

The American Association of University Women

The TORCH

October-November, 2022

AAUW. Vol. 61 No. 2

Peggy Drennan Cihl, Editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

Our September meeting was a bright start to our new year! The September luncheon was full of conversation and joy at being together face to face. The Branch spirit is very much alive! A special thank you to Jemetta and her program. Her Tai Chi exercises left us calm and refreshed.

Alas ... IAN hit, and our October luncheon had to be canceled and the TORCH delayed. We have contacted or heard from all our members, and thankfully, there has been no loss of life; but damages to property varied from minor to loss of cars to total loss of homes. The tragedy is real and heartbreaking, but the stories of survivors and spirit of many organizations and volunteers is heartwarming. As AAUW women let us all remain strong and determined and support one another and our community's recovery. The following are summaries of...

September Board Meeting

- Passed the 2022-2023 budget.
- Approved the \$60 dollar price for the BINGO GALA ticket if purchased prior to November 20th and \$65 after that date.
- Approved the job descriptions for Diversity Chair and the Branch Strategic Plan.
- Thanks to Lisa Crotty and Jemetta Hunt, the new Directory is done and was delivered to all present and mailed to other members. If you have not received yours, it will be available at the November 12th luncheon. ***Please check that your email in the Directory is correct*** to ensure that you get our branch email blasts.
- Per the normal routine, the November meeting agenda, the October minutes and the financial report will be distributed via email blast **three** days prior to the November luncheon.

October Board and Bingo Gala Zoom meeting:

- Due to Ian, there will be a combined TORCH for both October and November.
- An email blast to all members and this TORCH contain all the details on the Bingo Gala event and tickets. Start now to invite your family and friends!
- Additional dollars are still needed for the Star Bright Scholarship Fund which provides a \$1000 scholarship at Fort Myers/Cape Coral Technical College.

See you at the AAUW NOVEMBER MEETING/LUNCHEON which is NOVEMBER 12th
(not our usual 3rd Saturday)

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you must decide what kind of difference you want to make."

– Jane Goodall, Primatologist, Anthropologist, & Activist

Janet George & Bonnie Ryan
Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc.



**Join us for
Our Luncheon and Program**

**The Landings Yacht, Golf & Tennis
Club, 5200 South Landings Drive**

OUR MEETING DATE:

**Saturday, November 12, 2022
Gathering: 11:30 A.M.
Location: In The Garden Room**

Luncheon Menu:

Rolls, Coffee, Tea

*Choice 1: POT ROAST with whipped potatoes
and roasted carrots*

*Choice 2: SPINACH & BERRIES SALAD
with grilled chicken, baby spinach, sliced
strawberries, dried cranberries, mandarin
oranges, feta cheese, Bermuda onion, and
toasted almonds, finished with raspberry
vinaigrette*

Choice 3: Vegan Meal. Chef's choice

Dessert: Chef's Choice or Fruit Cup

*Beverages are available. Wait staff will accept
charge cards for beverages.*

***Reservations are required
and please indicate choice of menu.***



**For luncheon reservations, contact
Carolyn Nance. She'll acknowledge
your reservation by return e-mail. If
you do not receive a note, please contact
her again.**

**Carolyn's contact is:
cnance5240@gmail.com
or at
(239) 785-9993**

**Please title your e-mail
AAUW Reservations
and contact Carolyn Nance no later than
Monday, November 7.
Cancellations must be made no later
than *Tuesday, November 8*, using the
same method of communication,
otherwise, payment is expected.**

The value of luncheon is \$27.00

**(Meetings end in May and begin again
the third Saturday in September.)**

STEM and STEAM:



Inclusive STEM Education: Inviting More Voices to Address SWFL's Most Critical Issues



Dr. Heather Skaza
Acosta

The Whitaker Center at Florida Gulf Coast University works with FGCU faculty and students, the K-12 community, and public stakeholders to broaden participation and develop workforce capacity in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) disciplines. The Center integrates expertise across campus and the community to develop solutions to our region's most pressing issues.

Dr. Heather Skaza Acosta will discuss how various frameworks in STEM, like place-based education, models and modeling, STEAM, and environmental justice help more learners find a seat at the STEM table. We will discuss why inclusive STEM participation advances the field and provides a stronger foundation for equitable problem-solving. Broadening participation in a historically white male-dominated field will benefit “good science” and our community.

