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Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

September 2021

SEPTEMBER 2021 CALENDAR

- Sept. 8 Wed, 4-5:30pm Welcome Back Meeting
- Sept.13 Mon 4pm Joint Book Club/Potluck
- Sept. 14 Tue. 1pm Mah-Jongg
- Sept. 15 7pm Great Decisions (via Zoom)
- Sept. 17 10am Cultural Trip – Woodbury, CT



WELCOME BACK GENERAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021

(Rain Date: Thursday, September 9)

Place: Clark Memorial Field (Fireman's Field)

Address: 210 Elm St., Old Saybrook

Time: 4:00-5:30 pm

Please plan to join us for our first General Meeting of the 2021/22 season. It will be wonderful to be together again in person! To be on the safe side, we are meeting outside. Our plan is for Potluck munchies, but feel free to bring your own food and drink if that would be more comfortable.

Hoping to see you all there!

---Gerri, Program Chair



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2021-22 Lower CT Valley affiliate year! While Covid continues to impact us, the vast majority of our members have been vaccinated, so last year we were able to open up our activities a bit more as June 2021 approached. Our group will continue to be flexible in its planning throughout this upcoming year. I hope that the activity level in 2020-21 helped many of us to deal better with the effects of Covid. It was certainly a lifeline for me!

I am excited that our first General Meeting will take place at the Clark Memorial Field (across from Pasta Vita) on Wednesday, September 8 at 4 pm, with a rain date of Sept. 9. We will continue with our tradition of a pot luck dinner. If anyone is uncomfortable with the food aspect, feel free to bring your own. This is our opportunity to reconnect, sign up for activities, and recharge for the Fall.

If you have not had a chance to renew your membership for 2021-22, the September 8 meeting will provide the perfect opportunity. For those members who have friends who are interested in our group, please invite them to the meeting. Because of the success of the Shape the Future campaign in May, we now have two free National memberships.

The Shape the Future campaign will also be in effect on September 8. Should there be more than 2 new members, anyone else wanting to join will still qualify for a significant discount.

I would like to welcome Mary Ann as our new Treasurer and Dawn as our Public Policy & AAUW Funds chair. In addition, the Hiking Group has become an official interest group. Thanks, Margie, for initiating this outside activity!

CT AAUW continues to meet on a monthly basis via Zoom under the leadership of our CT President, Nana Amos. The State AAUW is working on greater coordination among the state affiliates. If you are interested in attending these meetings, let me know, and you can be included in the Zoom invitation. Two of our members, Mary and Judith, have contributed to the state group by serving as Secretary and Vice President respectively. Thank you, Mary and Judith.

Because of the generosity of our members in donating their luncheon reservations to the Scholarship Fund, along with monies available from the Al S. fund, the Scholarship Committee was able to award grants to three deserving recipients. It is a thrill that LCV is able to continue this tradition, despite the difficulties of this pandemic year. In May, our group sponsored five students to attend a virtual NCWWSL. As a representative of the Scholarship Committee, Sue also tuned in virtually and was impressed with the program. Thanks to Sue for taking time to do this.

Lower CT Valley interest groups set a precedent for involvement despite challenges over the last year. I hope this will continue in 2021-22. Please contact interest group leaders if you wish to join a particular group. New members are always welcome!

I look forward to seeing you on September 8th.

---Mary Jane, President



THANK YOU TO MEMBERS FROM THE YORK CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

Gerri, Programs Chair, received this note for the school supplies our members donated on June 9th, at the End of Year Picnic:

On behalf of the women of York Correctional that are enrolled in the university programs, I would like to thank the women of AAUW for giving them a hand up and lightening their load.

The Shoreline AAUW's generous donation of school supplies will assist the women in their quest to better themselves and the lives of their children. When one helps a person in need, one never fully understand the positive consequences of your act.

It was so nice meeting and conversing with your membership at Clark Field. Thank you for inviting me. The best to one and all...

*Sincerely, Jackie, University Tutor
York Correctional Institution, Niantic, CT*

NOTES FROM THE JUNE YEAR-END PICNIC SOCIAL



The annual year-end picnic social was held on June 9 at Clark Memorial (Fireman's) Field in Old Saybrook. There were 40 members and prospective members, and one guest attended.

President Mary Jane acknowledged the "wonderful turnout." She thanked Board Members, especially Linda and Deb, who are leaving the Board, and the Interest Group leaders for doing "an astonishing job during difficult circumstances."

She said that branch activities will be continuing after this meeting, and members should contact her or Deb with any questions.

