



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

**September 2023**

## Co-President’s Message



September is a month of beginnings. It starts a new school year and a new year of AAUW meetings and events. Welcome back! We hope you had a good summer with fun activities surrounded by family and friends.

What is new? Our monthly meetings have been changed from the third Saturday to the fourth Saturday. We will still be meeting at Allamanda Recreation Center in Liberty Park (1515 St. Charles Place). Because of this change, there will be no monthly meeting in November. In December we will meet for a holiday luncheon on December 9.

What is discontinued? Our Angel Book Drive is no more. This outreach program was a favorite of our retired teachers and librarians but local schools cannot accept book donations due to the current political climate.

What remains the same? AAUW is a strong advocate for the advancement of women and girls. We provide Tech Trek experiences for middle school girls and scholarships for college students. The goal is equality of opportunity in education, employment, and pay.

As always, we thank you for your participation and support.

Helen Gozdanovic and Barbara Fisler  
 2023-24 Co-Presidents

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## 501(c)(3) News

Our Branch has achieved 501(c)(3) status as a tax-exempt charity under Federal and State laws. A 501(c)(3) status allows us to solicit funds that will be tax deductible for the donors. Lack of tax-exempt status has been a stumbling block to our fundraising efforts, especially soliciting donations from area businesses and associations.



Our branch is now gearing up to raise funds under its new tax-exempt status. Over the summer an ad hoc committee developed procedures to maximize our new status. They are available on our website in the Board Handbook, which is in the Members' Pages.

A newly created **501(c)(3) Implementation Committee** will oversee fundraising efforts under this status, and members can help maximize our impact. We are trying to avoid a glut of members contacting the same potential donors. So...

- Are you interested in working with us to solicit funds from organizations or businesses? If so, contact Beth Hicks. She has a short training session for anyone who solicits funds for the branch; the intent is to ensure the volunteers have the tools to solicit funds and will convey a consistent message.
- Do you know of an organization or business that might support our mission? If so, please let Beth know! Give us information about the potential donor and a contact point, and the committee will do the rest.

Please consider where you can fit in and contact Communications Director Beth Hicks if you have any questions or are ready to “step up to the plate” for the future of our Branch.

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

### *General Meetings*

**Starting in September, *General Meetings* will be on the *4th Saturday* of each month.**

**Saturday, September 23  
Allamanda Recreation Center  
1515 St. Charles Place, The Villages  
Doors open at 9:30 a.m.  
Meeting starts at 10:00 a.m.**



On Saturday, September 23 we welcome everyone back from the summer with a program designed to help us know our Branch and each other better. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and conversation before our 10:00 a.m. meeting. Come early to catch up with all your friends!

We will learn more about our new 501(c)(3) tax status and what that means for the Branch. We will see a presentation about Branch activities and opportunities, and we will hear from our various committee chairs about our programming and opportunities to serve.

Finally, committees and activity groups are invited to have tables to which members can go and hear more, ask questions, and sign up to participate. If your committee or activity group wants a table space, please contact Cynthia Snaveley. Her contact information is in the Members' Directory.

If you have a neighbor or friend whom you think might be interested in joining our Branch, this could be a good meeting to which to invite them to come with you.

See you in September.

### *Future Meetings*

- **October 28:** *Florida Hurricanes Including Hurricane Preparation*  
Presenter John Shewchuk from the Weather Club

## **No November General Meeting. Happy Thanksgiving!**

- **December 9:**      *Holiday Luncheon* 12:00 noon – 3:00 p.m.  
Paulie's at the Oakes on 44 Restaurant  
Continental Country Club  
Cost: \$32.50 (includes tax & tip)  
Luncheon will include 1 pasta, 1 chicken, or 1 salad  
Dessert  
All non-alcoholic beverages (soda, tea, coffee)
  
- **January 27:**      Tech Trek Committee
  
- **February 24:**    Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
  
- **March 23:**      *Antisemitism and Our Response*  
Presenter: Michael A. Igel of the  
Board Chair of The Florida Holocaust Museum  
Chair of the Florida Commissioner of Education's Task Force  
on Holocaust Education
  
- **April 27:**      *Program for Women Veterans*  
Presenter: Marie Bogodoff  
Villagers for Veterans
  
- **May:**              *Spring Luncheon*  
Location and date to be determined

Cynthia Snavelly and Kathy Howe  
Program Co-Chairs

## **Public Policy**

The branch is actively recruiting a Public Policy Chair. The role calls for keeping members informed of AAUW National's Public Policy work. It's not necessary to reinvent the wheel. National has information that can be shared with our local Branch in this newsletter. Please contact Barbara or Helen if you are interested.

## Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

The DEI Committee spent time planning over the summer and is looking forward to the year ahead. We will continue to focus on racial amity, and we ask you to help us move from a “them vs us” mentality to the realization of the “we.” Toward this end, we will be offering several opportunities to learn and think about racial amity.



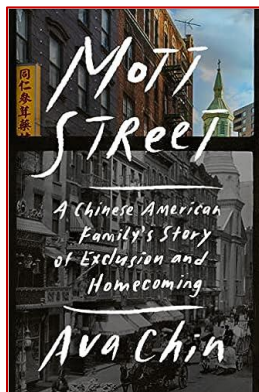
- Our brief **Infusion of Inclusion** segment will continue at General Meetings before each program is presented. And we will keep asking: *How have you used /will you use your influence and connections to further racial amity?* Keep in mind the power of one.
- On October 8, the Committee will launch the **Banned Books Reading Club** which will be held three times this year. At the first meeting, the group will discuss *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. The discussion will take place at the home of Jacquie Latzer from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. and members as well as non-members are heartily encouraged to participate.
- On November 12, we will begin **Diversity Movie Night**, which will be held twice during the 2023-24 program year. The first event will be held at the home of Jacquie Latzer and will begin at 4:00 p.m. There will be a light supper and a discussion after the movie; its title will be announced in October’s newsletter.

We want to thank Dorothy Dobbs for having served on the Committee, and we invite others to join us.

If you would like to be part of this dynamic committee or would like to sign up for any of the activities we offer, visit our table at the September General Meeting. Or contact Jacquie Latzer; her phone number and email address are in the Member Directory on the Members’ Page of our Branch website.

Jacquie Latzer  
DEI Committee Chair

### *Great Read from the Diversity Committee*



### **Mott Street: A Chinese American Family's Story of Exclusion and Homecoming** by Ava Chin

As the only child of a single mother in Queens, Ava Chin found her family’s origins to be shrouded in mystery. Over years of painstaking research, Chin traces the story of her pioneering family members who emigrated from the Pearl River Delta, crossing the Pacific in the mid-19th century to work on the transcontinental railroad. After enduring brutal racism in frontier towns, her ancestors moved east to New York City’s Chinatown.

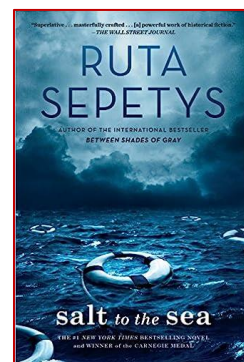
Chin's quest leads her to Mott Street, where so many Chinese Americans would live, begin families, and craft new identities. She discovers the men and women who became merchants, "paper son" refugees, activists, and heads of the Chinese tongs. It also meant confronting the weight of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882—the first federal law to restrict immigration by race and nationality, barring Chinese immigrants from citizenship for six decades. *Mott Street* uncovers a legacy of resilience that speaks to the American experience, past and present.

*Book Summary courtesy of Amazon.com*

*Recommended by Linda Carpenter*

## Book Club

Our next book club meeting will be via **Zoom on Friday, September 8** at 10:30 am. At this meeting we will be discussing and voting on our books for the upcoming year. In advance of this meeting, book club members are asked to send their book selection(s) including the title, author, and a short description of each book as well as the month(s) they are available to lead the discussion to both Kate Manion and Katie Haviland via email.



Following the Zoom meeting on September 8, we will have our regular **3rd Wednesday meeting on September 20 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Faith Room of the Northlake Presbyterian Church. The book we will be discussing is *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys. Kate Manion will lead the discussion. Members may recall that this book was previously scheduled for discussion on June 21 and that that meeting was postponed.