Dr. Skaza Acosta's undergraduate work was completed at the Ohio State University in Environmental Biology. Her graduate work in Environmental Education was completed at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, before moving to Southwest Florida in 2016. She specialized in using models and modeling to teach about the local impacts of climate change in our region. She has served as the Director of Education at the Conservancy of Southwest Florida and is the Committee Chair for the Environmental Education Alliance of Southwest Florida, in addition to her work at FGCU. She lives in Fort Myers with her husband and two wild boys.

As you may know, our Branch as well as AAUW National, has for years been promoting STEM as part of our goal of empowering girls and women to succeed in college, through our involvement in scholarships and the GEM program for middle school age girls.

Women of Interest



The women in “*Hidden Figures*” and their movie counterparts. The book highlights the experiences of three specific black women: **Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson**, and the movie brought their stories to an even larger audience.

What's the History of Women in STEAM?

In 1946, women coders helped make the first computer work. But their work on ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) wasn't recognized at the time. And people who later saw the coders in photographs published with articles about ENIAC thought the women were just models.”

In the 1940s, the aeronautics predecessor to NASA hired a group of Black women who later used their math, coding, and engineering skills to help give the space agency the ability to have a huge impact on the world. These women were unsung heroes until a 2016 book, “**Hidden Figures**” and a 2017 movie of the same name brought their stories to public attention.

*American Association of University Women
Welcomes You to
Bingo for Scholarships!*



*Buffet Dinner and Bingo Games
Saturday, December 3, 2022*

Scholarship Fundraiser

AAUW hasn't had a fundraiser for the previous two years due to Covid restrictions. Come on out and do your part to support our scholarship goals. We hope to have you join us for a wonderful evening. We have exciting plans for you and your spouse, significant other and friends! The dinner will be an extensive buffet; and there will be a silent auction, a live auction and \$\$\$\$ prizes for the bingo games! Mark your calendars, invite your guests and make a reservation as soon as possible for this fun-filled evening! You can reserve up to 8 people to sit at a table. The donation is \$60 per person until Nov. 20; \$65 up to date of event.

To reserve a space for you and your party, contact

Carolyn Nance at

cnance5240@gmail.com

or (239) 785-9993

Payment is required ahead of time. Send the check to Carolyn Nance at
11674 Lady Anne Circle, Cape Coral, FL33991



**Buffet Dinner and Bingo Games
Saturday, December 3, 2022**

This will be a fun-filled evening where you can interact with your friends and family. You will find yourself in The Landings' beautiful party room where the aroma of a delicious buffet wafts through the air. You will be able to admire and bid on some wonderful baskets created around themes.

The **BUFFET** will feature:

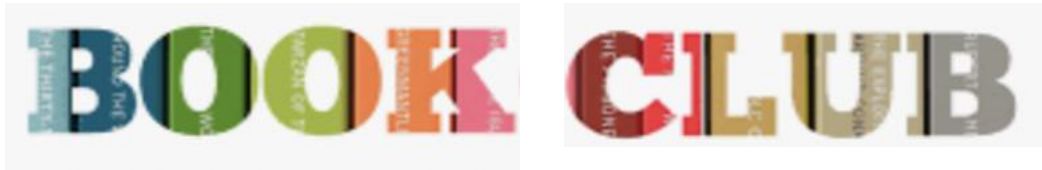
A COBB SALAD STATION
WITH ASSORTED DRESSINGS
ROLLS AND BUTTER
CHICKEN MARINARA
SALMON PICCATA
PASTA PRIMAVERA
VEGETABLE MEDLEY
FINGERLING POTATOES
A DESERT STATION
WITH ASSORTED DESERTS

Bingo will follow with cash **\$\$\$\$\$** prizes.

Reservations and Payment Required
Contact: Carolyn Nance at
cnance5240@gmail.com
or at
(239) 785-9993

Send the check to Carolyn Nance at 11674 Lady Anne Circle, Cape Coral, FL33991

AAUW



We have two book clubs. Each welcomes new members.

Cover Girls Book Club has been meeting on Zoom but is considering in-person meetings with the addition of Zoom for members out of town or unable to otherwise attend. Group members will be reading a mystery for their November meeting, *White Nights* by Anne Cleeves. The next reading will be *Wish You Were Here* by Judy Picoult. The group will decide during the November meeting whether to have a holiday luncheon in December as planned before the hurricane and/or to discuss the Jody Picoult novel in December or January. The meeting time is generally the second Wednesday of each month from 1 pm to 3 pm. If interested in joining or have questions, contact Carol Fuechsel at cbfuechsel@gmail.com.

