

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



The Year 2020 has certainly had its challenges. And when we think about the holidays it is hard to get our arms around what activities we will be engaged in. As I was trying to figure out what to write, I just happened to run across an Alfred, Lord Tennyson poem that just seemed to fit the tone for the year.

Ring Out, Wild Bells

*Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky
The flying cloud, the frosty light
The year is dying in the night:
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.*

*Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go:
Ring out the false, ring in the true.*

*Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.*

*Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manner, purer laws.*

*Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times:
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.*

*Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.*

*Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.*

*Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land.*

This poem was written in 1850 on the passing of his friend. But to me the poem seems timeless. I hope you enjoy reading it. The most happy holidays to you, however you celebrate. Let us look forward to a *wonderful 2021*.

*Kathleen Pickering
President, AAUW Venice branch*

~ ~ DECK THE HALLS ~ ~



Our membership is stable(186) and sadly there are no new members to report.

34 members attended the November Zoom General Meeting which was more than the last meeting.

The Board would love to see **more** of you though.

Some members just do not like Zoom but, in some ways, it is more personal because you see everyone's face up close with their name attached. It's really a way to know more members. About 20 people are on each page of Zoom on a normal size laptop. We can actually have as many as 100 online at a meeting. So.....there is *plenty* of room for more attendees.

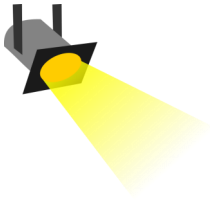
We hope you will come to our next meeting and festive program. Plan to put on your meeting finest or Christmas favorite (red and/or green) and fill those Zoom pages. Or, start the video and join us in your pj's or sweats (another plus for Zoom).

Instead of Deck the Halls, let's Deck our Zoom Screens with your beautiful faces.

Happy Holidays!

Patti Warner, Membership Director





MEMBER SPOTLIGHT BOBBI AMERO



The branch's new finance director didn't start out to be a numbers person. When this New Hampshire native graduated with a degree in sociology (minor in psychology), she found a bleak job market for social workers.

She found a position with Liberty Mutual Insurance, a berth she thought might be temporary until things changed in her field. Instead, she spent 37 years in the insurance industry. Twenty of these were with Acadia, a Maine-based commercial insurance company, where she became the regional vice president for the New Hampshire office and the chief underwriting officer for the entire company, both firsts for a woman.

As a "first woman," she says she "understands how important it is for other women to have mentors and advocates. She also points out that being "first" in any field can be "isolating," and underscores the role of AAUW as an advocate for women.

In addition to stepping outside her educational field, she says, "I'm an outlier in my family." Her husband of 38 years was a teacher, her daughter is a high school principal, and her sister was a university professor.

Like many of us, her introduction to Venice branch was through a friend, in this case Pat Weber. They met initially at Jacaranda Country Club, where both couples are members.

Her move to Venice was also prompted by a suggestion of a friend who had migrated here from New Hampshire. "We spent two days in Venice and I was convinced that this was the place." She found its smaller size and vibrant downtown "more like the New England towns we were used to."

In this era of "zooming" instead of meeting in person, look for Bobbi when we congregate around our computers, knowing our treasury is in very knowledgeable hands.

[Judith Houston]

MESSAGE FROM OUR PROGRAM CO-DIRECTORS
WENDY SEELEY AND PAM SWARTS

Until further notice when it is safe to meet face-to-face, all general monthly meetings will take place VIRTUALLY ON ZOOM ON THE SECOND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH. Members sign-in and social time starting at 10:30 pm, meetings will start at 11:00 pm Eastern Time.

****WATCH FOR AN EMAIL FROM VENICE AAUW WITHIN 12 – 48 HOURS OF ANY EVENT WITH THE ZOOM “INVITATION” AND THE LINK WHICH YOU WILL USE TO CONNECT.****

ACTION TOWARD EQUITY – LOOKING AHEAD TO MONTHLY PROGRAMMING

Program co-chairs Pam Swarts and Wendy Seeley chose the theme “Action Toward Equity” in spite of Branch members not being able to be actively together. The programs planned for 2020-2021 will be member-focused and highly interactive. The action-orientation will be in the form of questions: What can I learn? What can I speak out about? How can I do the best I can?