All AAUW members are welcome to join the Book Club and to attend both of the above-mentioned meetings. To join, simply send an email to Kate Manion and she will add your name to the group email distribution list.

Kate Manion  
Book Club Coordinator

## CONNECT

### Membership

#### *Membership Numbers*

As of August 24, our Branch has a total of 116 members. Of those, 74 are what AAUW National calls "Current" (annual paid) and "Future" (lifetime) members and 42 "Grace" (not yet renewed but still in the grace period following their renewal date) members. Four of us have been calling the Grace members. Not all have been called but we expect

to reach all of them before September 1. So far, most have promised to renew their memberships.

### *New Members*

Here is some information on our newest members. Perhaps you share some background. Their contact information can be found in our online directory.

- **Barara Combs** grew up in Hastings, Michigan, and later spent many years in Kentucky. She has a BA from the University of Kentucky and enjoyed a career in advertising and training. She and Paul live in the Village of Dunedin. Barbara loves golf and her many activities in The Villages.
- **Diane Ericson** grew up and lived most of her life in Michigan. She earned her B.A. from the University of Michigan. She continues to work online part-time as an accountant. She loves traveling, golf, and spending time with friends. She and Tom live in the village of Sabal Chase.
- **Eleonora “Ellie” Kukuk** was born and raised in Brazil where she earned both a medical degree and a law degree. She left Brazil for Michigan with two young children in 1999 and, after several other jobs, worked in the pharmaceutical industry until retirement. Soon after, she was widowed and moved to Florida. She enjoys golf, travel and learning to paint in watercolor. She and Jon live in the village of Sabal Chase.
- **JoAnne Fillwock** was born in Battle Creek Michigan and grew up in Michigan where she earned her BA from Michigan State University. As an adult she has lived in Michigan and Colorado, and she retired as a credit union executive. She moved to The Village of Mission Hills a year ago. JoAnne enjoys golf, music, friends, and learning anything new

### *Change of Address:*

- **Linda McLeod**  
Sumter Grand  
1490 Killingsworth Way  
Apartment 251  
The Villages, FL 32162

### *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 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!*

## Day Trip



*Step back in time...Saturday, November 11, 2023*

Our AAUW Lake/Sumter Branch fall outing will be an historical trip through central Florida. On **November 11**, we will **travel to Clermont** for a day of discovery!

Our first stop will be the Citrus Tower, at 141 S. Hwy 27, Clermont. This landmark was here long before the famous “mouse” arrived. It was said you could see from the Gulf to the Atlantic on a clear day! Built in 1956 it was the vision of Ralph Harper. The original Tower was to be 60 feet, but when it was finished it reached 226 feet! The Florida Tower Corporation owned the tower, it had 300 stockholders from 22 states. From the late 1950’s through the early 1960’s the tower had 500,000 visitors per year.

During this time, you could see beautiful orange groves surrounding the rolling hills of Clermont. Now you can see the growth of Clermont in housing developments, its



shimmering lakes and neighborhoods. The admission cost is \$10.00 for 55+; the hours are 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. There is a gift shop and snack bar.

Our next stop is right next door at 123 S. Hwy 27 in Clermont: The Presidents Hall of Fame. It has been adapted from a wax museum called the House of Presidents. There are life-size figures as well as knee-high and doll size president statuettes. You can view replicas of the White House china, miniature versions of the White House rooms, and tiny documents, as well as the beautiful dresses of the Presidents' wives. The admission cost is \$15, and the hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Our last stop of the day will be Clermont Historic Village Museum at 490 West Avenue, Clermont. They ask for a donation, and the hours are from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., but they are only open Saturday and Sunday. The Historic Village is a collection of buildings from the late 1800's that the city decided to protect. They are Herring Hooks Schoolhouse, Cooper Memorial Library, an outhouse, Clermont's train depot, Quonset Hut WWII Museum, Kern House, and Townsend House. The Village was founded in

1998 with the cooperation of the City of Clermont. The buildings are furnished with the décor of their time. On Saturdays there are guides and recordings in each of the buildings. All the buildings are close to each other, and it is an easy walk from one to another. The Historic Village is very near Lake Minneola, which is a lovely lake side park.

