

LAKE/SUMTER NEWSLETTER

December 2021/January 2022



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



Greetings to our Lake/Sumter members,

We are looking forward to seeing you in person soon! We hope you were or will be able to see family and friends during the long Holiday season. So many were alone last year.

We have had a challenging fall, but were able to meet on Zoom so we could continue to interact with each other. At the November meeting, Lillian Lopez, Migrant-Homeless Resource Advocate, told us about her work with students of the Lake County school system. Some of them are children of migrant farmers. If you missed this interesting and engaging Zoom meeting, you can [follow this link](#) and use passcode **VJ5%M2G**

Taking a look at upcoming in person branch outings: Our December meeting is a holiday luncheon at The Oaks. Some interest groups are hosting luncheons as well...the Singles and Book groups among them. Others are meeting in small groups for bridge and Mah Jongg.

For our January gathering, we invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to meet and listen to the students who participated in the Tech Trek Camp last summer. Through Tech Trek scholarships, we participate in encouraging young girls to pursue STEM in their high school and college career thinking. Diane Jacobson is arranging an opportunity for members to participate in an outreach

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program that will double as a Tech Trek fundraiser. Stay tuned for more information on that. Tickets are available for the necklace drawing...let's match or exceed last year's event in support of college scholarships for young women.

PLEASE NOTE: AAUW General Meeting Saturday, January 15. We look forward to our January meeting at Allamanda Recreation Center and hope many of our members will be joining us. We are requesting that you wear a mask and are sensitive to distancing for the benefit of many of our members whose immunity is compromised.

Doors will open at 9:00 a.m. The program will begin at 9:15 a.m. with the presentation of our most recent Tech Trek recipients. No refreshments or coffee will be served. Seating will be spaced for everyone's comfort.

Please respond to the Invitation to the January General Meeting that Carolee Litwinka, our Email Distributor, will be sending out. Your response will serve as a registration to attend, so a sufficient number of chairs can be set up.

A short business meeting will follow the Tech Trek students' presentations.

Katie Haviland & Gay Birchard, Co-Presidents

The Future of our Branch

Strategic planning is the process an organization follows to define its direction. The purpose of strategic planning is to specify organizational goals and to create a plan to achieve them. The process requires stepping back from day-to-day operations to consider what organizational priorities should be. Strategic planning has its roots in the business world, but the process is now applied effectively in many areas of endeavor, including non-profit organizations such as AAUW.

Our branch's current plan was developed in 2017 under the leadership of Jacquie Latzer and Susan Gold. Although it has guided our mission-driven work, it needs to be updated to keep our activities relevant to societal changes. Rather than create a plan from scratch, our strategic planning process will review and revise the current plan.

Co-Presidents-elect Anne Sobocinski and Linda Carpenter are now launching branch efforts to update our strategic plan. Their first step is to constitute a Strategic Planning Committee. In addition to the Executive Committee, Anne and Linda are extending an invitation to any member who wants to contribute to the future of our branch to serve on the committee.

The committee's work will begin in January 2022 and finish by the end of March, so participation will be time-bound. As work on the plan progresses, all branch members will have opportunities to provide input to the committee and suggest goals and action steps for the plan. Anne and Linda are hoping for broad participation in the planning process, so please contact either of them if you would like to join the committee or if you

have ideas about the process or content of the plan...the future of our branch depends on all of us.

Linda Carpenter and Anne Sobocinski, Co-Presidents Elect

Members Who Make Our Branch Work

Public Policy

Public policy is about working for and supporting those policies that affect our people in our neighborhoods, states, and nation. AAUW is very political, but NOT partisan. Whether you vote Republican, Democrat, Independent or some other party, you can still support what is good for our people. It is writing emails and letters, making phone calls and visiting our legislators to remind them that AAUW wants equal pay for equal work, a higher minimum wage for all people, especially women, and health care for all women so that they may be in charge of their own bodies. We also help with voter registration drives, and support getting out the vote with fair elections and fair voting laws.

To these ends, the Public Policy Chair keeps an eye on all bills coming before the Florida legislature and guides her branch to support those that would benefit the people of Florida. This involves participation in Lobby Days, where we go up to Tallahassee and visit the Capitol, talking with those legislators from our districts and encouraging them to get behind legislation we support.