Membership Chairs Margie and Sharon Howell were available to meet with prospective members, who were eligible to receive National's "Shape of the Future" program discounted membership dues of \$61 at this meeting.

Program Chair Gerri introduced Jackie, University Tutor for the Trinity/Quinnipiac College Program at York Correctional Institute who was our last "live" speaker in March 2020. Jackie described how the facility's 900 women have been on lockdown due to Covid. To continue the program, the instructors created old-fashioned "snail-mail" correspondence courses because they could have no direct contact with their students. Jackie hopes that in-person courses will be revived in the Fall.

Jackie thanked branch members who brought donations of bound notebooks, lined paper, index cards, pencils, etc. for the students at York. Jackie said these donations will be helpful to the success of women in the program. She cited a recent student who earned her Associates degree at York and went on to get a Bachelor's degree from UConn and secure an internship in city planning.

After the short meeting, members socialized and enjoyed sandwiches, chips, beverages, and cookies.

---Elaine, Secretary



MEMBERSHIP

We currently have 71 paid members for the 2021-2022 year. Thank you to all those members who have renewed! **The deadline to pay your membership dues is September 8th at our first meeting in order to have your name published in our new Membership Directory for 2021-2022.** New directories will be available at our October meeting.

If you are one of the 26 members who **have not yet renewed** their membership, you will receive an email from memberinfo@aauw.org with a link to easily renew online around August 30th. Members can then update their information if needed (phone number, email address, etc.) when renewing on the AAUW site. You also have the option to mail a check for \$93 to our Treasurer. (Membership renewals were due on July 1st.)

You will also be able to renew at our first meeting on September 8th at 4:00 pm at Clark Memorial Field in Old Saybrook.

Hope to see all of you there!

SHAPE THE FUTURE CAMPAIGN

We had a very successful Shape the Future Campaign earlier this summer with 6 new members joining. **Welcome new members!**

Our branch now qualifies for **2 free National memberships!** (Member would still have to pay \$31 for State and Branch dues. This is a savings of \$62 for national dues.) If you have a friend, neighbor, family member who would like to join our AAUW Branch at the discounted rate of \$31, please invite them to our September meeting or contact one of us.

The Shape the Future campaign will also be in effect at our September 8 meeting.

Should there be more than 2 new members, anyone else wanting to join will still qualify for a 50% discount off national dues (a savings of \$31. Thank you.

---Margie & Sharon, Co-Chairs

NEW LCV BRANCH MEMBERS

Please welcome our 9 newest members!

Know their contact information will be in the 2021-2022 Directory:

Cheryl; Barbara; Lucinda; Elizabeth; Gloria;
Hannah; Marcia; Mary; Liz.

---Margie and Sharon, Co-Chairs



BOOK AUTHOR LUNCHEON

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, April 2, 2022

Keep checking this section for more details on this Spring 2022 event.

---Sue & Penny, Co-Chairs

DONATING TO THE LOWER CT VALLEY BRANCH OF AAUW

Many of our members donate to AAUW National when paying their dues on-line. Those donation dollars support many of the great efforts that AAUW supports which include economic security and fair pay, gender equity etc. None of the donated dollars to National AAUW go to the branches. If you wish to donate to the Lower Connecticut Valley Branch it can be done easily on our website.

Steps to Donating to our LCV Branch:

Go to our website <https://lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net>
Click on the yellow “Donate Button” on right side of the page.

A donation page will come up.

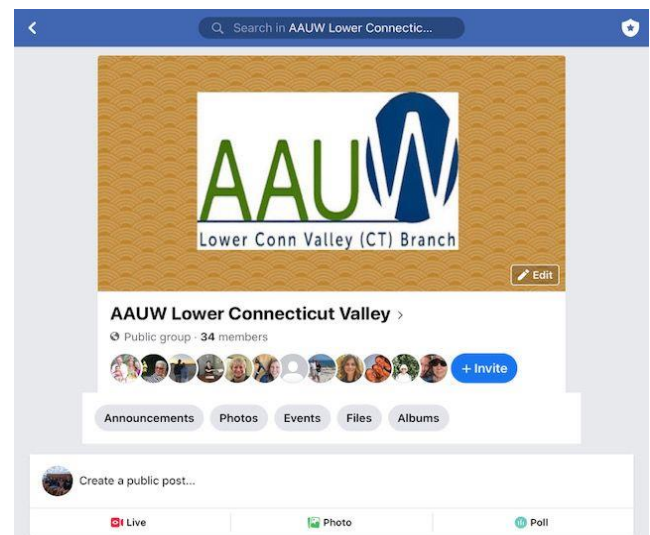
1. Choose the amount of the donation
2. Choose where you would like the money to go. your choices are:
 - a. Undergraduate Grants & Scholarships