It is suggested to tour the Tower and Presidents Hall of Fame, then meet for lunch (location to be announced) and then continue to the Historic Village which opens at 1:00 p.m.

You may also want to explore the historic business district of Clermont or some of the commercial stores along route 27 before returning home. You should allow 1 hour to drive from Colony Recreation Center to the Citrus Tower (directions to follow for participants).

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Kate Manion, Angela Vickers, or Carolyn Pasquale

## **Social Interest Groups**

### *May Jongg Players Group*

The Mah Jongg players group will meet the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. All members are invited to participate in this group regardless of

their level of skill in the game. We will even teach those new to the game how to play. To join the Mah Jongg Players Group, contact Kate Manion.

### *Singles Group*

- AAUW Single Women's Group is planning to attend the musical called *Grumpy Old Men* at the Savannah Center on October 26 at 3:00 p.m.

*Grumpy Old Men* is the story of two aging men, Max and John, neighbors who have been feuding for most of their lives. Invigorated by their shared affection for their new neighbor across the street, the beautiful, eccentric, and charming Ariel, they face-off as romantic rivals until their hilarious shenanigans finally bring about a resolution to their long-standing differences. Based on the 1993 film, which starred Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau, and Ann-Margret, this stage adaptation captures the lovably crotchety characters through twinkling humor, great songs, and the affectionate depiction of a small town that feels like home to everyone.

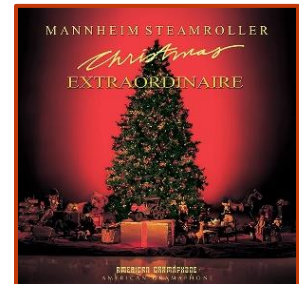
Ticket prices start at \$35/pp up to \$49/pp.

Please RSVP to Karen Pickelsimer.

- Kathy Mason and Liz Schweers are promoting a Senior Adventures bus trip to Sarasota on **Sunday, November 19**, for the AAUW Singles Group. The trip will be to see the **Manheim Steamroller Christmas Concert**.

Everyone makes their own reservation for this bus trip. Cost is \$128. Departure is from the Recreation Plantation at 1:00 p.m. on November 19.

Check out the full list of day bus trips at the Senior Adventures website. There might be some other trips which you might like. Ladies: Feel free to organize another trip that sounds good to you.



# SUPPORT

## 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.

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

There will be training in January, June, and September 2024 for new volunteers. Contact Jennifer Thompson if you are interested in volunteering at the precinct in 2024.

## Tech Trek



**“Best week of my life,”** said Catie H. Her twin sister, Claire, who also attended Tech Trek, said, **“I’ve also met some really cool girls who are just like me.”** Another camper, Haley M., said, **“My favorite part of being at Tech Trek so far was the Professional Women’s Night.”** These girls along with three others had an exciting and educational week at Tech Trek STEM camp. We will be looking forward to hearing from them in person at the January General Meeting.

Both Catie and Claire were guests of one of the 2022 campers this past January. Going forward we will be asking last summer’s campers to invite their like-minded STEM friends to the January 2024 General Meeting. The girls are the best recruiters we could possibly have.

You may remember Abby Lacayo who was one of our Tech Trek campers in 2022. Abby attended our January 2023 General Meeting and gave a presentation that left many of us in total awe of her explanation of her Science Fair project. Not only was her project the first in the State Science Fair but she was also selected to attend an “Aim High”

camp designed for future doctors this summer. We will be hearing a lot more of this young lady.

Liz Schweers  
Tech Trek Chair

## Scholarships

The Scholarship Committee is **DESPERATELY** in need of a chair. There is a committee that needs a leader. Scholarship is one of our core projects. Please consider this carefully! If not you...who?????





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

Welcome back! We hope that everyone had a relaxing summer and is ready to get to work. There are several “holes” in our Board of Directors and we are hopeful that members will step up. If we all do a little, lots can be accomplished!

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>