



President's Message

As your new Co-Presidents, Jackie Zukley and I are excited about many things. We have a wonderful board of directors, excellent committee chairs, and so many women in this branch with life long experiences, wisdom, and talents to share. It takes a village...

After fifty-four years of membership in AAUW in Michigan and Sarasota I am continually amazed and proud of how we affect change. Please take time to go to the links to read the letters from two young women, whom we sponsored, and who attended the NCCWSL conference this year. These college students were enriched and inspired to be excellent future leaders. And you have to be excited when you look at the smiling faces of the middle school girls at Tech Trek camps. Our branch sponsored seven girls this year. How thrilling to play a part in positive change. Excitement filled the classroom when Sue Ritchey and I delivered books to our Write Read Write third graders. Don't miss Sue's article for more excitement from our teacher, Megan Mahoney.

Hang on to your hats for the 2026-2027 year of exciting programs, opportunities to meet and mingle with AAUW friends, and always promoting gender equity for women and girls.

Liz Smith, Co-President

2026-2027 Calendar of Speakers/Programs

DATE	SPEAKER/ PROGRAM	PRESENTER	FACILITATOR
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9/16/2026	League of Women Voters "Every Vote Counts"	Melinda Schell, Roslyn Painter Goffi	Sue McGowan
10/21/2026	Art Center Sarasota "Celebrating our Centennial" Past, Present and Future Highlights	Ms. Katherine Ceasar	Carol Bernasconi
11/18/2026	"Personal Reflections on a Career in the CIA"	Ms Ilka Rodriguez	Carol Bernasconi
12/16/2026	Holiday Luncheon Stoneybrook Country Club		Carol Bernasconi & Kathy Schersten
1/20/2027	Westcoast Black Theatre	TBA	Carol Bernasconi
2/17/2027	Mote Marine Laboratory "Community Initiatives & Partnerships"	TBA	Carol Bernasconi
3/17/2027	"A Walk Through Our AAUW History"	Sue Ritchey	Sarasota Branch Members
4/21/2027	TBA Carol Welcomes Member Suggestions	TBA	TBA
5/12/2027	Spring Luncheon Marina Jack Restaurant		Carol Bernasconi & Kathy Schersten

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September General Meeting

Guest Speakers!



League of Women Voters

Sarasota County

Our speakers for the September 16 meeting are **Melinda Schell** and **Roslyn Painter-Goffi**. Melinda and Roslyn are representatives of the Sarasota League of Women Voters and will be speaking to us about the questions and amendments on this year's November 3 ballot. With many questions and the confusion surrounding amendment 3, this is a meeting not to be missed. Please bring your friends. There is a lot to consider as we cast our votes this election year.

Melinda Schell

Melinda joined the League in 2019 and immediately began to register voters. She is now an active participant in the Speakers Bureau, educating the community on voter registration and election information. Melinda was a Cardiovascular Clinical Nurse Specialist and a national speaker in cardiovascular care.

Roslyn Painter-Goffi

Roslyn came to Florida in 2017 and is now a full-time resident. She joined the League in 2024. Roslyn is a retired public school librarian. She was the president of her local teachers' union and served on the State Board of Education in Ohio for two years.



NCCWSL: In Their Own Words

There is no better way to understand the impact of the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) than to

hear directly from the young women who experienced it.

This year's attendees returned with new perspectives, meaningful connections, and inspiration they will carry with them as they continue their education and step into future leadership roles.

They have generously shared letters reflecting on their time at NCCWSL, what they learned, and what the experience meant to them.

We invite you to click the links below to read their letters and hear their stories in their own words.

[Letter from Kate](#)

[Letter from AnaClara](#)



Save The Dates!

2027 Tech Trek Florida Meeting



We have some exciting things happening with Tech Trek Florida, and we're excited to share them with you!

2027 Tech Trek Branch Kickoff Meeting

Thursday, September 10 @ 7:00 PM

We have lots of good information to share as we kick off planning for Tech Trek 2027! We'll review what's ahead, share important updates, and get everyone ready for another great camp season. This meeting

is for all the branch Tech Trek contacts.

