



Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

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February 2019

CALENDAR

Feb 6	Wed	1 to 3 pm	Afternoon Book Grp
Feb 7	Thu	2 to 4 pm	Thursday Bridge
Feb 10	Sun		Gourmet Grp Brunch
Feb 12	Tue		Mah Jongg
Feb 13	Wed	12:00 pm	Meeting & Luncheon
Feb 14	Thu	6:45 pm	Great Decisions
Feb 26	Tue	7 pm	Evening Book Grp

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Date: February 13, 2019

Place: Acton Library

Time: 12:00 PM

Ol' Man winter is finally showing his punch but can't quite make up his mind ---- first cold, then unseasonably warm, then snow followed by torrential rains! No matter what unpredictable potpourri mix of weather is headed our way, you can be guaranteed a warm, relaxing, rewarding, enlightening and delicious afternoon if you join fellow AAUW members at the Valentine luncheon, sponsored and supplied by your AAUW Board and held at the Acton Library February 13th at noon. Added to the camaraderie and culinary delights, there will be a book reading by our esteemed and cherished fellow AAUW member, Pat O.. Pat is a graduate of Columbia School of Social Work and has volunteered as a social worker throughout her adult life. She is a member of Guilford Poets Guild and co-founded CT River Poets. She is

Saybrook's Poet Laureate. Pat's book, "*The Laughing Rabbit: A Mother, A Son, and the Ties That Bind*" retraces and relives that difficult decision when in 1962 she gave up her infant son for adoption. Follow, through her, the relentless pursuit to find her son, the years of frustration and sidestepping the bureaucracy until a reunion, and a formation of a deep bond that became the foundation for a close, albeit surprisingly extended family.

Mary M., Program Chair

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We welcomed the new year with our annual tea on a rainy but not snowy Saturday afternoon. It was a busy afternoon of socializing with friends over a cup of tea, buying used books and a very lively game of trivia. We raised around two hundred dollars to be put in a fund to help our members defray the cost of attending the National AAUW Conference in Washington in 2020. Present at the tea were Kiran Khosla and Kristin Gleason two of our scholarship recipients who were each given a check for a \$1,000 dollars. A special moment came when I introduced Barbara S. and announced that she had established the Alan Spargo Memorial NCCWSL Scholarship for Women in memory of her late husband Alan S.. Alan was the first man to join our branch and was very active in Great Decisions. The fund will cover the full cost for four students to attend the next annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders to be held on May 29 - June 1 at the University

of Maryland campus. No other branch in Connecticut will be sending this many students. Barbara will continue to fund the scholarship as long as she lives and thereafter her son will do so. Because of her generosity and ongoing support, the lives of many young women will be changed for the better. What a wonderful tribute to a lovely man from a loving wife.

Our treasurer Linda F. on announced that we have moved the money from the Helen Sommer Graves Endowment Fund into a new account which will yield a higher interest rate and will allow us to use the interest to help fund scholarships as needed without touching the principal. Thank you Linda, this was long overdue.

Our February business meeting is a luncheon at the Acton Library on Wednesday February 13th from 12 - 2pm. We will provide lunch, just come and enjoy yourselves. If you remember please bring a nonperishable food item for donation to the food bank. Our speaker will be our own Pat O. who will be reading from her latest book The Laughing Rabbit: A Mother, A Son and the Ties that Bind. Books will be available for purchase and signing. I hope the weather will cooperate and I hope to see many of you there.

Olga S.
President

FUNDRAISER LUNCHEON

Save the date—April 6—and bring your friends!

Yes, it's February and only two months until our Book Author Luncheon on April 6 featuring two **remarkable** authors, Fiona Davis and Lynda Cohen Loigman, authors of new historical novels appearing on several "must read" book lists.

In addition to our always popular auction and chance raffle, our event will be one of the first in Saybrook Point Inn's remodeled ballroom, "The Lighthouse Gallery." This will be an event that you (and your friends and relatives) will not want to miss! A PDF of the luncheon reservation

form is attached to this newsletter and will soon be available on our branch website.

Of course, we will need members' help in raising funds for our scholarship program, not only through ticket sales, but also by selling or buying ads in our luncheon program or donating or soliciting items for our chance baskets or silent auction.

There are other ways members can help, too, from working on our committees to volunteering for the "day of" luncheon tasks. Not only is this fun, but also a good way to make new friends in our branch. Hope you can participate in our efforts!

Penny H. and Elaine Q.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The second half of each student's education grant was awarded to Kristin G. and Kiran K.. Both students are excelling academically and received \$1000 each to cover their spring semester costs. They are due to graduate in May. We are pleased that they were able to attend our January tea and that everyone had the opportunity to meet them. Both are fine young women, certainly worthy of our grants. The second semester grant to our third student, Maile C., is pending receipt of her spring semester registration.

Linda F. continues to correspond with National AAUW and the four students selected to attend this year's NCCWSL conference in May. They are Kiran K. at Boston College, Libby S. at Endicott College, Kandra O. and Samantha M. both at Middlesex Community College. Funding has been generously provided by the Alan Spargo Memorial NCCWSL Scholarship for Women, and, in addition, by a matching scholarship from CT AAUW for one student.

