

The American Association of University Women

The **TORCH**

, January, 2023

Vol. 58, No. 6

*AAUW. Vol. 61 No. 4
Peggy Drennan Cihl, Editor.*

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear Members,

We are extremely pleased with the results of the BINGO fundraiser event. Everyone had a good time. There were 94 guests that included Members, guests, and family. Please read the article written by Peggy Cihl, the Chairperson, for the event.

There are so many people that made it all happen. We thank them ALL!

Did you know that we were especially fortunate to have all the Bingo sheets and dabbers donated by Devera and Fred Graf. Fred managed to get the Arrow International Inc. company to provide all those supplies. It was the Gallagher Family that Fred dealt with for the donation. That was a HUGE savings for the event budget. Then, Devera and Fred worked at the Gala. Fred was the computer tech that randomized the numbers on the computer and projected it all on the screen so that everyone could see as well as hear the numbers called. When there was a "Bingo" called, Devera verified the win. Cheryl Tromley and Cecile Brennan announced the numbers and entertained the audience. It was so enjoyable.

The January luncheon and program will be on the 2nd Saturday of January (not our usual 3rd Saturday), January 14, 2023 in the Main Deck dining room. We have invited members from other AAUW Florida Branches and opened tickets to friends and guests. They will join us. Seating is limited so RSVP to Carolyn Nance ASAP. Reservations will not be considered complete until the \$27 check is received by Carolyn. Guests' tickets are \$30.

It is time to start planning for 2023-24 Fiscal Year. Cecile Brennan, President Elect, is the Chairperson for the Board of Directors Nominating Committee. The by-laws require at least 3 members on the Nominating Committee. Phyllis Wayco has already volunteered to assist Cecile. We need at least one more person to volunteer for the Committee. Call or email Cecile if you are interested in helping to find the best candidates for the Board of Directors 2023-24. Meanwhile everyone should be thinking about who to Nominate (perhaps yourself) for the 2 positions:

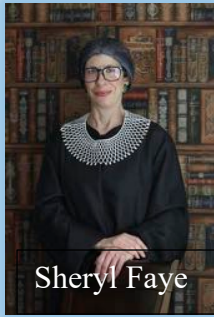
- VP Programs
- Secretary

The election won't be until April, but the candidates must be presented by March.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Janet George and Bonnie Ryan

Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc.



Fight for the things you care about but do it in a way that will lead others to join you. --Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Ruth Bader Ginsburg – “I Dissent,”

Portrayed by Sheryl Faye, our January 14 Luncheon Speaker

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was an American lawyer and jurist who served as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1993 until her death in September 2020. She was the first Jewish woman ever appointed to the Court and became the longest serving Jewish Justice.

She championed fairness and equality and objected to different expectations for men and women, discrimination against minority groups in hotels and restaurants, and women having fewer job opportunities than men. Ruth served on the national board of the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) and launched The Women’s Rights Project, where she continued to be a leading voice for gender equality, women’s interests, civil rights and liberties until her death at age 87.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s life is characterized as one of achievement: as a lawyer, professor of law, a judge, and then a Supreme Court Justice. She stands out because she was not afraid to dissent, disapprove, and disagree with conditions of unfairness and inequality. This show is the inspiring story of how she changed her life—and ours.

Sheryl Faye, originally from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, decided at an early age that she was determined to be an actress. Encouraged by her mother, with whom she was very close, Sheryl majored in acting at Emerson College in Boston. Success favored her, and to date she stars in ten productions, one-woman shows, that she has written and produced. Most subjects of her shows are notable women in history such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Clara Barton, and Susan B. Anthony, to name just a few.

***Information about the luncheon is on the next page; please read carefully.*
*There are changes in the procedure for reservations.***

Woman of Interest

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Ruth Bader Ginsburg died at age 87 in September 2020. In her later years, the court's second female justice and liberal icon also became a pop culture figure known as the "Notorious RBG."