- December 12 **Keeping the Spirit Bright** - Members share traditions, décor, food and festivities. See Page 6.
- January 9 **Art Brings Learning to Life** - Baila Miller, Art Historian and Educator will share her expertise.
- February 13 **Book review - TBD**
- March 13 **Art in the Afternoon** - This will be a sneak peek into one of our special interest groups.
- April 10 **Annual Meeting**
- May 8 **The Rewards of Serving** - A panel of members share their volunteer involvement.

ZOOM TIPS & REMINDERS

Like hundreds of organizations, AAUW is ZOOMING to stay connected. Members are finding that the “face-to-face” quality of this virtual meeting platform helps us grow better acquainted. It’s like being invited into someone’s home! And, like strong, educated women, we all are learning to turn challenges into opportunities. This article is intended to help those ‘late adopters’ forge forward, and the ‘new embracers’ pick up a new tip.

Not a ZOOM member? Visit www.zoom.us and register for free. Upload a mug shot and save the name you want people to see. Watch a “getting started” tutorial and check out tips! Ready for advanced work? You can plan your visual staging by following these five steps: 1. zoom.us/sign 2. Personal Meeting Room 3. Start Meeting 4. Open Zoom Meeting -- **Watch for an email from Venice AAUW within 12–48 hours of any event with the Zoom “invitation” and the link which you will use to connect.** 5. Start Video. You are all alone, so have fun experimenting with lighting and backdrops! Hint: It’s OK to move the computer out of the kitchen office or your desk in the bedroom.

General Guidelines:

DO:

- Use a computer with a larger screen and built-in camera if possible. iPads and cell phones will work, but they are less effective in terms of tools and options to see everyone.
- Plan a setting that puts a source of light in front of you (not to the side or behind you) to avoid shadows on your face.
- Dress as you would for a face-to-face event; It is a small step toward normalcy!
- Join early (10-15 minutes before the start of an event) to conquer any technical glitch or enjoy chatting.

DON'T:

- Leave your microphone on and make noise; even coughs trigger interruptions.
- Move too close to the camera when speaking; it’s like violating personal space.
- Talk over others; learn to use the chat room.
- Let the ceiling be part of your background, ***especially ceiling fans.***
- Move in and out of the setting without first turning off your video.

Tips from the Pros (think morning talk show host broadcasting from home):

Plan a background that shows some personality; Raise your computer so the camera is at eye level; Allow your torso and face to fill the scene; Assume good posture; Have what you may need within arm’s reach; Try looking at the camera!

Finally, if you are having challenges with ZOOM, please reach out for one-on-one assistance! We are here to help you and we all want to see **you!!**

Pam Swarts, Program Chair & Zoom Coordinator



WANTED:
PRESENTERS FOR “KEEPING THE SPIRIT BRIGHT”
FOR DECEMBER 12 GENERAL MEETING

December is rich with multi-cultural celebrations, and our December 12 general meeting program will be a member-focused opportunity to share and learn some seasonal holiday traditions.

In addition to Christmas (both secular and religious) we invite a diverse focus such as Hanukkah celebrations, Kwanzaa traditions, New Year observances and more!

How do you decorate? Does your family have a unique gift-giving tradition? Is story telling or special readings part of your family holiday practice? Maybe you are a musician and can share something special with your AAUW family. Do special family recipes play a role in marking a holiday?

Hurry!! There is still time to jump in and submit an idea for the December program! If you would like to share a seasonal tradition, send a brief paragraph to aauwoutreach@gmail.com (program chair’s email), with the subject line “Keeping the Spirit Bright” Approximately six diverse presentations will be selected.

The program will take place via Zoom, and, as your Zoom coordinator, I will help presenters prep for the event!

Pam Swarts, Program Chair

NOVEMBER 12, 2020
GENERAL MEETING REVIEW

Ashley Brown, CEO and Executive Director of the Women’s Resource Center (WRC) of Sarasota and Manatee Counties, joined us via Zoom to share her organization’s scope and impact. Like almost every organization, she and her staff needed to reimagine themselves in March 2020. Within 5 days after shut-down, they were able to field calls from home and continue their mission of enabling and empowering women of all ages to be self-sufficient.

