



# Synthesis



## The State of Education

Where we are today

A Look at the Challenges facing our City and our State

Our Mission Statement is clear when stating that....

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Here are some of the major issues affecting the education they may receive in our city.

- 1) Books are being banned.
- 2) Curriculum is being changed in a manner that transforms history into an unrecognizable narrative.
- 3) Vulnerable populations of students are losing protections from harassment and school personnel are being gagged from providing them with supportive resources.
- 4) Large sums of taxpayer money are being funneled into vouchers for private school education.
- 5) Private think tanks and businesses, rather than educators, are making policy decisions for public schools.

Based on AAUW's primary mission of supporting education for women and girls, October's program will highlight the alarming changes that are destroying the structure and mission of our public schools with speakers who can address these issues.

*Submitted by Martha Lindberg, Program Director*



**DON'T FORGET—MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!**



OUR FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR IS ALMOST HERE—SEPTEMBER 20, 2 P.M., AT THE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER. WE HAVE MISSED SEEING EVERYONE AND HOPE TO SEE MANY OF YOU AT THIS FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR. 340 S TUTTLE AVE • (941) 366-1700

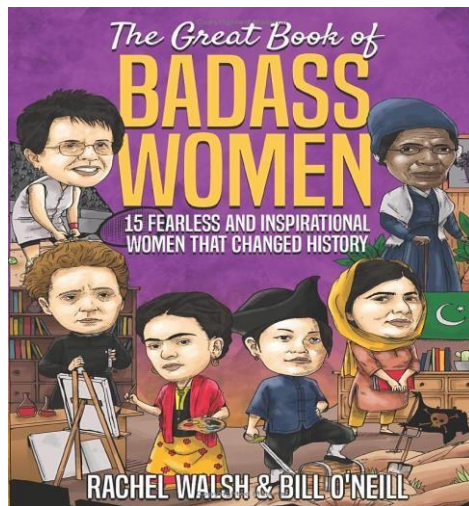
## President’s Message – October 2023



Sue Casey, President

Welcome! While thinking about what I wanted to convey to y’all this month, I saw a saying “Nevertheless, she persisted” and came across a book and loved the title. Why? Because being in AAUW I’ve met some really great women – women who saw something that caused them to do something.

Last year I wrote about our need for volunteers. This year I’m hoping that the reason I joined AAUW - our *mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy* is something I strongly believe requires not just my checkbook but my participation and I’m asking you to give us a small piece of your time and energy. The barriers that we’ve faced have not lessened but, in many instances, have increased. Seeing these women brings to mind what John F. Kennedy said “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country,” I challenge each of you to think about what you can do to support AAUW. May I replace the blank face picture with yours? (If you need help identifying these women – keep reading)



From the top left – Rosa Parks, Florence Nightingale, Marie Currie, Juliet Gordon Low, Alice Paul, immediately below Harriet Tubman, across Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Warren, Eleanor Roosevelt, YOU and Malala Yousafzai

## MEMBERSHIP

Welcome **Jeannie Simons**, our newest member! Jeannie is originally from Pennsylvania and attended Muhlenberg College in that state. She also holds a PhD in organic chemistry from Johns Hopkins University.

Jeannie and her husband moved to Kansas, where they both taught chemistry at Wichita State University. Jeannie worked in the energy/environment field for the Wichita city government and later for consulting firms in the Washington, D.C. area.

When Jeannie and her husband moved to Florida, Jeannie earned a law degree at Stetson University College of Law and practiced in Pinellas County for 14 years before moving back to northern Virginia and serving as an appellate attorney for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Upon retiring in 2005, Jeannie and her husband returned to Florida, where their grown children and grandchildren remained. In retirement, Jeannie has audited numerous college literature and Latin courses. She enjoys reading, playing tournament bridge, and cheering avidly for the Rays. She also enjoys needlework, cats, classical music, and traveling.

We're so glad you've joined us here at AAUW Sarasota, Jeannie.



