



Orlando *** Winter Park Branchline

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Emily Sujka

Director of Community Relations



Emily Sujka—a Winter Park native with a passion for the arts—has joined the Morse in the newly created position of Director of Community Relations.

Sujka is a graduate of Winter Park High School and holds a bachelor's degree in economics from New York University. Following graduation, she traveled abroad for two years and, during that time, worked in Poland for Bank of New York Mellon and Hilton's DoubleTree chain.

"I am very pleased that Emily is bringing her skills and experience to the Morse," said Museum Director Laurence J. Ruggiero.

In her position, Sujka will be responsible for the Museum's community and public affairs programs, including media relations and advertising, and will be our liaison with civic and business organizations.

GENERAL MEETING

Saturday

February 13, 2021

Time: 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Place: Your couch, chair, bed

Cost: \$0

(Bring your own coffee, tea, juice, donuts, yogurt, fruit, breakfast burrito, etc.)

Brought to you by ZOOM

You will receive your email invitation about one week before the General Meeting.

DO NOT click on the http address until the morning of the meeting.



Abigail would be so proud!

From the President



Dear Branch Members,

We made it through Inauguration Day! Valentine’s Day and Presidents’ Day are just around the corner. Like President Biden, AAUW National has wasted no time in tackling the multiple issues that lay ahead for 2021-22.

On January 19, in a town hall Zoom meeting attended by more than 390 members, CEO Kim Churches and Board Chair, Julia Brown, Esq., discussed the issue of dropping the college/university degree requirement for membership. [Life member and our Branch Parliamentarian, Barbara Knapp, informed me that this issue is raised every few years.] This information, and perhaps the new revelations about QAnon surrealism, conjured up a game show synopsis of the town hall and my breakout session chaired by CEO Churches—Herewith . . .

WHEEL OF FORTUNE: AAUW is taking a risk by dropping the requirement as a bid to increase membership numbers and age, gender, racial and ethnic diversity. Currently, our average age is 72+ years and we are predominantly white. No research was presented that would indicate that the proposed change in the educational requirement will increase membership. However, there is a growing pool of women without college degrees—such as entrepreneurs and those in manufacturing—who confront gender inequities and may want to join an organization whose goal is to eliminate these. One change from last year is The Equity Network which has appealed to younger women, BUT it does not require AAUW membership.

JEOPARDY! and **FAMILY FEUD:** Some members expressed their intent to cancel their membership if the educational requirement is dropped. It is a contentious issue for some members.

I’VE GOT A SECRET: Currently, AAUW is an association, but it has international members, not just Americans, and males and nonbinary members, not just women. AAUW wants to retain the ‘brand,’ that is our initials, but might change the ‘name.’ For example, ‘university’ would become ‘united’: American Association of United Women.

THE PRICE IS RIGHT: Currently our membership dues are being raised: \$3 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, \$5 for FY 2023, and \$5 for FY 2024, making the total dues that go to AAUW national \$62, \$67 and \$72, respectively. All but \$3 of your annual dues remain tax deductible. Of the \$88 total for the FY 2022, \$12 goes to AAUW-FL and \$14 to our Branch. Membership dues pay for only 15% of the national operating expenses. These dues and expenses are separate from the approximately \$4.5 million scholarship and fellowship fund.

LET’S MAKE A DEAL and **DEAL OR NO DEAL:** The AAUW membership must vote on this change. The Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of individual members voting. Very few of the approximately 170,000 members vote; but of the small percentage who do vote, the passage of amendments requires two-thirds of the votes. Please vote. Let your voices be heard.

WHAT’S MY LINE: As your Branch President, my ‘line’ is to inform you of the issues. Please vote based on this information and a review of the AAUW website that also has a video of the town hall. Comments and proposed amendments can be submitted until February 5, 2021, at 5 pm ET. Voting is in April and May. As members, we want to see AAUW persist as a robust, diverse, and inclusive organization. One hundred and forty years and counting . . .

Leslie Sue Lieberman, Ph.D.
President, AAUW Orlando/Winter Park Branch
Professor Emerita UCF

Scholarships

The Orlando/Winter Park Branch Scholarship deadline is March 1.

