

Website lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net

Facebook facebook.com/groups/460005185436947

Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2023

MONTHLY MEETING

Wednesday, February 15th 12pm/Noon

Valentine’s Luncheon & General Meeting

Acton Library, Old Saybrook
60 Old Boston Post Rd.

The Long Island Sound is the reason many of us are on the Shoreline.

Things are rapidly changing with overfishing, warming waters, controversy over wind farms, and so on. Many recreation boats add to this change.

Commercial Fishing is dramatically changing! Think few or no more lobsters!

Colleen Bouffard, Supervising Fisheries Biologist, Marine Fisheries Program, CT Dept. of Environmental Protection, will update us on current realities.

FEBRUARY 2023 CALENDAR

Feb. 1 Wed –1pm Afternoon Book Club Zoom Event

Feb. 5 Sun – Gourmet Group (email sent with information)

Feb. 7 Tue - 11am Cultural Trip (meet at 10am)

Feb. 14 Tue – 12:30pm Mah Jongg

Feb. 15 Wed – 12pm Meeting /Valentine’s Luncheon

Feb. 21 Tue – 7pm Evening Book Club Zoom Event

Feb. 22 Wed – Hiking Group

(No Meeting for Great Decisions)

LIVE BOOK AUTHOR DISCUSSION:

ALL MEMBERS INVITED!

February 1st – 1pm via Zoom

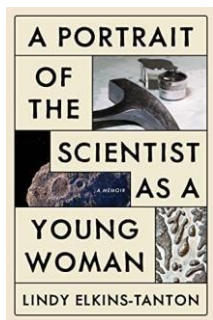


Author Fiona Davis, an LCV favorite, is joining us **Wednesday, February 1st, at 1 pm, via Zoom.** during the second half of the Zoom discussion of The Magnolia Palace, Fiona’s thriller novel about the Frick Collection.

All LCV members are invited to attend! Please send your email address to Co-Chair Sue Aberbach by January 31st if

you are not a book group member and would like to attend. Co-Chair Elaine Quayle assisted in coordinating this event. (Attendees may even get a preview of Fiona’s upcoming book, The Spectacular!)

LIVE BOOK AUTHOR DISCUSSION:
ALL MEMBERS INVITED!
February 21st – 7pm via Zoom



On Tuesday, February 21, at 7 pm via Zoom the Evening Book Group will host guest author, Lindy Elkins-Tanton. Barb will lead the discussion of Lindy's novel, A Portrait of the Scientist as a Young Woman.

All AAUW members are welcome to attend. If you are not a member of the book group, and would like to attend, please email Mary Jane by for a Zoom link by February 19th.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We had record attendance at our January Tea this year. It was wonderful to meet two of our scholarship recipients who were able to attend. The Trivia Contest was enjoyed by all. Next year we will try to make the questions even more challenging! Many thanks to Cheryl Barnum for working with me on the questions.

The Book Author Luncheon Committee is hard at work preparing for our Scholarship Fundraiser on March 25th. Current trends indicate we will have a very successful event. I hope many of you will be able to attend with family or friends. This year we are planning for wider publicity through social media as well as solicitation of donations from larger local businesses.

Lastly, don't forget to come to the Valentine's Lunch on Feb 15th at the Acton Library. For this event YOU don't have to bring anything!

--- Deb, President

IMPORTANT UPDATE:

**AAUW-LCV 501(c)(3)
APPLICATION**

Currently, our LCV Branch is a 501(c) (4) which means we are a non-profit organization, but we do NOT have tax-exempt status.

Obtaining a 501(c)(3) designation means any donations LCV receives would be tax deductible to the donor, LCV can apply for matching grants from businesses and foundations, and LCV would be exempt from CT sales taxes.

AAUW-LCV has applied to, and been accepted by, **Pro Bono Partnership**, a nonprofit organization that provides free legal help to other nonprofits. A Pro Bono Partnership attorney has agreed to work with us and guide us through the application process.

Hopefully, LCV will be able to attain a 501(c)(3) designation by this summer.

VOTING ON AAUW BYLAWS CHANGES

National AAUW is proposing a series of changes to the bylaws. There are 8 suggested amendments, primarily to governance and practice. There are no changes to membership requirements.

Recent emails (1/19) sent from National announcing the proposed amendments and the voting timeframe (April 5th - May 15th) provide a link to the National Election Page on the AAUW website. Each change and rationale for change is explained for all 8 proposals. No changes are proposed for Public Policy Priorities, but members have an opportunity to comment and offer suggestions.

Please take a few minutes to read the information on the website and consider the proposals. Voting begins in April...lots of time to have a look! Thank you.

--- Dot, Chair

BOOK AUTHORS LUNCHEON Saturday, March 25, 2023



**The LCV Book Author Luncheon
is Saturday, March 25th from
11:30-2:30pm
@ the Saybrook Point Inn.**

It is a fabulous event and Saybrook Point Inn is a wonderful venue.