Personal Property of Ruth Bader Ginsburg was auctioned, and the final public offering came directly from the family of Justice Ginsburg. The sale included 76 personal items including rare, signature fashion pieces, such as lace gloves and two collars, which have never been offered at auction before. Proceeds from the sale which totaled \$517,000 will fund a new endowment benefiting SOS Children's Villages, the world's largest organization dedicated to caring for children without parental care or who are at risk of losing it.

In 2019, Justice Ginsburg donated a portion of her Berggruen Prize for Philosophy & Culture to SOS Children's Villages USA. Following her death, personal items were donated to SOS Children's Villages by the Ginsburg family to seed The RBG Endowment Fund, which will be directed to specific programs in the organization’s portfolio. Non-political and non-sectarian, SOS Children's Villages' holistic programs are designed to ensure sustained impact and focus on children and their families across all aspects of life, as well as strengthening the communities in which they live. For more details, please visit [SOS-USA.org](https://www.bonhams.com/auction/28148/personal-property-of-justice-ruth-bader-ginsburg/)

<https://www.bonhams.com/auction/28148/personal-property-of-justice-ruth-bader-ginsburg/>



**Join us for
Our Luncheon and Program**

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

OUR MEETING DATE:

**Saturday, January 14, 2023
Gathering: 11:30 A.M.**

Location: The Main Deck Dining Room

Luncheon Menu:

Rolls, Coffee, Tea

***Choice 1 SHRIMP CAESAR SALAD- Crisp
romaine hearts tossed in our creamy Caesar
dressing, finished w/ pecorino Romano
cheese homemade croutons***

***Choice 2: ITALIAN CHICKEN CUTLETS
with fresh lemon mist harvest rice and chef's
vegetable***

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,
payment is expected
to insure your reservation.
Contact Carolyn Nance with your
choice of menu by e-mail, phone or
when you send in your check.**

**Carolyn's contact is:
cnance5240@gmail.com**

or at

(239) 785-9993

**11674 Lady Anne Circle
Cape Coral, FL 33991**

**Please title your e-mail
AAUW Reservations
and contact Carolyn Nance no later
than *Monday, January 9.*
Cancellations must be made no later
than *Tuesday, January 10.***

**The value of luncheon is \$27.00
Guests will pay \$30 for this special
luncheon.**

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



Bingo Gala

Huge responses in attendance and the funds raised makes our Bingo Gala a wonderful success.

Long before the evening begins, many months were spent by the Fund-Raising Committee, consisting of Peggy Cihi, Kathy Jones, Janet George, Bonnie Ryan, Devera Graf, Kath Haibach, Clementina Hoegler, Marcia Howard, Jemetta Hunt, Mary Kellner, Cheryl Tromley, and Mary Lou Chamberlain brainstorming ideas around Peggy’s dining table as to how to make the event something special.



Part of the preparation was these large posters to help players duplicate the winning design (*the gift box and the candle*), held by Bonnie Ryan and Cecile Brennan

At 4:00 on Saturday, December 3, the big Bingo day arrives. The committee comes in carrying packages of Bingo equipment, decorations, posters, auction items and sets everything up by 5:00.

Members and guests sign in and pick up programs and Bingo sheets.

We enter the spacious Main Deck dining room decorated with Christmas trees and garlands and listen to the piano renderings of Bob Cihi.



Greeting guests are (clockwise) Kath Haibach, Mary Kellner, Marcia Howard and Carolyn Nance.

The festive atmosphere is contagious as we meander among friends and amazing baskets of themed goodies. We look over the silent auction choices and decide what items deserve our bid as we vie to be the final bidder for that special silent auction item.

We then go over to the table that lines the entire back of the room laden with delectable looking food from Caesar salad at the beginning to salmon piccata end. We fill our plates with maybe just a little too much because it all looks so good.

Finished savoring our food, we set up for Bingo, taking a dauber from the holiday centerpiece, placing our Bingo sheet in front of us and turning the program to the back where there is a holiday-themed diagram to follow for each game: just to make it a little more fun and challenging.



Co-presidents Janet George and Bonnie Ryan (in photo above L to R.) welcome us. An anticipatory hush follows.