Page Turners Book Club has generally been meeting on the fourth Thursday at 12:45 in the Lakes Library. Dates for November and December will change due to the holidays. In December there will be a luncheon. Book selections are made by consensus. The November/December selection is *French Braid* by Anne Tyler. The group reports it is accepting new members. Contact Lynn Felice if you have questions or want to become a member: lfelice@embarqmail.com



AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County

<https://fmlc-fl.aauw.net>

Our local e-mail address:

aauwleecounty@gmail.com

Our National Organization

<https://www.aauw.org>

Facebook, linked from the website and the direct link:

<https://www.facebook.com/AAUW-Fort-Myers-Lee-County-Branch-107794550957375>



Our next Great Decisions discussion has been *rescheduled* for Friday, October 21, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. The topic will be Foreign Policy, Economic Power, and U.S. Industrial Policy. Janet and Bruce George are the discussion leaders. If you have been considering joining Great Decisions and would like to join this discussion as a guest, please contact Suzan Harden at skh062653@gmail.com. She will arrange to send you the reading material and the link to the Master Class discussion.

It is time to order books for the 2023 discussion year. The discussion topics are as follows:

- Energy Geopolitics: How will changes in the energy industries impact relations between countries?
- War Crimes: What is a war crime? How does this definition apply to recent events in Ukraine?
- China's Foreign Policy: How will the U.S. respond to China's growing global presence?
- Economic Warfare: What comprises economic warfare? How have these measures been used recently against Russia?
- Elections in Latin America: What does the emergence of various left-wing governments mean for countries in Latin America?
- Iran and the Gulf States: What is the future for relations between Iran and the Gulf states?
- Climate Migration: How is climate change impacting migration?

We meet the first Friday of the month at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom February – June and September – November. Members take turns leading the discussion. **Please contact Suzan Harden by Friday, October 21, if you would like to order a book.** If the order is placed by the end of October, we get a 20 percent discount per book with a minimum order of 10 books. The cost is \$35 – 20% = \$28 + shipping/handling. You do not have to pay for the book at the time of ordering. They are payable on delivery, and they will not be delivered until early in January.

Suzan Harden Skh062653@gmail.com



Strategic Planning Committee

A short history of this committee: several years ago, National put out a Strategic Plan to assist branches with achieving the AAUW mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. National had three areas of focus:

1. Education and Training (addressing barriers in education)
2. Economic Security (ensuring livelihoods for women)
3. Leadership (increasing the number of women in leadership roles)

In September 2021 AAUW Florida adopted a Strategic Plan to assist Florida branches with achieving National's goals. In October 2021 our branch formed an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee to develop a 2-year strategic plan specific to our branch, incorporating National and Florida AAUW goals. The committee was made up of multiple Board members and met over several months. The following recommendations were made and approved by the Board in April 2022:

1. Appoint a Diversity Officer
2. Expand STEM to include STEAM scholarships
3. Create an Editorial Committee to schedule activities/messaging reflecting a specified AAUW theme
4. Collaborate with other Florida branches
5. Increase branch membership, including mentors to new members to increase retention and participation
6. Designate the Strategic Planning Committee as a Standing Committee, reporting to the Board quarterly

We are currently seeking branch members to serve on this important committee. Please contact Kathleen Haibach or Presidents Janet George/Bonnie Ryan

Kathleen Haibach, Past President
585-233-7974
Kathhaibach@gmail.com

New Interest Group
Tools for Advocacy

The fledgling **Tools for Advocacy** special interest group has had one meeting. The second meeting was scheduled for right after the hurricane went through, so we are just getting ourselves back together again. Anyone can join **Tools for Advocacy**. Our goal is to follow legislation related to the issues important to AAUW's Strategic Plan and to coordinate advocacy efforts.

Contact Lisa Crotty or Suzan Harden if you are interested.

Lisa Crotty lisajcrotty@gmail.com and Suzan Harden Skh062653@gmail.com

PUBLIC POLICY

Vote-by-Mail ballots were mailed on October 6. You should receive it within a week. *If you are in an area where your mail has been redirected or you have had to relocate due to the hurricane, you can call 239-533-8683 to request a new ballot.*

You should have received an email from "Lee County Elections" with updates regarding the general election. As you can imagine, they are working closely with county and state officials to assess the availability of polling locations for the November 8 election. You will continue to get updates from Lee County Elections as details are finalized. They are also updating their website, www.lee.vote regularly. Go to that page and click on Post-Hurricane Operations to get Post-Hurricane Elections Information.

Faye O'Briant, coordinator of the branch's Adopt-a-Precinct project, will be contacting branch volunteers with updated details.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Due to Hurricane Ian, the AAUW mailbox location is now at the Page Field Post office. If you had mailed donations prior to the hurricane, please check your bank account statement that your check has been cashed, as the post office we used was flooded.



