

The American Association of University Women

The **TORCH**

May, 2024

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AAUW. Vol. 62, No. 7

Peggy Drennan Cihl, Editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR MAY

Dear Members,

I am surprised to reflect on this being the final President's Message for this 2023-2024 season. It has moved so fast! We have seen a lot of accomplishments and some changes as well. The bingo fundraiser, GEMS, the science fair, our guest speakers and the capstone luncheon with the scholarship winners were all events that should make us proud as an organization.

As we begin the process of planning for next year, we have decided to form an *ad hoc* committee on community engagement. This committee would look for ways for us to bring our AAUW values and vision more directly into the community, for instance, attend various public events while identified as AAUW members (AAUW t-shirts perhaps!) or sponsor an outreach event to a local school or community organization.

I would like to encourage your ideas and your participation. If you are interested in being on the committee, contact me at cecilebrennan@gmail.com, and I will see that you are notified about any activities. Let's use this as a way of supporting causes we believe in while raising our profile in the community.

Thanks to all of you who filled out our survey, it provided valuable insight into your views. See the summary of the survey in this newsletter.

Finally, I want to thank the Board for all their hard work. This is a team effort! If you are travelling this summer, stay safe. Join us for our final get-together, an informal picnic on May 18.

We look forward to seeing you in the Fall.

Cecile Brennan

Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc.



Our AAUW Board has approved an exciting new opportunity for our members to support our scholarships. Beginning in 2024/2025 fiscal year, anyone will be able to sponsor and name a scholarship “*in honor of*” someone.

For example, Cheryl Tromley intends to fund the Fort Myers Technical College Star Bright Scholarship and name it “The Violet Roberts FMTC Star Bright Scholarship” in honor of her grandmother. You can do this as an individual or partner with others.

This offer would apply to the following scholarships:

- AAUW Star Bright Scholarship (Cape Coral Technical College): \$1,000 per year.
- AAUW Lee County High School Scholarships: 2 @ \$1,500 per year.
- AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Award: \$300 per year.
- AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Emerging Research Scholar Award: \$300 per year.

This opportunity does not change any of our normal donation processes. All opportunities for donating will remain the same, and this is just an ***additional way*** to contribute to our scholarships and an ***additional way*** to honor someone. The normal channels will still be available.

In addition, if anyone wants to donate “*in honor of...*” but does not want to commit to a sponsorship, as has always been the case, they may elect to target that donation to a specific scholarship or the scholarship fund. If the latter, the Scholarship Committee and/or Chairs will allocate it where the need is greatest.

If anyone is interested in exploring this opportunity, please contact Cheryl Tromley, Scholarship Committee Co-Chair at 203-530-9147 or email cltromley@gmail.com.

WOMAN OF INTEREST

**Marie Glasgow,
Past AAUW President**

10/20/1945—7/15/2018

*Our Marie Glasgow and AAUW STEM Award
Fund was established in Marie Glasgow's
honor.*



Marie was dynamic, artsy, creative, sometimes wildly so. She wore a blue wig to AAUW saying she would wear it until all the tickets for the Fashion Show were sold. She was managerial and incredibly self-disciplined, but the fun and spontaneity were always lurking. Most noticeably she was a hard worker. Committed, she gave 100%!

Marie talked about being born in a relocation camp to Ukrainian parents fleeing Russians and of coming to the United States when she was 5, living first with relatives in Chicago then moving to Wisconsin. She spoke of the Ukrainian community, wearing the traditional costumes, dancing the traditional dances with her two older sisters at the Ukrainian Orthodox church, and cooking potato pancakes and Borscht. She described falling in love with a handsome, athletic upper-classman and marrying as soon as she graduated from high school. She and Ron had a daughter and son, and she was a working, studying mother while she pursued her degree and then another and another sometimes having to commute for part of the week and attaining a PhD in Education. She was Principal of two parochial elementary schools before becoming Director of Personnel for the Janesville School District, WI. She went on to become Superintendent of the Walworth School District, WI, then Director of Personnel for the Green Bay School District,

WI and was Assistant Superintendent of the Franklin School District, WI when she retired.

Marie believed in contributing to community and helping. She wrote for the Heron's Glen newspaper. She was a Guardian Ad Litem and cared deeply for the children she represented and their mothers. She raised funds for ALS. And Wow! Was she involved in our AAUW Branch!

Joining in 2005 she participated in the Fashion Show, the Movie and Dinner Group, and founded the Writing Group. She modeled, she solicited, and she and Ron asked not to be regulars for the Adopt a Precinct team but helped when we were short people to work or help with the food. I think she hated the "Garage Sale and More" but participated and was pleased with its enormous success. For several years she edited the membership directory. She wrote a review of the year's activities with flattering pictures of participants. When she became president in 2013, she wrote these words "...In 1976 I became acquainted with AAUW and its mission 'to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.' This was a mission I could whole-heartedly support. At the time membership was interrupted by family, career, and continuing education."

