluate the impact of the discussion series. If you have attended at least one of the sessions, watch your email inbox for the link. . .and please respond to the survey!

## Fundraising

### Jewelry Drawing - Deadline February 10<sup>th</sup>

While many members have already sent in their donation and raffle tickets, there is still time for those of you who wanted to wait until after the holidays. Please keep in mind that this is the only major fundraising event for this 2020-2021 program year.

In the fall 5 raffle tickets were mailed to each member. Be sure to return only the ticket stubs – the portion of the ticket with your name, contact information and ticket number – along with your



donation. Ten dollars for each ticket is requested but any contribution to the scholarship program is appreciated. You keep the larger portion of the ticket with drawing information and your ticket numbers. An envelope addressed to Kathy Mason was included in the mailing you received for you to use when sending in your check and ticket stubs.

Be sure to write your check to: **LAKE SUMTER AAUW**.

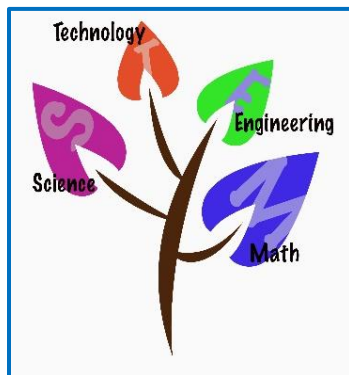
For additional tickets or any questions, please contact Kathy Mason, [kmason0826@gmail.com](mailto:kmason0826@gmail.com). Checks are to be mailed to Kathy Mason, 2444 Lay Lane The Villages 32163

A recent note to remind you why we do this!

*I wanted to send you and the women of AAUW an update. I am all set to take my final course in the spring and will graduate with my Bachelor of Science in Nursing on May 7, 2021. I couldn't have achieved this accomplishment without AAUW's support. Because of your support, I have decided to continue my education and begin graduate school in June 2021. Please tell the lovely women of AAUW how much each and every one of them mean to me and I pray you all stay safe during these difficult times. Sincerely with care,*

*Josie Goodman RN for Women and Children*

## STEAM Lecture Series



The pandemic has caused many organizations to re-imagine their fundraising activities. As we move forward to life getting back to “normal,” AAUW Lake/Sumter is proud to announce our online STEAM Lecture Series, which will be live on Zoom. We have arranged five exciting classes about traditional STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields but we have



added in the Arts as well. You will not want to miss this series!

We know it has been a tough year for many and have decided not to sell the classes for a set price. Instead, we are offering them as a *thank you* for donations to AAUW Lake/Sumter, and participants can choose the amount to donate that fits their budget.

The classes are available to all AAUW Lake/Sumter members, as well as their family and friends. We encourage you to email and tell anyone you know who might be interested in supporting AAUW Lake/Sumter and who would enjoy this fabulous thank you gift in recognition of their donation.

Donations, which are tax-deductible, fund the Lake / Sumter AAUW College Scholarships and AAUW Florida Tech Trek camperships. Scholarships are awarded to women who are completing their baccalaureate degree at local universities. Camperships are awarded to rising 8th-grade girls to attend a week-long STEM-focused summer camp sponsored by AAUW Florida. This fundraising effort will offer women and girls opportunities to discover, learn, and succeed.

To donate, send your check, payable to AAUW Lake / Sumter, to:

Diane Jacobson  
755 Mallory Hill Drive  
The Villages, FL 32162

Please include your **printed email address** for class registration.

Your donation gains you access to all classes in the series as there are no registration fees. A link to each Zoom meeting will be sent just prior to each class as a *thank you* to those who have donated to AAUW Lake / Sumter. We have not set a registration deadline and people can donate after the series begins and attend a later class or classes.

Each lecture will last approximately 40 minutes and will be followed by a Q&A period. A Zoom invite will be sent just prior to the class. When you sign on to Zoom set your device on Speaker view and enjoy the class. Turn off your video and sound as the questions will be taken through the chat feature.

Check out the information below for class titles, teachers, dates, and times. Direct any questions to Diane Jacobson at [diandchas@gmail.com](mailto:diandchas@gmail.com); Diane can also provide tax code information if needed for your donation.

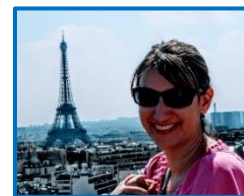
### ***2021 Topics, Teachers, Dates, and Times***

#### **Class #1**

**Title:** *Women Artists: Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better!*  
**Teacher:** Debbie DeWitte

Debbie DeWitte is a professor of Art History. She holds a PhD from the University of Texas at Dallas and she is a co-author of *Gateways to Art*.