The scholarship is open to women enrolled in an Associates, Bachelors or Doctoral degree. Preference is given to women in STEM areas attending local colleges/universities.

The application is on our website and applications can be emailed to Karen Buchan (kgb@unknownegg.org).

I offer my opponents a bargain: If they will stop telling lies about us, I will stop telling the truth about them.

Adlai Stevenson, campaign speech, 1952~

PACE CENTER FOR GIRLS -- ORANGE

A very big **THANK YOU** to all the ladies who contributed to the Pace Thanksgiving gift cards and the Christmas Gift Bags! You were VERY generous and **total contributions amounted to over \$4000!**

Contributions of goods such as gifts, food, treats, clothing, gift cards are always welcomed—especially at the holidays and especially when we know these things will make a happy holiday for the PACE girls.

As many of you are aware, most non-profit organizations rely heavily on cash contributions to keep the operation going day to day. PACE has done very well in caring for and educating the girls during the pandemic, BUT, because of some Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) restrictions, their census decreased this fall which decreased their funding. Although PACE Orange receives funding from OCPS, Juvenile Justice, and other sources, there is always a need to supplement that with individual or corporate contributions.

Perhaps you recently received a Stimulus check that is burning a hole in your wallet or checking account. PLEASE think about making a contribution to PACE. Any amount is a valuable contribution and can be done online at: www.pacecenter.org/orange or by mail:

Pace Center for Girls, Inc.
445 North Wymore Road
Winter Park, FL 32789.

PLEASE NOTE ON A CHECK:
PACE Orange/AAUW member

THANK YOU!

Karen Buchan

AAUW Representative to the
PACE Orange Board of Directors

SAVE THE DATE

PACE Center for Girls – Orange
Believing in Girls Annual Breakfast
Tuesday, March 30, 2021
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Citrus Club-Downtown Orlando

Note: This breakfast was canceled last year. It is PACE’s major fund-raiser.

Please plan to attend if you feel comfortable; there will be social distancing at the tables.

If you cannot be there in person, please consider making a contribution.

More information next month or contact Karen Buchan.

VP Membership



Maria Bonnet

Elizabeth Powers-Byrd

There ought to be one day -- just one -- when there is open season on senators.

~Will Rogers~

(what was intended as political humor turned eerily prophetic)

Here’s the info for renewals for this year:

\$88 (National \$62; State \$12; Chapter \$14)

\$26 **Life members** (\$12 state; \$14 chapter)

Deadline June 30!!

Make check to: “AAUW-Orlando/Winter Park”

Mail check to:

Phyllis Hall
481 Forest Court
Altamonte Springs 32714

\$57 **New Member**

If someone joins as a result of attending a meeting, they get 50% off the National dues so their initial dues would be: **\$57** (\$31 National; \$12 state; \$14 chapter)

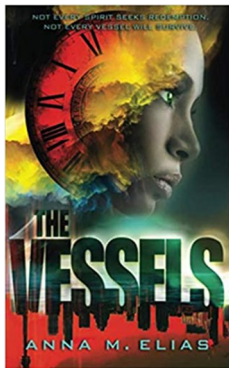
Virtual Literary Scholarship Fundraiser (Submitted by Myra Gaziano)

Our 20th Annual Spring Literary Luncheon that was scheduled for March 6, 2021, has been canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, our organization's 20-year-old event was creatively challenged to implement our mission of education for women and girls in a safe and unique way. A spectacular virtual literary scholarship fundraiser is planned via Zoom for our March general meeting with speaker Anna M. Elias, author of the murky urban fantasy, *The Vessels*. Funds raised from this virtual event will maintain our local Branch scholarship funds. Traditionally, ticket sale proceeds from past literary luncheons funded National AAUW educational programs while the proceeds from our 50/50 opportunity and silent auction supported our local Branch scholarships. In order to maintain our Branch scholarship funds, we are asking members to donate, if possible, last year's cost of the literary luncheon which was \$45.00. Send your check to Ginny Gillmer.

Please make every effort to support our Branch's only fundraiser and demonstrate your personal appreciation for the value of education for women and girls by contributing to this virtual event. All proceeds go to a very worthy cause--maintaining our local scholarship funds and enabling AAUW to continue its mission.