### Build our AAUW Sarasota Scholarship Fund

Our branch has a scholarship fund that supports women who need financial help to finish their college degrees. The Fund is managed by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County (CFSC). We welcome donations to this fund so we can continue to support local women. If you plan to make a donation, please make your check payable to CFSC with this on the memo line: "AAUW Sarasota Scholarship Fund." You may mail a check to CFSC at 2635 Fruitville Road, Sarasota FL 34237. Let me know if you have other questions.

*Submitted by Ellen Roche (ellen.roche.AAUW@gmail.com).*



## Public Policy

Our public policy program is directed by our mission – to advance gender equity for women and girls through education, advocacy, and research. The guiding principles of the Florida public policy program are aligned with AAUW National’s Public Policy Priorities, established every two years by an every-member vote. The most recent version of the Public Policy Priorities identifies these Biennial Action Priorities:

- To support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity, and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls.
- To achieve economic security for all women.
- To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society.

### Your participation

As an AAUW member you play a pivotal role in the success of our public policy program. Make sure you are:

- 1) registered to vote
- 2) registered for the AAUW Action Network (<https://www.aauw.org/act/>) to receive national and Florida email notices for your legislators
- 3) know who your elected representatives are.

To find your Florida **state representative** go to: [myfloridahouse.gov](https://myfloridahouse.gov).

For all of Sarasota County and part of Manatee County, the **state senator** is **Joe Gruters**. Contact him at <https://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/S22>.



### Will you be able to vote next year?????

Due to a change in the state law, all Florida residents who vote by mail **MUST** submit a **new** mail ballot request from their county Supervisor of Elections every two years.

To renew a request for a mail-in ballot, or check on the status of your request, go to the Supervisor of Elections site for your county: <https://www.sarasotavotes.gov> or <https://www.votemanatee.com> and click on Vote By Mail. If you need a Vote by Mail renewal form, Sue McGowan will have copies available at the September meeting.

# AAUW Membership Renewal for 2023 - 24

## Renew Now!

Your membership has been vital in making AAUW the only organization advancing gender equity from all sides for more than a century. Because of you we’re working with lawmakers to reshape unfair systems; partnering with employers on workplace and economic equity; and investing in women who are creating change from the inside out.

Today, we’re asking you to continue the legacy of moving women forward and renew your membership!

You can pay all of your dues--branch, state, and national--at once. Here’s how:

Renew by check: Write a check for \$105 payable to AAUW Sarasota and mail to:

**AAUW Sarasota, PO Box 3554, Sarasota FL 34230**

or go to **AAUW.ORG** to renew online.

*When you renew your membership, you can take pride in knowing that our work together continues to make a difference. Thank you!*

*Submitted by Nancy Brennan, Membership*



### Education Committee

The Education Committee has five areas we work with: **NCCWSL** (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders)--an annual conference for college women; **Tech Trek**-- a STEM summer camp experience for rising 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls; **Academic Olympics** – a competition for local area high school students; **Write-Read-Write** – our reading program for a local third grade classroom; **Scholarships** – branch monies helping women complete college or a non-traditional career path.

**We have openings on this committee!** If you have questions regarding any of these areas or if you would like to join us, please contact Lois Wilkins at [cellololoma2@gmail.com](mailto:cellololoma2@gmail.com) or 989-430-0478.

*Submitted by Lois Wilkins, Director of Education Programs*



### **Benderson Babes**

Every Wednesday at 11:30 am - the absolute best remedy for the mid-week blahs. It's getting a vitamin shot from like-minded women – just what the doctor ordered.

We bring our folding chairs and meet under the shade of the trees at Benderson Park, enjoying gentle breezes. We spend about an hour sharing everything from current topics to “problem solving” (amazing what a group of females can do together). The conversation is as varied as the ladies who join us. After we've chatted, we head off for lunch— where we go for lunch varies each week and is decided by majority vote. Come join us and give us your opinion of where we should dine.

For details on where we meet, send an email to [aauwflcasey@gmail.com](mailto:aauwflcasey@gmail.com) or call (941)735-8324. Hope to see you next Wednesday.