- b. Recognition Fund “in honor of” or “in memory of”
 - c. LCV Programs or Functions
3. Choose if you would like to add to your donation to help offset the cost of processing fee (ex. For a \$25 donation it would be \$1.25). If you do this you will be donating \$25 to LCV and paying the \$1.25 processing fee.
 4. Choose “Donate with PayPal” or “Donate with a Debit or Credit Card”
 5. On the payment page you can write a note
 - a. To identify who the donation is “In memory of” or “in honor of”. Please include if you want someone to be notified of the gift. If so, include their name and their address (email or mailing address)
 - b. If you are doing “in memory” or “in honor of” please write in where you want the money to go – Grants & Scholarships or LCV programs & functions.
 6. Fill in your payment information
 - a. Please add your contact information so we can contact you with any questions and/or send a thank you for the gift
 - b. Click on “Donate Now” and you are done.

---Linda, Past Treasurer

AAUW LCV FACEBOOK PAGE

Please check out and join our new AAUW Lower Connecticut Valley Branch Facebook Page! Invite your friends to join too!



SCHOLARSHIP



Co-Chair of the Scholarship Committee presenting one of our Grant Recipients, with her grant check.

The Scholarship Committee met in June to select the Educational Grant recipients for 2021. We are happy to announce that three women will receive the grants this year:

Cassidy is a Senior pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, focusing on clinical social work practice, at Simmons University in Boston. She is working with AmeriCorps, with pre-school children, and plans to work in a pediatric setting as a medical social worker.

Caitlin will be a senior at the University of Connecticut with a major in Civil Engineering and minor in Environmental Engineering. She has worked in the UConn Department of Civil and Environmental Education on projects concerning the strength of concrete, as well as working as an intern in a local organic landscape firm. She plans to work as either a geotechnical or environmental engineer.

Tonya is studying to be a Registered Nurse at Goodwin University, completing her degree in December 2021. She has worked as a Paraeducator since 2006. As a paraeducator, she worked with special needs students. She worked also as a job coach and nurse's assistant. She stepped forward to take this position during the recent COVID pandemic to acquire nursing experience.

Tonya also volunteers at a local Soup Kitchen.

The Scholarship Committee received five applications for the Educational Grants. We publicized the grants in both print and virtual media, and we will continue to explore other means to spread information about the applications. Most applicants learned about the grants from local newspapers.

The Scholarship Committee was impressed with the educational accomplishments and career goals of these applicants and are happy to be able to offer them the financial assistance of the Educational Grants.

--- Olga & Sue, Co-Chairs



INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

We are looking forward to the Afternoon Book Group! Over the summer we had a virtual discussion of Hamnet, by Maggie O'Farrell, the fictional account of the family of William Shakespeare, his son, Hamnet, who died at age 11 of the plague, and his wife, Agnes (Anne Hathaway), a talented herbalist and healer in Stratford. We enjoyed this book and recommend it to all!

We selected the nine books we will read this year from a list of 19 books nominated by book group members. There were many intriguing titles that spanned genres of fiction and nonfiction.

On September 13th, at 4 p.m., we will join evening book group members to discuss Carnegie's Maid, by Marie Benedict, at Mary Ann's home, followed by a pot-luck dinner.

RSVP to Mary Ann if you plan to attend.

Our October book will be In My Own Word, by Ruth Bader Ginsberg. November's selection is Eat the Buddha: Life and Death in a Tibetan Town, by Barbara Demick. In December, we will read Deacon King Kong, by James McBride. The meetings will be on Zoom; dates to be announced.

We welcome new members to the group. Feel free to contact us for more information.

Happy reading!

-- Sue & Elaine, Co-Chairs

EVENING BOOK GROUP

The Evening and Afternoon book groups will hold their annual joint meeting (a few months later than usual due to the pandemic) on Monday, Sept. 13 at 4 pm at the home of Mary Ann Kistner. Jane will lead the discussion of Carnegie's Maid, by Marie Benedict, followed by a potluck dinner. We thank Mary Ann for continuing this 20-year tradition of an annual joint meeting.

Please call or email Mary Ann if you wish to attend, so that she has the correct number for the dinner.

Those who wish to carpool to Mary Ann's will meet at the Exit 70 parking lot of I-95 at 3:30 pm.