The highly anticipated luncheon will be back for the first time since 2019! As in the past there will be both chance and silent auctions, as well as a delicious lunch, followed by our two great authors.

LUNCHEON AUTHORS & THEIR BOOKS

Penny Hein has secured two incredible authors to speak at our Book/Author Luncheon—Heather Webb and Amy Poeppel.

Heather's book, Strangers in the Night, about the tumultuous romance between Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner that defined an era and scandalized the world, debuts on March 21, right before our event. The book has received a rating of 4.5 stars by Goodreads. Other books by Heather include The Next Ship Home (about Ellis Island) and Meet Me in Monaco, about Grace Kelly's fairy-tale wedding to Prince Rainier.

Amy's publication date for her new book, The Sweet Spot, is January 31st. The book features a large cast of characters in a Greenwich Village brownstone where

“delightful chaos” ensues, and has been praised by *Publishers' Weekly* as a “treat for readers.” The book has also been selected as a “Most Anticipated Spring Read” by *Off the Shelf* magazine. Amy's other books include Small Admissions (she has worked as an admissions counselor) and Limelight, a chronicle of a family's move from Dallas to New York City, and the surprises that ensue. Articles by Amy have appeared in *The New York Times* and *Working Mother* magazine, among others.

Members of the fundraising committee have been working diligently to assure this is another wonderful event. The Donors and Sponsors group has done an extraordinary job of obtaining auction items and securing sponsorships. Sue Aberbach and Elaine Quayle are creating the program for the luncheon. This year, the program will only include ads for companies donating \$250 or more. Registrations are going fast with eighty five (85) individuals already committed to attend!

Thanks to everyone's efforts, we are ahead of schedule, and I believe we will reach our goal of providing scholarships to a greater number of worthy women and/or be able to increase the monetary award of each scholarship.

--- Linda, Fundraising Co-Chair



MEMBERSHIP

We now have 86 members! Please welcome our newest member, Cindy, and add her information to your membership booklets:
Please change Krista May's phone number in your booklets.

Our March 25th Book Author Luncheon qualifies as a Shape the Future Event so any of your qualified friends, neighbors, or family members are eligible to join at the luncheon and receive 50% off their National Membership Dues good for the 2023-24 year. More information will be in the March newsletter, or you can contact Co-Chairs Margie or Deb.

SCHOLARSHIP

We hope you enjoyed meeting two of our 2022 Educational Grant recipients at the January tea. The students spoke about their college and career paths and stayed for the trivia contest. Each student has now received her second part of the Educational Grant funding for this spring semester.

The Scholarship Committee will meet on January 30th to discuss our branch's sponsorship of students to attend the NCCWSL Conference. This year's NCCWSL will take place on June 1-2 at the University of Maryland campus. We have identified one student to sponsor and will continue to look for one more student. If you know of a college student who would benefit from this conference for young college leaders, contact us.

Another topic for our meeting will be the publicizing of the Educational Grant. With the expert help of Gloria, we have been able to make the Grant application accessible on our website. Last year, we were able to reach more applicants in New London and Middlesex counties. The deadline for this year's applications is June 12, 2023. If you know of anyone who might qualify for the Education Grant, please contact us.

--- Olga & Sue, Co-Chairs



AAUW NATIONAL ART CONTEST

AAUW is holding its annual art contest. Members will be able to view the entries starting February 1st and the voting will begin on February 2nd.

To view the entries and participate in the voting, click on the following link to the art gallery:
<https://artcontest.aauw.org/contest/>

I have entered two photographs I took while on vacation.

--- Olga, LCV Member

AAUW LCV FACEBOOK PAGE

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



INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

The Afternoon Book Group met Wednesday, January 4th, to discuss Clint Smith's *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*.

We began with an overview of the author's life and were amazed at what he has accomplished in his 34 years: Maryland Teacher of the Year; wrote a volume of poetry; wrote this well-received nonfiction work (New York Times "10 Best of 2021", and recommended by Barack Obama; current staff writer for *The Atlantic* magazine. Poetry link: [Counting Descent — Clint Smith \(clintsmithiii.com\)](https://www.clintsmithiii.com)

How the Word Is Passed chronicles the author's visits to seven sites significant to the history of slavery in America, including Goree Island off the coast of Senegal, where enslaved Africans were put on ships to the Americas. Our discussion focused on new facts we learned, including:

The original design for the Statue of Liberty had one of Lady Liberty's arms holding chains and shackles, but the chains were placed at her feet—and hardly visible--so fundraising for the statue could proceed;

Angola Prison, Louisiana, is on the site of a former plantation, the equivalent to having a German prison on the site of a World War II concentration camp; The restored Whitney plantation, Louisiana, takes the perspective of the enslaved, focusing the story on their experiences;

New York's Central Park displaced Seneca Village, a settlement of mostly Black residents, by the use of eminent domain so New York City could have a park like cities in Europe;

Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, endeavors to share the history of the enslaved people who lived there through some focused tours about their lives. For many years, in the twentieth century, tours of Monticello were given by Black guides dressed as enslaved people.