Marie set goals for her presidency: encourage engagement of all, especially new, members in AAUW activities, increase community awareness and support for our AAUW Branch endeavors and finally, implement a strategic 3-to-5-year plan. Marie reminded us that we have a history of activism and charitable giving and that we need to continue our good work in this community. We miss her creativity. What can we do? There could be no finer tribute to Marie but that we embrace her goals anew, striving to be a positive influence in our community and in each other's lives.

Reprinted from *The TORCH*, September, 2018



Join us for
Our Luncheon
The Landings Yacht, Golf & Tennis
Club, 5200 South Landings Drive

OUR MEETING DATE:
Saturday, May 18, 2024
Gathering: 11:30 A.M.
Location: The M^cCoy Pavilion
(located at Picnic Pointe)
(See location and map on pages 6-7.)



PICNIC LUNCH

***Turkey Sandwich with Cheese and
Tomato, Pasta Salad, Chips***

For Dessert

***Choice 1:
Red Grapes***

or

***Choice 2
Cookie***

Bottled Water

Luncheon reservations are required.

If reserving my mail or e-mail,
please title your contact information:
AAUW Reservations.

1. **Please indicate choice of menu**
by contacting Carolyn Nance:

cnance5240@gmail.com

or at

(239) 785-9993

or at

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

2. **Pre-Payment Is Expected** to
insure your reservation.

Cost for the luncheon is
\$20.00.

Your check, made out to AAUW,
can be sent to Carolyn, along with
your menu choice.

You can also pay with PayPal.



is available on our Branch
website: <https://fmfc-fl.aauw.net>
(See page 5 for more information.)

Reservations can be made no later
than ***Monday, May 13***
Cancellations must be made no later
than ***Tuesday, May 14***

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

Example of method to pay with PayPal.



is available on our Branch website: <https://fmlc-fl.aauw.net>

1. You will scroll to this blue button and press it to be taken to the next screen.



Payment can be made by mailing a check - Send your check to Carolyn Nance: 11674 Lady Anne Circle Cape Coral, FL 33991

Or pay online via [PayPal](#). Click the button below:



2. You will be taken to this screen.

AAUW Luncheon Reservation Form

RSVP for our upcoming luncheon below.

Payments can be made online with PayPal / credit card: [https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=HVSUFNRAWBGZJ](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=HVSUFNRAWBGZJ)

or by mailing a check to:

Carolyn Nance
11674 Lady Anne Circle
Cape Coral, FL 33991

Your e-mail address should show up at the bottom of this screen.

3. You will fill in your information.

Email *
Your email

Full Name *
Your answer

Phone Number *
Your answer

Lunch Option Choice *
Options details can be found on our website: <https://fmlc-fl.aauw.net/>

Option 1
 Option 2
 Option 3

4. You will answer these questions

Q1: Yes No

Q2: Yes No

Q3: Yes No

4. You will finish up and press

Submit

AAUW Luncheon Reservation Form

peggycihi@gmail.com [Switch account](#)

Click submit to finish

A copy of your responses will be emailed to the address you provided.

[Back](#) [Submit](#) [Clear form](#)

Join us for some fun!