Bingo begins with personable announcers Cheryl Tromley and Cecile Brennan (L to R, pictured below) welcoming us and beginning calling the letter/number combinations.



Eight times someone calls, “Bingo,” and wins \$50 and a unique Christmas gift prepared by special guest, Ron Glasgow.

Before the final bingo, there is bidding on the many Florida Repertory Theater tickets donated by member Naomi Bloom for the occasion. The silent auction winners are announced, and the last Bingo winner has a

bonus of a gift certificate for the Prawnbroker Restaurant.

We say our goodbyes and members and guests depart while the committee remains to collect the Bingo items and decorations left behind.

We anticipate this was a great success based on attendance and enthusiasm. We are proved correct when we total the funds raised for scholarships. We must be supremely joyful we will be able to help provide scholarships for those in need in the coming year. Thank you to everyone. We should all be proud of our efforts and the fabulous results.



Jametta Hunt, photographer and Peggy Cihl, Chairperson of the event.

Information about the January luncheon is on page 3. Please read carefully. There are changes in the procedure for reservations.

2022-2023 MEETING DATES and Torch Production Schedule

SEND ARTICLES TO peggycihi@comcast.net

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

Meeting Date	Deadline for Articles	<u>Mail Torch Date</u>
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

AAUW



We have two book clubs. Each welcomes new members.

Cover Girls Book Club

Our club is now meeting in members' homes. Zoom will be available for those who are out of town or unable to otherwise attend. The selection for January will be *Wish You Were Here* by Judy Picoult. The meeting time is generally the second Wednesday of each month from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. If interested in joining or have questions, contact Carol Fuechsel at cbfuechsel@gmail.com.

Page Turners Book Club

Since the hurricane, meetings have been cancelled due to the unavailability of the Lakes Library, which is being used by FEMA. A meeting is tentatively planned at the Lakes Library for January 26 at 12:30 pm, if the library opens that month. The book planned for discussion is *The Hotel Nantucket* by Elin Hildebrandt. Contact Lynn Felice if you have questions or want to become a member at lfelice@embarqmail.com

In the Spotlight

Peggy Drennan Cihl is honored this month. She has been Membership Chair , and as Ways and Means Chair, she has overseen five fashion show fund raisers with the enthusiastic help of our membership. Peggy and her committee planned our recent highly successful Bingo Gala. She enthusiastically supports our scholarship goals. She has been the TORCH editor for the last seven years.

Peggy retired from 42 years of teaching kindergarten through graduate school in gifted education. She was National Gifted Teacher of the Year and has authored numerous books for use by teachers of the gifted. She is married and has a blended family of six children and eight grandchildren.





Offered by Cecile Brennan
& Nancy Schoenstein

What?

- ☞ Do you want to learn to be more proficient using Zoom?
- ☞ Are you interested in learning more about social media—
Instagram, TikTok, Facebook?
- ☞ Are you wondering how to use some of the features on your iPhone or iPad?
- ☞ Do you have general questions about computers you are hesitant to ask?

If you answer yes to any of the questions above, consider attending our technology workshops. These will be hands-on sessions, so if possible, bring your computer, iPhone, or iPad. We will have two Apple Mac's, but you are best using your own.

When?

These help sessions will be offered on **Friday, January 20 and Friday Feb. 3 at 1:30 pm.** Additional dates will follow if people are interested.

Where?

Cecile Brennan will host at her home:
Address: 12895 New Market St. #101 Fort Myers, Fl.
Phone: 216-233-0879

RSVP

Please RSVP to Cecile at cecilebrennan@gmail.com by January 16 for January 20 and by January 30 for February 3.



AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County

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

Our local e-mail address:

aauleecounty@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>



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 if you are interested.

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



HIGHLIGHTING OUR SCHOLARS

Scholarship Co-Chairs: Cheryl Tromley and Devera Graf

This month we will be highlighting the 2021/2022 winner of our AAUW Lee County High School Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to a graduating female student with financial need and few other scholarships, in recognition of educational commitment and ambition. This \$1,000 award was established in 2011 by friends of Jane Wagner, a former AAUW president and is paid to the college of the winner's choice for her academic use.

