



Synthesis

AAUW Sarasota Branch

February 2024



*Our monthly meeting is on February 21, 2024,
at the Betty J. Johnson North Sarasota
Library 2801 Newtown Blvd., Sarasota*

Black History Music Through the Ages

Throughout history, music has been central to the African experience— from the African Motherland to the shores of this land called America. The melodies and rhythms of the African Motherland have been captured in Spirituals (which, among other iterations were used as signal songs on the Underground Railroad to alert and instruct the enslaved Africans) and other forms of Soul Music. Along the way, the music of African Americans has continued to evolve... including social music, classical music, and many other forms.



Marsha Kindle Smith



Lonnetta Gaines

President's Message



Sue Casey, President

Happy New Year. When I was a kid, I used to tell my grandmother that I wanted it to be Christmas again. She would chuckle and assure me that I didn't want to "wish my life away." Grandmother said just wait – you'll want to slow down time – of course, I never believed her. Now that I'm the age she was when she was passing on her wisdom of age, I understand what she meant. It seems that our current year (23-24) is already 5 months "old." What I have learned is that as time marches forward so does the need for our branch for volunteers. I'm sure y'all are now shaking your heads and wondering why my message each month is asking you to volunteer for some of the open needs of our branch. I hear you – I've been there and done that – time for some of the "new blood" to volunteer. That brings up another problem – our membership hasn't expanded like it did before COVID. Some of the needs for volunteers only require 2-5 hours TOTAL – time reviewing our Tech Trek applicants, time spent reviewing our financials and creating a budget for next year, membership committee, etc. We have openings on our Board of Directors for the next term (like my job). So, I'm asking that you think about the future of our branch and tell me (if you don't want to be a volunteer), what we can do to find volunteers.

OFFICERS NEEDED:

Please nominate yourself or a friend for one of the following positions on our Board. It's a wonderful way to be in community with your AAUW Sarasota friends.

President Vice-President Membership Nominations Public Policy



Corrections to the recent edition of the Branch Directory:

- Member entry for Ernie Kent. Please change her address to 1955 N Honore Ave., Apt. B201, Sarasota, FL 34236-1901

➤ *Submitted by Nancy Brennan, Membership*



Public Policy



The AAUW Florida Public Policy Issue Forums

Wouldn't you like more in-depth information on the important issues facing Florida from a nonpartisan but equity-focused viewpoint? Would you like to be able to ask your own questions of experts regarding these issues? Then be sure to attend as many AAUW Florida Issue Forums this year as you can. All sessions will start at 6:00 PM and last for an hour. The series is open to AAUW members and guests.

TITLE	DATE	SPEAKERS	RSVP
Gender Pay Gap and Economic Security	March 7, 2024	Dr. Mary Gatta, AAUW FL Co- Public Policy Director and Director of Research and Public Policy, National Association of Colleges and Employers	Click here to register for this session
Voting Rights	April 18, 2024	Debbie Chandler, Co-President, League of Women's Voters. Florida	Click here to register for this session

You will need to RSVP for each session individually. Once you RSVP you will receive a Zoom link for the session. If you have any questions, contact Mary Gatta, Co-Public Policy Director, AAUW Florida at gatta.mary@gmail.com.



The AAUW Florida Public Policy Committee has selected four bills to support and one to oppose for the current legislative session that began January 9. You may not read about these bills in the news, but they have been crafted to make the lives of women easier in Florida. Please contact your state legislators to give your opinion—position papers are available on the AAUW Florida website: <https://aauwadvocacyflorida.blog/2024/01/10/florida-2024-legislative-session/> After stating that you are a constituent, you may use the AAUW Florida name (I stand with AAUW Florida on this bill.) or just write a short note in support/opposition with your name.

ERA Bills: SCR142/H647: The 14th Amendment to the US Constitution does not prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in the same way it does for race or national origin. We need this protection now.

Pregnant Women in Custody: SB 100/HB 237: After a pregnancy test on their request, every arrested female would be allowed to petition for a postponement, but not a reprieve, of incarceration. Jail is no place for healthy pregnancy and delivery.