FINALLY, BACK TOGETHER

**Scholarship Co-Chairs:
Cheryl Tromley and Devera Graf**

It was such fun to be able to kick off a new season by meeting in person!!

As I said at the meeting and in the last Torch, we are (mostly) in good financial shape and will be able to offer all our scholarships with a minimum of begging for funds. I know you must be tired of reading this column only to be continually asked to contribute yet again. We really do wish we didn't have to continue to do so—especially after your incredible generosity during COVID.

One small request....

The AAUW *Star Bright Memorial Scholarship* was established in 2005 by Book Club 3. It provides branch members with the opportunity to make donations honoring friends and commemorating special events. As funds accrue, a \$1,000 scholarship is awarded to a female student attending the second semester at Fort Myers or Cape Coral Technical College.

While all our scholarships are meaningful, the Star Bright scholarship is especially impactful because of the women it targets. These women, often minorities, are attending technical colleges and are working incredibly hard to improve their lives against the odds. Their stories are truly inspiring. We have been able to award this scholarship every year since it was established, *but this year is uncertain*. Unlike our other scholarships, the *Star Bright Memorial Scholarship* is funded directly by member contributions rather than through our normal, budgeted fundraising channels. We currently have only \$235.00 in the fund. While it was designed as a commemorative scholarship, I hope I can persuade you that making sure we can award the scholarship this year is important even if you have nothing new to commemorate or honor. As you decide on your end-of-year giving, please think about adding to the fund. We will keep you up to date on our progress.



Our Scholarships

AAUW Star Bright Scholarship
(See description in the box)

AAUW Lee County High School Scholarship: Established in 2011 in memory of Jane Wagner, a three-term branch president. It awards one \$1,000 scholarship per year to a graduating female student with financial need chosen by the school counselor. The award is paid to the college of the recipient's choice.

AAUW STEM Award: Established in 2001 to encourage middle and high school girls in STEM fields. It awards one \$500 prize to a top female entrant in the Thomas Alva Edison & Kiwanis Regional Science and Engineering Fair. A “First Time” award of \$100 is also given to a female entrant for an outstanding first entry. All Lee County female high school entrants in the Edison Regional Science Fair are eligible.

Marie Glasgow and AAUW STEM Award Fund: Established in 2019 in honor of Marie Glasgow, president of AAUW Fort Myers/Lee Co Branch for two years. It is awarded each year with the goal of improving educational opportunities by rewarding young Middle School girl(s) who are winners at the Junior Division of Edison-Kiwanis Science Fair or Thomas Edison Festival of Light Regional Inventors Fair.

Girls in Engineering, Math and Science (GEMS): This hands-on program is dedicated to science education for regional middle school girls by enthusiastic professionals and undergraduates as facilitators and role models in a girls-only environment.

AAUW FGCU Endowed Scholarship: Established in 2000, with member and matching funds from the state, it awards one scholarship to a female student who resides in the five-county (Lee, Collier, Charlotte, Glades, Hendry) area with financial need pursuing an undergraduate degree at FGCU. Priority is given to the current awardee.

AAUW Sue Gottcent Memorial Endowed Scholarship: Established in 2006 with a bequest from the estate of member Sue Gottcent who was an avid supporter of AAUW’s mission. It awards one \$2,000 scholarship to a Lee County female student aged 25 or older with demonstrated financial need who attends an institute of higher education that is part of the Florida State University system. Priority is given to the current awardee.

AAUW FSW State College Endowed Scholarship: Established in 2000, with member and matching funds from the state, it awards one \$1,000 scholarship to a female Lee County student with financial need attending the Fort Myers Campus of FSW. Priority is given to the current awardee.

2022-2023 MEETING DATES and Torch Production Schedule

SEND ARTICLES TO peggychihi@comcast.net

Please note: All our meetings are on the third Saturday except Nov., Dec., Jan.

Meeting Date	Deadline for Articles	Mail Torch Date
November 12, 2022	October 17, 2022	November 1, 2022
Bingo Dinner Dec. 3	November 15, 2022	November 24, 2022
January 14, 2023	December 17, 2022	January 5, 2023
February 18, 2023	January 25, 2023	February 8, 2023
March 18, 2023	February 22, 2023	March 8, 2023
April 15, 2023	March 22, 2023	April 5, 2023
May 20, 2023	April 26, 2023	May 10, 2023

INTEREST GROUPS/COORDINATORS

BOOK GROUPS

Carol Fuechsel, Coordinator

cbfuechsel@gmail.com

Book Club Meets

Cover Girls 2nd Wednesday, 1 PM

Page Turners 4th Thursday, 12:45 PM

(The book clubs are very interested in new members. If interested, please contact Carol.)

