



Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net

September 2020

CALENDAR

Sept. 2 Wed 1:00pm Afternoon Book Group
Sept. 8 Tues 1-2:30pm Mahjong (on-line)
Sept. 9 Wed 3:30-5pm Outdoor Meeting
Sept. 14 Mon 1:30pm Cypress Cemetery Tour
Sept. 16 Wed 1-3:00pm Great Decisions
Sept. 22 Tues 4:00pm Evening Book Group

GENERAL MEETING

IT'S OUTSIDE!

Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2020

Time: 3:30-5:00pm

**Place: Clark Memorial Field
210 Elm St. – Old Saybrook**

We are excited to be able to gather our Lower CT Valley group together to kick off the year! The first general meeting of the 2020-21 year will take place on Wednesday, September 9, 3:30-5:00 pm, at the pavilion of Clark's Memorial Field, 210 Elm St., Old Saybrook. This will be an outdoor, socially distanced event with masks required. Light snacks and water will be provided. (Unfortunately, it is not possible to do a Pot Luck due to Covid conditions.)

There are picnic tables for seating, but you are also welcome to bring a chair. If you have friends who are interested in joining AAUW, please bring them to this meeting.

**(Rain Date: Thursday, September 10, 2020
at the same Time and Place)**

Directions: The Clark Memorial Field (Fireman's Field) is located across the street from Pasta Vita in Old Saybrook. Once you have turned in, take the first left, which will lead to the Pavilion where parking is available. Google Maps will take you directly there if you type 'Clark Memorial Field, Old Saybrook' into the app.

For members who have not yet renewed, this is your opportunity to do so! Membership will have a table with renewal forms to fill out. Please bring your check book and take this opportunity to renew before the 2020-21 Directory goes into print.

MEMBERSHIP

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, we were unable to hold our Annual Gathering in August for New Members. **If you have any friends that may be interested in joining our AAUW Affiliate, please bring them with you to our September 9th meeting at Fireman's Field, as we would love to be able to tell them about our organization and have them join!** (Social distancing and masks required.)

Due to Covid 19, we will have many virtual meetings and activities this year so **it is important that we have everyone's correct email address.** Please let one of us know if there are any changes that need to be made. We would not want you to miss out on anything!

We currently have 72 paid members out of 98 members for the 2020-2021 year. Thank you to all the members who have renewed!

Know the deadline is September 9th to pay your membership dues and have your name published in our new Membership Directory for 2020-21.

If you are one of the 24 members who **have not yet renewed** your membership, you will receive an email from memberinfo@aauw.org. There is no password or sign-in just a link to the site. This is easy to do! **Membership renewals were due on July 1st.**

You can renew on-line with a charge card (no charge card information is retained on the site). Members can update their information (phone number, e-mail address, etc.), as needed, when renewing on the AAUW site.

You can also renew in person at our meeting on September 9th, from 3:30-5:00pm, at Clark's/ Fireman's Field in Old Saybrook.

The 2020-21 AAUW Directories will be available at our October meeting.

Hope to see you all there!

Linda F.
Treasurer & Membership

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2020-21 Lower CT Valley affiliate year!

Despite the trials of Covid-19, our affiliate is continuing to provide as many offerings as possible. Many thanks to the Interest Group leaders who have organized activities, either on Zoom or outside, throughout the summer.

Members have been able to take advantage of our Afternoon and Evening Book Groups, Bridge, Great Decisions, and Mahjong. For Fall, Deb D. and Jeanette S. have arranged three Cultural Arts trips, to be conducted outside, in September and October.

As you noticed in the above message, we will be able to gather for our traditional September meeting outside at the Clark Memorial Field pavilion.

At present, arrangements for our regular Monthly Meetings are in flux. Since the libraries remain closed to groups, we are investigating Zoom presentations if needed.

I would like to extend many thanks to Barbara H., Eva B., and Mary M., as they leave the Board. Their many contributions are greatly appreciated. A hearty welcome to Sue A, Kristen O., and Kathy R. as they join the Board in the capacities of Fundraising, Newsletter, and Communication with local news outlets.

