

VOLUME XLVX No. 7

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN, VENICE, FLORIDA BRANCH

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A Message from the Co-Presidents

Dear Venice AAUW Members:

As we welcome spring with its promise of renewal and growth, April is the perfect month to acknowledge the many opportunities showered upon us as AAUW members.

Starting on April 7, 2025, the old and new VAAUW Boards will come together for a day-long retreat. Through this interactive activity, we aim to cultivate new ideas and enthusiasm for the upcoming term. How can we engage our membership more completely? Can we streamline our

efforts? How can we raise funds to support our goals? All while we focus on what matters most—empowering women!

Our general meeting is on April 10th, when we will install the new slate. It's time to nurture those “new seeds” and help them grow into exceptional leadership roles. We encourage you to think about how you can contribute. Whether it's volunteering for a new role, mentoring a new member, or sharing innovative fundraising ideas, your involvement is essential! You have the power, skills, insights, and knowledge needed for our VAAUW to thrive.

April 17, 2025, marks the next exciting leadership opportunity: the AAUW Florida SW Regional Conference, taking place right in our own backyard at the Venice Art Center. Nine southwest branches will gather to share ideas and support one another as we evolve into a cohesive organization across the state. Anyone interested in attending can find the information to sign up in this newsletter.

This is the season to spring forward, so let's continue uplifting one another, supporting our missions, and inspiring the next generation. Together, we can transform this season of renewal into a time of lasting impact. Our term has not yet concluded, and we view May and June as ongoing opportunities. We invite you to stay “onboard” with us and continue this extraordinary journey into the year!

Wishing you the best,
Jan & Bev

Journalist Carrie Siedman Spoke at our March Program



We had the pleasure of hearing Carrie Siedman, former journalist for the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, speak on March 13th. Carrie and Program Director Lynda Weston engaged in a lively Q&A covering Carrie's past and current engagement with many issues. The first one she discussed was her involvement with issues regarding mental health. On many occasions this was a topic for Carrie in her writing. She has written a performance piece on the topic which will be performed April 26 at 3 and 7 at Sarasota Contemporary Dance in the Rosemary District. Tickets (which are necessary, but free), can be found at www.sarasotacontemporary-dance.org. Click on "performance" and then "in studio".

Carrie also discussed the Sarasota County Commissioners with perhaps some steps forward, but a few in the other direction regarding development and what seems like a conflict of interest between the board member and the building trade. The school board has calmed down with some changes of board members.

She gave some personal examples of exclusions due to being a female early in her career and then not feeling she had been given a fair chance at the other end, which could have been seen as equity issue. A question was asked regarding "freedom of the press" and the recent ousting of the AP from the White House and Air Force One. With so many avenues to get news, Carrie said that we need journalists now more than ever. She urged the membership to stay involved.

Carrie is currently out of her condo due to the hurricane floods of last fall. She hopes to return to her home in the next few months.

April Program

The Installation of Officers for the 2024-2026 term will be conducted by Kathy Black. Join us to welcome and support the incoming board. Also, a farewell skit will be presented to thank the Board members who have brought us great leadership and exciting events and activities. And...don't forget to join us for lunch following the meeting at Shamrock Cafe.

The nominees for the April 10 Annual Meeting area as follows:

- President: Joyce Mikulski
- Membership: Cindy Sproehnle
- Secretary: Susan Donovan
- Nominating: Susan Hotzler
- Nominating: Joan Kieran

Introducing our New Members



Gayle Valletta

Gayle is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island. She is the mother of 4 daughters and grandmother of 8. She began her career by working for Texas Instruments as a sales engineer, leaving to raise a family. She returned to school and started her second career as a high school math teacher. She “officially” retired in 2021. She and her spouse Dave sold their house of 32 years in Clinton, Connecticut, and moved to their cottage on Prudence Island in Rhode Island. Wanting to enjoy the warm Florida weather, they purchased a condo in Venice last year. Gayle enjoys the beach, reading, boating, and going to the YMCA for group classes. She was a member of AAUW when she lived in Connecticut. WE are delighted that she chose to join us here in Venice.