Evening book group members, please be on the lookout for interesting books to read in 2021-22. We have already selected Premonition, by Michael Lewis, for our October discussion.

---Mary Jane, Chair



LCV Members' Cultural Trip to the Elizabeth Rose Garden in West Hartford, June 17, 2021.



GREAT DECISIONS

Great Decisions resumes monthly Zoom meetings on the third Wednesday of the month in September. On Wednesday, 9/15 at 7:00 we will discuss CHINA IN AFRICA. The subject is more relevant than ever given these two major factors: 1. Global COVID damage is very uneven and vaccine availability in Africa still at less than 5% the amount needed to vaccinate the populations so recovery is stymied; AND 2. China has surpassed the USA and Europe in funneling money into Africa, mostly in the form of many billions of dollars of repayable loans for Chinese built infrastructure projects. China needs the raw materials Africa has to continue its domestic economic growth. Africa's debt burden may lead to China repossessing the trade route-built infrastructure. The western aid emphasis on education, health, equal rights does not seem to figure prominently.

Zoom invitations will follow closer to meeting but save the date! Members not currently participating are welcome to listen in to see if you enjoy the discussion of world events. We will watch the DVD provided by GD together, share some additional

info in a slide show, and get members' questions, concerns, analysis.

The final two GREAT DECISIONS Zoom meetings of 2021 will occur the third Wednesdays of October and November. The facilitators for 2022, Kaye and Judith, will join in the planning of these last three sessions and bring their new perspectives to next year's offerings.

---Carol, Sara, and Eileen, Co-Chairs

HIKING GROUP

We will be continuing our monthly hiking group again this year. Please let me know if you would like to join our group. (I still have everyone's names that participated last year.) I usually pick a date a week or two ahead depending on the weather and send out an email with the info. Thinking about a hike at Rocky Neck State Park for September. Please contact Margie.

MAJ JONGG

We will play Tuesday, September 14th, at 1:00 pm. Location TBD. If you are interested in attending, please contact Sharon.

GOURMET

Please know there are new Gourmet chairs for this 2021-22 year. If you are interested in the Gourmet group, please contact Beth or Bonnie for more information.

AFTERNOON BRIDGE

TBD. If interested in playing, please contact Marcia or Deb.



LVC Members' Cultural Trip to the CT Historical Society in Hartford, June 17, 2021.



CULTURAL TRIPS

Event: HOGPEN HILL FARMS

Driving Tour & Lunch

Date: Friday, September 17th

Location: 100 Weekepeemee Rd, Woodbury, CT

Time: 10am-4:30pm

Fee: \$20 per person + Lunch

This beautiful 234 acres of tree farm and landscape sculpture park in Woodbury, CT, was created by artist Edward Tufte. There are more than 100 sculptures ranging from stainless steel surfaces reflecting light to giant boulder megaliths. The farm is open from 10 am to 4:30 pm. Admission is by car with cost of \$80 per car (max of 4 occupants, so \$20 per person). We can drive along the route through

the farm or get out and walk. We will have a late lunch at Good News Restaurant and Bar in Woodbury.

Interested members should contact Deb no later than Friday, Sept 3rd, so tickets can be reserved. Please let me know if you are willing to be a driver.

**Event: HISTORIC NEWPORT, RI
Historic Walking Tour & Lunch**
Date: Thursday, October 21st
Location: 127 Thames St., Newport, RI
Time: 9:00am-4pm
Fee: \$15 per person + Lunch

We will head to Newport and drive along beautiful Ocean Drive and Bellevue Avenue. Next, we will visit the Newport Historical Society, at 127 Thames Street, for the 11 am walking tour, “Discover Colonial Newport. The tour takes about an hour and costs \$15 per person. Following the tour, we will have lunch as a group in downtown Newport (restaurant TBD).

After lunch, members can choose to hike along the Cliff Walk, tour one of the Newport mansions, or just visit some of the shops. We will head back to CT by 4 pm.

If interested, please contact Deb no later than October 7th. Please let me know if you are willing to be a driver.

WELCOME FALL - SEPTEMBER 22!



**The Devil's Hopyard State Park's
Covered Bridge - East Haddam, CT**

AAUW: UPCOMING OCTOBER MEETING

**Wednesday, October 13, 2021
7:00 pm
Saybrook Point Pavilion
155 College St., Old Saybrook**

Speaker: Ann O'Brien, Director of Community Engagement for IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services) to address:

**“Refugee Resettlement on the World Stage
and in Every Hometown”**