Data shared by Ashley revealed that, between March 23 and September 30, the WRC conducted nearly 4,000 remote appointments and directed nearly 9,000 individuals to resources, almost doubling the numbers in the same period in 2019. Services span emotional support, financial and legal resources, support groups, career counseling, and much more.

For clients in need of suitable attire for interview or the workplace, WTC offers a free “Career Closet” with gently used, donated clothing. Donations are accepted Wednesdays at the WTC location in BrickYard Plaza.

During her presentation, Ashley stressed that every woman has been through transitions, and our ability to survive and move forward has much to do with resiliency. Please take a moment to consider how this relates to your formative years. How did you accomplish your goals? Who gave you hope? What bolstered you in the tough times?



**NOVEMBER 12, 2020 AAUW VENICE BRANCH
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was held via ZOOM on November 12, 2020.

President Kathleen Pickering called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

Minutes of October 10, 2020 were approved as published in Venice Views.

Treasurer's Report – Bobbi Amero

The treasury has a net of \$40,569.35.

President's Update – Kathleen Pickering

State Convention has been canceled.

Public Policy – Joan Armstrong

Lobby Days are scheduled for March 17, 2021.

Membership – Patti Warner reported we currently have 186 members.

Development – Susan Hotzler - anonymous donation to be matched by members donations up to \$500 total.

SIGs – Stephanie Hallowell

All are invited to join the Exploring with Camera group to visit the Solomon's Castle on November 17. On November 19 the next Sunsetter event will be held. The Book Club, Duplicate Bridge, and Coastal Cruisers are meeting regularly.

Education – Wendy Seeley

Title IX– No change.

Tech Trek camps may be held virtually.

Paula Dulski is designing an online interface for Work Smart.

Wendy Seeley is coordinating with the Laurel Civic Association for those interested in tutoring students online.

Scholarship Committee is seeking members.

Programs – Pam Swarts

The December program is Keep the Spirit Bright – looking for stories of family traditions within our members. The January meeting will be a presentation by Baila Miller.

Old Business – Susan Farstrup reported that the Nominating Committee is seeking nominations.

The Strategic Plan is being refined.

Deadline for Venice Views is November 15.

New Business – N/A

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Submitted by Elaine Izzi, Secretary

SCHOLARSHIP CHALLENGE

The comment below was posted during the October ZOOM meeting by one of 2020 scholarship winners.

From Sahskia Celestin to Everyone:

"Ladies, I really thank you for this amazing opportunity. This is a blessing beyond measures. It really warms my heart to have amazing women support me."

One member was so moved by the Scholarship Winners' presentations that she is willing to donate \$500.00 to the 2021 scholarship fund IF Members will raise the funds to match her contribution. The person wishes to remain anonymous.

This challenge was sent out to our membership via an eblast message on November 4 to match her contribution. At the November 12 meeting, a report was given that we were over halfway there in meeting the challenge.

At that meeting another member stepped up to offer an additional \$500 to add to the challenge. Great news we are now challenging our members to match the \$1000 donation that will be provided by these two members, so we are extending the date of the challenge.

The challenge to raise the funds is extended until **DECEMBER 19**. Please help us match the funds to support the 2021 awarding of scholarships.

To participate in the challenge, send your checks to:

AAUW Venice Branch, P.O. Box 515, Venice, FL 34284

[Susan Hotzler]

SARASOTA BRANCH RELEASES RESEARCH STUDY

In October, the AAUW Sarasota Branch released a new research study, *Aging, Women and Economic Insecurity in Sarasota County, Florida* conducted by Mary Gatta, PhD and Jessica Horning, MSSW. One notable finding is; "In the County, women reported a medium retirement income of \$13,792; men had \$24,289 - a gap of 57 percent." AAUW Sarasota recommends policies targeted to seniors to address these gaps. Learn more about the study results and recommendations by following the link <https://sarasota-fl.aauw.net/files/2020/10/AGING-WOMEN-AND-ECONOMIC-INSECURITY-IN-SARASOTA-COUNTY-FLORIDA.pdf>.

Research has been a cornerstone for AAUW to advance equity for women and girls. See related research by Dr. Gatta at aauw-fl.aauw.net/about/advocacy/economic-security/.