MAY PICNIC

Picnic Lunch

**Saturday May 18, 2024
11:30 am
Picnic Pointe-
The Landings Yacht,
Golf & Tennis Club, 5200
South Landings Drive**



**Located on
The Caloosahatchee
River
at the Landings Marina**



***Turkey Sandwich with
Cheese and Tomato,
Pasta Salad, Chips,***

***Choice 1:
Red Grapes
or
Choice 2
Cookie for Dessert***

**Picturesque McCoy Pavilion on Picnic Pointe,
On the banks of the Caloosahatchee**



**Bob Cihi will provide piano
entertainment.**



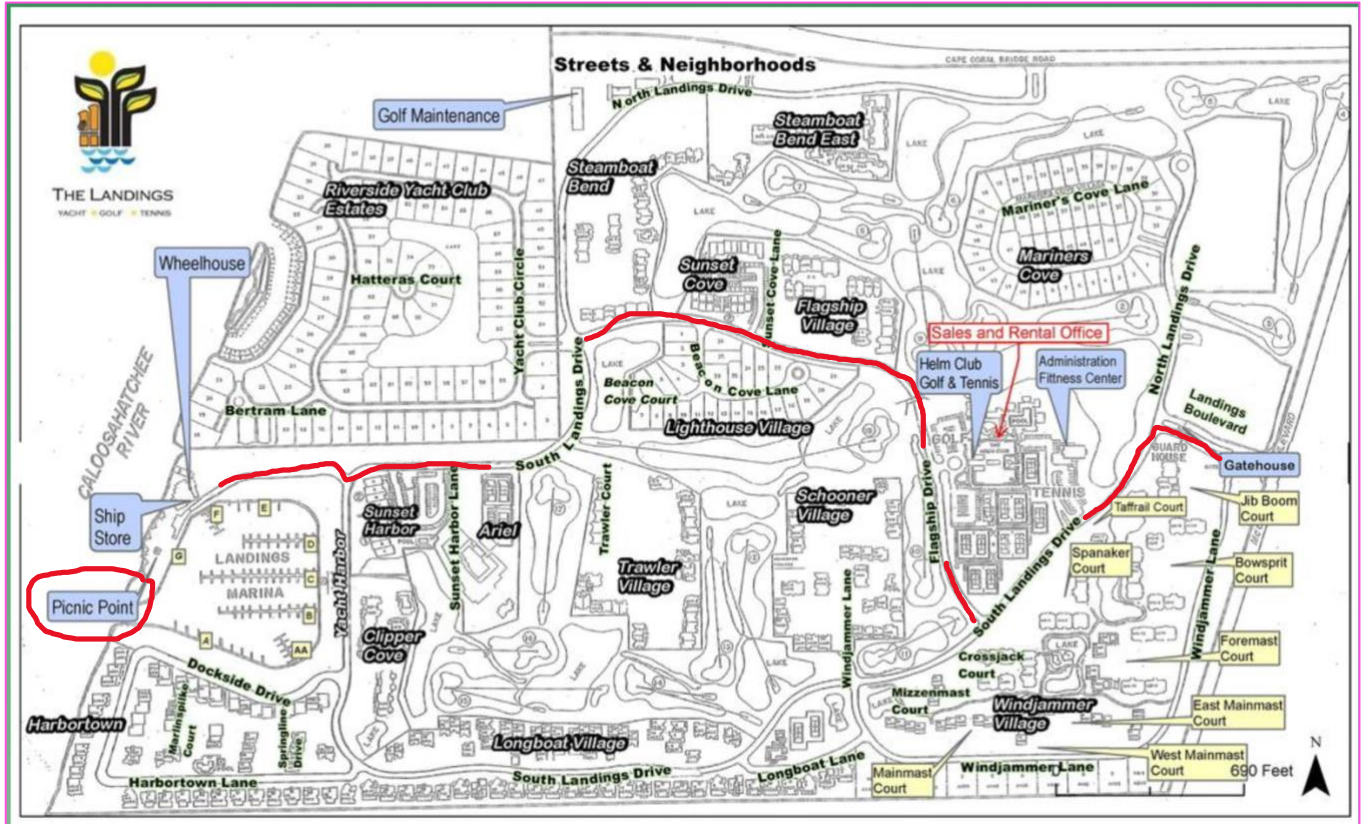
**RSVP and indicate your choice of desert
following the directions on page 4.**

Hope to see you at the Pointe!*

**See the map on p. 7*

Directions to the
McCoy Pavilion at Picnic Ponte

(This is a map from the real estate office in THE LANDINGS.)



Follow the red line on the map.

- Enter at the gatehouse
- Follow South Landings Drive to Flagship Drive (this is the usual way we get to the Helm Club for our luncheons). Turn right.
- Follow Flagship Drive to the stop sign. At the stop sign turn left onto South Landings Drive.
- At the first opportunity, just as you approach the Marina, turn right. Find a parking place. (There is construction going on at the Wheelhouse which was damaged during Hurricane Ian.)
- Walk out to Picnic Point (Be careful as you pass by the Wheelhouse construction.)
- Join the others for a lovely afternoon.



CELEBRATING OUR NEW SCHOLARS

Scholarship Co-Chairs: Cheryl Tromley and Devera Graf

This month we want to introduce you to all our wonderful scholarship winners, report on our celebratory luncheon).

Our scholarship¹ winners for 2023/2024:

- AAUW FGCU Endowed Scholarship: Melanie Sarmiento, working toward becoming an orthodontist.
- AAUW Sue Gottcent Memorial Endowed Scholarship: Tomika Breese, pursuing a Graduate degree at FGCU in Education.
- AAUW FSW State College Endowed Scholarship: Jade Kaye
- AAUW Star Bright Scholarship: Rachel Hernandez, a second semester student at Cape Coral Technical College in Electronic Technology.
- AAUW Violet Roberts Star Bright Scholarship: Melissa Delmasse, a second semester student at Fort Myers Technical College in the LPN program
- AAUW Lee County High School Scholarship: Kayla Harrison, Island Coast High School is on her way to FGCU.
-

- AAUW Lee County High School Scholarship: Yasmin Sharifi, Cape Coral High School is on her way to FSW.
- AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Award: Anayah Chowdhury, Canterbury School, investigated the impact of different cooking methodologies on the stability and depletion of Vitamin C.
- AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Emerging Research Scholar Award: Ky Pham, Gateway High School, investigated reverse osmosis.
- Marie Glasgow and AAUW Friends STEM Award Fund: Evangeline Robison, St. Andrews School, investigated coastal erosion.