Emily Feistritzer



Emily has been a lifelong educator. She started as a high school math and science teacher in Kentucky, then advanced to a teacher educator at the University of South Carolina and culminated in being an educational entrepreneur. She is the creator of the on-line university, Moreland University, which she sold in 2021. Emily has conducted several surveys and studies on education; particularly in the teaching profession. She has published 48 reports on education including: *The Making of a Teacher*, *Teacher Crisis: Myth or Reality*, *Profiles of Teachers in the US* and *Cheating our Children*. Emily was born and raised in Kentucky. She received her PhD from Indiana University, she was on the faculty at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, S.C. and went on to Washington DC in 1977. She lived and worked in DC until moving to Venice in November 2024 with her two little dogs, Jasmine and Molly. She loves the sunshine and the people here. Her lifelong mantras have been “Dream big and don’t believe in failure” and “If you can dream it, it can come.

Pam Butler



We are pleased to welcome Pam Butler (formerly Vansky and Moran) to AAUW. Pam is a retired registered dietitian. She is a native of Ohio and is a graduate of Ohio University. She moved to New York for an internship at New York Hospital. Then she went on to earn her masters at NYU. She has one daughter and one granddaughter and has lived in Venice for over 30 years. Her passions are and always have been food and nutrition. Welcome, Pam!

Cynthia Czesak “Cindy”



Cindy

is a graduate of Rutgers University where she also earned a Masters Degree in Library Sciences. From 1971 to 2017 she worked in the public library system, starting as a high school page and eventually becoming a director in a municipal library. As a director, Cindy served over 150,000 residences. The aspect of her career that she found most enjoyable was interacting with community organizations and community members. Cindy has also served on multiple non-profit boards. Some were related to library work and some were more community focused. Relocating to Venice is a challenge for her as she looks to find her place in this new community. AAUW will certainly help her with that.

From Public Policy Director Debbie Blackwell

Those who care about public schools and Social Security issues should contact your congressmen. The following activities are underway. The current president of the United States of America plans to sign an executive order to dismantle and abolish the United States Department of Education. Congress has the final say. Our members may be interested in contacting their Representatives in Congress to demand and present their opinions on protecting the Department of Education and Social Security. These positions comply with the National AAUW positions.


Following is a sample letter:

Dear Congressman,

As a registered Sarasota County, FL voter and your constituent, I demand you protect the United States Department of Education and Social Security as they stand.

Your name and address

Please mail it to Congressman Greg Stuebe, 7590 Fruitville Rd #102, Sarasota, FL 34240, or call his office at 941-499-3214 and leave a message.

- Below is a link that also may interest you. It is a critical part of the public school program.  Florida Universal Lunch and Breakfast program

Check out the Team Picture and Team Schedule



Joyce attended Opening Day on Saturday, February 22. Our 14/16U team was proudly introduced as Venice AAUW – the American Association of University Women. Our coach is Chad, and his assistant is Mark. Our banner is up now in both softball fields. I am proposing a softball social for our members on Tuesday, April 29 with a rainout date of Tuesday, May 13. We will meet for dinner at Asaro’s at 6:00pm and then head over to the game at 7:30. There will be a sign-up sheet at the April meeting.