[Bea Holt]

SIG BOOK GROUP SELECTED READS -- 2020-2021

	Title	Author	Facilitator
Dec. 14	The Map Thief	Michael Blanding	Dottie Bingman
Jan. 11	American Dirt	Jeanine Cummins	Lynda Weston
Feb. 8	The Island of Sea Women	Lisa See	Gail Densler
March 8	The Library Book	Susan Orlean	Susan Farstrup
April 12	This Is How It Always Is	Laurie Frankel	Joyce Mikulski
May 10	The Immortalists	Chloe Benjamin	Hilda Dilman

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Carol Cudia	15	Dottie Bingman
1	Gail DeVet	16	Sylvia Irish
3	Kathy Black	17	Elaine Jarchow
5	Kathy Dierstein	18	Amy Schirber
6	Susan Leege	19	Carol Sbabo
			
9	Patti Warner	20	Carole Goolden
9	Susan Hotzler	27	Jan Harris
10	Karen Cianci	28	Marge Collin
11	Judith Kolk	30	Emily Jennings
12	Jean Norman	30	Ronnie Storch
13	Diane Sisko		

ART IN THE AFTERNOON

Our beloved Art in the Afternoon will be on hiatus for the 2021 season due to the pandemic. Our committee chose to keep the health of everyone first, and we look forward to entertaining you again next winter. Please stay safe.

**** Please note that we will be doing a mini version of Art in the Afternoon as the March program at our Branch General Meeting. ****

We will contact you all next fall.

Artists and photographers keep creating.

We love your work!

Trena Kelly, Creative Director

Ellen Badger

Holly Wilson

Susan McConnell



SHARING AND CARING

Sympathy card sent to Claire Waddington-Sears on the death from Covid-19 of her sister Roberta Cardamone. Roberta had been a member of AAUW for 50 years and a member of the Venice branch for over 30 years.

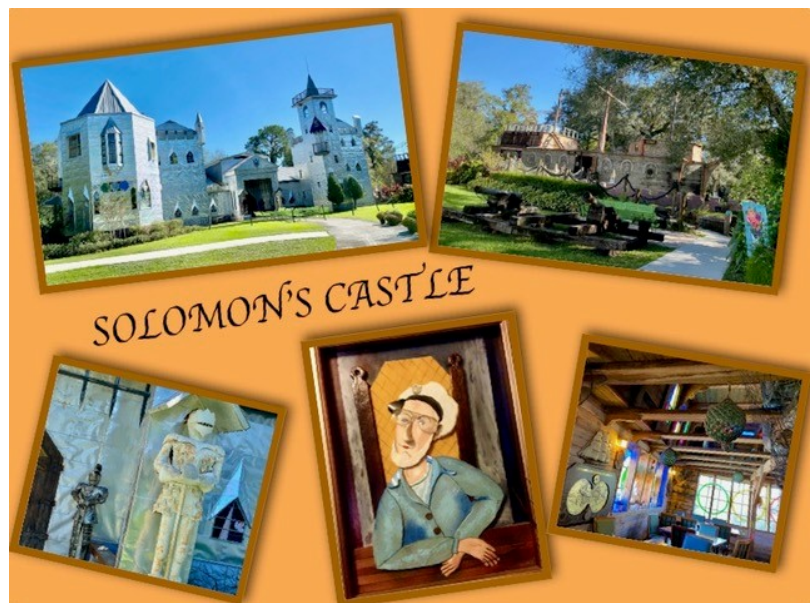
Please notify Marge Collin if you are aware of someone who needs get-well wishes, if there is a serious illness or passing of an AAUW member or family member so that we can acknowledge this on behalf of the Branch.



JOIN
OUR MONTHLY
SUNSET
SOCIALS!



EXPLORING
WITH YOUR
CAMERA
NOV. 2020





Venice Views Editor for December Issue: Jeri Jaminet

E-copies Circulation: Patti Warner

VENICE VIEWS: All submissions to our monthly Venice Views need to be sent by the 15th of the previous month to aauwveniceviews@gmail.com

**Deadline for the January issue of Venice Views is
12/15/2020**