

VENICE VIEWS

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN, VENICE, FLORIDA BRANCH

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AAUW ADVANCES EQUITY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

SUCCESSFUL ZOOM GENERAL MEETING KICKS OFF OUR YEAR

Susan Farstrup, Vice-President



Some of our members participating in our virtual meeting.

Forty-three members joined together on Zoom for our first general meeting of the year. The meeting began with a social time. In spite of the large number of people attending, I found it very conversational. We were able to hear from everyone and share more than we might have sitting at a table with just a few people. Several members shared online activities and websites that they found interesting and rewarding. These included lectures, tours and performances. I'm suggesting that if you discover "online gems" that you think others would enjoy, please send the link and a sentence describing them to Venice Views and we will publish them.

aauwveniceviews@gmail.com

At the business portion of the meeting, President Kathleen Pickering welcomed us to the start of the year and asked each board member gave a brief update on her area of responsibility. It was easy to see that the board has been quite busy in spite of our restrictions.



Dr. Kay Lee-Smith

After the meeting was adjourned, we continued on to our program “Hard Won, Not Done.” Bea Holt introduced our speaker, Dr. Kay Lee-Smith, Director for Public Policy for AAUW Florida. Bea asked Dr. Lee-Smith to respond to several prepared questions. In responding, Dr. Lee-Smith spoke about the legislative agenda that must pass to advance equity for women in the workplace, not only in pay but also in leadership roles. She addressed the importance of our role to get out the vote. She shared her personal experience as a woman of color encountering racism in the workplace and how that was one of the factors along with sexual harassment and lack of opportunity that impedes women’s advancement. She urged us to mentor and educate women in younger generations, not only about equity in the workplace but also in politics, so women don’t lose ground in the areas we fought so hard for. She concluded by stating her belief that gender equality is necessary for a sustainable world.



Bea Holt introduced our speaker

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Our October 10th program entitled “Behind Every Student There’s a Story,” will feature our 2019 scholarship winners who will share their journeys and how the AAUW Scholarships have impacted their lives. All of these recipients are planning nursing careers and have overcome many obstacles to get where they are. Please join us as we hear from them and congratulate them for their achievements.

Our monthly meetings will zoom on the second Saturday at 1:00 pm. Pam Swarts, our Zoom coordinator, will open the meeting at 1:00 for socializing, Kathleen Pickering will call the meeting to order at 1:30 and the program will start around 2 pm. Should you need a Zoom tutorial, please refer to the September Venice Views, which has an excellent explanation or contact Pam Swarts directly.

Remember, you can still invite a guest to attend our meetings. Send the name and email address of your guest to veniceaauw@gmail.com and she will receive an invitation to join us on Zoom. [Wendy Seeley]

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Kathleen Pickering



It was really nice to see 43 members sign into our September virtual meeting. Next month it will be on Saturday, October 10 at 1:00. A Zoom invite with the link will be sent out on Friday, October 9.

Our speaker, Dr. Kay Lee-Smith was excellent as you read in another article in this month’s Venice Views. She touched on a lot of topics that Kim Churches, AAUW CEO, also addressed in her webinar on August 25th. Both talked about how far women have come, but there is still much to do.

Kim talked about what AAUW can do to advance the issues facing women today. She believes that AAUW has to open its doors of membership. With an organization that has the average age of 72 and is mostly white, it will not be able to exist in the future without change. Younger women are really not interested in joining AAUW. Our mission says all women, all girls, but all are not welcome. This is something we all need to think about. Many of us joined AAUW to meet women who were educated and would be interesting to know. The degree gave us something in common. I believe that women without a degree who would choose to join would have much in common with us also.

For years now, I have not supported opening the membership; but after listening to Kim, I believe we do need to open it up. Maybe younger people, people of color would be more inclined to want to support many of our advocacy positions if they felt we were open to all women. In fact, we did open membership to men a few years ago, but we have not seen the membership overrun with men.

There is so much for us to do in AAUW to make a difference for the lives of women and girls. Your strategic planning task force will be bringing their best ideas forward. We cannot do it all, but we can focus on issues that we think are important for us. Please listen to Kim’s Webinar of August 25th to get the full picture of where AAUW is going.