Check out the team schedule below. Our team is Chad.

g	Date	Home	Away	Time	iel	DayOfW
14U	03/11/25	Miss DeSoto 2 (Oma	Miss Venice 1 (Chad)	7:30pm	3	Tuesday
14U	03/13/25	Miss Venice 1 (Chad	Miss DeSoto 1 (Adam)	7:30pm	1	Thursday
14U	03/27/25	Miss Venice 1 (Chad	Miss North Port 1 (Jessica	7:30pm	2	Thursday
14U	04/01/25	Punta Gorda	Miss Venice 1 (Chad)	7:30pm	5	Tuesday
14U	04/10/25	Miss Venice 1 (Chad	Miss Charlotte	7:30pm	1	Thursday
14U	04/15/25	Miss Venice 2 (John	Miss Venice 1 (Chad)	7:30pm	2	Tuesday
14U	04/24/25	Miss DeSoto 2 (Oma	Miss Venice 1 (Chad)	7:30pm	3	Thursday
14U	04/29/25	Miss Venice 1 (Chad	Miss North Port 2 (Brandoo	7:30pm	2	Tuesday
14U	05/13/25	Miss Venice 1 (Chad	Miss Englewood	7:30pm	2	Tuesday
14U	05/15/25	Miss Venice 1 (Chad	Miss Venice 2 (John)	7:30pm	1	Thursday

Join us for a Spring Wine Tasting



Provided by WOWEE (Women Owned Wineries Event Extraordinaire)

Location: **Home of Leona and Bill Crosskey
on Casey Key**

Date: **April 9, 2025**

Time: **4 to 7 PM**

Cost: **\$75.00,**

an inclusive tasting of 6 wines with 6 appetizers

To purchase tickets, click on link:

<https://www.aplos.com/aws/events/wowee>



***Note:** A **free parking shuttle** will transport all participants to the home beginning at 3:45 PM. Please look for the AAUW sign in the public parking lot across from Nokomis Beach at the intersection of Casey Key Rd. and Albee Rd. **No parking is available at the residence.**

You are invited to attend!

Florida SW Regional Conference 2025

Tampa, Sun City Center, Manatee, Greater Naples, Ft. Myers, Marco Island, Punta Gorda, Sarasota, Venice

"Elevating our Community Impact"

Through Leadership, Membership, Finances, Public Policy,
Branch Successes, and Community Impact

Venice Art Center
390 Nokomis Ave S
Venice, FL

April 17, 2025 10:00 am - 3:30 pm

Registration

All Venice AAUW members are welcome to register, and current and future leaders are especially encouraged to attend.

Our branch will pay the \$25.00 registration fee, which includes a buffet lunch, morning coffee and tea, soft drinks, and snacks.

Advance registration is required by April 9, 2025, to Bobbi Amero, bamero48@gmail.com. Please provide your name, email, and phone number. *No-shows will be charged \$25.00.*

Kind Thoughts



A sympathy card was sent to Kathy Economides, whose husband, Jim passed away suddenly.

A sympathy card was sent to Jeri Jaminet as her husband, Jerry passed away.

A card was sent to Marge Ostrom who had surgery.

A sympathy card was sent to Pat Bull as her husband passed away.

A sympathy card was sent to Karol Olsen whose husband, Hal passed away.

A card was sent to Joan Kostka who had surgery.

Please send any members' names to Bonnee Hagen if there is a need.

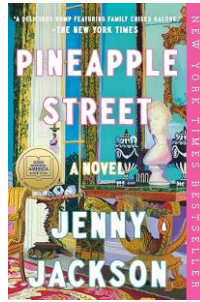
Study/ Interest Groups

EVENING OUT

*You're
Invited*

The next Evening Out will be on Wednesday, April 16 at 6 pm at Captain Eddie's Seafood Restaurant. We need a minimum of 6 people to keep this reservation. The address is 107 Colonial Lane East in Nokomis. Call or email Melanie Odom by Monday, April 14.

BOOK CLUB



The May selection for your VAAUW book group is *Pineapple Street* by Jenny Jackson. A house on Pineapple Street is not only a place, but a symbol of a family that cannot let go of the past.

Anne Finger will lead the discussion at the Jacaranda Library on April 14. Book discussion begins at 1:25pm, but come any time after 1:00 to share what you have been reading.

