

VOLUME XLVX No. 3

NOVEMBER 2023

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN, VENICE, FLORIDA BRANCH

P.O. Box 515, VENICE, FL 34284

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NATIONAL: aauw.org



WHO ARE WE?

The Venice AAUW Branch is the largest in Florida. We are active, vibrant, and motivated. We want our time with fellow members to be worthwhile, fun, and lasting. To that end, we, as co-presidents, want to refresh our **DIVA** goals with you. And we haven't done this alone. Look at everyone involved in our efforts, and we just left the gate! As we wrote at the end of summer, we have created a four-pronged approach.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE. Deliver initiatives so that their impact can be measured, have an important effect, and might even be remarkable! Already, we have committed to partnering with two outstanding groups: Women's Resource Center and USF (University of South Florida). Our "Community Involvement" will make a difference in the lives of the women and students we touch. Please follow the plans to be a part of this new endeavor.

BE INCLUSIVE. We want "on board" membership to include everyone in everything. The outreach to our members never stops. We want you to feel welcome and free to join any SIGs (Study/Interest Groups) or meetings that interest you. The member involvement in our planning of events and meetings is "over the top!" This will be a record year of participation.**BE VISIBLE.** Let VAAUW be seen doing worthwhile endeavors, sponsoring programs, and initiating activities. Did you hear about the girls' Fast Pitch Softball Team we are sponsoring? Title IX is working in our community, and we want to support these young women this season and next fall. Not only are they good athletes, but they are also winning their games! Our branch's new logo (VAAUW) shares the limelight with our national logo. Join us by purchasing a special polo shirt displaying our new logo. Wear it on our home tour, on the golf course, or just around town. There's no limit to our exposure. Don't forget the RBG Show at the Art Center. We're limited to 150 seats, so don't hesitate to make your reservation.

BE AWARE. We want to have knowledge and sensitivity to the many issues and current topics within our branch, community, state, and nation. Talking about "hitting it out of the park," have you seen the information our Public Policy pair have been sharing with us? They have given us an easy way to be involved. We can read about it, participate, sign petitions, or keep abreast of what our local, state, or nation is doing by simply listening to what they bring us.

It will be an exciting year with a multitude of great activities, many of which are already in the works. We're looking forward to seeing all of you at one of our many endeavors. We are **DIVAs** in the Venice AAUW!

Bev Weltzien and Jan Harris



Pictured here: VAAUW member Debbie Blackwell, LWV member Shawn Bartlet, VAAUW member Pam Swarts, and LWV member Jill Lewis-Spector

VAAUW Public Policy Perspective

The Assault on Public Education & Academic Freedom in Florida

Wonderful to see so many of you at VAAUW's October kick-off program in collaboration with the League of Women Voters (LWV). We heard Dr. Jill Lewis-Spector passionately make the case that public education in Florida is in serious trouble. Like LWV, AAUW staunchly supports public education and the uniform standards, accountability, inclusiveness, and academic freedom it embodies.

Jill pointed to the raft of recent Florida legislation resulting in book bans and restrictions on discussion of certain prohibited topics by teachers. DEI initiatives, gender studies and LGBTQ topics have been eliminated. Fear and distrust abound since teachers' certification and employment are at risk with non-compliance. Sadly however, confusion reigns over what compliance means, as the FL Dept. of Education (DOE) and the State Attorney General differ. No wonder there's been an exodus of teachers, with a growing shortage. Funding for public schools has been threatened, with about \$4B set to be siphoned in 2023 to private schools not accountable to the DOE in Florida, where discrimination based on special needs, religion or sex is acceptable.