Mark your calendar — you won't want to miss it!

West Coast Camp Discovery Meeting

Thursday, September 17 @ 7:00 PM

We're exploring the possibility of establishing a third Tech Trek camp on the west coast of Florida!

This meeting is for anyone interested in learning more, sharing ideas, and potentially joining the committee that will explore this exciting opportunity.

Interested in attending the Discovery meeting to learn more? Simply register using the link below.

Please share this invitation with your branch members and friends who may be interested in getting involved. We're excited to see where this opportunity could take Tech Trek Florida and the possibilities it could open up for even more girls across the state!

 Join Us via Zoom

Zoom links for both meetings will be shared at a later date. And remember, you can join us via Zoom whether you're in Florida or joining us from somewhere else!

Mark your calendars — we look forward to seeing you!

[Discovery Meeting Link](#)

[FAU Camp Photos](#)

[More FAU Camp Photos](#)

[Stetson Camp Photos](#)

[More Stetson Camp Photos](#)



BOOK CLUB



The Gulf Gate Book Group

**Tuesday, October 27th, 2026 –
11:30 AM**

**Location: Gulf Gate Library 2nd
Floor Conference Room**

Janet Mahler will lead a discussion of [The Talented Miss Farwell](#) by Emily Gray Tedrow. Optional lunch follows the discussion. For further information contact Jocelyn Baskey at baskey0@gmail.com.

Many thanks, Jocelyn

[CLICK HERE FOR THE 2026/2027 BOOK SELECTION LIST](#)

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Third Friday Bridge



If you enjoy good company, friendly competition, and a few hours of engaging conversation, we'd love to have you join our Third Friday Bridge Group. We meet every month at 1:00pm at the Glen Oaks Condos to play party bridge. Whether you're a seasoned player or just looking to reconnect with the game, this is a wonderful opportunity to gather, play, and build community.

If you're interested in participating or would like more details, please contact Maureen Firth at firthent@yahoo.com | 941-358-6451.

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Ballet Enthusiast



The AAUW Ballet Enthusiasts have selected the four performances we will be attending this 2026-27 season of the Sarasota Ballet. The dates are below:

Program One

October 24, 2026, 2 PM

at the FSU Center for Performing Arts (The Asolo)

Program Two

November 21, 2026, 2 PM

at the Sarasota Opera House

Program Four

January 30, 2027, 2 PM

at the FSU Performing Arts Center (The Asolo)

Program Seven

May 1, 2027, 2 PM

at the Sarasota Opera House

For more details about the performances, go to the Sarasota Ballet website at <https://www.sarasotaballet.org/>.

Contact Nancy with any questions at nbrennan617@gmail.com

Thanks! Nancy 🧑🧑

In Memoriam: Jo-An Webb

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of our longtime AAUW member, Jo-An Webb, at the age of 98.

Jo-An had been a dedicated member of AAUW since 1973, marking more than five decades of membership and connection to our organization.

We honor her many years as part of our AAUW community and extend our heartfelt condolences to her family, friends, and all who had the pleasure of knowing her. Her long-standing commitment to AAUW will be remembered with gratitude.

Friendly Hurricane Season Reminder

As you make the necessary preparations for hurricane season, include your Florida Real ID, U.S. passport, and voter ID in your list of documents to safeguard, especially with the November 2026 elections around the corner.

AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference 2026 September 25-27, 2026 Lancaster, PA!



[Conference Details Here!](#)



Save The Date: Holiday Luncheon!