BANNED BOOKS



The Banned Book SIG discussed Kirsten Miller's new book *Lula Dean's Little Library of Banned Books* at its March 24th meeting at the Jacaranda Library. While a fiction book, so many of the issues that arose in the little town of Troy, Alabama are issues we in Florida find ourselves also dealing with. These include: book banning, racial identity, class, removing civil war monuments, sexual orientation, etc.

This is the last meeting of this SIG until next fall. Please continue to follow the turnabouts so many institutions are facing.

EXPLORING WITH YOUR CAMERA



Grab your cell phones and cameras, we will be exploring historic downtown Venice. We will meet at the Gazebo, Tuesday April 8th at 10:30 am.

Plan on lunch following our walk.

COOK'S CORNER



Cook's corner met at the home of Cindy Sproehnle where the group shared a meal of "artfully crafted appetizers." The pictures above are just a sampling of the beautiful offerings!

Debbie Blackwell will host the next meeting. The theme for April will be "lemons."

MIX AND MINGLE



March's Mix and Mingle was a celebration for our Home Tour. The women pictured represent many of the workers who made the Tour so successful.

The next Mix and Mingle will be on April 14 at the Hotel Venezia.

AAUW VENICE BRANCH ACTIVITIES CALENDAR APRIL 2025

DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT	CONTACT	LOCATION / NOTES
Tues	1	10:00	Coastal Cruising	Paula Dulski	Meet at Marine Max.
Fri	4	11:30	Euchre	Charlene Turczyn	Paradise Grill
Tues	8	10:30	Exploring with Your Camera	Val Dwek and Linda Friedman	Meet at the Gazebo in Venice
Fri	11	12:15	Bridge for Fun	Bernadette McEnerney	Venezia Restaurant
Mon	14	1:30	Book Group	Hilda Dilman	Jacaranda Library Pineapple Street
Mon	14	4:00	Mix and Mingle	Kathleen Pickering and Judy Houston	Hotel Venezia
Tues	15			Deadline for May Venice Views Send Word formatted articles and/or jpg formatted photos by email to aauwveniceviews@gmail.com	
Wed	16	12:00	Cook's Corner	Joan Kieran	Deb Blackwell will host. Theme: lemons
Wed	16	6:00	Evening Out	Melanie Odom	Captain Eddie's Seafood Restaurant, 107 Colonial Lane East in Nokomis
Fri	18	11:30	Euchre	Charlene Turczyn	Paradise Grill
Tues	22	10:00	Coastal Cruising	Paula Dulski	Meet at Stump Pass Marina.
Wed	23	11:30	Lunch Bunch	Anita Kunkle Lydia Russo	British Open Pub, 367 Jacaranda Blvd.
Thurs	24		French Conversation	Jane Metcalf	Contact Jane for location
Fri	25	12:15	Bridge for Fun	Bernadette McEnemey	Venezia Restaurant
			Movie Mavens	Sue Lang	TBD



Venice Views Editor for MAY: Ann Saller

E-copy Circulation: Susan Donovan

VENICE VIEWS: 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 MAY issue of Venice Views is 4/15/2025

MAKING VENICE VIEWS BETTER FOR YOU!

The Venice Views Editorial team continually tries to make our newsletter more informative and easier to read. In order to do so we came up with the following requests:

Everything that is emailed for inclusion in a monthly newsletter **MUST BE SENT ONLY** to: aauwveniceviews@gmail.com. Venice Views has its very own email address.

- (1) We ask that each member who submits a notice to please keep the article down to a reasonable size, write the article in the third person. We thank you for your information. Please note your copy may be edited.
- (2) Because the newsletter is posted on the internet, personal contact information is **not** to be included. Personal info is located in our Annual Directory. Contact Membership Director Marge Collin for a copy.
- (3) We LOVE your photos! **BUT** please do **not** send them **twice**. [Often photos are sent to the SIG chair and by the individual straight to the Venice Views.]
- (3) Not everybody knows everybody! **Please** label your photos, as much as possible, with the event and the names of the people in the photos.
- (4) All photos are to be sent in **JPG format ONLY**.