**Date:** Monday, February 8, 2021  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. EST



## Class #2

**Title:** *Arts Integration and Its Impact on Students*

**Teacher:** Nicole Duslak

Nicole Duslak is the Founder and Head of School at CREATE Conservatory in Leesburg, FL. She was a school principal for grades K-8 and a director at the college level. Nicole was named the Sumter County District Teacher of the year in 2013.



**Date:** Monday, February 15, 2021

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. EST

## Class #3

**Title:** *Random Numbers That Aren't So Random: A Look at Benford's Law*

**Teacher:** McKenzie West

McKenzie West is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire; she holds a PhD in Mathematics from Emory University.



**Date:** Thursday, February 25, 2021

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. EST

## Class #4

**Title:** *Keeping Your Online Information Safe*

**Teacher:** Brenda Bjerke

Brenda Bjerke is Senior Director, Information Risk Management at Target Corp. She is also an Executive Leadership Team member for the Diversity Action Committee and the Executive Women's Forum (EWF) Champion advancing women in security. She is a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) and Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP). She holds a Bachelor of Applied Business and a Master of Business Administration.



**Date:** Thursday, March 4, 2021

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. EST

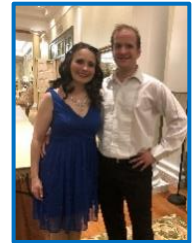


## Class #5

**Title:** *Puttin' on the Ritz: The Process of Solo Stage Performance*

**Teacher:** Lindy & Greg Pendzick

Lindy & Greg Pendzick, the headliners at last year's AAUW Music of the Night, are actors/singers/dancers. Lindy holds a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from Stetson University and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from The Ohio State University. Greg holds Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Arts from Boston University.



**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021

**Time:** 7:00 p.m. EST

## Public Policy

Information has come in about Lobby Days in March and the Leadership Conference in April. Both will be virtual.

This year there will be only one Virtual Lobby Day and it will be on March 17<sup>th</sup>. More information will be coming from AAUW-FL as it becomes available. As you all know, we public policy folks are always energized about Lobby Days and pester you constantly to participate. This year you will have absolutely no excuse! Since it will be virtual, there will be no expense for hotel and restaurant costs, no long drive to Tallahassee, and no re-arranging schedules because of travel. So, we expect to see lots of you participating!

The Leadership Conference will be April 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>. Its theme will be *Women Together in the Sunshine State*. Some of the topics of interest will be Diversity and Inclusion, Women's Economic Insecurity, and Social Justice Initiatives. I expect most of you know quite a bit about these topics because of the recent events across the nation. If not, plan on doing a little research and participate this year. As with Virtual Lobby Day, we are running out of excuses!

Judy Bonn, branch Public Policy Chair, will be keeping us all up to date as she receives more information.

## Activities

### Finger Food and Fun/ Dine Around

The AAUW Finger Food and Fun events are on hold until further notice because of Covid-19. However, beginning in January 2021 Judith Anderson, chair of this activity, proposes the following ideas for Dine Around.:

1. Limited outdoor events at various restaurants, preferably in late afternoon.
2. Driveway events in late afternoon with everyone bringing their own snack and drink.

Please forward to Judith any other safe ideas that you might like to offer regarding future Dine Around gatherings. You can email her at [jcdukeirl@aol.com](mailto:jcdukeirl@aol.com).

## Diversity Book Club

Our book for January is *The Nickel Boys*. We will be meeting via Zoom on Wednesday, January 20 at 10:30 a.m. Mary Place will lead the discussion. An email invitation for Zoom will be sent out to all club members prior to the meeting.

All are welcome to participate in the Diversity Book Club and anyone who is interested in joining should contact Kate Manion at [kmanion52@gmail.com](mailto:kmanion52@gmail.com).