We were happy to be able to welcome six of our winners in person (unfortunately four others were previously committed and could not attend) to our annual celebratory luncheon. They all expressed their profound gratitude and the importance of the awards to them. It is such a pleasure to get to know these talented and motivated young people. Hearing their stories is always inspiring and moving. This luncheon just reinforces why we do what we do.

Our speaker, who we introduced in the March TORCH, was Julianna Bendeck. She was awarded our 2023 Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Emerging Research Scholar Award. Julianna gave a wonderful talk that highlighted her personal journey and the lessons she learned from it. Everyone was moved and impressed by her maturity and poise as she expressed ideas that everyone could relate to.

I want to thank you, our members for your generosity. Without you, none of this would be possible. You are making a profound, positive difference in the futures of these young women!!

See Jemetta Hunt’s photos from this celebratory day on page 16.

¹ A complete description of our scholarships appears at the end of this column.

Scholarships we provide. . .

AAUW Star Bright Scholarship

Established in 2005, by Book Club 3, to provide branch members with the opportunity to make donations honoring friends and commemorating special events awards two \$1,000 scholarships to female students attending their second semesters at Cape Coral Technical College and Fort Myers Technical College.

AAUW Lee County High School Scholarship

Established in 2011 in memory of Jane Wagner, a three-term branch president. It awards two \$1,500 scholarships per year to graduating female students 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 high school girls in STEM fields, it awards two entrants in the Thomas Alva Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science and Engineering Fair. Recipients must present a unique, quality topic, and conduct their own research. Judging is done by members of the Scholarship Committee. The first award, the *AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Award*, provides a \$300 prize to a third or fourth place female entrant in the Thomas Alva Edison & Kiwanis Regional Science and Engineering Fair. The second award, the *AAUW Thomas Edison and Kiwanis Regional Science & Engineering Fair Emerging Research Scholar Award*, provides a \$300 prize to a female entrant for a project that shows promise with the purpose of encouraging her participation in future years.

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 terms. 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. In even numbered years the award will go to a Lee County Middle School (grades 6-8) girl participating in the Junior Division of the Edison-

Kiwanis Regional Science Fair. The winner should demonstrate meritorious effort but is not a major winner (i.e., third or fourth place.) The project must be STEM related and show proof of own research. In odd numbered years the award will go to a Lee County Middle School (grades 6-8) girl participating in the Thomas Edison Festival of Light Regional Inventors Fair. The winner should show meritorious effort but is not a major winner (i.e., third or fourth place.). The projects could benefit mankind or the environment. Judging for both awards is done by the Special Award Staff. The Award Judges may suggest different selection criteria but must seek approval of donor prior to award disbursement.

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, it awards one (approximately) \$2,000 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, it awards one (approximately) \$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.

AAUW Branch Membership

Survey Results



Participants

Thank you to everyone who participated in the membership survey. The board is grateful for your input and will use the feedback provided in planning for next year.

The member participation rate was approximately 56%, and the survey results are summarized below. Of these respondents, 15% reported being members of the Fort Myers branch for less than one year, 26% have been members for 1-5 years, 33% have been members for 6-10 years., and 26% have been members for more than 10 years. This is a good representation of our membership.

Most respondents (62%) heard about AAUW from a friend or relative. About 8% read about AAUW in the paper, while a few respondents reported finding the organization online or via social media. Some respondents came to our branch from another branch, and a few reported attending a luncheon program and enjoying it so much that they joined the organization.

When asked why they joined the branch, most respondents (51%) chose belief in AAUW's mission, and 39% indicated it was because they enjoyed the branch's programs. Approximately 15% said the social opportunities attracted them, and 13% wanted to advocate for AAUW's mission. There were several additional individual responses, which included supporting scholarships for women, professional networking, and seeking an intellectual home.

Takeaway: (1) We have an evenly split range of years of membership, and it is great to see the organization is continuing to attract new members; (2) word of mouth and invitations to join in on an exciting program are the best ways to attract members; and (3) AAUW's mission and the good programs are crucial to membership, but the social components are essential, too.