Here is the link to the webinar: <https://youtu.be/WU87N06LbIc>

I hope to see many of you in October. Stay safe.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Patti Warner, Membership Director



We are starting our new year with 184 members. Approximately 43 of us did attend our first meeting. We encourage more of you to come to our next meeting on October 10 as the Zoom format is very up close and personal and for the first time, snowbirds can join us for the fall meetings.

Our meetings are open to the public and to your guests. And please do invite guests. Send the name and email address of your guest to veniceaauw@gmail.com and she will receive an invitation to join us on Zoom.

You have received the online Directory which contains all the updated information for the coming year and is still your best reference guide. But if you have any questions you can send them to the Gmail address above and they will be answered. Communication is very important this year especially during the Pandemic.

No doubt Covid has affected our membership and we are still hoping some of our non-renewals will come back later. If you have friends who did not renew, encourage them to join us again. We miss them.

In the meantime, I hope you'll consider coming to some of our beach Sunsetter socials. This is such a challenging year for all of us. It helps to be together as friends make the hard times

Reconnect, Relax, Rejoice...



“A sunset is the sun’s fiery kiss to the night.”

Crystal Woods

Please, join us at lovely **Nokomis Beach** on **Sept. 24 th**
at **6 :4 5 pm** (Sunset @ 7:14 pm)

Bring your beach towel/ chair & your favorite beverage
(Social Distancing implemented).

RSVP: veniceaauw@gmail.com

* **Rain Date: Sept. 28 th**

Member Profile: Meet Wendy Seeley

Judith Houston



New co-chair of education for Venice branch comes well credentialed for this charge. Wendy Seeley is a lifelong educator who “loved being a teacher and an administrator.”

Except for a “brief stint in Maine,” most of her career was in Connecticut. She has taught everything from pre-K through sixth grade plus special education classes. In 1999 she became a school administrator of students from pre-K through 5th grade, continuing until she retired in 2014. She then moved to Venice with her husband in 2015.

Her own early education path was a little choppy. She says, “I was one of very few children in the 1960s whose parents were divorcing.” Born in Rhode Island, she lived there until she was ten and moved around “between parents.”

In eighth grade, she moved from Atlanta back to Rhode Island where she was placed in advanced classes. The contrast between her classes in Georgia and her new school was challenging but her eventual success helped her find “an amazing peer group of motivated high achievers,” many who are still part of her life today.

Like many of us, she was introduced to AAUW Venice by a current member. In her case, it was Samira Easton and she also credits neighbor Jane Farley, “who sucked me right in.” That took the form of serving on the branch’s scholarship committee and she is maintaining contact with our four most recent recipients.

For her, the value of AAUW also comes from “meeting women who have a great deal to offer,” and “there’s always something to learn from the meeting programs.”

After settling into her new home in Venice, she also became a guardian ad litem, an advocacy program for children in foster care. She says, “I’ve always rooted for the underdog. I had a sister with mental health issues, and I saw how people treated her.”

Life during a pandemic did bring some changes. She had been walking dogs as a volunteer with the Suncoast Humane Society and that activity closed down. Always a “cheerleader for women,” she recently did a long-distance project on women’s suffrage with a nine-year-old niece.

In this new partnership of Wendy with long-time chair Pat Weber, look for innovation ahead in this key area of our AAUW mission. On her radar? She says, “Title IX is in trouble! Women and girls need the protection of this law to ensure that they are treated fairly and equitably in a school/work environment. Although women make up half of all college graduates and the labor force, the percentage of women in high paying jobs or as members of Congress is far below their male counterparts. AAUW must continue to fight for the advancement of ALL women.

In spite of the ongoing health crisis, the Seeleys won’t be held back. They have plans to be on the road next summer in a motor home they recently acquired, with destinations being some of our country’s national parks.

Until then, watch for news from our two capable education leaders.

VOTING INFORMATION

Be sure you are aware of important voting information for this year.

Know the correct postage needed for mailing your ballot. As an alternative, vote-by-mail ballots can be delivered in person at supervisor of elections office during regular office hours and at drive through locations early voting sites during the early voting period.

Vote-by-Mail – Request & Return Information

November 3, 2020 General Election

Make a Vote-By-Mail Ballot Request

Any registered voter may vote by mail (absentee).

Submit an online request or track your vote-by-mail ballot at SarasotaVotes.com/VoteByMail. Call 941.861.8618 to request a vote-by-mail ballot or ask questions.