### Book Club Selections for 2020-2021

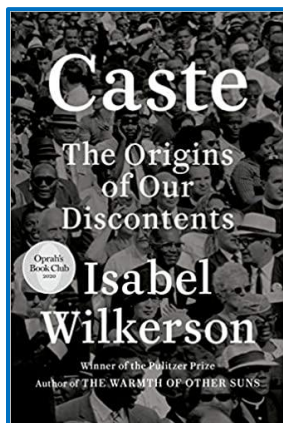
	Title	Author	Facilitator
Jan. 20	<i>The Nickel Boys</i>	Colson Whitehead	Mary Place
Feb. 17	<i>This Tender Land</i>	William Kent Krueger	Diane Jacobson
Mar. 17	<i>Born a Crime</i>	Trevor Noah	Ginny Rivera
Apr. 21	<i>See No Stranger</i>	Valerie Kaur	Judy Reinhardt
May 19	<i>Caleb's Crossing</i>	Geraldine Brooks	Myra Mervine
June 16	<i>Simon the Fiddler</i>	Paulette Jiles	Blanche Boyne
July 21	<i>American Dirt</i> *	Jeanine Cummins	Blanche Boyne
Aug. 18	<i>Selection of 2021-22 Books</i>		

## Diversity

### Great Read from the Diversity Committee

This month's Great Read is *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. The following information comes from Random House, the book's publisher.

***“As we go about our daily lives, caste is the wordless usher in a darkened theater, flashlight cast down in the aisles, guiding us to our assigned seats for a performance. The hierarchy of caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power—which groups have it and which do not.”***



*In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings.*

*Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people’s lives and behavior and the nation’s fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King, Jr., baseball’s Satchel Paige, a single father and his toddler son, Wilkerson herself, and many others—she shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. She documents how the Nazis studied the racial systems in America to plan their out-cast of the Jews; she discusses why the cruel logic of caste requires that there be a bottom rung for those in the middle to measure themselves against; she writes about the surprising health costs of caste, in depression and life expectancy, and the effects of this hierarchy on our culture and politics. Finally, she points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.*

*Beautifully written, original, and revealing, Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents is an eye-opening story of people and history, and a reexamination of what lies under the surface of ordinary lives and of American life today.*

*“Viewing history and current events through a caste lens dramatically changes what we see. I am stunned at the lengths some white people go to just to keep black people ‘in their place.’ Hopefully, understanding this underlying system will help us combat racial injustice.”*



*Linda Carpenter*

## **Ending Racism: Unitarian Universalists’ Social Justice Programs**

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County's Social Justice and Environment Committee is pleased to announce the next three Online Social Justice Programs, all of which will be devoted to ending racism. These presentations are free and open to the public and are made possible by the expertise provided by the UUCLC’s Zoom Tech Committee. Each presentation starts at 7:00 p.m.

- Sunday, January 10, 2021: **Healing Racism**. Ruth Anne Bergeron King, a local blues artist and author, will share her music and new memoir, *Zebra: Lost and Found between Two Races*, about growing up half Black and half White. Register at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwtf-ypqjovH9MNpyT7qe41ynrIGTh3TTT>
- Sunday, February 14, 2021: **Confronting Racism**. Rev. Sandy Haxton will monitor a panel discussion by three faith leaders – Pastor John Christian, Rev. David Crump, and Rev. Michael J. Watkins – on identifying and confronting racism. Register at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIvf-yspzIqHdooQ3JevxTy5AjEh7PfqtmK>
- Sunday, March 14, 2021: **Living Racism**. Cassandra Brown and Mae Hazelton, co-founders of *2020 All About the Ballots*, will present a 90-minute interactive learning experience to show what living in the racial wealth gap is like. Register at <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMkdeiqrTwpGNGNe9L6MkrnOXzPVk5IBJZw>

Once you register, Zoom will send you a confirmation with a link (different from the registration link) to use on the evening of the presentation. If you do not receive a confirmation within a few minutes, please try registering again (there may have been a misspelling in your email address or an electronic glitch!); they will re-send the confirmation.

## Racism in the Woods: A Zoom Dialogue

The Center for the Healing of Racism announces a presentation and facilitated dialogue about experiencing racism in the woods. The program will be Wednesday, January 27, 2021, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. CST. (That’s not a misprint; they’re located in the Central Time Zone). Register at <https://www.centerhealingracism.org/event-calendar/>.

During the global pandemic, the outdoors is one of the only safe spaces to spend time in the company of other people. Research shows that spending time in nature is associated with a long list of health benefits – physical, emotional, and spiritual. Yet, like so many other public spaces, the woods are a White Space, where black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) face special risks, beyond the spiders and bears.

This presentation is free and open to the public, with donations encouraged. To reserve your spot, please register before January 26.

## EDITOR'S MUSINGS



There may be a light at the end of the tunnel with vaccines rolling in. We can hope that 2021 will be the year we can once again greet and spend time with friends and family. Please contact me with information you think needs to get out to the membership. The deadline for the February edition is **January 20**

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

### AAUW Websites

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