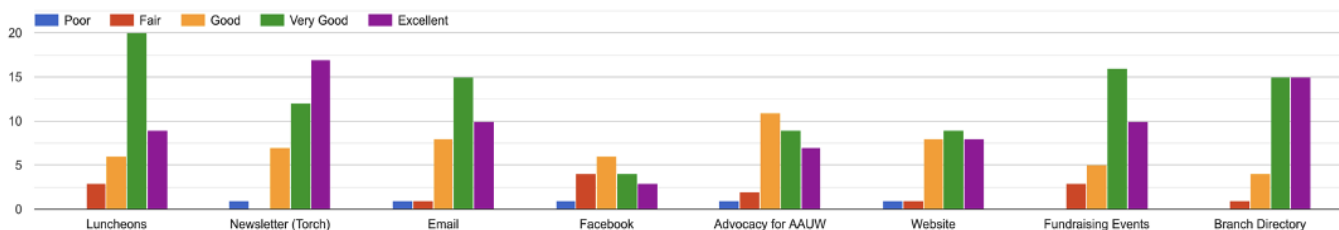
Involvement

In terms of involvement, three in ten respondents consider themselves very engaged, and an identical number said they were slightly engaged. While one in five is happy to stay on the fringes, 10% of respondents said they are less engaged than they would like to be. Seven in ten respondents have served on a committee or the board, and four in 10 are willing to do so.

Branch Activities

When asked to rate the activities that AAUW engages in, the results were as follows:

Overall, how would you rate the quality of each of the following activities we engage in?



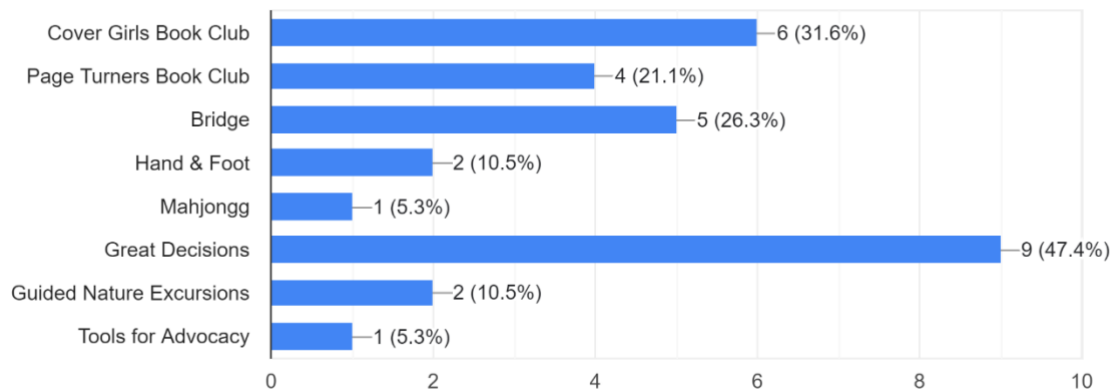
Takeaway: Luncheons and fundraising events are very popular. The Torch, branch directory, and email are important communication tools. for respondents.

Interest Groups/Book Clubs

The two book clubs (combined) edged out Great Decisions for the most respondents reporting partaking in these activities. Bridge was the third most frequently chosen response.

Which of the following interest groups or book clubs have you joined in on?

19 responses



By far, the most frequent reason for not participating in interest groups was lack of time (48%). In comparison, 16% indicated that the groups meet when the respondent is unavailable, and 12% indicated they were not that fired up by any of the offerings. Several individual responses offered a variety of reasons for not participating, such as a conflict with other activities. One person indicated they would like to try the guided nature excursions.

Takeaway: Approximately 50% of respondents participated in at least one of the groups, while only three indicated they were not participating due to the offerings. There appears to be something for nearly everyone who has the time to participate.

Respondent Suggestions

One in three respondents offered suggestions for improving the branch.

There were multiple suggestions around the following two topics: (1) Better member engagement – including reaching out to less engaged members and having the board interact/share more with the general membership, and (2) Attracting younger members.

Takeaway: Great feedback; perhaps the next President's message could address the issues raised.

Satisfaction

More than 85% of respondents indicated they are very likely to renew their membership this year, and more than 75% would recommend our AAUW branch to a friend.

Additionally, 70% indicated their concerns/questions were addressed very responsively, while no one suggested a lack of responsiveness.

Takeaway: Overall, there was very positive satisfaction

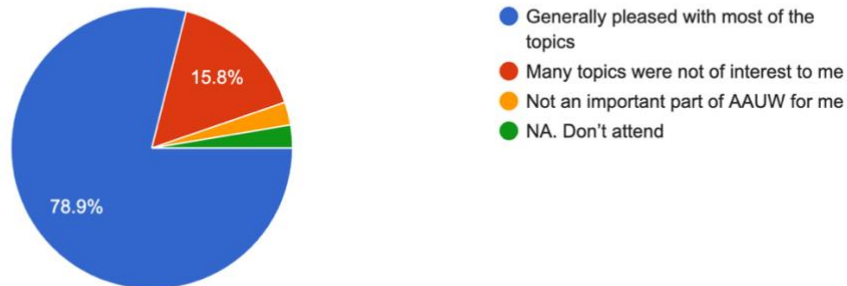
Luncheon Programs

Nearly eight in ten indicated that they were generally pleased with most of the luncheon program topics that interested them, but 16% said the topics were not of interest to them.