*Submitted by Sue Casey*

### ***Meet and Eat Sundays***

***Dates and Locations will be sent separately.***

*For further information contact Sue Casey at [aauwflcase@gmail.com](mailto:aauwflcase@gmail.com).*

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## **National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)**

I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for the incredible opportunity you provided me by sponsoring my attendance at the NCCWSL Women's Conference in Maryland. Your support has left an indelible mark on my life, and I am deeply appreciative of your generosity.

The experience at the conference was nothing short of transformative. The range of workshops, enlightening panel discussions, and inspiring keynote speeches expanded my horizons and instilled in me a stronger sense of empowerment. I gained insights into pressing women's issues, discovered new dimensions of professional development, and delved into the intricacies of effective leadership. The chance to network with fellow attendees introduced me to exceptional individuals who are actively shaping positive change in their respective fields.

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the financial assistance that made it possible for me to participate in this extraordinary event. Your kind support alleviated the financial burden and allowed me to immerse myself fully in the experience. I am committed to paying forward the impact of this opportunity by advocating for empowerment within my community and beyond. The inspiration I've drawn from the conference will guide my efforts to effect positive change and contribute to meaningful initiatives, including my continued involvement with nonprofits in SRQ. Please feel free to reach out whenever you require assistance with the SRQ AAUW—I'm more than willing to lend a hand.

I'm delighted to share that the camaraderie among the attendees was remarkable. Throughout the journey, from our adventures on the metro to exploring Maryland, D.C., and even navigating the airport, the four of us forged strong bonds. On the occasion of our one free night to explore D.C., we decided to visit the zoo followed by a memorable dinner at Geoffrey's. A snapshot of that evening is enclosed for your enjoyment.

Once again, I extend my heartfelt thanks for making this exceptional experience possible for me. Your dedication to the empowerment of women is both admirable and inspiring. I will always cherish the memories and insights gained from the NCCWSL Women's Conference, and I look forward to carrying forward the lessons learned to create a brighter future for all.

With sincere gratitude,

Dahlia Singer

*Submitted by June Benowitz and Joan Nasser*

*P.S. We hope you will enjoy seeing the enthusiasm of all of these young women leaders!*





QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

*I think the best way to learn about anything new is to try it.* –Mae Jemison

Born on October 17, 1956, Mae Jemison is an American [engineer](#), [physician](#), and former [NASA](#) astronaut. She became the first [African-American](#) woman to travel into space when she served as a [mission specialist](#) aboard the [Space Shuttle Endeavour](#) in 1992. Jemison joined NASA's [astronaut corps in 1987](#) and was selected to serve for the [STS-47](#) mission, during which the *Endeavour* orbited the Earth for nearly eight days on September 12–20, 1992.





**BALLET ENTHUSIASTS:** The ballet season will be under way next month! Our first ballet will be **October 21** at the FSU Center for the Performing Arts. Anyone interested in joining us for one or more should purchase her own ticket. To be added to the Ballet Enthusiasts list, send me an email at [suemcg4802@gmail.com](mailto:suemcg4802@gmail.com). We will be dining at the Grillroom at the Ringling. I

will send a reminder on October 1. It's important to let me know as soon as possible if you will be sharing dinner with us after the ballet. It will be the beginning of Sarasota's "season," and early reservations are a must. Thank you.

*Submitted by Sue McGowan*



**PLAY READING GROUP:** As some of you may know, the Play Readers Interest Group was launched in our branch many years ago.

We have recently come across remarks from a participant several years ago about her experience. Her words reminded me of the benefits of this activity to our members. So I share them with you below:

*I really think play readers is ideal for busy people who want an opportunity to mentally escape, for a couple of hours, from everyday tasks—into a world of make believe. You also have the fun of learning about theatre and participating in the presentation. A delightful escape from the everyday events that we get caught up in. Lunch is super, too.*

Please consider joining the Play Reading interest group this coming year. Play reading will commence in January, generally meeting the second meeting of the month. Over the year, we do a mix--"cold" readings of plays selected by our group in members' homes as well as attendance at performances at local high quality repertory theater, such as the Asolo Conservatory.

