

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

President's Message February 2021

Just when we thought 2021 was going to be a better year with the advent of the vaccine for Covid19, it seemed to fall apart on January 6, when there was an attack on our nation's capital by a mob. Never have we seen something so destructive of the people's buildings in our lifetime. To see one of the insurrectionists sit at Nancy Pelosi's desk with his feet on it and to hear them call for the murder of Vice President Pence was unconscionable.

There will many difficult times ahead while 2021 is starting to look worse than 2020. Seeking vaccines will be difficult for quite some time. We have a new President and the one leaving office will not be gone. Just so much to think about.

On a more positive note, we will still have AAUW Venice and will continue to do good work with our scholarships, Tech Trek, and assisting Laurel Nokomis Civic Association. I am very hopeful that by summer we will be able to meet in person and SIG groups will be able to meet again.

Please read the message from Julia Brown, National Board Chair, on the proposed changes to the membership requirements and the proposed changes to the Public Policy Priorities. You can give feedback no later than February 5. Voting is April 7 to May 17.

Until we meet again, please stay safe. And I am hopeful that we will all be able to get the vaccine sooner rather than later.

Kathleen Pickering
Venice AAUW President



Member Profile

Lynda Weston

Lynda Weston is one of our “book ladies” who joined the branch in search of literary discussions. She still “ZOOMS” with the Ohio book group she started 48 years ago. And she owned an Ohio book shop for several years that she’s pleased to report is still in business. Along with co-chair, Hilda Dillman, she is now heading up our Book SIG.

This former teacher (who has taught music in grades from kindergarten through graduate school) got her bachelor’s degree in English and music. She went on to get a master’s in education and a Ph.D. in literacy.

The last 12 years of her career were spent as the assistant superintendent of the Mt. Vernon (OH) school system where she oversaw curriculum and personnel decisions. Along the way, she was also a radio talk show host for a year, interviewing local personalities. She credits this accomplishment to her involvement with the League of Women Voters and its civic issues.

She and her attorney husband bought a home on Manasota Key, Englewood, in 1996, primarily because her older sister lived there, planning to divide time between Florida and Ohio. Regretfully, her sister is no longer living in Florida. Her two children both migrated to the Pacific Northwest and the couple purchased a cottage in that area and sold the Ohio home. Her daughter remains in Portland, Oregon, but her son has since moved back to Ohio. “Hmm,” she quips, “are you sensing abandonment issues here?”

She continues her passion for music with piano playing and is also part of a church hand bell choir. She is program chair for the Englewood Performing Arts Society (EPAS). She also belongs to a local writers group and bikes to beach yoga regularly. Her expeditions to the Northwest have also made her and her husband “big Seahawks fans.”

Book groups are still the center of her intellectual life. “I value what people I meet in book club bring to the conversation,” she says.

What is the Venice Book SIG reading now? The February book is “*The Island of Sea Women*” by Lisa See. It’s an historical novel set in Korea. She welcomes any member who wants to participate in the next book club discussion. This group continues to meet via ZOOM. “Just get and read the book and call or send me an email, so we can put you on our link to the meeting, which is held on the second Monday of the month.

Like the virus, the love of reading can be contagious...but with many positive outcomes.



Bricks for Shirley Reid

The Memorial bricks for Shirley Reid, AAUW Venice President from 2009 to 2013 have been Installed at the Performing Arts Center in Venice. Donations for the bricks were given by members. There was even enough money left over to put toward a scholarship for Tech Trek.

When you go to the Performing Arts center be sure to look for Shirley's bricks.



Reading Together in February

Thursday, February 11th program will be a book discussion of *"The Invention of Wings"* by Sue Monk Kidd. What makes this book extraordinary? One reviewer wrote, "It's a conversation changer! It is impossible to read this book and not come away thinking differently about the status of women and about all the unsung heroines who played a role in getting us to where we are."

The themes woven through this novel include mother/daughter relationships, racial strife and emancipation, women's rights, breaking free of bonds, and more.