There were 22 responses regarding recommended topics for future meetings. Several were related to having speakers who are local women leaders and entrepreneurs. While some responses were generalized—for example, current issues and community activities—others offered specific speaker recommendations.

What do you think of the luncheon program topics?

38 responses



What type of programs are you most interested in?

- A variety of Current issues
- People who are involved in the area
- Call to action
- Equity programming
- Programs related to science and arts and music and travel.
- I do like learning about things happening within our community.
- Women, leadership, healthcare, local issues like housing and poverty and local services/organizations programs.
- Those related to our mission
- Nature experiences, fundraisers
- Local activities
- Informative
- Local speakers.
- Programs that support our mission.
- Local women leaders
- Empowering women; community activities
- Like variety
- Ones that showcase successful women in difficult fields
- Things going on in the community; meeting scholarship recipients
- How to make a better life
- Variety of topics

Takeaway: – Luncheon topics seem to be satisfactory, but there are many suggestions that could enhance this response in future surveys.



Additional Comments: Given the opportunity to make any final comments, several respondents offered a thank you for seeking their input. Another respondent shared their enjoyment of the intelligence and friendliness of the women in the organization.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!

**IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR ANNUAL AAUW
BRANCH MEMBERSHIP!
for 2024-2025**

AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc.

DO YOU KNOW:

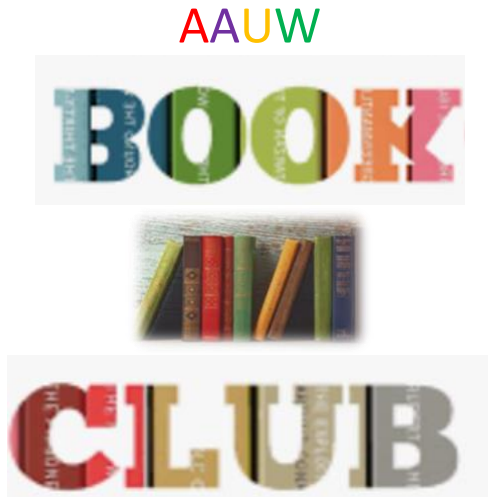
- **YOUR AAUW PERSONAL ID #.....?**
- **DATE YOU JOINED AAUW**
- **DATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES**

**IF YOU DO NOT, CONTACT: Jemetta Hunt, VP Membership, 203-245-6545,
jemetta@aol.com**

As an AAUW member whose branch participates in the Membership Payment Program (MPP), you will be paying all your dues – branch (15), STATE (12), national (72) all together. Total Due is \$99.00

YOU CAN RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1. **AAUW NATIONAL website, <https://aauw.org>**
2. **OUR AAUW BRANCH website , <https://aauw-fl.aauw.net>**
3. **BY CHECK, \$99.00, made out to...
AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County, Branch, Inc.
and mail to
AAUW
PO Box # 2115
Fort Myers, FL 33902-2115**
4. **BRING YOUR CHECK and membership form to
the May 18 picnic.**



We have two book clubs. Each welcomes new members.

Cover Girls' Book Club

Cover Girls is meeting in members' homes. Zoom will be available for those who are out of town or unable to otherwise attend. The meeting time is the second Wednesday of each month from 1 pm to 3 pm.

The selection for May is *Hello Beautiful* by Ann Napolitano. The meeting will be held at Carol Fuechsel's home.

Contact Carol Fuechsel at

cbfuechsel@gmail.com

for more information

Page Turners' Book Club

It meets monthly the 4th Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at the Lakes Library. The next meeting is Thursday, June 13 at 1 p.m. We are discussing *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese, former police chief of Aurora Illinois, and one of our recent luncheon speakers.

We welcome new members. If interested, contact Lois Benedetto,

benedettol@georgetown.edu

WHY JOIN A BOOK CLUB?

Are you in a book club? Are you thinking of joining one or even starting one up? Well, here's some good news – book clubs are good for you and here's why:

SOCIAL CONNECTION

Book clubs offer an affordable way to connect with others. Socialization helps sharpen your memory and cognitive skills, which leads to an increase in your sense of happiness and well-being.

IT FORCES YOU TO READ

And I mean that in a good way. In today's busy world, it can be hard to find time for ourselves. Being in a book club forces you to put everything aside and just read and relax.

BROADEN YOUR HORIZONS

Book clubs read a wide variety of books so if you're stuck in a reading rut or don't know what to read next, look no further, a book club can open you up to a whole new world of books.

HEAR NEW PERSPECTIVES

You can enjoy healthy, respectful debates about a variety of issues in a book club. Hearing other readers' perspectives on social issues and everyday topics might change your own opinions - or theirs. You get to talk about books! Whether you're gushing over a book or ranting about it, your fellow book clubbers will be all ears.