A special thanks to Olga S. for her outstanding tenure as our President. She has left big shoes to fill, and all her hard work is appreciated. Olga will continue to provide valuable input to the Board as Past President.

You may have noticed AAUW email regarding Zoom presentations on relevant topics of interest to women. Olga and I have participated in some of these. If a topic interests you, tune in, because the presentations have been excellent. Also, please visit the new AAUW National website. You will be very impressed!

CT State AAUW is gearing up for more activity and greater coordination among our state's affiliates. More to come on that front! If you are interested in participating on the State level, let me know, and you can be included in the Zoom meetings. Mary M. has agreed to serve as Secretary of the CT State AAUW. Thank you, Mary!

We are delighted to announce that 2 ½ grants were awarded this summer to three VERY qualified students. The ½ refers to a student who has only one semester left to complete her degree. We were able to do this, despite the cancellation of our Author Luncheon fundraiser. This was due, in large part, to the interest that has accumulated in our Bequest Fund. The Board felt fortunate that we were able to continue our long-standing commitment to educational grants for undergraduates.

Four students were nominated to attend the NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) this past Spring.

Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to the pandemic. Since the young women have committed to attending this event in Spring 2021, funds have been designated for them to attend.

Know that our Lower CT Valley Interest Groups continue to be very active, so please contact the Chair(s) of any group you wish to join.

New members are always welcome!

Mary Jane P.
President

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee has selected three women to receive education grants for the upcoming academic year, 2020-2021.

Two students were awarded \$2000 grants which will cover two semesters, and one student was awarded a \$1000 grant to cover her final semester before graduating.

Congratulations to the following students:

Kelsey D. – Kelsey is a junior at Purdue University and is pursuing a BS degree in Animal Sciences. She earned a spot as a member of the Veterinary Scholars Program which allows her to complete her degree in three years and then enter Purdue’s Veterinary School to pursue a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. Her goal is to perform animal surgery and to find a way to reduce costs so that an “animal’s life rests in the hands of how much their owners care, not how much is in their wallet.”

For two years, Kelsey worked part-time as a veterinary assistant and currently works on campus as a back milker, moving groups of cows in and out of the milking parlor.

One of her instructors describes her as ‘hard-working by nature’. Aside from her academic success, she demonstrates strong leadership skills as she was recently voted to be President of Purdue Crew, a 120-person rowing team.

Juliette L – Juliette is currently attending Seton Hall University as a junior, majoring in Early Childhood Education with a Concentration in Speech and Language Pathology and Spanish. She is bilingual and aspires to a career as a Bilingual Speech and Language Pathologist, working with young learners who struggle with language. She wants to provide them “a clear voice and expansive vocabulary to courageously change their ability to learn, progress, and improve themselves.”

Upon graduation in 2022, Juliette plans to enter a MA program. She is a member of the International Honor Society in Education, Seton Hall Dance Team, Latin Dance Club, Buccino Leadership Institute, and Cuban American Alliance for Leadership where she is a college mentee for cultural and professional leadership advancement. She has volunteer experience in numerous capacities and has been involved in community service activities dating back to high school.

Tabitha R. – Tabitha is a 35 years old mother with two young daughters and a husband. She holds a BS degree in Biology and Marine Sciences from the University of Tampa in 2008. Since her husband is not working due to medical issues, she works as a licensed Veterinary Technician to support the family. Her goal is to become a licensed Registered Nurse.

Along with a limited number of students, Tabitha was accepted into the accelerated nursing program at UCONN at Avery Point. This is a three-semester program that began in Spring 2020 and will complete in Fall 2020. One of her professors describes her as “bringing a wealth of experience and emotional maturity to the profession.”

Tabitha is a student who is balancing motherhood, a part-time job, and full-time course work. After graduation and working in the field, Tabitha would like to pursue a MS degree leading to becoming an APRN.