You may request a vote-by-mail ballot for all elections through 2022 or a single election. The deadline to request that a vote-by-mail ballot be mailed to you is Sat., Oct. 24 at 5 p.m. Vote-by-mail ballots must be returned to the supervisor of elections office by 7 p.m. on November 3 (election day) to count. All three elections offices are open 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. on election day.

Ballots Will Be Mailed to Voters

Vote-by-mail ballots for the November 3 general election will be mailed beginning September 24. Ballots to overseas military and civilian voters will be mailed September 19.

Return Your Ballot by Mail (Two Forever Stamps or \$.70 postage)

If returning by mail, the US Postal Service suggests returning your vote-by-mail ballot no later than Tuesday, October 27 (one week prior to election day).

The return postage is two Forever Stamps or \$.70.

Return Your Ballot In Person (Drop Off Locations)

Elections Office Drop Boxes

(M-F, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. & 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. on election day)

You may return your ballot in person to a secure drop box located inside all supervisor of elections offices during regular business hours (M-F, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.) and from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. on election day (Nov. 3).

Supervisor of Elections Drop Box Locations:

Terrace Building, 2001 Adams Lane, Sarasota, 34237
RL Anderson Building, 4000 Tamiami Trail S., Venice
34293 Biscayne Plaza, 13640 Tamiami Trail, North Port 34287

Early Voting Location Drop Boxes

(Oct. 19 – Nov. 1; 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. daily)

Vote-by-mail drop boxes will also be available inside all early voting sites during early voting. (Monday, October 19 – Sunday, November 1; 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. daily).

Early Voting Drop Box Locations:

Terrace Building, 2001 Adams Lane, Sarasota, 34237
RL Anderson Building, 4000 Tamiami Trail S., Venice 34293 Biscayne Plaza,
13640 Tamiami Trail, North Port 34287
Sarasota Square Mall, 8201 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota
34238 North Sarasota Library, 2801 Newtown Blvd., Sarasota
34234 Fruitville Library, 100 Apex Rd., Sarasota 34240
Shannon Staub Library, 4675 Career Lane, North Port 34289
Bee Ridge Park, 4430 S Lockwood Ridge Rd, Sarasota, 34231

Drive Thru & Drop Off Ballot Locations

(Oct. 19 – Nov. 3, Election Day; 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. daily)

Vote-by-mail drive thru, drop off is available from Monday, October 19 - Tuesday, November 3 from 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 pm daily at all three supervisor of elections offices listed below.

Supervisor of Elections Drive Thru Locations:

Terrace Building, 2001 Adams Lane, Sarasota, 34237
RL Anderson Building, 4000 Tamiami Trail S., Venice 34293
Biscayne Plaza, 13640 Tamiami Trail, North Port 34287

[Information from Ron Turner | Supervisor of Elections | Sarasota County]

SIG NEWS

Stephanie Hallowell, SIG Chair

We are all looking forward to rejoining and participating in our various **Special Interest Groups** this fall. Social distancing guidelines may restrict the setting and size of our activities for a while. However, be assured your SIG Leaders are considering options to reconnect in new and inventive ways. They will be reaching out to you soon with their ideas, and undoubtedly, to ask for your suggestions, as well. In the meantime, if you have any thoughts or questions regarding future group events, I encourage you to reach out to them. You can find SIG information on page 8 of the online directory.

ART IN THE AFTERNOON

Calling all artists, photographers and storytellers. If you have not participated in Art in the Afternoon previously, please contact iwartintheafternoon@gmail.com or call Trena Kelly (number in the directory.) We will explain how much fun it is to join us. Details are up in the air with COVID, but we want your input.

BOOK CLUB

We may have missed book club meetings in June, July, August and September, but don't despair. We will be discussing My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayer via Zoom on October 12. Using Zoom means that you can participate even if you are not in Venice. Details will follow soon, so get reading.