SHARE YOUR LOVE OF
BOOKS



Nature's Bliss: A Journey to Happiness with Maria Felipe

Marilyn Myli joined Jemetta Hunt and Cathy Tucker on Monday, April 22, 2024

in Naples, Florida as they explored Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, a natural, protected wetlands area featuring a boardwalk trail, observation tower and native wildlife, located at 375 Sanctuary Rd W, Naples, FL 34120



Our Bingo Gala
at the Helm Club at The Landings is
BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!
Our Annual Fundraiser
has successfully funded our
scholarships. We will plan to
fund our scholarships for
2024-2025.



We will have a fantastic buffet dinner and 10 Bingo Games with cash prizes and auction items!
We need all our members to pitch in and help.



Here's how YOU can help:

- 1. Provide *Silent Auction* items, such as donations from businesses and theme baskets.**
- 2. Offer to serve on the committee.**
- 3. Offer to help with decorating and setting up the room for the event.**
- 4. Start telling friends and relatives to plan to join you at a table.**

Contact Astoria Aviles, *Bingo Fundraiser Chair* at
astoria.aviles@gmail.com

Celebrating Our Scholars



Note: These are the dates for the next season.

2024-2025 MEETING DATES and TORCH PRODUCTION SCHEDULE

SEND ARTICLES TO peggycihi@comcast.net

Meeting Date	Deadline for Articles	Mail Torch Date
September 19, 2024	August 21, 2024	September 9, 2024
October 19, 2024	September 25, 2024	October 9, 2024
November 16, 2024	October 22, 2024	November 6, 2024
*Bingo Dinner Date ??	November 12, 2024	November 21, 2024
January 18, 2025	December 13, 2024	January 8, 2025
February 15, 2025	January 22, 2025	February 5, 2025
March 15, 2025	February 19, 2025	March 5, 2025
April 19, 2025	March 26, 2025	April 9, 2025
May 17, 2025	April 23, 2025	May 7, 2025

**unusual date*



AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County

P.O. Box 2115

Fort Myers, FL 33902-2115

<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>



Great Decisions will meet on Friday, May 3, at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom.

We will discuss Topic 4 – Technology Denial and Sino-American Rivalry.

Here is a summary from the Foreign Policy Association website: China's economic rise and its current policies of increasing the role of the state in the economy have led some U.S. policymakers to seek to deny China access to U.S. technology and investment. This is seen as a necessary corrective to decades of predatory Chinese economic policies. Is this a wise strategy, and how effective can it be?

Lois Benedetto will be moderating the discussion. If you are interested in learning more about Great Decisions, contact Suzan Harden.

skh062653@gmail.com

PUBLIC POLICY

AAUW FORT MYERS/LEE COUNTY

Submitted by Suzan Harden

skh062653@gmail.com

Upcoming Elections

Tuesday, May 21 – Special Elections for the Captiva Erosion Prevention District and for the City of Sanibel. Go to www.lee.vote for information.

Tuesday, August 20 – Primary Election

Deadline to Register – July 22

Deadline to Request that Ballot be Mailed – August 8

Tuesday, November 5 – General Election

Deadline to Register – October 7

Deadline to Request that Ballot be Mailed – October 24

If you have updated your request that your ballot be mailed since Dec. 31, 2022, your request is valid until the end of this year. You do not need to do it again.

PUBLIC POLICY

Governor DeSantis is in the process of signing or vetoing the bills that were passed during the 2024 legislative session. As bills are signed, they are usually mentioned in local news coverage (both print and broadcast media) so citizens know the outcome of the legislation.

Summaries of the last two AAUW FL Public Policy Forum discussions, Economic Security and the Gender Pay Gap (March) and Voting Rights (April) were distributed at the April luncheon. Because the forum presentations received very favorable feedback, the AAUW FL Public Policy Committee will be organizing a series of presentations for next year. If you have a topic to recommend, contact Suzan Harden.

To those of us who have been around a (long!) while, it's almost unimaginable that Title IX is still a heavily debated issue. But as students' needs change, it is. On April 24 you should have received an email from Meghan Kissell, AAUW Advocacy Chair, regarding the issuing of new, stronger Title IX rules. According to Meghan, these rules "strengthen protections for students experiencing sexual harassment. The rules will also ensure equal education opportunities for pregnant, parenting, and LGBTQ+ students." See the April 24 email from AAUW Meghan Kissell to see the complete email. There is also a Two-Minute Activist Link you can access to let your legislators know you support these Title IX rules.

Tools for Advocacy

As you complete your membership form for the 24-25 program year, you will see Tools for Advocacy listed as an interest group. The purpose of this group is to help interested members develop techniques for advocating with legislators. Contact Suzan Harden if you would like more information. Everyone is welcome!