So, what can public school advocates do? (continued on next page)

- **Send letters to your legislators** supporting public education and academic freedom. Fight back against book bans! It's easy, [here's how](#).
- **Check out the Florida Freedom to Read website [here](#)**. This non-profit helps defend the intellectual freedom of all school librarians, students, and community members by curating resources to educate and empower the public to fight censorship. It is endorsed by the American Association of School Libraries.
- **Come to the VAAUW SIG on Banned Books** to meet with others concerned about the censorship of books from libraries and schools in our community. On 4th Monday @1:30p/Jacaranda Library (Oct-Apr). VAAUW Contact: Lynda Weston.
- **VOTE! Support Sarasota County school board candidates** (e.g., [Tom Edwards](#)) who believe in public education and the importance of academic freedom.
- **Support local candidates** for municipal, county & state office who believe in same! As noted by the LWV, *"Education is the key to preserving democracy and assuring prosperity for all citizens."*

Questions or Comments? Contact Debbie Blackwell or Barbara Constantz.

ART IN THE AFTERNOON

SAVE THE DATES for Art in the Afternoon 2024. They are January 17, February 21 and March 27--all at the downtown Jervey library at 1 p.m.

We are looking for artists and photographers as well as members who can create a story about a painting. It's just 4 minutes at most. Please contact Trena Kelly asap.

The AAUW Florida Public Policy Issue Forums

Wouldn't you like more in-depth information on the important issues facing Florida from a nonpartisan but equity-focused viewpoint? Would you like to be able to ask your own questions of experts regarding these issues? Then be sure to attend as many AAUW Florida Issue Forums this year as you can. All sessions will start at 6:00 PM and last for an hour. The series is open to AAUW members and guests.

Reproductive Rights

Sept. 14, 2023

Moné Holder, Florida Rising

***Recording & summary provided in September Venice Views*

Title IX and Dress Codes in Schools

Oct. 5, 2023

Nancy Tray, Change the Dress Code Movement, St Johns County

*** Recording & summary pending.*

Gender Studies and DEI Initiatives at Colleges

Nov. 2 2023

Dr. Elizabeth Brown, Past President of the United Faculty of Florida, University of North Florida

[Click here to register for this session](#)

Florida 2024 Legislative Preview

Nov.16, 2023

Dr. Pat DeWitt, AAUW Co-Public Policy Director and Public Policy Committee Members

[Click here to register for this session](#)

Public Education and Book Bans

Jan. 11, 2024

Dr. Marvin Dunn, Professor Emeritus at Florida International University and Miami Center for Racial Justice

[Click here to register for this session](#)

Gender Pay Gap and Economic Security

March 7, 2024

Dr. Mary Gatta, AAUW FL Co- Public Policy Director and Director of Research and Public Policy, National Association of Colleges and Employers

[Click here to register for this session](#)

Voting Rights

April 18, 2024

Debbie Chandler, Co-President, League of Women's Voters. Florida

Please RSVP for each session individually. Once you RSVP you'll receive a Zoom link. Contact Mary Gatta, Co-Public Policy Director, AAUW Florida at gatta.mary@gmail.com with any questions.



WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN SINCE 1979

On November 9th, we look forward to seeing more returning members as we welcome Brent Giangregorio, Director of Client Services at the Women's Resource Center of Manatee, Sarasota, and Venice.

Brent will be able to answer any questions regarding volunteer positions, training, and time required for each volunteer opportunity at the Women's Resource Center.

The Venice AAUW Community Involvement Committee announced that the Women's Resource Center is one of two organizations with which we can partner as an organization or as individuals.

Pam Swarts

Outing Opportunity

The Women's Resource Center offers a dynamic program that may interest many members! Entitled "**The Power of Conversation: Embracing Generational Differences,**" this event will feature a panel of women representing four generational groups: Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z.

November 16, 5:30 – 7:30 pm at the Grove in Lakewood Ranch.

Online registration is available at acarter@mywrc.org. The cost is \$50 per person, including the program, food, and refreshments.

Pam Swarts plans to attend and invites other members to register and email her with your interest. We can then set up some carpooling.

*The Women's Resource Center in Venice
Needs Your Donation to "The Career Closet"
at Our Holiday Luncheon*

**Last year, it was stockings for youth in residential transition.
This year, on December 14th, when we gather for our holiday event,
members are encouraged to donate items in their closets to new life:**

Suggestions:

Slacks, skirts, tops, sweaters, shoes, belts, and jewelry appropriate for
work or a job interview.

WRC clients are of all ages and all sizes!