Public Policy Chair Judy Bonn

I grew up in northern New Jersey right across from New York City. I became an elementary school teacher. I married a Texan in 1970 and we had a son in 1977. We moved to Florida in 1971. We lived north of Tampa in Land O' Lakes in Pasco County. In 1986 I received my M.A. in Guidance and Counseling, working as a middle school counselor until 2000. In 1989 my husband died. My son and I went through his teen years together. without killing each other. In 2000 I married Keith Bonn. We lived in Illinois for 3 years until he retired. We then returned to Florida and bought a home in The Villages. I worked 6 more years as a school counselor in Wildwood Elementary School. I joined AAUW in 2009 right after I retired.



Fundraising

Scholarship Jewelry Drawing



Reminder: there are two months remaining, December and January, to buy your raffle tickets for the beautiful necklace donated by Gold in Art Jewelers. The funds support scholarships for young women who reside in Sumter and Lake counties as they complete their college degrees. The tickets make great Christmas presents for friends and family so send your donations in now.

Questions? Contact Kathy Mason by email (kmason0826@gmail.com) or call (850-556-7986).

Kathy Mason, Scholarship Committee Chair and Past Co-President

Adopt-A-Precinct Poll Worker Initiative



Our branch can raise \$4,400 for Tech Trek Florida by participating in Sumter County's Adopt-A-Precinct Program for the 2022 elections. The Adopt-A-Precinct Program provides the opportunity for clubs to raise funds to support their fundraising goals while supporting the election process.

For the program, we will need 12 to 15 AAUW members to volunteer as poll workers on two important election days:

August 23, 2022, and **November 8, 2022**. Watch for information about this program which will be coming your way by email soon.

Diane Jacobson, Fundraising Chair and Co-Director of Programs

Gift Card Initiative

As the holidays approach, you can do your shopping and benefit our branch at the same time by using **ShopWithScrip** for all your **Gift Card** needs!

Shop With Scrip offers a platform to buy gift cards; our branch will automatically get a percentage of every card sold through the program. By participating, our branch will earn a few hundred dollars annually for our General Fund. Order your gift cards through the Lake/Sumter AAUW ShopWithScrip account to benefit the branch! Contact Diane Jacobson diandchas@gmail.com to find out how.



Diane Jacobson, Fundraising Chair and Co-Director of Programs

Membership

Please welcome a new member and add her name and contact information to your membership booklet.

- Jennifer (Forrest) Thompson
3064 Loyola Court The Village of Pinellas
forrestgt@hotmail.com
678.777.5256
B.A. University of Georgia Home Economics
M.Ed. University of Georgia Adult Education

Karen Pickelsimer and Joanie Schmidt, Co-Directors of Membership

Programs



Holiday Luncheon

On December 11, we enjoyed a delicious luncheon at The Oaks on 44. Festively dressed in our holiday sweaters we were entertained by Dorothy Dobbs with her rendition of “The 12 days After Christmas”. It was great to spend some time with our fellow AAUW members and friends.

We at AAUW Lake/Sumter wish you and yours a Happy Holiday Season!!!



General Meeting

On Saturday, January 15, 2022, we will hold our General Meeting in the Allamanda Recreation Center. Doors will open at 9:00 and the Presentation of the Tech Trek participants will begin at 9:15.

Our program, hosted by Co-directors of Tech Trek, Liz Schweer and Laura McLaughlin will feature our Tech Trek girls who participated in a virtual camp this year. We are so excited to learn more about their projects and insights into what camp meant to them.

During the meeting we will also have several tables for Branch information, donations to Teachers of the Year (see Susan Gold's article), and brochures from past speaker Debi Girard, of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranch.

We are making every effort in the Allamanda Recreation Center to keep us all safe such as social distancing as best we can and no serving of food or drink.

But you need to do your part too...in the spirit of caring for fellow members and guests, do not attend if you are feeling ill. Please wear a mask upon entering and consider keeping your mask on throughout our time together. We are not checking to determine if you are fully vaccinated but trust that you too are doing all you can to keep us all safe.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you in person soon!

Ann Marie Lombardi and Diane Jacobson, Co-Program Directors

Teachers of The Year: Program Follow Up



You may remember our two outstanding teachers of the year Shannon Clark from Lake County and Brittany Brown from Sumter County. You met them on Zoom last year.