Since many of you enjoy reading the book prior to hearing the speaker, you may purchase a signed copy of *The Vessels* directly from the author for \$18.00. Please send your check to Anna Elias at 315 Isle of Sky Circle, Orlando, FL 32828. *The Vessels* is also available for sale on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. Anna Elias is generously offering our branch 10% of any book sales from her virtual presentation in March. This offer includes online sales as well as direct sales from the author or through purchase at the Writer's Block.

March General Meeting Virtual Literary Scholarship Fundraiser Speaker: Anna M. Elias



What critics are saying:

"Elias has crafted a serial killer thriller novel like nothing I've ever read before...a high quality, unputdownable novel, I would highly recommend *The Vessels* to any supernatural thriller fan looking for their next captivating read." - **Readers' Favorite**

"...a blend of murder mystery, spiritual travelogue, and thought-provoking thriller...fast-paced, emotionally compelling and hard to put down." - **Midwest Book Review**

"This unique novel mixes social commentary, Native American mysticism, the power of love and forgiveness, and ghostly spirits. This Gothic speculative tale will appeal to science fiction and horror fans alike." - **Booklist**

Author, Anna Elias, is a graduate of the University of Florida with a degree in Production. She is also a member of our AAUW branch. Anna began her career as Don Johnson's assistant on *Miami Vice* then moved on to major feature films such as *Nell*, *The Rainmaker*, *the Client*, *12 Monkeys*, *A Time to Kill* and *Practical Magic*. She has written and co-written spec films, TV scripts, and award-winning shorts. Anna's passion for justice translates to her work. On the set of John Grisham's *A Time to Kill*, Canton Mississippi had just suffered a great racial hardship and division in a Mayoral race. With Anna's encouragement, the movie crew made extra efforts to befriend, buy from, and work with the townspeople, and it served to break down walls of inequality and injustice that had divided the town for decades. This impact was so positive that Dan Rather traveled there to tape a two-part special

for *48-Hours*. Anna's desire for fairness and justice are also at the heart of her writing. Her works are varied and entertaining, but always have a seed of social relevance inside.

Anna's debut novel, *The Vessels* is a supernatural thriller, emotionally compelling and complex, conjuring a world in which the living can become Vessels for the spirits of the dead. The Vessels program purports to do good by allowing spirits the chance to right the wrongs they committed in life but only have seven days to succeed – and survive. Every spirit has the chance to atone, no matter what hurt or harm they caused in their mortal life. Elias challenges her readers' ideas about forgiveness, an especially timely topic amid today's brutal cancel culture. Emotionally compelling and complex, *The Vessels* reminds readers of the power in their connection to others.

Interest Groups



Contact Anne Coppenhaver if you have any questions about our interest groups. Her contact information is 832-704-2854 (cell) or ccoppenhaver@me.com

Anne Coppenhaver

Interest Group Chair

Booklovers:

Through rain, hail, sleet or Zoom, Booklovers are continuing to read. This month most are reading *Olive Again* by Elizabeth Strout, and Booklovers VII are reading *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. Each book is a prime target for a lively discussion and I encourage each of you to read and participate.

Booklovers Lite will meet on Zoom on February 24 at 1 p.m. to discuss *Legacy of Lies: A Legal Thriller* by Robert Bailey. Our moderator will be Linda Fessel.

Ellen James

Booklovers Coordinator
(ellenjames54@gmail.com)

Cooking Globally: Will not meet until it is safe to do so. For more information, contact Adrienne Katz at katzaid@yahoo.com

Couples Dining Party (Formerly Dining Couples) will not meet until it is safe to do so. For more information, contact Eileen Garrison at 407-620-9703.

Current Issues: Has not been meeting. If you have any questions about this group, contact Marcy Kysilka at kysilka@bellsouth.net or 321-972-5315

Dining In: The Dining In group will meet on Zoom on February 5 at 12 pm. The theme of the recipes will be "puff pastry." Contact Jane Rosen for information about this group: 321-295-7689 or mjcrozen@hotmail.com.

