



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

**May 2024**

## Presidents' Message



It is May, the merry month of May! By the time you read this, we will have shared our April 27 General Meeting and our May 4 Spring Luncheon. Officers for 2024-2025 have been duly elected and installed. We are winding down for the summer.

We want to thank all the dedicated officers, committee chairs, and workers who have made this past year a success for our branch. We say a tearful goodbye to members who have left us this year and extend a warm welcome to our new members.

Our branch is a living organism because of all the helping hands and loving hearts. And we will hit the ground running in September with new leaders, new energy and new programs that will inspire and educate us.

Yes, our bodies get older, and our joints may creak and somehow, we cannot stand or walk as effortlessly as we used to. But our minds and hearts remain strong. No rust allowed!

We wish you a summer of joyful exercise for the mind and the body. Read fulfilling books. Spend time reconnecting with friends and family. Stay current and watchful regarding happenings in our country and around the world. Each one of us can make a difference. You already have in your support of our Tech Trek and scholarship programs.

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We appreciate all you have done this year and look forward to more successes for Lake/Sumter AAUW.

Barbara Fisler and Helen Gozdanovic  
Co-Presidents

## **501(c)(3) and You**

We asked and you answered in a resounding fashion. There are so many to thank and there is always the issue of missing someone. I hope this list is complete! If I missed you, my sincere apologies!

### *Businesses and Groups*

- Gold in Art Jewelry
- Friends of the Library
- Rotary Club
- Independent Film Club
- Baha'i Faith
- Villages Pops
- Villages Theater



### *Individuals*

Linda McLeod, Blanche Boyne, Joan Krick, Linda Ferens, Susan Gold, Ann Marie Lombardi, Lisa French, Ellen Randall, Judith Reinhardt, L. Gay Davidson, Thomas and Belinda McGeehan, Pat Beerhalter, Sarah Reagan, Susan Egloff, Walter Albers, and Terry and Claudie Ziegler, and Walter Griffiths, Beth Hicks, Carol Piiro, and Joanne Fillwock.

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

## **Meetings and Programs**

### *Summer Breakfasts*

Our General Meetings are on hiatus until September. However, we will still get together. Join us for our summer breakfasts! Members will gather every Wednesday in June, July, and August at 9:00 a.m. at Panera in Lake Sumter Landing. Hope to see you there!



### *April Meeting Follow-up*

Many folks who attended our April meeting asked for more information and where to send contributions.

Marie Bogdonoff  
2518 Burnsed Blvd  
Box 303  
The Villages, FL 32163  
[marie.bogdonoff@villagersforveterans.org](mailto:marie.bogdonoff@villagersforveterans.org)  
<https://www.villagersforveterans.org/>

### *Fall General Meeting Needs*

Ann Marie Lombardi is looking for a few volunteers to share the hospitality responsibilities for our General Meetings, starting in September. It is an **easy job** to set up the food and paper goods tables as well as pass around the Volunteer List for members to bring breakfast items to future meetings.

Ann Marie will store all the paper goods, decorations, etc. and arrange for the coffee and hot water to be made by the recreation center staff.

Please contact Ann Marie by email, ([am.lombardi1956@gmail.com](mailto:am.lombardi1956@gmail.com)) or phone or text (352-638-0550) if you are interested and the months you are available to help. Thank you.

## **Public Policy**

### *Florida Constitutional Amendments 2024*

There are six amendments to the Florida state constitution on the ballot in 2024. Of the six proposed amendments four are Legislatively Referred Constitutional Amendment (LRCA). These LRCA (numbers 1, 2, 5,6) are amendments that require the legislature to seek voter approval to amend the constitution. Forty-nine states allow LRCA amendments.

Two other proposed amendments (numbers 3, 4) are Citizen Referred Constitutional Amendments (CICA). While many states revise their constitution, Florida is one of only 18 states that allow citizens to put an issue before the voters.

Although Florida allows citizens to put an issue before voters, it is not an easy process and needs 60% voter approval to become part of the Florida State constitution.

## *What Are the Amendments*

The CICA Amendments are proposals 3 and 4.

- **Amendment proposal 3** would legalize recreational marijuana for adults 21 years and older. Individuals would be allowed to possess up to three ounces (or about 85 grams) of marijuana for personal use.

Legalized marijuana exists in 37 states. There is no evidence that legalizing its use increases underage consumption. Keeping it illegal perpetuates a criminal culture.

- **Amendment proposal 4** provides a constitutional right to abortion before fetal viability, which is estimated to be around 24 weeks, or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider.

This comes after the Florida Governor, Ron DeSantis, and lawmakers approved preventing abortions after 6 weeks of pregnancy effective May 1, 2024.

All Floridians deserve the freedom to make personal medical decisions, free of government intrusion. Politicians and the government should not interfere in such personal decisions and limit the ability of doctors and nurses to treat patients.