We asked them what we as a branch could do for them and each of them replied to us. Shannon sent a list of supplies she needed for her classroom and Brittany asked for new books for children, ages 6-10 years.

We wanted to collect these at our first meeting in September, but due to Covid, we changed our meeting to Zoom. Fortunately, on January 15, 2022, we will once again be meeting in person so we will be able to collect items for these teachers. We will have bags for this purpose set up at the back of the room in the Allamanda Recreation Center. Please check for after Christmas sales and be sure to bring these items to our first meeting on January 15.

Book Suggestions from Brittany

By Title

- *Percy Jackson*, a series of novels by Rick Riordan
- *Harry Potter*, a series of novels by J.K. Rowling
- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, a series of novels, by Jeff Kinney

- *Baby-Sitters Club*, a series of novels (including the graphic ones, which have pictures and high interest but require low reading ability) by Ann M. Martin
- *Magic Tree House*, a series of children's books, by Mary Pope
- *The Land of Stories*, a series of novels by Chris Colter
- *Whatever After*, a series of re-imagined fairy tales by Sarah Mlynowski
- *Rainbow Magic*, a series of books by various authors
- *Dork Diaries*, a series of children's books by Rachel Renee Russell
- *The Kicks*, a series of books by Alex Morgan
- *Geronimo Stilton*, a series of books by Elisabetta Dami
- *Thea Stilton*, a series of books by Elisabetta Dami
- *Judy Moody*, a series of books by Megan McDonald

By Author

- Beverly Cleary
- Judy Blume
- Katherine Applegate

School Supplies Suggestions from Shannon

- Reusable water bottles (The water fountains are turned off at school for safety)
- Number 2 pencils
- Glue sticks
- Eraser block
- Dry eraser markers
- Pencil pouches/boxes
- Post-it notes
- Pocket folders
- Composition notebooks
- Backpacks

Susan Gold, Past Co-President

Public Policy

AAUW Florida held a webinar on December 9 to begin training for Lobby Days. I will be watching that and will keep the branch informed as Lobby Days is coming up soon. As some of you may know, I have been the branch Public Policy Chair for many years now. I would dearly love to hand this great job over to someone new before the mid-term elections. Therefore, I'm hoping to find someone who would like to share the workload with me this year so that I can hand the job over to her next year. Any takers?

Judy Bonn, Public Policy Chair and Past Co-President

Great Decisions



Great Decisions has announced nine topics for 2022: Changing Demographics, Outer Space, Climate Change, Russia, Myanmar and ASEAN, The Quad Alliance, Industrial Policy, Drug Policy in Latin America and Biden's Agenda. We will meet on Monday mornings for 1 hour 20-minute sessions on January 10, 24, 31, February 7, 14, 21, 28 and March 7, and 14. There will be two sessions beginning at 9:00 am and 10:30 am. at the Sumter County Villages Annex Conference Room, 8033 East CR 466, The Villages. This group participation program is free to all AAUW Lake/Sumter branch members.

(Nonmembers are asked to make a \$20 donation to participate.) For those who would like to order their own material it is available at www.fpa.org. Direct questions or to sign up for the sessions contact Diane Jacobson diandchas@gmail.com.

If you have signed up for the sessions and did not receive an email about the program from Diane, contact her to let her know.

Diane Jacobson, Membership Co-Chair and Fundraising Chair

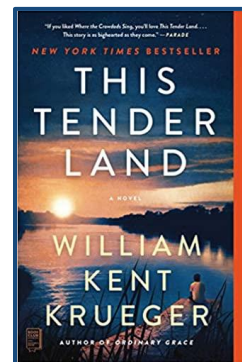
Great Read from the Diversity Committee

This month's Great Read is *This Tender Land: A Novel* by William Kent Krueger. The following information is provided by Simon & Schuster, the book's publisher.

The unforgettable story of four orphans who travel the Mississippi River on a life-changing odyssey during the Great Depression.

In the summer of 1932, on the banks of Minnesota's Gilead River, Odie O'Banion is an orphan confined to the Lincoln Indian Training School, a pitiless place where his lively nature earns him the superintendent's wrath. Forced to flee after committing a terrible crime, he and his brother, Albert, their best friend, Mose, and a brokenhearted little girl named Emmy steal away in a canoe, heading for the mighty Mississippi and a place to call their own.