Taking full advantage of ZOOM's ability to break a larger group into smaller discussion groups, all AAUW members will be able to participate (even without reading the book). Members of the Venice AAUW book club (Special Interest Group) will serve as small group discussion leaders. Be sure to be there!



Membership Update

2021 has finally arrived and we had our first guest and prospective new member of the year at our January meeting. We will be happy to add one more which will bring our membership to 187. Meeting Nancy Brex reminded us of all our outstanding new members of this past year who did not get the chance to go to many meetings, SIG gatherings, or even a New Member Breakfast.

We are so sorry about that so we are planning to have a Zoom cocktail party on March 18 for those new members who didn't get to meet the Board and learn more about AAUW. Details will follow later.

Thirty-eight members were at our last meeting and enjoyed the program by Baila Miller on the emergence of modern art in America. It was a great beginning to a new year in AAUW.

Patti Warner
Membership Director



February Birthdays

2/1	Ginny	Hurney
2/3	Lynda	Irvin
2/8	Pat	Hirt
2/8	Mary Lou	Thetford
2/10	MaryAlice	Gagnon
2/10	Joani	Leeds
2/12	Katie	Morey
2/13	Beth	Gamel
2/13	Karen	Mullen
2/14	Mary Ann	Dillahunty

2/14	Elizabeth	Stannard-Letcher
2/15	Suzanne	Biviano
2/15	Eileen	McGurk
2/16	Jan	Middendorf
2/21	Ilda	Deming
2/21	Jeri	Jaminet
2/22	Adele	Cohill
2/23	Lidia	Madrazo
2/24	Gayle	Grant
2/27	Paula	Choyke



JANUARY 14, 2021 AAUW VENICE BRANCH GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was held via ZOOM on January 14, 2021.

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

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

Treasurer's Report – Bobbi Amero: Scholarship funds exceed \$41,000.

President's Update – Kathleen Pickering

Members should read AAUW CEO Kim Churches' memo.

Comments at the national level are being sought on proposed eligibility for membership for non-degreed women and are due by February 5, 2021.

The use of online meetings will be added to the Branch by-laws.

The March General meeting is tentatively planned to be held at Maxine Barrett Park.

Public Policy – Joan Armstrong / Joyce Kamm

Virtually attended the Venice City Council meeting Tuesday, January 12th when the League of Women Voters, Diane Dimperio, gave a presentation on Medicaid Expansion. Draft resolution failed by a vote of 4-3.

Reminder that Lobby Days start March 17.

Membership – Patti Warner – Guest introduced.

New member cocktail hour is scheduled for March 18, 2021 at 5 PM via ZOOM.

Development – Susan Hotzler - A friend of Bea Holt has donated \$500 to the scholarship fund. Because of the cancellation of the Home Tour this year, other types of fundraisers are under consideration.

SIGs – Stephanie Hallowell—Sunsetter event will be scheduled when it is warmer.

Education – Wendy Seeley

Scholarship Committee has formed. Names have been sent to Gulf Coast Foundation.

Tech Trek letters have been sent to the schools for the virtual 2021 program.

Working with Laurel Civic Association to provide virtual tutoring support.

Programs – Pam Swarts -The February meeting will be a book discussion – “The Invention of Wings” by Sue Monk Kidd.

Communications – Judy Houston – preparing a news release announcing cancellation of the Home Tour and alternate fundraiser.

Strategic Plan – Susan Farstrup -Final version has been emailed to all members.

Old Business – N/A

New Business – N/A

Pam Swarts motioned that the meeting be adjourned, and it was seconded by Kathy Black.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Elaine Izzi, Secretary

NOTICE OF BYLAW PROPOSED AMENDMENT

AAUW Venice Members, please read the following proposed amendment to our bylaws. I will be asking for your vote at our meeting on February 11, 2021 beginning at 11:00 am.

Notice is hereby given by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Venice Board of Directors of a proposed amendment to the Bylaws of the AAUW Branch, Inc. The following proposed addition to the bylaws is required to allow Venice AAUW to conduct meetings by one or more means of remote communication. Although this amendment is proposed in the context of the COVID health crisis the proposed bylaw, if enacted, will allow Venice AAUW to respond to other situations which may prevent in person meetings such as extreme weather or personal illness.