Date	Title	Author	Facilitator
October 12	My Beloved World	Sonia Sotomayer	Marge Ostrom
Nov. 9	The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek The Giver of Stars*	Kim M. Richardson Jojo Moyes	Barb Tompkins (N-Z) Joyce Mikulski (A-M)
Dec. 14	The Map Thief	Michael Blanding	Dottie Bingman
Jan. 11	American Dirt or Sarasota Reads	Jeanine Cummins	Lynda Weston
Feb. 8	The Island of Sea Women	Lisa See	Gail Densler
March 8	The Library Book	Susan Orlean	Barb Martinage
April 12	This Is How It Always Is	Laurie Frankel	Joyce Mikulski
May 10	The Immortalists	Chloe Benjamin	Hilda Dillman

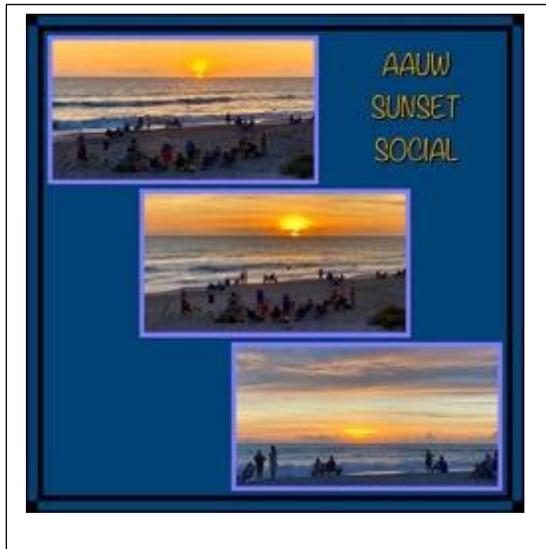
*Both books deal with the same topic. Both will be discussed. If possible, choose according to your last initial indicated by the facilitators.

COASTAL CRUISERS

The coastal cruisers will meet on Oct 26 out of the Englewood Cape Haze Marina from 2 to 4 pm. Dinner at Farlow's can follow the cruise. Call Paula Dulski to reserve your spot and get more information.

SUNSET SOCIAL

Our first successful COVID-19 **AAUW Social Event** was held on Thursday evening, 8/27, at Manasota Beach. Sixteen lovely ladies and two gentlemen joined us for camaraderie and conversation. We were able to safely social distance, by setting up stakes in the sand, to mark our six feet chair spacings. It was exhilarating to breathe in the fresh air, with our toes in the sand, surrounded by friends, watching the sun slip away.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Susan Champion
4 Patricia Ritner
5 Janice Hollister
7 Paula Dulski
12 Degen Sayer
20 Helen Boruff
20 Marcia Seman

22 Lynn Kroll
22 Linda Patriarca
23 Leslie Curley
23 Claire Waddington
25 Joyce Delaney
25 Carol Murray
28 Carol Beyer
28 Judy Weber



CARING AND SHARING

Best wishes to **Pat Ritner**, recovering from surgery and **Marie Rulolo**, recovering from a stroke.

How do you plan to “Keep the Spirit Bright” this holiday season?

Pam Swarts, Program Chair

December is rich with multi-cultural celebrations, and our December 12th program promises to be a way to learn some special seasonal holiday traditions from members. This means thinking NOW about what you might like to share.

Possibilities abound! In addition to Christmas décor, food, and music, we invite a diverse focus such as Hanukkah celebrations, Kwanzaa traditions, New Year observances and more! Storytelling could also be part of the event. We may not be celebrating in full force with our families, but the Venice AAUW family can demonstrate its spirit!

If you would like to share a seasonal tradition, send a brief paragraph to aauwoutreach@gmail.com (program chair’s email) describing what you would like to present with the subject line “Keeping the Spirit Bright” Approximately six diverse presentations will be selected.

The deadline for submitting your presentation idea is October 31. The program will take place via Zoom, and inquiries are invited regarding how your idea could translate to that format.

EXPRESSING OUR OPINION

During our September General Meeting chat, Kindra Muntz told us an effective way to communicate about our issues is to submit a guest column or letter to the editor to local newspapers. Just remember that AAUW is a non-partisan organization and you should not state a partisan view if you identify yourself as a member.

Here is where to send letters (or proposed guest columns (!) to the Herald-Tribune and the Sun newspapers: Letters to the Editor:
Herald-Tribune: editor.letters@heraldtribune.com
Venice Gondolier-Sun: scott.lawson@yoursun.com
North Port Sun and Englewood Sun:
chris.porter@yoursun.com

250 words max for Sun Newspapers, 200 for Herald-Tribune. Sign full name. List address and phone number (those won’t be published.)



Venice Views Editor for October: Susan Farstrup

E-copies circulation: Patti Warner

REMINDER

IF YOU HAVEN'T RESPONDED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE EMAILED TO YOU ON
SEPTEMBER 8, PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN BY SEPTEMBER 25.