

January 2025

# BRANCH BEACON

## EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Application deadline: March 31, 2025



*AAUW was formed in 1881 by seventeen women from eight colleges.*

*The Lake Wales Branch was founded May 16, 1953.*

*The purpose of this branch shall be to unite graduates of different educational institutions in order to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.*

We are happy to announce that applications for our 2025 Educational Achievement Awards are now available. Preference is given to mature women who are currently enrolled in an institution of higher learning.

At our annual meeting in April 2024, \$1,000 awards were presented to two deserving women selected from 18 applicants.

The program was established by our branch in 1986 to provide scholarships to Polk County residents seeking a degree beyond the high school level. Since then, scholarships have been presented to more than 55 women (and 2 men).

The awards make a difference, as expressed by a 2019 recipient:

*The scholarship I received from you was such a tremendous help financially and also emotionally and mentally. It gave me the feeling that others believed in me I now have my Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Criminal Justice Management and am the first and only college graduate in my family.*

Applications for our Educational Achievement Awards are available on our web site: <http://lakewales-fl.aauw.net/>. *Pauline Phillips, Chair, Awards Program*

### Holiday Dinner

The Holiday Party was a jolly time at Water's Edge December 6. Victoria de Lissavoy played carols on the piano, followed by singing and a game of identifying holiday lyrics. ***THANKS, LINDA BROWN FOR PLANNING A GREAT PARTY!***



*Nancy Gossard and Victoria de Lissavoy enjoying the meal, including Brussel sprouts, declared by Gail French as "to die for."*

# CARD AND GAME PARTY

Saturday February 1<sup>ST</sup>



from one to four pm

CLUB HOUSE AT TOWER LAKES - 21605 US HWY 27 - LAKE WALES

**TICKETS: \$10 - INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!**

Tickets available from Linda Brown or Betty Martin

Raffle tickets for great prizes available at the door

*The party will raise funds for our annual Educational Achievement Awards*

**\*\*\*\* JANUARY 18 – BRANCH MEETING \*\*\*\***

**The public is invited.**

10:30 AM Program - Water's Edge – 10 Grove Ave. W., Lake Wales

9:30 Breakfast \$15 - Please reserve with Georgianna (863) 678-1349

**Eric DeHaven: "The Future of Water in Polk County"**

Polk County's Regional Water Cooperative's CEO Eric DeHaven will speak on a vital topic in light of the rapid growth in the county. The organization is drilling two wells into the lower Floridan Aquifer in an uncertain effort to increase water supply for Polk County.

*Charlene Bennett, Co-VP for Program*



*The PRWC is a voluntary affiliation of almost all municipalities in Polk County, including Lake Wales.*

## DINING GROUP

*January Lunch*

**JANUARY 24 - 1 PM - Maritime Restaurant - 302 4<sup>th</sup> St SW - Winter Haven**

Please contact me if you would like to join this fun group for a monthly lunch.

Tel. (231) 420-0991 Email: lindabrown306@hotmail.com

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Do you have ideas for the STEM Program or fund raising efforts? The Board of Directors welcomes your input. All members are welcome to join the discussion at Board meetings, held at noon on the second Friday of each month at the Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce.

### Volunteers, please step up!

Three Nominating Committee members are needed to serve for the upcoming April election. The term will be February to April 2025. Please respond by January 18.

For more information contact me or Juanita.

- Georgianna Pentinen  
gpentinen@tampabay.rr.com
- Juanita Zwaryczuk  
[namasteifz@gmail.com](mailto:namasteifz@gmail.com)

Best wishes for the New Year,  
Georgianna Pentinen, President

## IN MEMORIAM

We are sad to hear that Gloria Hunt passed away December 5, 2024. Gloria joined the Lake Wales AAUW in 1965 and was a member, on and off, through 2017, a span of over 50 years. Among other duties in the club, she was active in the book study group.

Charlene Bennett said many remember her fondly and described her as a "great character."