**Let's make it festive by bringing your donated clothing item in a big holiday gift
bag! Start purging that closet NOW!**

Kind Thoughts



A get well card was sent to Carol McGrain, who had leg surgery.

A thinking of you card was sent to Joyce Mikulski, our branch Vice President. Her husband is doing at home rehabilitation as a result of a heart attack.

Bonnee Hagen

The Buzz is on! HOME TOUR 2024

Our traditional Home Tour will be held on Friday, February 9, 2024. Planning is moving along as scheduled and we have secured two outstanding homes. Our goal is to add a few more to ensure another outstanding event.

PERHAPS 2024 WILL BE THE BEST YET!

If you know anyone who would enjoy showing off her home, contact Dee Collins or Trena Kelly. We all know this is a most worthy cause. Venice AAUW is empowering local women by raising funds for scholarships. Our awardees will be able to return to their academic pursuits and complete their degrees. Certainly empowered, educated women lead better lives and elevate the lives of their families as well as our community.

Ready? Again, let's go all out to put VAAUW and our HOME TOUR on the Venice map!



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP TEAM

We are off to another year of contribution, accomplishment, friendship and fun. AAUW kicked off 2023-2024 with our first meeting of the new membership year. We were pleased to host a new member and a guest. A special thanks to Suzanne and Dee for their help at the Membership Desk and in distributing our new branch directory. Should you find any errors in the directory, please contact me and I will see that the membership is informed of the correct information. I encourage you to invite potential members to our Mix and Mingle events and to our regular monthly meetings. We are always happy to have them. In the meantime, welcome back! **Membership Director Marge Collin**

Introducing New Member Cindy Sproehnle



Cindy is looking forward to joining AAUW and enjoying the learning opportunities it offers.

She is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati (Associate Degree), Vanderbilt University (Peabody College, BS), and Xavier University for my M.ED. Her career in education lasted 34 years, as she taught in the Newport, Kentucky public schools for 19 years, then transitioned to Gateway Community and Technical College as an instructor and Assessment Center Director.

When she retired in 2015, she pursued a life-long passion and studied for 3 years to become a certified Wine Judge through the American Wine Society.

She has been married for 39 years and has 2 wonderful daughters and 2 granddaughters.

SAVE THE DATE!

What? Scholarship Reception

When? Monday, November 20, 2023, 4:00 to 6:00 PM

Where? Café Venice on The Island
101 West Venice Ave., Venice, FL 34285

Cost? \$25.00 for one beer or glass of wine, hors d'oeuvres, tax and tip

Join us at this special event to celebrate the accomplishments of our five scholarship recipients: Cassie Davis, Anne Marie Medico, Heather Gomez, Larissa Lippe, and Veronica Gemesi.

Learn about these amazing women and how your contributions have or will change their lives!

The cost for the evening is \$25.00 and includes one beer or glass of wine, hors d'oeuvres, tax, and tip. Sign up no later than the November meeting. Payment can be made in cash or check payable to "AAUW Venice Branch".

Thank you,

Wendy Seeley, Scholarship Committee Chair

Committee members include Bobbi Amero, Dottie Bingman and Marge Ostrom

ORDER FORM - VAAUW LADIES POLO SHIRTS



Ladies Sizes: XS-4XL

True Navy

- 3.8-ounce, 100% polyester interlock with PosiCharge technology
- Self-fabric collar
- Removable tag for comfort and relabeling
- Taped neck
- Elongated 2-button placket with dyed-to-match buttons
- Set-in, open hem sleeves

For sizing details, go to:

<https://www.sporttekusa.com/p/9061> True Navy

\$30 for sizes XS-XL \$32 for XXL \$33 for XXL

Send your size and check payment to **Venice AAUW**
by December 1

Mail to Pam Swarts (address in the directory) or

Orders will be taken at the November Meeting



Please send your check for \$35 to
AAUW Venice P.O.Box 515, Venice, FL 34284
Or pay at the branch meeting on Nov. 9

Serving Holiday Salad: Leafy greens, grilled chicken, strawberries, candied walnuts, goat cheese, grape tomatoes, cucumber, strawberry vinaigrette and rolls.

