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Bradenton Branch

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## April President's Message

Hello, members. I thought I would start off with an update on the **joint branch Zoom meeting** scheduled for the end of March. We were exploring steps in merging together. Unfortunately, the meeting was cancelled and has not yet been rescheduled. I will keep you informed as we continue to move forward.

Speaking of moving forward, our **slate of leaders** for 2022-23 had open positions. Unexpectedly, our treasurer Sandra Stone, will only be able to serve this year. She is available to help her successor move into the position and is happy to do so. We are most appreciative that our newest member, Linda Lewis, has volunteered to do so. Thank you, Linda! We voted to elect Meg Newsome as president, Judy Griffin as Secretary, and Linda Lewis as treasurer. There are many other ways you can support our chapter. If you would like to be on the leadership team in any capacity, just let me know.

Spring is nature's time for renewal! Guess who else is up for renewal? It's AAUW's time to renew membership for the coming fiscal year. If you renew **prior to July 1**, there is no national dues increase so you save \$5. The website has had a Major overall (yes, with a capital "M") and requires all members to create a new password as they log in. Go to AAUW.org and you will see "Log In" on the upper right. Click there to begin the process. You will be able to pay dues online after that as you have in the past. I have already renewed, so if you get stuck, call me and I will walk you through it. (941-704-5381)

**Marcia Hill, President**



## SAVE THE DATE

**April 26-27** – From **12 noon April 26 through 12 noon April 27**, The 2002 Season of Giving Challenge will match your gift to numerous charitable organizations in Manatee and Sarasota Counties. The donation match is provided through the Patterson Foundation. You may want to consider, among other worthy causes, the Manatee Women’s Resource Center, whose work lines up with the core goals of AAUW.

**May 17**—Bradenton Branch Meeting: Picnic in the Park. If you would like to make suggestions about the best time of day to meet, please share with Marcia Hill.

**June 30** – Last day to renew membership before the \$5 increase in dues!



## Our Last Meeting

Our visit to the Bishop Museum of Science and Nature was both fun and enlightening. In addition to our business meeting, we had an interesting talk from the new CEO of the museum, Hillary R. Spencer. In the almost one year since her arrival, she has seen the museum reach its pre-COVID attendance levels and shared her vision of Bishop as a place to experience the joy and wonder of science and discovery. She seeks input and ideas from all the museum’s visitors, members, and staff. During our question and answer period we talked about women’s roles in science and in non-profit organizations. We also discussed the museum’s mission to examine the core collection with fresh eyes. She and Marcia connected to the theme of the Florida State AAUW Convention regarding digital storytelling. Who tells the stories of the collections? Whose stories are told, and how are they told? What is the purpose, and who is the audience for the stories told by the artifacts?

The planetarium is bringing back the popular laser lights shows (be sure to request your favorite music), as well as numerous after dark activities for adults. School field trips are already booked for next fall, and the museum provides after-school workshops at elementary schools. And, of course, the manatee rehab center is still a centerpiece of the museum. Aria, Iceland, and Janice are the three juvenile manatees currently being served. The “girls” are putting on weight before they can be released into the wild. Their goal is to reach about 900 pounds so that when they are released they have enough extra to get through the initial period of adjustment. We even got to witness a diver do the daily vacuuming of the tank and learned that a diet of sea grass and lettuce produces quite a bit of waste needing to be vacuumed away!

After our salad lunch, we toured the museum, and then were treated to a show at the Bishop Planetarium called "Skyfall," a fascinating program about comets, asteroids, and Earth's history with them. We then had the opportunity to explore the museum on our own, until closing time if we wished. Members had a great time. It was truly wonderful to see so many members in person again!



## OUR NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

In Person

## PICNIC IN THE PARK

Details TBA – Watch for your Evite.

## Musings About the 2022 AAUW Florida Virtual Convention & Annual Meeting

This year's state conference was designed to be an in-person meeting but became a virtual experience instead. The Zoom formats allow more members to participate and eliminate the cost and trouble of travel, but the virtual "exchanges" with others just aren't the same as the tidbits shared over banquet chicken and thinly sliced pie! **Meg Newsome**, our president-elect, and I participated throughout the weekend. Below are our musings about the speakers, sessions, and connections to our branch.

I was able to attend most of the Convention sessions this year, and it was terrific! The Keynote speaker Friday night was **Michael Butler**, PhD, Keenan Distinguished Professor of History, Flagler College, St. Augustine, Fl. His presentation on **Myth, Memory, and the Power of Story** moved me deeply.

His research into the Civil Rights Movement, the current controversies surrounding the teaching of American History, and the debates about memorials dedicated to Confederate heroes, was thorough and thought-provoking. How do we tell the stories of the past? Who gets to tell these stories? What stories are we excluding? Which stories distort our memories? These questions and more were raised and discussed in a fascinating program.

Dr. Butler's presentation is not yet available on the Florida AAUW website, but I will be sure to share the link with you when it is.