Contact me at [nbrennan617@gmail.com](mailto:nbrennan617@gmail.com) or 941-924-5951. I'd be happy to tell you more about us. Thanks!

*Submitted by Nancy Brennan*




#### **KEEP YOUR CALENDARS OUT AND SAVE THESE DATES!**

- **OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, AT STONYBROOK COUNTRY CLUB. THERE'LL BE ORIGINAL AND TRADITIONAL HOLIDAY MUSIC.**
- **OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISER, JANUARY 16, 2024, AT THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH IN SARASOTA. A ONE-WOMAN SHOW BY SHERYL FAYE AS RUTH BADER GINSBERG. CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!!!**



## OCTOBER 2023

To place items in the Calendar, contact Sue McGowan by October 10 for the November 2023 Newsletter at [suemcg4802@gmail.com](mailto:suemcg4802@gmail.com). Please send them in Word format. I cannot edit a PDF file. Thank you.

Date	Time	Event	Location / Contact	Notes
Tuesday, October 3	10:30 a.m.	<b>AAUW Sarasota BOARD MEETING</b> 	Meet at Women's Resource Center. An invitation will be sent a day or two before the meeting.  <b>Contact:</b> Sue Casey at <a href="mailto:aauwfcasey@gmail.com">aauwfcasey@gmail.com</a>	All members welcome.
Tuesday October 10		<b>DEADLINE for submission of articles for the November Synthesis.</b>	Susan McGowan <a href="mailto:Suemcg4802@gmail.com">Suemcg4802@gmail.com</a>	Early submissions are appreciated.
Tuesday, October 17 	11:00 a.m.	<b>North County Book Group</b>  <b><i>Golden Girl</i> by Elin Hilderbrand.</b>	Betty J. Johnson North Sarasota Library Dr. Edward James II Meeting Room 2801 Newtown Blvd, Sarasota	Discussion Leader: <i>Joan Nasser</i>  All members welcome.  For more information contact Lois Fisch at <a href="mailto:lfisch@utica.edu">lfisch@utica.edu</a>
Wednesday, October 18	2:00 p.m.	<b>AAUW September BUSINESS MEETING</b>	Women's Resource Center  340 S Tuttle Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237	All members and guests are welcome.
Thursday October 24 	11:30	<b>Gulf Gate Book Group</b>  <b><i>The Light We Carry</i> by Michele Obama</b>	Gulf Gate Library  7112 Curtiss Ave, Sarasota, FL 34231	Discussion Leader: Janet Mahler All members welcome.  For more information contact Sylvia Rosenfeld at <a href="mailto:Sylros10@yahoo.com">Sylros10@yahoo.com</a> Jocelyn Baskey <a href="mailto:@yahoo.co.uk">@yahoo.co.uk</a>

**AAUW Sarasota Branch  
Elected Officers and Directors 2022-2024**

**OFFICERS**

President (2022-2024)	Susan Casey
Vice President (2022-2024)	Vacant
Secretary (2021-2023)	Estephanie Herrera
Treasurer (2021-2023)	Ellen Roche

**DIRECTORS**

Program (2023-2025)	Martha Lindberg
Membership (2022-2024)	Nancy Brennan
Public Policy (2022-2024)	Diana Sells
Communications (2022-2024)	Dawn Graber
Education Programs (2023-2025)	Lois Wilkins
Nominations (2023-2025)	Lois Fisch
Past President, (ex-officio, non-voting)	Lois Fisch
<b>Synthesis</b> Editor	Sue McGowan



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[www.facebook.com/AAUWSarasota](http://www.facebook.com/AAUWSarasota)

Or on the web at:

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

<https://www.aauw.org/>

(National organization)

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

(Florida branch)

or

email us at: [Sarasota.AAUW@gmail.com](mailto:Sarasota.AAUW@gmail.com)



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