Includes Assorted Mini Desserts

Note: The bartender only accepts credit card payments

Community Involvement
We will collect business clothing and accessories to
donate to the Women's Resource Center in Venice



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Pat Perry	5	Janet Hemond	13
Phyllis Shonk	6	Patty Otto	14
Boneeta Hagen	7	Phyllis Barth	16
Nancy Savenko	7	Alice Haber	22
Hilda Dillman	8	Barbara Wyshner	29
Susan Luterbach	8	Rosemary Smith	30
Roberta Meyers	10		

BOOK BARTER

The book barter continues in November. Bring a book or two. Take home a book or two. Enjoy the read.



AAUW Venice Branch Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2023, William Jervey Public Library

Vice President Joyce Mikulski called the Business Meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. A message from the copresidents was read. Kathleen Pickering spoke on the AAUW Venice community involvement initiative for this year. The Women's Resource Center and the University of South Florida are the organizations. Future programs will outline all the volunteer opportunities available.

Brief board reports were given. New members and guests were introduced. SIG chairs had brief announcements. Program dates are listed in the Venice Views

The Venice chapter has sponsored a girls' U14-16 years softball team to enhance AAUW visibility. A game party will be held on Oct. 26th before the game at 7:30 p.m. The games are played at the Pinebrook Fields.

Polo shirts with the AAUW logo will also be available to raise visibility.

A scholarship fundraising event will be held on January 14, 2024. The program is a live portrayal of RBG.

The Home Tour is on February 9, 2024. Only two homes have been selected, and another two are needed. The committee is looking for other possible homes.

The Giving Challenge will be in April.

Wendy Seeley spoke for the Scholarship Committee. A Scholarship Reception at Cafe Venice will be held on November 20th to introduce this year's winners. The cost is \$25.

The media chair noted the deadline for Venice Views is the 15th of the month before that issue's release. Members are encouraged to check the chapter website for all information on activities, policies, etc.

Public Policy suggested checking the ZOOM recordings for the League of Women Voters website for information on various projects, policies or other news.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 PM

Submitted by Suzanne Biviano and Wendy Seeley

Study/ Interest Groups

LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch will meet at Made in Italy, 117 W. Venice Ave., Venice on Wednesday, November 29 at 11:30. *Please note date change from 4th Wednesday to 5th Wednesday due to Thanksgiving on the 4th Thursday.

Lydia Russo and Anita Kunkle

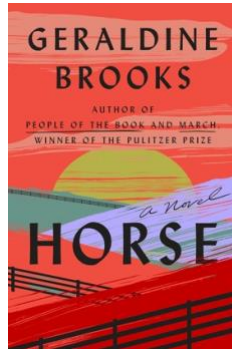


COOK'S CORNER

Cook's Corner gathers at members' homes on the third Wednesday of the month at noon. Each month we recruit a member for the following month who offers her home and a theme for the menu, and look forward to each other's company and a wonderful luncheon. After lunch we take time to review our choices and what we think makes them special to share and, we hope, enjoyable! We welcome new members...please send your name and email to be added to our list.

The gathering spot for November will take place at the home of Nancy Brex at 4602 Borghese Court in Venice on Wednesday, November 15. The theme will be Asian food. Come join us!

Joan Kieran, Chair



BOOK CLUB

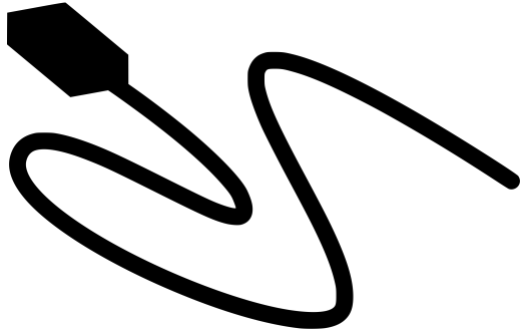
November brings in-person meetings again at the Jacaranda Library for the AAUW SIG Book Club! Everyone has enjoyed the opportunity to read and talk with the group via Zoom but will be happy to be back together. The November book is *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks, and the discussion will be led by Dottie Bingham. The date is November 13, 2023 at 1:30, but come early to catch up with everyone.
Hilda Dillman

*You're
Invited*

EVENING OUT

Evening Out will take place on Wednesday, November 15 at Cafe Venice at 6pm. Please e-mail or call Melanie Odom by Monday Nov.13. Hope to see you there.