Due to the pandemic, it was not possible this year for Committee members to meet these students over lunch and present their awards in person.

The awards were mailed. They, however, are invited to meet the branch at our Annual Tea in January 2021.

We note that all three students are truly deserving of our awards as they excel academically, have an impressive set of goals, and clear financial need.

Rose P.
Scholarship Chair

BOOK AUTHOR LUNCHEON

AAUW Book Author Luncheon Rescheduled

Due to the ongoing need to socially distance, the Book Author Luncheon has again been rescheduled from this October to March of 2021!

New Date: Saturday, March 27, 2021

Time: 11:30 am

Place: Saybrook Point Inn, Old Saybrook

Thankfully, our 2 fabulous authors, Heather Webb and Jennifer Robson, are able to arrange their schedules to be our guest speakers.

If you already have a reservation, Linda F. will contact you. You can choose to keep your reservation for March 27, 2021, donate to the scholarship fund, or receive a refund.

New reservation forms will be available closer to the luncheon date.

Of course, the luncheon will also include our renowned silent and chance auctions, as well as a wonderful SPI lunch. **We will keep you updated on this event, so save the date and tell your friends!**

INTEREST GROUPS

New members to Lower CT Valley Branch should contact the Chair (s) listed for each Interest Group to join. Previous members should contact the Chair(s) to confirm they will continue as members of that group.

Afternoon Book Group

Chair: Sarah K.

Evening Book Group

Chair: Mary Jane P.

Bridge Group

Chair: Marcia N.

Gourmet Group

Co-Chairs: Beth B & Sharon H.

Mah Jongg

Chair: Sharon H.

Great Decisions

Tri-Chairs: Carol H
Eileen B. & Sarah K.

Cultural Trips

Chair: Deb D.

EVENING BOOK GROUP

The Evening book group will meet to discuss **The Night Watchman**, by Louise Erdrich, on Tuesday, September 22, at 4 pm either outside at the home of Barbara H. or via Zoom, if inclement weather. Please let Barbara know if you plan to attend.

We will be deciding on books for the upcoming year, so please send Mary Jane your suggestions by September 15. **New members are welcome!**

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Our September book choice is **A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II** by Sonia Purnell. We usually meet the first Wednesday of each month from 1-3pm at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook, but have been meeting via Zoom due to Covid 19.

At our September 2 meeting, we will discuss this book and take suggestions for this 2020-21 year. Sara K. will compile these and send via email for group voting. All are tallied and the top choices become our monthly selections. We then vote on the choice for October, and the other top choices are read November through May.

We determine a discussion facilitator for each book, and rotate turns so everyone can participate and help the group process:)

June is traditionally a joint meeting of our group with the Evening Book Group for a discussion of a book from the Authors' Luncheon held in March

We are glad to have new members!

MAH JONGG

Mahjong members have been playing Mahjong online at the RealMahjong website. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at either 12:30 or 1 pm. The first meeting will take place at 1 pm on Tuesday, Sept. 8. Contact Sharon H. to join!

AFTERNOON BRIDGE

We welcome players at all levels! Please join us. Contact Marcia N, to join!

GOURMET GROUP

Beth B. and Sharon H. are heading up Gourmet Group this year. Hopefully, we will be able to gather soon. Contact us with suggestions.

Thank you for your patience. All who are interested are welcome! Sign up on September 9th -or- contact Sharon H..

GREAT DECISIONS

The Great Decisions discussion group has been meeting via Zoom, and that will continue for the next few months.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, September 16, at 1 p.m. We will be discussing "China in Latin American." Individuals signed up for the discussion group will receive a Zoom invite by email a couple of days before the meeting.

We will have a new sign-up toward the end of the year, with the Discussions beginning in February 2021. Hopefully, we will be back to in-person discussions.