Paid Parental Leave for State Career Service Employees: SB 127/HB 128: This bill changes unpaid to paid leave for the over 80,000 employees of the State of Florida, who are paid an average of \$56,500 per year.

Pregnancy Support and Wellness Services: SB 256/HB 343: This bill would improve the integrity of the state-supported childbirth-only Pregnancy Support Centers by requiring that information presented be medically correct and requiring Department of Health inspections and annual audit reports.

Employment and Curfew of Minors HB49 The AAUW Florida opposes bills aiming to enable employers to hire 16-year-olds without time or job restrictions (HB49/SB1596), because of the supreme importance of a good education in lifting people out of poverty.

The Freedom to Learn Act S1414/HB1355 The Freedom to Learn Act would repeal or amend many of the provisions of previously passed legislation prohibiting educational materials related to system racism and “identity politics”.

Submitted by Diana Sells, Director for Public Policy



THANK YOU!

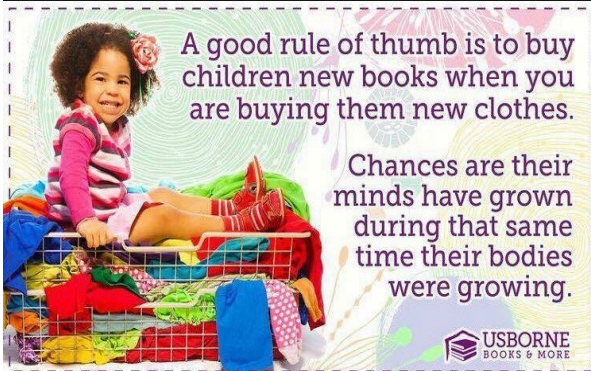
Shoe Boxes for Seniors

A big thank you to all who participated this year by filling and wrapping (note to self - next year don't use those #%!! boxes with attached lids!) a shoebox filled with Christmas treats for clients of Meals on Wheels.

We have received a thank-you letter for our generosity and plan to make this an annual project. We hope many members will also participate, so keep in mind as you run across possible gift items during the year to put them away until December, along with a sturdy shoebox.

Barb Kerwin and Diana Sells

EDUCATION INITIATIVES *LOIS WILKINS*



Write Read Write Program

Alta Vista Elementary School

Mrs. Jackson’s class

Mrs. Bowlin’s class.

We received letters from the combined 32 students on December 21. Bev Prechtel and Anne Salamone working as a team and Carol Bernasconi and Kathy Oarr working as a team will be getting these letters to you in the near future. Your book in a gift bag, along with a personal message, should be in their hands no later than February 21, our next meeting (Note: At the North County Library). If you haven’t already volunteered, it’s not too late. Just email me at suemcg4802@gmail.com.

*Submitted by Sue McGowan
Write Read Write Coordinator*



Twenty-one students were nominated in Sarasota County. However, that is not broken down by branch (We share those students with the Venice branch.). These students are currently submitting their applications after having been nominated by their teachers. The deadline to complete their applications is January 31st.

*Submitted by Leiland Theriot
AAUW Tech Trek Coordinator
Sarasota Branch*



NEW FINANCE COMMITTEE NEEDED

As our year rolls around, we are already preparing for another year of learning and giving. We are forming a Finance Committee to prepare the Budget and the Philanthropy Plan for 2024-2025.and

would like to have any interested members join us. We will begin with Zoom calls and perhaps meet in person. The Board will review the documents on March 5th, and they will be submitted to the Synthesis by March 10. The final vote will be at the Annual General Meeting/Branch Meeting on April 17th. Please join us to learn about how we get money and how we give money. Contact Ellen Roche: ellen.roche.AAUW@gmail.com.



Benderson Babes

Weather permitting, every Wednesday at 11:30 we 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.” The conversation is as varied as the ladies who join us. After that, we head off for lunch— where we go for lunch varies each week and is decided by majority vote. For details on where we meet or are having lunch if the weather is inclement, send an email to aauwflcasey@gmail.com or call (941)735-8324. Hope to see you next Wednesday.



Meet and Eat Sundays

Sunday dinner with your AAUW friends—good times with great people. All are welcome to join us, share a dinner, and spend time with your AAUW family. All reservations are for 5 p.m. If you want to join us, **please reply to this email** (aauwflcasey@gmail.com) to let me know. If your plans change, or you forgot to RSVP and you decide you’d like to come, just call (941-735-8324) or email me so I can update the reservations.