Members may comment on the proposed amendment from receipt of this notice until (February 11) at which time the comment period will close and a vote on the amendment shall be taken. Comments should be sent to: veniceaauw@gmail.com. The notice and comment period shall be no less than 15 days prior to the vote. A 2/3 majority of the voting members in attendance on February 11 is required to pass the amendment.

Article XIX. Electronic Meetings

Any meeting may be conducted by one or more means of remote communication through which the Directors and/or Members may participate with each other during the meeting. Participation in a meeting by remote means constitutes presence in person at the meeting. Notice of the meeting shall include instructions for remote participation.

Book Club SIG Update

More members are joining the book club every month; why don't you? We meet the second Monday of the month via ZOOM. Social time begins at 1:00pm with the book discussion from 1:30-2:30. If you send your email address to Lynda Weston at lyndalweston@hotmail.com, you will get an invitation.

Our January meeting began with a time of title sharing. During the pandemic, many members have been reading more than ever. The book for January was "*American Dirt*" with Lynda Weston leading the discussion. Opinions were wide ranging, but most were glad to have read the book.

On February 8 Gail Densler will facilitate the discussion of "*The Island of Sea Women*" by Lisa See.

Public Policy

Sarasota State Legislative Meeting

December 18, 2020

The AAUW Sarasota Branch attended a meeting on December 18 in Sarasota of the state legislators representing Sarasota county. The purpose is “to hear from community organizations and members of the public about priorities for 2021 legislative sessions.” The State Representatives attending were Will Robinson R-Bradenton, Senator Joe Gruters R-Sarasota, Tommy Gregory R-Sarasota and James Buchanan R-Osprey.

The AAUW Sarasota Branch was put on the agenda and presented information from the report, *Aging, Women, and Economic Insecurity in Sarasota County*. Lois Finch, AAUW Sarasota Branch, reported for the AAUW Bradenton, AAUW Sarasota, and AAUW Venice branches. She pointed out the income disparity of women to men, especially Black and Hispanic women; the need to support the \$15 minimum wage; support and expand State Ride Sharing (bus transportations) and include paid leave and sick pay for government employees.

Joan Armstrong and I attended this meeting virtually because there were not enough seats for everyone. There were many other presenters such as Sarasota, North Port and Venice Chamber of Commerce, Education Foundation of Sarasota County, and the League of Women Voters who point out Florida could save \$2M if they supported Medicaid Expansion.

Joan and I will follow up in the New Year with our representatives and try to attend local government meetings.

Joyce Kamm
Public Policy

FEBRUARY 2021 – AAUW VENICE BRANCH ACTIVITIES

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT	CONTACT	LOCATION/NOTES
Mon	8	1:00	Virtual Book Club	Lynda Weston	Book Title: The Island of Sea Women Contact Lynda for ZOOM invitation request
Mon	22	2:00	Coastal Cruising	Paula Dulski	Leaving from Marina Max. Contact Paula for further information.

January Program Recap

Guest speaker Baila Miller delighted us, first with a humorous self-introduction, then a nearly hour-long presentation about the evolving art movement in America prior to World War One.

Using dozens of slides, Baila told the history of the 1913 Armory Show, a phenomenal undertaking which introduced America to progressive art. Part of the "new" art movement depicted poverty and deprivation, and it was met with ridicule in the form of negative publicity, but we were reminded that ANY publicity can have positive effects. "Whenever there is change, it's followed by fear, sneer, then cheer!" Baila shared.

The women of the Suffrage movement played a strong role in supporting the Armory show with their forward-thinking attitude AND their pocketbooks, and as more women became renown artists, America was poised to become the world's leader in modern art. In her closing comments, Baila quoted a noted artist, saying "Artists have a moral responsibility to reveal the truth in order to impact positive change" -- fitting for AAUW as well! Watch for more from Baila in the coming year.

To learn more about Baila's presentations, visit www.bailamillerprograms.com



Venice Views Editor for February: Sue Hotzler

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