The AAUW Lee County High School Scholarship is particularly rewarding to present because it supports a young woman's dreams of attending college. Our 2022 recipient of the High School Scholarship is Alaura Santosarroyo (r.) pictured at with Devera Graf (l.) from Dunbar High School in Fort



Myers. She is currently attending FSW and has expressed how much the \$1,000 award helped her reach her goal of attending college this year. She reports that she is doing well in her classes despite the classroom time lost due to Hurricane Ian. However, studying is not all Alaura is doing. She also works 2-10 pm several days a week. She says she has gotten into a good routine of getting up early

to get her class work done before going to school and work, and she has chosen her classes for next semester. Whew! A tiring lifestyle for sure! It is so rewarding to see her prosper. All our branch members can be very proud of this young woman who is using all her resources to reach her goal of a college education.

We promised to keep you updated on our progress toward funding the *Star Bright Memorial Scholarship*, highlighted in last month's Torch. SUCCESS!! Thanks to the generosity of one of our members, we have the necessary funds to award the scholarship!!

On the STEM front, the Thomas Alva Edison Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair will be held on February 18, 2023. As has been the case for the last few years, the Science Fair will be held virtually again this year. In the past, concerns about Covid caused the change from an in-person fair. This year, Hurricane Ian has forced the fair to be virtual. Nonetheless, high school students around Lee county are busy doing research and preparing projects to present virtually in February.

This year, our AAUW branch will present two awards to female students who present projects meeting our established criteria. Each award will be \$300.00. The judges will be looking for projects that reflect a strong understanding of the scientific method with results clearly presented and understood. We wish good luck to all the budding scientists. We will be announcing our award winners towards the end of February.

In addition, the Girls in Engineering, Math, and Science (GEMS) program will take place in the spring. This hands-on program is dedicated to science education for regional middle school girls. Enthusiastic professionals and undergraduates facilitate and act as role models in a girls-only environment. This year, hurricane Ian caused the GEMS events, originally planned for the fall, to be postponed until the spring. This will be a wonderful opportunity, for those of you who would like to, to get more directly involved and interact with about one hundred middle school students as

they learn new scientific concepts by using a hands-on approach. We will announce the dates when we learn them and find out how our members can assist with the programming.



Our Scholarships

AAUW Star Bright Scholarship

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.

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 Awards: Established in 2001 to encourage middle and high school girls in STEM fields. It awards two \$300 prizes based on those projects submitted to the Thomas Alva Edison & Kiwanis Regional Science and Engineering Fair: The AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Award goes to a top female entrant; The AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Emerging Research Scholar Award goes to a female entrant whose skills are laudable, but still developing.

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.



Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions *Briefing Book*, watching the documentary film series and meeting in a Discussion Group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today. Books for the 2023 Great Decisions discussions have been ordered. They should arrive the first week in January. Suzan Harden will let you know when payment is due and how to obtain your book. If you did not order a book and would like to participate in the discussions, please contact Suzan at skh062653@gmail.com. The first discussion will be Friday, February 3, 2023, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom.

PUBLIC POLICY

The Florida Public Policy Committee has begun reviewing legislation proposed for the 2023 Florida General Session, which begins in March. As additional information becomes available. It will be shared with members. Just a reminder that 2023 Lobby Days will be March 14 and 15 in Tallahassee. This will be the first time in three years Lobby Days will be held in person. Many more details to come!

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

INTEREST GROUPS/COORDINATORS

BOOK GROUPS

Carol Fuechsel, Coordinator

cbfuechsel@gmail.com

Book Club Meets
Cover Girls 2nd Wednesday, 1 PM
Page Turners 4th Thursday, 12:30 PM

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

BRIDGE

Kathy Jones, Coordinator

Kathyj1972@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

bffjegeorge@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 Cih

Standing Committees

Torch Editor – Peggy Cih

Records Retention – Executive Board

Science Fair - Cathy Tucker

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 Public Policy Communications Fashion Show
- Fundraising Membership Directory Scholarships Torch Newsletter Production
- 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*) _____



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