Dining Out (at night): Dining Out will not meet until it is safe to do so. For more information

Exploring Central Florida (ECF): To be added to the contact list, please contact co-chairs Linda Fessel at

lfessel@embarqmail.com. or Christine Porter at portercl7166@gmail.com. Participation in last year's excursions does not guarantee your place on the new email contact list. You MUST contact Linda or Christine to get on the new list. ECP visits the azaleas in Winter Park on Thursday, March 11. Details to come.

Foreign Affairs: The Foreign Affairs group will meet ,via Zoom, on February 28 at 2 p.m. The topic of our discussion will be *Struggles over the Melting Arctic*. Parveen Wahid will moderate the discussion. For more information contact D.Fuentes at tucu662@gmail.com or 407-310-1154

Foreign Films: Foreign Films will not meet until it is safe to do so. For more information about place, time, and location (or to be added to the email list), contact Linda Fessel at LFessel@embarqmail.com

Lunching Out: Will not meet until it is safe to do so. For more information about place, time, and location (or to be added to the email list), contact Linda Fessel at LFessel@embarqmail.com

MahJongg: For more information, contact Linda Fessel: LFessel@embarqmail.com or Karen Deo: Karen.deo@gmail.com

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Booklovers X meets on ZOOM on Jan. 9, 2021.



Lynda Hinckley, our perennial Calendar Girl, collected hundreds of calendars to pass out to seniors. After giving herself an "attagirl" for a job well-done, she discovered, to her dismay and amusement, that she neglected to save one calendar for herself and had to buy one!



"Save the Date"

Virtual Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting

April 16, 17, & 18

"Women Together in the Sunshine State"

April 16th - Late Friday Afternoon

- View video of branch successes
- Hear our keynote speaker

April 17th - Saturday Morning

- Explore the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Toolkit developed by AAUW National
- Learn how to address the realities of economic security thru financial literacy

April 18th - Sunday Morning

- Branches share their highlights of 2020
- Annual Meeting - includes reports, election of officers and review of proposed Bylaw Changes.

(This year's conference will be held virtually.)

The Leadership Conference is a Bi-Annual Event.

Mark Your Calendars

Watch for More Information

For more information about AAUW Florida contact

Bea Holt, AAUW Florida Director for Programs, beaholt45@gmail.com

Patricia Dewitt, AAUW Florida President, aauwflde Witt@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 <u>10 a.m.</u> B-Lovers VIII ZOOM <u>10 a.m.</u> B-Lovers IX ZOOM <u>1 p.m.</u> B-Lovers II ZOOM <u>1 p.m.</u> B-Lovers VII ZOOM	4	5 <u>12 noon</u> Dining In ZOOM	6
7	8	9 <u>3 p.m.</u> B-Lovers VI ZOOM	10 <u>1:30—3</u> Board Meeting ZOOM	11 <u>1:30</u> B-Lovers X ZOOM	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13 <u>10 a.m.</u> General Meeting ZOOM
14 Valentine's Day	15 Presidents' Day	16 <u>1 p.m.</u> B-Lovers V ZOOM	17	18	19 <u>10:30</u> B-Lovers IV ZOOM	20
21	22 Washington's Birthday	23	24 <u>1 p.m.</u> Booklovers III ("Lite") ZOOM	25	26	27
28 <u>2 p.m.</u> Foreign Affairs ZOOM						

MORE FROM OUR MEMBERS (Submitted by Georgiana Atkins Havill)

I'm not being light about it. Indeed, the very un-Christmas-y, *annus horribilis*, were words in our greeting card. Little lifted our hearts during the political and pandemic turmoil.

One could say it was a "blessing" to be so distracted, but early-covid was spent deciding to live only in Winter Park. At ages 75 and 80, we could feel time ebbing. We'd been splitting our years with feet in the DC suburbs and here. During March and July, we were selling and moving out; selling and moving out; then buying and moving in. Friends and family were told we had to find a full-time home before we were too old. (Unbeknownst to us, that ship had sailed!) Though fit and more-than-averagely energetic, we still paid a usurious price in stress and effort.

Cue the sunshine! The quest paid off. Now there's room for family to visit (eventually!) plus everyday, there's the renewing challenge of gardening in the subtropics.