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, 12:45 PM

**(The book clubs accept new members.
If interested, please contact Carol Fuechsel.)**

BRIDGE

Patricia Crowe, Coordinator

pwc@world.std.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 each month.
skh062653@gmail.com

GUIDED NATURE EXCURSIONS

Jemetta Hunt, Coordinator
jemetta@aol.com
Cathy Tucker, Master Naturalist
cptucker@embarqmail.com

TOOLS FOR ADVOCACY

Suzan Harden Coordinator
Skh062653@gmail.com

New Interest Groups Are Welcome
Contact: Jemetta Hunt
jemetta@aol.com

AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County Branch, Inc. 2023-2024 Officers

Elected – Executive Board

President – Cecile Brennan
Past Presidents – Bonnie Ryan
and Janet George
President Elect –
Nancy Schoenstein
Vice President of Programs –
Jill Jennings
Vice President of Membership –
Jemetta Hunt, Kathleen Haibach
Secretary –Patricia Crowe
Treasurer – Mary Kellner

Appointed Officers – Board Members

Public Policy – Suzan Harden
Co-Chairs of Scholarship –
Cheryl Tromley and Devera Graf
Communications (Torch/Website/Facebook)
Peggy Drennan Cihl, Astoria Aviles and
Perry Doubt
Ways and Means –Peggy Drennan-Cihl

Standing Committees

Records Retention – Executive Board
Science Fair - Cathy Tucker
Diversity Officer - Lisa Crotty
Strategic Planning–
Kathleen Haibach and Tamara Pigott

Ancillary Positions

Reservations – Carolyn Nance assisted by
Lynn Felice
Sunshine – Mary Jane McDowell
Greeters – Board Members
Torch Proofreaders: Jill Jennings
and Carolyn Nance
Torch Circulation –
Jemetta Hunt (US Mail)
Kathy Jones (E-mail)



American Association of University Women

Fort Myers / Lee County (FL) Branch Inc.

PO Box 2115
Fort Myers, FL 33902-2115

Donate Today to help the Fort Myers Branch Advance Equity for Women

Use my Gift for: ___ **Operating Expenses** ___ **Unrestricted** ___ **Scholarships*** ___

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State & Zip _____

Phone: (Mobile) _____ (Home) _____

Email: _____

Donation Amount ___ **\$25** ___ **\$50** ___ **\$100** or **Other Amount \$** _____

Is the gift in honor or memory of someone? If so please complete the following:

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Contact information for person honored or family of person remembered:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Note: Should you want to specify a specific Branch scholarship or award please name below: (See list under: <https://fmlc-fl.aauw.net> under tab Philanthropy; Scholarships, Awards

Scholarship/ Award: _____

**Please make checks payable to AAUW Fort Myers / Lee County, Inc. and mail to:
AAUW – ATTN: Treasurer, PO Box 2115, Fort Myers, FL 33902**

AAUW Fort Myers/Lee Co FL is a 501 (c) 3 not for profit organization and gifts may be tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law.

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 OR www.800helpfla.com. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.” CH39730



**Membership and Interest Form
AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County
Branch, Inc.
July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025**

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____

Florida Address (Is this a new or edited prior address in Florida? Circle: Y or N)

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Dates usually in Lee County: Full Time or Seasonal, from: _____ to: _____

Out of Season Address (Is this a new or edited out of season address? Circle: Y or N)

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Contact Information--Will be included in the directory and used to send branch communications such as the Torch.

Email: _____

Phone-Home: _____ Phone-Cell: _____

Birthdate: Month/Day: _____ / _____

Education—As you would prefer to be included in the directory. Education: Degree(s)/Year/College/University(s):

Degree _____ Year _____ Colege/University _____

Degree _____ Year _____ College/University _____

Level of Membership

- \$63.00 New Member (Reduced cost for first year membership! Welcome!)
- \$99.00 Renewing Branch Member
- \$27.00 Dual Member—Primary membership with another branch Primary branch: _____
- \$27.00 Paid Life Member
- \$0.00 Honorary Life Member

Payment: Mail the Membership Form with your check, payable to **AAUW Fort Myers/Lee County Branch Inc.**
AAUW Fort Myers/Lee Co Branch, Inc.
P.O. Box 2115
Fort Myers, FL 33902-2115

All questions regarding membership may be sent by email to Jemetta Hunt, Membership VP, jemetta@aol.com

My interests would be in the following Committees and Interest Groups

Check	Committees	Check	Interest Groups
	Membership/Directory		Book Group
	Public Policy		Bridge
	Scholarships		Hand and Foot
	Communications		Mahjongg
	Ways and Means/Fundraising		Nature Walks
	Torch Newsletter Production Editing		Tools for Advocacy
	Strategic Planning		Great Decisions
			Field Trips
			Other:



AAUW FORT MYERS/LEE CO. BRANCH
Jemetta Hunt, Torch Distributor
7361 Twin Eagle Lane
Fort Myers, FL 33902
AAUW Website: <https://fmlc-fl.aauw.net/>



AAUW Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070887894617>