The LRCA amendments are regarding school board elections, the right to hunt and fish, the homestead property exemption, and public campaign financing.

Why This Matters

Susan Laluk and Elizabeth White  
AAUW Public Policy Co-Chairs

### **Join Us for Summer Breakfasts Starting June 5**

*Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m.*

*June, July, August*

*Panera Bread*

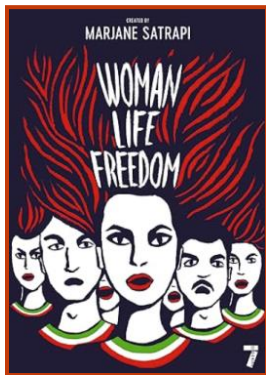
*Lake Sumter Landing*

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

### Great Reads from DEI

Summer Reading from the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee

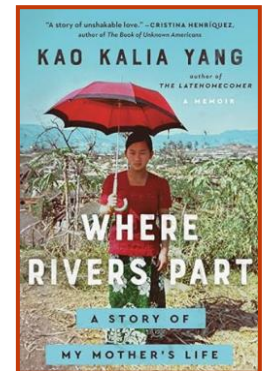
*Woman, Life, Freedom* by Marjane Satrapi



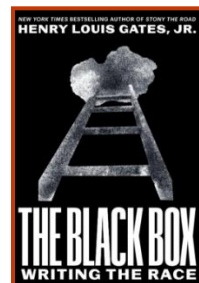
On September 13, 2022, a young Iranian student, Mahsa Amini, was arrested for not wearing the headscarf required for women by the Islamic Republic. At the police station, she was beaten badly until she fell into a deep coma and died three days later. A wave of protests soon spread through the country, and crowds adopted the slogan “Woman, Life, Freedom”—words that have been chanted around the world during solidarity rallies. In a powerful collection of full-color, graphic-novel-style essays, Marjane Satrapi has collaborated with over 20 activists, artists, journalists, and academics to depict the historic uprising, in solidarity with the Iranian people and in defense of feminism.

*Where Rivers Part: A Story of My Mother's Life* by Kao Kalia Yang

Tswb was born in 1961 in war-torn Laos; when she was a teenager, the country erupted into genocidal attacks on the Hmong people. Tswb and her family fled their village for the jungle, eventually settling in a refugee camp. After marrying and having children, Tswb and her husband emigrated to the US, where the determined couple enrolled in high school, even though they were both nearly thirty, and worked grueling jobs to provide for their daughters. Kao Kalia Yang reveals her mother’s astonishing saga with tenderness and unvarnished clarity, giving voice to the countless resilient refugees who are often overlooked as one of the essential foundations of this country.



*The Black Box: Writing the Race* by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.



Distilled over many years from Henry Louis Gates, Jr.’s legendary Harvard introductory course in African American Studies, this is the story of Black self-definition in America through the prism of the writers who have led the way. Through essays, speeches, novels, plays, and poems, a long line of creative thinkers has resisted confinement in the “black box” to record the compelling saga of the creation of a people, in resistance to the lies of racism over the course of the country’s history.

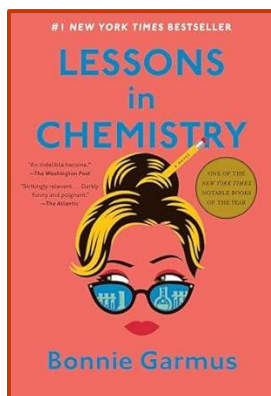
## Who's Afraid of Gender? by Judith Butler

Judith Butler, the groundbreaking thinker whose iconic book *Gender Trouble* redefined how we think about gender and sexuality, confronts the attacks on “gender” that are fueling reactionary politics around the world. The anti-gender movement demonizes struggles for equality, seeks to nullify reproductive justice, and leaves millions of people vulnerable to sexual and gender violence. Imagining new possibilities for both freedom and solidarity, Butler offers a timely and hopeful work of social and political analysis--to make a broad coalition with all those whose struggle for equality is linked with fighting injustice.



*How have you or will you use your influence and connections to enhance racial harmony?*

## Book Club



The Book Club will meet on May 15 to discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. Discussion Leader is Marge McQueston.

June's read will be *Babylon's Ark: The Incredible Wartime Rescue of the Baghdad Zoo* by Lawrence Anthony. Kate Manion will lead the discussion starting at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 19. All members are welcome to attend.

The Book Club meets at 10:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month in the Conference Room at the Sheriff's Office Annex. All members are welcome to attend.