The list of upcoming dinners will be available soon. Stay tuned.

Submitted by Sue Casey

In



Profile of a Sarasota AAUW Member

**Estephania Herrera, President
EH20 Marine Business Solutions**

Congratulations are in order for our very own Esteph, who recently was awarded national recognition in the boating industry as a 2023 Women Making Waves recipient. In its sixth year and a part of *Boating Industry* magazine's Top 100 Awards her award recognizes Esteph as a Top 30 woman in a male-dominated industry.

Coming from Puerto Rico and always loving the water, Esteph began her career in the boating industry 18 years ago, where she worked for 16 years for a major boating company. Beginning as a receptionist and climbing the corporate ladder as a finance and insurance administrative assistant and personal assistant to top yacht sales professionals, she became a top producing business manager—helping turn around one of the worst performing stores to now one of the top producers in the nation. After 16 years she moved to a privately owned company, improving their finance and insurance (F & I) department and was appointed Director of Finance.

Throughout all these years, Esteph continued her education and two years ago was awarded her master's degree from LSU Shreveport.





To hear Esteph speak, she will admit that achieving success has required effort and perseverance, especially working in such a male-dominated world as the boating industry. But along with the challenges has come a true sense that those same challenges also provided opportunities to develop her own potential.

Just within this last calendar year, Esteph struck out on her own, establishing her own company, EH2o Marine Business Solutions. With so many companies calling on her looking for advice and answers to ways in which they can grow their companies, she recognized the needs of these small boating companies. Her finance and insurance training seminars are bringing that wealth of knowledge gained through her 18 years in the boating industry.

Congratulations, Esteph, and continued success. We are so proud of you and your accomplishments and so happy you are sharing your talents with our AAUW Sarasota Branch.

A last word—during this past year Esteph has also found time to plan her February 2024 wedding! Congratulations on beginning this exciting life journey with your Mike.

To place items in the Calendar, contact Sue McGowan by February 10 for the March 2024 Newsletter at suemcg4802@gmail.com. Please send them in Word format. I cannot edit a PDF file. You can text or call me at 781-264-2450. Thank you.

Date	Time	Event	Location / Contact	Notes
Tuesday February 6	10:30 a.m.	AAUW Sarasota BOARD MEETING 	Women's Resource Center 340 S. Tuttle Ave. Sarasota, FL Contact: Sue Casey at aauwfcasey@gmail.com	All members are welcome.
Friday February 16	1:30 p.m.	Third Friday Bridge 	1500 1500 Glen Oaks Drive E	Contact Maureen Firth at firthent@yahoo.com for details.
Tuesday February 20	11.a.m.	North County Book Club <i>The Queen of Dirt Island by Donal Ryan</i> 	North Sarasota Library Edward James II Meeting Room	Discussion Leader: Ellen Roche All members welcome For more information contact Lois Fisch at lfisch@utica.edu
Wednesday February 21	2 p.m.	Monthly meeting NOTE THE LOCATION CHANGE FOR THIS MEETING! 	North Sarasota Library Edward James II Meeting Room Black Music History Through the Ages	All members and friends invited.
Tuesday February 27	11:30 a.m.	Gulf Gate Book Group <i>The Postmistress of Paris by Meg Waite Clayton</i> 	Gulf Gate Library 7112 Curtiss Ave, Sarasota, FL 34231 2 nd floor	Discussion Leader: Carol Bernasconi All members welcome. For more information contact Jocelyn Baskey at baskey0@gmail.com Or 419 559 6319

This month we brought Esteph into Focus. Esteph is in the early stages of her career, and we are so excited for her growth. Many of our AAUW members have already had amazing careers and lives beyond that. I would love to profile you for a future issue. If you would be willing to share YOUR story, especially for our younger members who don't know our varied backgrounds, please let me know. Thank you. Sue McGowan (suemcg4802@gmail.com) or 781-264-2450.

**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
Synthesis Editor	Sue McGowan



Visit us on Facebook at
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



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Sarasota Branch

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