Our Sarasota **AAUW Holiday luncheon** will be held on Wednesday, December 16th, 2026 at:

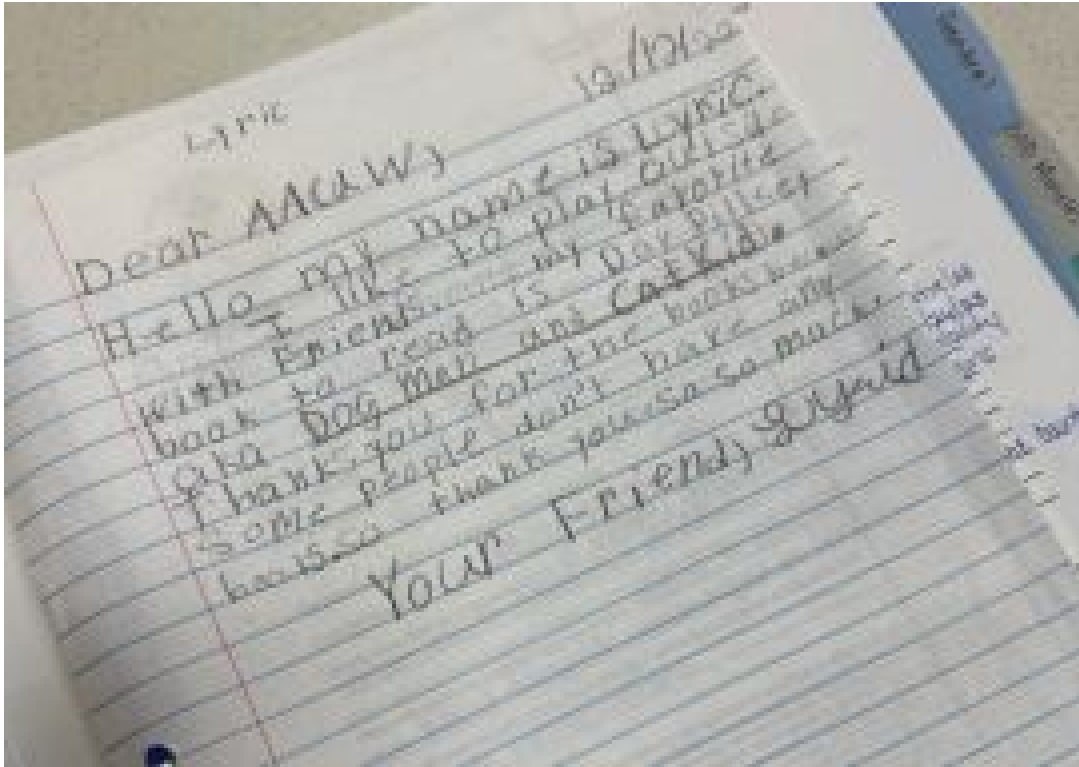
Stoneybrook Golf and Country Club

Palmer Ranch, 8801 Stoneybrook Blvd, Sarasota, FL

Information and reservations will be shared in a future Synthesis.

Look forward to and anticipating our usual great turn-out. Friends and family always included to join in our festivities!

Write Read Write



An excited Megan Mahoney called this summer. Megan is our 3rd grade Write Read Write teacher and she wanted us to know that her school, Booker Elementary, is a grade A school for the first time ever. Grades are given by the state as a result of the many tests the students have to take. In her classroom seven had perfect scores in both reading and math, no one had to go to summer school, and no one was held back.

I think we play a tiny part when we write our letters, carefully select books and present them in beautiful bags. It is thanks to so many of you who participate to share our love of reading and books and education. We're looking forward to participating with her classroom again this fall.

Sue Ritchey

2026 / 2027 MEETING DATES

Board Meetings

*First Tuesday of the month at the Women's Resource Center
10:30am - 12:30pm starting in September*

September 1

October 6

November 3

December 1

January 5

February 2

March 2

April 6

May 4

June 1

Branch Meetings

*Third Wednesday of the month at the Women's Resource Center
2:00pm - 4:00pm*

September 16

October 21

November 18

December 16 Holiday Luncheon

January 20

February 17

March 17

April 21 Annual Meeting

May 12 Spring Luncheon

2026-2027 Board of Directors

Liz Smith & Jackie Zukley President	Marcia Hill Secretary	Janice Sladzinski Treasurer
Diana Sells Memberships	Carol Bernasconi Director of Programs	Sue McGowan Public Policy
Lois Fisch Past President	Estephanie D. Synthesis / Communication	

AAUW SARASOTA

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