It was also exciting to see that Florida branches are being encouraged to submit videos for the website to highlight what we are doing around the state. At another video, <https://vimeo.com/aauwflorida>, you can see what Nova Southeastern University is doing to promote Education and E-STEAM with young women. Great ideas!

I am excited about how AAUW is staying relevant through these times, and I am also excited about our future!

**Meg Newsome**, President Elect

As Meg noted, **Dr. Butler** repeated asked us to think consider “Whose story are we telling?” when hear about local “history.” Much of his story about St. Augustine applies to Manatee County’s monument/memorial controversy.

Saturday morning, we explored telling AAUW’s story with **Mary Hickey, AAUW’s Senior Director of Communications**. Through story we can tell others about the organization’s work. As I listened to her, I couldn’t help but note that when we did our first branch Zoom meeting in September 2020 the power of story latched on to each of us listening to our scholarship recipients telling their own stories. It moved us enough to know that we wanted to begin our 2021 year with the same format of hearing the scholars tell us about themselves. During the next hour **Dr. Natalie Underberg-Goode of the University of Central Florida** shared elements of effective digital storytelling. I realized that how widespread digital storytelling is becoming in so many forms of communication, including “fake news.”

Sunday morning **Dr. Mary Gatta, Director of Research and Public Policy, National Association of Colleges and Employers**, shared examples of how digital stories enhance the power of qualitative research. Her name may seem familiar to you since **AAUW FL** and various branches have contracted with her to conduct research related to women’s economic security in Florida (or should I say “insecurity”). Most recently she worked with the Sarasota branch. Rarely do folks get excited about data, but the sharing the stories of women behind the data can make all the difference to the impact it has on, for instance, legislators or commissioners.

So, what is my big “Aha!” from the conference? That “Storytelling” can make all the difference in sharing our branch mission or project with prospective members or potential financial supporters.

The townhall meeting followed the last session and included both questions and sharing from branches. You’ll be able to hear more when the recordings are posted, as Meg mentioned. She will post the link.

I am happy I participated, learned, and can share with you. Thanks!

**Marcia Hill, President**

## Tech Trek Update

Here is the most recent update from our Tech Trek team:

In February, an interview was held at the State College of Florida Collegiate School in Bradenton. Our applicant for the **Virtual Tech Trek Camp** appeared poised, enthusiastic, and motivated.

**Divonna Hankins** has been accepted as a participant in the June 2022 Camp. We will be excited to hear from her in the fall as she shares her thoughts and experiences with us. She is an excellent candidate for this program.

On another note, our Tech Trek grant has been denied for this year. Our branch can submit the camp fee using the designated funds for this year's camper to the state AAUW. Hopefully, there will be other grant opportunities in the future! I'll continue to explore.

All the best,

**Barb Coolahan**

## Support Tech Trek By Shopping!

Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> to do your amazon shopping and amazon will donate a small percentage of your purchases excluding taxes, gift wrap, etc. to the Florida AAUW Supporting Foundation, the sponsor of the Tech Trek camps. For more information about how to do this go to the [donate page](#) on FL AAUW website. Every item you purchase through smile.amazon.com will help raise money for Tech Trek.



## April Scholarship Foundation News

The **Scholarship Foundation Board** sent a letter to members requesting a donation to build our funds in the checking account. We want to thank those who have donated and are pleased to announce that over **\$1900** dollars have arrived in the mailbox. HUGE THANKS.

This week our Scholarship Foundation board members are joining members from the Manatee Community Foundation to select our scholarship students. Watch for the next newsletter for an introduction to our new students.

If you have not donated to this branch project, please consider doing that in the next few days.

### **BBAUW Scholarship Foundation**

P.O. 14099  
Bradenton, Fl. 34280

**Elaine Graham**

Scholarship Foundation, President



### **Special Interest Groups**

Special Interest Groups are not meeting regularly yet.

Would you like to start a new one?

Here are some ideas...

Museums/Galleries/Lunch Out?

Bridge? Financial Literacy?

Any idea could work!

Contact Marcia Hill if you want to start something fun!

### **April Birthdays**

Carolyn Reynolds AL

This month the book group will again meet outdoors at Lewis Park (1st Ave. W. and 31st St. W.).

**Fay Murphy** will lead the discussion of the book, ***Ask Again, Yes***, by **Mary Beth Keane**. We will also finish choosing our books for the coming year.



For information, call **Carolyn Reynolds** at 941-0720-6575.



## **Bradenton Branch Leadership**

National AAUW: <http://www.aauw.org/>

Florida AAUW: <http://aauwfl.aauw.net/>

Bradenton Branch Website: <http://bradenton-fl.aauw.net>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AAUW-Bradenton-Branch-103388217778483>

### **Bradenton Branch Board: 2021-2022**

President: Marcia Hill [mshanerhill@gmail.com](mailto:mshanerhill@gmail.com)

Secretary: Fay Murphy [faymurph@aol.com](mailto:faymurph@aol.com)

Treasurer: Sandra Stone [sstone101654@gmail.com](mailto:sstone101654@gmail.com)

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