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m., Saturday, January 18, 2025 at Bok Tower Gardens in the Magnolia Room.

The link to her obituary is:  
<https://www.marionnelson.com/obituary/gloria-hunt>.

## Spotlight on the VPs for Program

*A diverse and active membership is imperative to our branch's success. Naturally, the more active members we have, the greater our advocacy can be and our impact on our community more significant.*

*Kristin Vanpraet, Public Policy Officer*

This month: **Charlene Bennett** and **Pauline Phillips**, Co-Vice Presidents for Program.

**Charlene** says: *The task of developing programs for AAUW is both rewarding and challenging. It is challenging because it is sometimes difficult to communicate with potential speakers, and it is rewarding in that one gets to meet some very interesting and talented experts.*

*Members seem to highly value the programs and appreciate expanding their knowledge on a variety of topics. The job is fun and illuminating, and often a source of new learning for me.*

*I highly recommend this position to others and hope folks don't shy away next year from taking on a role which is enriching both for the members and the Program VP.*

**Pauline** adds: *I totally agree with Charlene's comments. I have had the pleasure of serving with her for the past 3 1/2 years. We meet in June to discuss program suggestions from the planning meeting. We then divide the task of pursuing speakers and start making phone calls.*

*While sometimes frustrating, I find it rewarding to meet new people and learn new things. Two heads are better than one and I strongly recommend continuing with two Vice Presidents for Program.*

*Please consider this position and let the nominating committee know you are interested!*

## THIS POSITION WILL BE ON THE BALLOT IN APRIL 2025

The Lake Wales branch by-laws state that the position of VP for Program shall serve as chairperson of the committee on program development and perform duties of the president when the president is unable to serve.

## BOOK STUDY GROUP



*Jan. 8 Selection*

In 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is deemed an unrepentant aristocrat by a Bolshevik tribunal, and is sentenced to house arrest in the Metropol, a grand hotel across the street from the Kremlin. Rostov, an indomitable man of erudition and wit, has never worked a day in his life, and must now live in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history are unfolding outside the hotel's doors.

*Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles is a mega-bestseller with more than 2 million readers and is now a Paramount+ with Showtime series starring Ewan McGregor as Count Alexander Rostov

Colleen Hoover's *It Ends with Us* is a "brave and heartbreaking novel that digs its claws into you and doesn't let go, long after you've finished it" (Anna Todd, New York Times bestselling author).

From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *All Your Perfects*, a workaholic with a too-good-to-be-true romance can't stop thinking about her first love.

*Feb. 12 Selection*



***The book study group meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Blue Palmetto Café at Bok Tower Gardens at 10:00 AM. All who are interested are welcome to attend.***

*Carol Gillespie, Chair, Book Study Group*



## MAKE IT MAGICAL

**Thanks go to Juanita Zwaryczuk for her fourth year of managing our booth at the holiday festival in downtown Lake Wales on December 8. Juanita represents us on the Lake Wales Main Street organization.**

**And thanks also to volunteers Dianne Schmoyer, Victoria de Lissavoy and Elf Jennifer Nanek (pictured).**

This newsletter is a publication of:

**The American Association of University Women**

Lake Wales FL Affiliate, Inc., P.O. Box 1264, Lake Wales, FL 33859-1264

### Branch Officers 2024-2025:

**President:** Georgianna Pentinen    **Immediate Past President:** Juanita Zwaryczuk

**Co-Vice Presidents Programs:** Charlene Bennett & Pauline Phillips    **Vice President Membership:** Juanita Zwaryczuk

**Communications Secretary:** Margaret Swanson

**Recording Secretary:** Sharon Becker Allen

**Co-Treasurers:** Jennifer Nanek & Nancy Gossard

**Bylaws and Parliamentarian:** Dianne Schmoyer

**Historian:** Betty Martin

**Public Policy:** Kristin Vanpraet

**Newsletter Editor:** Margaret Swanson    magjs@yahoo.com