We have just received these discussion topics for Great Decisions 2021:

*The Role of International Organizations in a Global Pandemic

*Global Supply Chains and National Security

*China and Africa

*Korean Peninsula

*Persian Gulf Security

*Brexit and the European Union

*The Fight Over the Melting Arctic

*The End of Globalization?

CULTURAL TRIPS

The Cultural Trips Interest Group has planned three outdoor meetings in September and October to provide members with both interesting experiences as well as a safe environment during the Co-Vid pandemic. **Members are asked to wear masks to all of these events.**

Please know, as Covid issues decline, we hope to offer more indoor events that will accommodate a greater number of members.

Our Tour of Cypress Cemetery is on again!

Event: CYPRESS CEMETARY TOUR

Date: Monday, September 14, 2020

(Rain Date: Tuesday, September 15)

Location: 100 College St. - Old Saybrook

Time: 1:30pm

Cost: \$5 per person donation

Cypress Cemetery in Old Saybrook is one of the oldest, continuously operating cemeteries in North America and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This one-hour tour will start at 1:30 pm on Monday, September 14th, and will be conducted by Torrance Downes. A donation of \$5 per person will go to the Saybrook Historical Society.

You can park in the lot at the Fort Saybrook Monument Park or the lot near Saybrook Pavilion. Then walk up the two blocks to the gate of Cypress Cemetery at 100 College Street.

Please contact Jeannette S or Deb D. if you are interested.

Event: SCULPTURE GROUNDS TOUR

Date: Thursday, October 8, 2020

(Rain Date: Friday, October 9)

Location: 80 Lyme St - Old Lyme

Time: 11am

Cost: \$5 per person donation

Located next door to the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts, Studio 80 and its Sculpture Grounds encompass 4.5 acres along the Lieutenant River.

Designed by sculptor Gilbert Boro, the grounds feature 66 contemporary art sculptural works by Mr. Boro and other visiting artists. You can both see and touch the exhibits.

The tour will start at 11 am and will last about an hour. **It is suggested that members download the "Otocast" app on their cell phones** as audio tour is available for the new Summer Sculpture Showcase 2020.

Parking is available at the Studio 80/Sculpture Garden at 80 Lyme Street in Old Lyme -OR- next door at the Lyme Art Academy. **Please wear sturdy shoes.** A donation of \$5 per member is suggested.

Please contact Deb D. if you are interested.

Event: DEVIL'S HOPYARD STATE PARK

Date: Wednesday, October 28, 2020

(Rain Date: Friday, October 30)

Location: 366 Hopyard Road - East Haddam.

Time: 10am

Cost: Free

Founded in 1919, Devil's Hopyard State Park in East Haddam is most famous for the Chapman Falls, which drop more than sixty feet over a series of steps into a Scotland Schist Stone Formation.

Please join us for a hike through this beautiful park. For those who are bird enthusiasts, the park offers some of the finest birding in the state.

We will meet at the Main Entrance to the park at 10 am and walk along the trail(s). Weather permitting, we can picnic afterwards. **Please bring your lunch.** There is ample parking and toilets are available. Admission is free.

Contact Deb D. if you are interested.

Check for further Cultural Trips in our monthly newsletters!

AAUW MONTHLY MEETINGS 2020-21

Please mark your calendars with these upcoming scheduled General Meetings.

We do not know if the programs will be in person or virtual, so we will keep you posted!

Wed, September 9, 2020 - 3:30-5:00 pm
Outdoor Meeting for All & New Members
Clark's/Fireman's Field, 210 Elm St, Old Saybrook

Wed, October 14, 2020 - 7:00 pm
Speaker Patty Sisson, recently retired science teacher from Middletown High School, will present **"Your Part in Solving the Climate Crisis"**.

Wed, November 4, 2020 - 7:00 pm.
Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame will present a program on suffrage titled **"Votes for Women"**.

More Monthly Meetings information and program details to come!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
re: Membership, Interest Groups,
Cultural Trips, Meetings --

Please click on CONTACT US on this website. Complete the short form, and we will respond to you ASAP!

Thank you for your interest in joining!