Rose P., Chair

REMEMBERING ALAN SPARGO

Al was one of the first men to join AAUW. He was my Gentle giant pussycat and we are YING and YANG. I am high wired and he can fall asleep in the middle of a sentence. We both

worked at SNET and ATT, and met during a strike in 1971. Married in 1974, we had 48 WONDERFUL , happy years together.

If I was upset and wanted to argue with him (which married couples do) HE would turn his back on me and walk away from any confrontation. We did get to travel all over the world, from Paris where we rented a car and drove to Pensance, and got to visit the Town Of Spargo, visited Moscow to Beijing to Israel. Only missed Croatia which I will go on a trip in May to visit.

We both went to night school where I received two masters from Wesleyan and Al got a PHD from Rensselaer and passed the bar and became an attorney. He first worked for a large law firm in New Haven then opened a practice in Old Saybrook. I became the second highest paid woman at SNET despite the problems I faced with the men.

Al's rule was never charge a woman because she could have been abused, or neglected or could not receive a decent pay.

His death a tragedy, we went to dinner with friends and no drinking, came out of the restaurant and it was a cold February icy night. Al always had his arm around me and we never saw a curb leading to the car. He fell and I went on top of him. Claudia called 911 and an ambulance took him to ER where they said "Go home Mrs. S your husband is bleeding in the brain and won't live thru the night". He did live four more years although the last were tough for me to take care of him.

Barbara S.

Barbara has established the **Alan Spargo Memorial NCCWSL Scholarship for Women** in memory of her husband. Barbara has committed to making a monthly contribution to the Spargo Scholarship. Barbara's son Barry will continue to make these contributions after Barbara's death.

PUBLIC POLICY

Ten years ago President Barack Obama signed into law his first piece of legislation: the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. AAUW was critical to that success. However the gender pay gap is stuck at 20 cents. The fight for fair pay isn't over yet.

The Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA) will be introduced in both chambers of Congress with robust and bipartisan support. Your voices will be vital to passage of the PFA. Call your Congressional representatives and tell them you support passage of the PFA. They need to hear from you. They tally all responses. It helps them to have big numbers to argue for passage. Thank you. Enjoy the gift of the day.

Barbara H.

AAUW FUNDS

Where does our money go?

Our contributions support AAUW research on issues pertaining to women and girls. You can find the research reports at <https://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/research>.

Here are the descriptions of two 2018 research reports that you can find on the AAUW web site.

[The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap \(Fall 2018\)](#). This is a commonsense guide, updated twice each year, provides key facts about the current state of the gender pay gap in the United States, with explanations and links to additional resources that can help you effectively advocate for pay equity.

[Broken Ladders: Barriers to Women's Representation in Nonprofit Leadership \(2018\)](#). Women are underrepresented in leadership positions across all sectors of the economy and American society. In

this research, we take a closer look at the broken ladders to advancement that women face even in sectors where they make up the majority of workers: at nonprofit organizations, in postsecondary education, and at philanthropic foundations.

We can be proud that our dollars are put to good use.

Deborah R.

GREAT DECISIONS

Our first Great Decisions discussion of the year will be held on Thursday, Feb 14 at 6:45 at the downstairs community room at the Westbrook Library. The topic is *Refugees and Global Migration*. If you have signed up but not yet received your book, email Carol H.

We have 26 people signed up for the discussion group. We still have a few additional books, so it is not too late to sign up. Email Carol H..

EVENING BOOK GROUP

Many thanks to Pat C. for hosting our January gathering and to Jane K. for leading a stimulating discussion of Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI.

On February 26 at 7 pm, our group will discuss Pachinko by Min Jin Lee. Barbara S. will host us at 175 Ferry Rd., Unit 6, Old Saybrook. Please call or email Barbara if you plan to attend. All are invited!

MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg will be on February 12th. Place and time TBD. If you are interested in attending, please contact Sharon H..

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

We will be discussing Tara Westover's memoir, *Educated*, on Wed. Feb 6th 1-3 at Acton. If you like to read ahead, March 6th will be *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, a longer read but so

worthy! Elaine N. will lead us in Feb and a Brooklynite, Carolyn C., in March.

GOURMET GROUP

Our brunch to celebrate 2019 is scheduled to be held on Sunday, February 10. The next event will be dinner on April 13 at various homes with the final picnic in June at one location for everyone..

If interested in joining or hosting the next dinner please get in touch with: Mary Ann K. or Elaine N. Couples and singles are welcome to this purely social event.

AFTERNOON BRIDGE

Afternoon bridge is scheduled for the 3rd Monday of the month. Please contact Bonnie for time and place.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON BRIDGE

Thursday Bridge will be held on February 7 from 2-4. If you would like to come, please email Marcia.

AAUW Monthly Meeting Dates: 2019

Wednesdays:

February 13, 2019 - 12 noon at Acton Library
Old Saybrook

March 13, 2019 - 6:45 - Essex Public
Library

April 10, 2019 - joint meeting with Shoreline
- 6:45 Westbrook Library

May 8, 2019 - 6:45 - Essex Public Library

June 2019- Ivoryton Theatre Evening - TBA