Melanie Odom



Reconnect!

Mix & Mingle
Monday, November 13
4 to 6 pm
Café Venice, 101 W. Venice Avenue

**It's an opportunity to socialize with members
you may not have met or
snowbirds who have been away.**

Join us for a couple hours of "getting to know you."

**To help us in our planning, please phone or email
Kathleen Pickering
Or Judy Houston**

Hope to see you there!

AAUW VENICE BRANCH ACTIVITIES CALENDAR NOVEMBER 2023

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT	CONTACT	LOCATION/ NOTES
TBD	TBD	TBD	French Conversation	Jane Metcalf	Contact Jane for dates, times, and location The goal is to meet twice a month.
TBD	TBD	1:30	Duplicate Bridge	Susan Leege	TBD
TBD	TBD	11:30	Euchre	Charlene Turczyn	Paradise Grill
Tues	7	9:00	Walk and Talk	Beth Gamel	Maxine Barritt Park, Meet at Big Pavilion, 20-to-30-minute brisk walk.
Fri	10	11:00	Bridge for Fun	Carol Cudia	TBD
Mon	13	4-6	Mix and Mingle	Kathleen Pickering	Café Venice
Mon	13	1:30	Book Group	Lynda Weston Hilda Dillman	Jacaranda Library Horse by Geraldine Brooks
		TBD	Exploring with Your Camera	Val Dwek and Linda Friedman	Starting in December
Tues	14	TBD	Mahjong	TBD	TBD
Tues	14	9:00	Walk and Talk	Beth Gamel	Maxine Barritt Park, Meet at Big Pavilion, 20-to-30-minute brisk walk.
Wed	15			Deadline for December Venice Views	Send Word articles and/or jpg formatted photos by email to aauwveniceviews@gmail.com
Wed	15	6:00	Evening Out	Melanie Odom	Café Venice
Wed	15	12:00	Cook's Corner	Joan Kieran	Location: home of Nancy Brex. Theme: Asian dishes
Tues	21	9:00	Walk and Talk	Beth Gamel	Maxine Barritt Park, Meet at Big Pavilion, 20-to-30-minute brisk walk.
Mon	20	4:00	Scholarship Reception	Wendy Seeley	Café Venice
TBD	TBD	1:30	Banned Books	Lynda Weston	Jacaranda Library
Tues	28	9:00	Walk and Talk	Beth Gamel	Maxine Barritt Park, Meet at Big Pavilion, 20-to-30-minute brisk walk.
Wed	29	11:30	Lunch Bunch	Lydia Russo and Anita Kunkle	117 W. Venice Ave. *Please note date change from 4 th Wednesday to 5 th Wednesday due to Thanksgiving on the 4 th Thursday.
			Coastal Cruising	Paula Dulski	No cruise this month.

FREE*FREE*FREE*FREE



FREE*FREE*FREE*FREE

ALL WELCOME

**Thursday, November 30th
1-3 PM**

**Invited speakers include representatives
from
Secret Service
Florida Attorney General's Office
Sarasota County Sheriff Department
Bank representatives**

**Organized by the
Venice Branch
of
American Association of
University Women**

**Our Hosts
Venice Presbyterian Church
825 The Rialto on the Island of Venice**



Venice Views Editor for November:

Nancy Brex

E-copies Circulation: Susan Donovan

Reminder for Sharing and Caring Cards:

Please email Boneeta Hagen and let her know of any illnesses/accidents/deaths or other events happening to our members within our branch. We need your input!!

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

Text in Word Formatted File—Pictures in JPG Format Only!

Deadline for the December issue of Venice Views is **11/15/2023**.