*Over the course of one summer, these four orphans journey into the unknown and cross paths with others who are adrift, from struggling farmers and traveling faith healers to displaced families and lost souls of all kinds. With the feel of a modern classic, *This Tender Land* is an enthralling, big-hearted epic that shows how the magnificent American landscape connects us all, haunts our dreams, and makes us whole.*



Linda Carpenter, Diversity Committee Co-Chair and Co-President Elect

Activities

Singles Group



Nine members of our Singles group traveled to Leesburg, Florida to tour the Mote-Morris House and enjoy a social lunch. We met at the historic, late Victorian home at 1195 W. Magnolia Street, an attractive park-like setting. Our guide was Mr. Morris, a member of the last family to live in this home, so we had some special stories to hear. The house is open for tours on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month; the admission is free, but donations are welcome. After the tour, we made our way to Naples Restaurant at 1107 W. North Blvd for a tasty Italian lunch.

Leesburg was settled in 1857 and incorporated in 1875. Edward Mote build this home in 1892 at the cost of about \$9000. It is an attractive two-story home with a 4-story turret which provides a wonderful view of the area. The house was sold to John Morris in 1918. The original home was at 1021 W. Main Street but was moved to its present location on September 1, 1990. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and is one of the few remaining original homes in Leesburg.

The house suffered a devastating fire February 20, 2018, with extensive damage. Restoration work was done by Evergreen Construction of Lake County and all sub-contractors were also from Lake County. Much of the replacement lumber had to be hand milled as the original lumber was a different size than the lumber we used today. Rooms were decorated by local businesses in keeping with the time period. Many of the items were original or donated by Leesburg residents.



Mr. Morris told of sharing a large second floor bedroom with his two brothers and noting which stairs squeaked, as they would climb them after curfew. Their sister had a room of her own. The four siblings all continue to reside in Florida. Some of us ventured up the turret stairways and were greeting with a beautiful view of the grounds and gazebo!

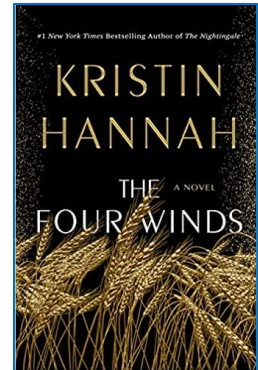
Learning the history of our area gives me a deeper understanding of my adopted home in Florida.

Carolyn Pasquale, Branch Secretary and Singles Group Member

Book Club

The Book Club will hold its annual holiday luncheon on Wednesday, December 15 at 11:30 a.m. at the Chop House in Lake Sumter Landing. Those who have not yet made a reservation may do so by contacting Kate Manion at kmanion52@gmail.com.

For our January 19 meeting, we will be reading *The Four Winds* by Kristen Hannah. Barb Blatchford will lead the discussion. A decision as to whether we will continue to meet via Zoom or in person at the Northlake Presbyterian Church will be made closer to the January date and will be based on the COVID situation at the time. An email announcement will be sent out to all club members advising them of whether the meeting will be online or in person.



Kate Manion, Book Club Coordinator

Date	Book	Author	Discussion Leader
Dec. 15	HOLIDAY LUNCHEON		
Jan. 19	<i>The Four Winds</i>	Kristen Hannah	Barb Blatchford
Feb. 16	<i>The Life She Wished to Live: A Biography of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings</i>	Ann McCutchan	TBD
Mar. 16	<i>The Barbizon</i>	Paulina Bren	Linda Carpenter
Apr. 20	<i>The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell</i>	Robert Dugoni	TBD
May 18	<i>Klara and the Sun</i>	Kazuo Ishiro	Blanche Boyne
June 15	<i>The Personal Librarian</i>	Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray	Mary Place
July 20	<i>The End of the Ocean</i>	Maja Lunde	Christine Loken-Kim
Aug 17	SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR 2022-23		



Thank you for your support of this newsletter. I am sure we are all looking forward to the upcoming IN PERSON meetings! Next Edition will be the February edition and deadline is back to the normal January 20. Be safe all!

Editor: Beth Hicks
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AAUW Websites

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

Save the Date: March 8, 2022

What: International Women's Day
When: Tuesday, March 8, 11:00 a.m.
Where: Lake Sumter Square

**We are Standing on the Shoulders
of
Those Who Came Before Us**

Join us as we celebrate with music, speakers, and activities