2023 – 2024 Book Club Selections			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Discussion Leader</i>
5/15/24	<i>Lessons in Chemistry</i>	Bonnie Garmus	Marge McQueston
6/19/24	<i>Babylon's Ark: The Incredible Wartime rescue of the Baghdad Zoo</i>	Lawrence Anthony	Kate Manion
7/17/24	<i>Ordinary Grace</i>	William Krueger	Helen Gozdanovic
8/21/24	<i>The Girl Who Wrote in Silk</i>	Kelli Estes	Judy Reinhardt

## Day Trips



On April 10, 13 AAUW members and two guests headed out on a Senior Adventures bus from Recreation Plantation. The original destination of Madeira Beach had been changed to Clearwater due to boat issues with the Calypso Breeze. After boarding the Calypso Queen, the group toured the intracoastal waterway while dining on an amazingly tasty buffet. After the scenic and narrated boat tour, the group boarded the bus for a shopping trip to nearby Tarpon Springs. This town is known for its sponges and hand-made soaps. Delights included snacks and take-home goods from Hella's Greek bakery. The happy troop from the day-long adventure arrived at The Villages promptly at 7:00 p.m.

## 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](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.

### *Downloading the Directory and Saving to your Desktop*

Now that you have the password, you can access the Members' Pages of our website (<https://www.lakesumteraaauw.org>) and download the current directory. If you are an Apple user, follow the instructions Leslie handed out at the September General Meeting for saving the directory to your computer's desktop. If you are not an Apple user, a similar set of instructions is also available for you. Both sets of instructions are posted in the Members' Pages.

## **Social Interest Groups**

### *Mah Jongg*

Please contact Lois Venus ([loisvenus@gmail.com](mailto:loisvenus@gmail.com)) for MJ. The group plays the second and fourth Wednesday of the month and is always looking for more players.

### *Bridge*

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

### *AAUW Singles Events*

On Saturday, June 15, The Orange Blossom Opry in Weirsdale, FL, presents a tribute band called Forever Simon & Garfunkel, starting at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are: \$45, \$39, \$34, and \$30 and there is still a good selection. Each person attending should purchase her own ticket or I will purchase in bulk with advance payment. Again, carpooling is suggested with Colony Recreation Center as the rendezvous point @6:00 p.m. Ladies who have said they want to attend are: Bobbie Peters, Helen Gozdanovic, Gay Birchard, Barbara Fieldman, Lois Venus, and Liz Schweers. I will drive four ladies, but we will need a second driver. Please contact Liz Schweers, 850-247-9489, for more information.





# SUPPORT

## Fundraising

### *AAUW Lake/Sumter ROCKS!!!!*

This year was a fundraising success! Thanks to the efforts of all we have enriched girls and young women and enabled them to pursue their goals.

13 Tech Trek campers	\$15,700
4 New Scholarship recipients	\$ 7,500
3 Continuing Scholarship recipients	\$ 6,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,200</b>

### *Adopt-A-Precinct Program*

We have received a check for \$2,500 for our work for the March Primary. Well done, folks!

### *Thank You to Gold in Art*

Thank you to Gold in Art. A delegation of the scholarship committee and past winners stopped in to personally thank Richie Kluesner for his support of our scholarship fund raising! The plaque is up and make sure you thank him when you do jewelry shopping at his store!



## *Thank you to Friends of the Library*

And a big thank you to the Friends of the Library for their support of Tech Trek. Two girls are attending the summer camp thanks to their \$2,400 donation.



## Tech Trek



Tech Trek is **ACTIVELY** looking for a new Chair. Liz has done a great job, but it is time for someone else to pick up the helm of our unique program. There are plenty of workers and volunteers ready to help. Please consider if you can help!

## Scholarships



It is our pleasure to announce our scholarship recipients for this year. We had applications from both Lake Sumter State College (LSSC) and Beacon College. Thanks to our fundraising efforts and individual donations to the Scholarship Fund, we can award scholarships to four outstanding women as they work towards their 4-year degrees.

We are awarding scholarships to two women from LSSC.

- **Allyson Ricketts** has been accepted at both the University of Central Florida and the Savannah College of Art and Design. Her goal is to become an instructional designer. She will make her decision of where to attend in the coming months.
- **Evelyn Oyanedel** will return to LSSC to finish her associate degree. Her goal is to continue her education for a bachelor's degree in nursing.

We are awarding scholarships to two women from Beacon College.

- **Victoria Vasquez** will continue to attend Beacon College and complete her degree in Human Services and Psychology. Her goal is to become a school social worker.
- **Fiona Clifford** will complete her degree in Human Services at Beacon College. Her goal is to become a Special Education Elementary teacher or a Registered Behavioral Technician.

None of this would have been possible without the efforts of the Scholarship Committee. We would like to recognize them and thank them for their hard work. They are: Dotty Sasmor, Arlene Stein, Carolee Litwinka, and Marge McQueston as well as this year's leaders Susan Gold and Gretchen Lewis.



## **American Association of University Women**

The 2023-24 AAUW program year is over. Enjoy the summer. Hope to see you at a Summer Breakfasts ...every Wednesday at 9:00 a.m., Lake Sumter Panera.

See you in September. Please get any news to me by August 20 for inclusion in the September edition.

***Learn – Connect – Support***

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### AAUW Websites

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