BRIDGE

Kathy Jones, Coordinator

Kathy1972@hotmail.com

HAND & FOOT

Carolyn Nance, Coordinator

Meets –1st Monday each month

cnance5240@gmail.com

MAHJONGG

Carolyn Nance, Coordinator

Meets –3rd Thursday each month

cnance5240@gmail.com

GREAT DECISIONS

Suzan Harden, Coordinator

Meets 1st Friday of the month

skh062653@gmail.com

NATURE WALKS and DAY TRIPS

Jemetta Hunt, Coordinator

jemetta@aol.com

TOOLS FOR ADVOCACY

Susan Harden Coordinator

Skh062653@gmail.com

New Interest Groups Are Welcome

Contact: Bonnie Ryan

bonniemarieryan@aol.com

Janet George

bffegeorge@comcast.net

AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc.

2021-2022 Officers

Elected – Executive Board

Co-Presidents – Bonnie Ryan
and Janet George

Past President – Kathleen Haibach

Vice-President Elect – Cecile Brennan

Vice-President of Programs –
Jill Jennings

Vice-President Membership –
Jemetta Hunt

Secretary – Patricia Crowe

Treasurer – Mary Kellner

Appointed Officers – Board Members

Public Policy – Suzan Harden

Co-Chairs of Scholarship –
Cheryl Tromley and

Devera Graf

Communications/Website/Facebook –
Mary Lou Chamberlain

Ways and Means – Peggy Cihl

Standing Committees

Torch Editor – Peggy Cihl

Records Retention – Executive Board

Science Fair - Cathy Tucker

Adopt-A-Precinct – Faye O'Briant

Diversity Officer - Lisa Crotty

Strategic Plan -

Ancillary Positions

Reservations – Carolyn Nance assisted by
Lynn Felice

Sunshine – Mary Jane McDowell

Greeters – Board Members

Torch Circulation –

Jemetta Hunt (US Mail)

Kathy Jones (E-mail)



Fort Myers / Lee County Branch, Inc.

P.O. Box 2115

Fort Myers, FL 33901-2115

Donate Today help the Ft. Myers Branch to Advance Equity for Women

Use my gift for:

Operating Expenses

Scholarships

Unrestricted

Name:

Street Address:

City, State & Zip:

Phone: (Mobile)

Phone: (Home)

Email:

Donation Amount \$25

 \$50

 \$100

Other Amount \$

Is gift in honor or in memory of someone? If the answer is "Yes," please provide the following:

In honor of:

In memory of:

Please provide contact information for the person honored or family of the person remembered:

Name:

Street Address:

City, State & Zip:

Please make checks payable to AAUW For Myers / Lee County, Inc. and mail to: AAUW - Attn:

Treasurer

PO Box 2115

Fort Myers, FL 33901-2115

As a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, donations to the Branch may be tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc., is registered as a not-for-profit charity with the State of Florida, #CH39730. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling Toll-Free (800-435-7352) within the State of Florida or online by visiting www.800helpfla.com. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.



Volunteer Interest Form

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone (Home): _____ Phone (Cell): _____

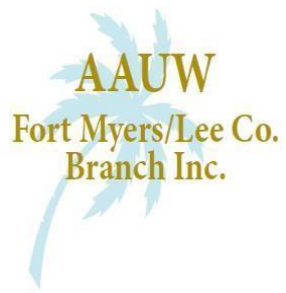
I would like to participate in the following committees:

- Finance Adopt-A-Precinct (Elections) Communications Fashion Show
- Fundraising Membership Directory Scholarships Torch Newsletter Production
- Public Policy Other (*Please describe*) _____

Interest Groups and Coordinators

I am interested in learning more / joining the following interest groups:

- Book Groups - Carol Fuechsel.
- Bridge – Kathy Jones
- Day Trips – Jemetta Hunt
- Great Decisions – Suzan Harden
- Hand and Foot – Carolyn Nance
- Mahjongg – Carolyn Nance
- Nature Walks and Day Trips - Jemetta Hunt
- Tools for Advocacy - Suzan Harden
- Suggestions for New Group (*Please describe*) _____



AAUW FORT MYERS/LEE CO. BRANCH
Jemetta Hunt Torch Distributor
7361 Twin Eagle Lane
Fort Myers, FL 33912