All members agreed that we learned many new facts and perspectives from Smith's visits to these sites and were impressed with his ability to share his open, honest, and non-confrontational conversations with those he encountered during his travels. We had a wide-ranging and active discussion about this important part of our country's history.

Clint Smith also wrote the cover article, for *The Atlantic's* December 2022 issue, on the recent efforts by Germany to memorialize the Holocaust. He visited different Holocaust sites and made some thoughtprovoking observations on what Americans can learn when dealing with difficult historical places and experiences. Link: [How Germany Remembers the Holocaust - The Atlantic](#)

We discussed the shocking fact that slavery was foundational to early colonial New England, even in Connecticut, where there were large plantations. In the 1990s, *Hartford Courant's Northeast Magazine* published an issue about slavery in Connecticut, which was later published as a book. It's an eye-opening study of the influence of slavery on where we live. Link: [Complicity by Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, Jenifer Frank - Teacher's Guide: 9780345467836 - PenguinRandomHouse.com: Books](#)

Last, we discussed an effort to memorialize sites in Connecticut, and other states where enslaved people lived (the Witness Stones Project). Researchers, mostly students, learn about the lives of past, local enslaved people and organize efforts to install memorial stones to

them. Old Lyme has a trail map of the Witness Stones. Link: [Witness Stones Project Inc. - Restore History, Educate, and Honor Humanity](#)

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 1st, at 1 p.m. on Zoom. We will discuss Fiona Davis' novel, *The Magnolia Palace*, based on the lives of two people in the Frick Mansion in Manhattan --- the private secretary to Henry Clay Frick's daughter, and an English fashion model working on a photo shoot in the mansion in the 1960s. **We are fortunate to have the author Fiona Davis joining us!** Pat Prendergast will lead our discussion. **All LCV branch members are invited!**

The March book will be *Metropolis*, by B.A. Shapiro, a novel about the intersecting lives of six people who are connected to a storage warehouse in Boston, told from the character's different points of view. Elaine will lead our discussion. Happy reading!

--- Sue and Elaine, Co-Chairs



GOURMET

The Gourmet Group will be having a brunch on February 5. Our next dinner event will be in the spring. Watch the newsletters for upcoming details. Please contact me if you would like to be on the group's email list.

--- Beth, Chair

GREAT DECISIONS

Great Decisions will meet monthly on Wednesdays from 3pm-5pm at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook. Dates are March 15th, April 26th, May 17th, September 20th, October 18th, and November 15th.

Our first topic is "Global Famine". There is still time to join, cost is \$50 and includes the briefing book. Send a check, made out to "AAUW-LCV", to Mary Ann. Questions? Contact me.

--- Barbara, Chair

MAHJONG

Mah Jong will be Tuesday, February 14th, at 12:30 pm at the home of Margie. Please let Margie know if you plan to attend. Thank you.

---Sharon, Chair

HIKING GROUP

Weather permitting, our February Hike will be on Wednesday, February 22nd. Information will be emailed mid-February. If you would like to be added to the hiking group list, email me.

--- Margie, Chair



January Hike at Parmalee Farms in Killingworth.



EVENING BOOK GROUP

Many thanks to Judith for leading our lively Zoom discussion of *The Marriage Portrait* on January 24! Most of us enjoyed the book, which allowed us a view into the Medici and Ferrara Courts of the 16th Century and the role of women in that time.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, February 21 at 7 pm on Zoom. Barb will introduce our guest author, Lindy Elkins-Tanton, and lead the discussion of *A Portrait of the Scientist as a Young Woman*. **All AAUW members are welcome to attend.** If you are not a member of the book group, please email Mary Jane for a Zoom link.

A change for March --- Due to a scheduling error on my part, we are going to reschedule the book discussion to **March 21** at 7 pm at the home of Elaine. Please note that this is the **third Tuesday** instead of the fourth

Tuesday of the month. The book selected is *Isaac's Storm*, by Erik Larson.

Donations for our Book and Mahjong basket for the luncheon --- Sharon, Dot, and I have looked at your suggestions, and below are the items we will need for the basket. If you would like to make a specific donation, please reply to the email I will be sending. Monetary donations are also appreciated, so we can fill in the blanks and purchase a gift card from RJ Julia. Please bring your donations to the Valentine Luncheon on Feb. 15.

Wine (have it), hot chocolate, chocolates (not too large), packaged cookies, journal, book light, bookmarks, reading oriented mug, puzzle (have it), small size word game. We also already have several book donations to include in the basket.

If you are not presently a member of the group and wish to join, please contact me.

--- Mary Jane, Chair



Member/Docent Sue Aberbach leading LCV January tour at the Florence Griswold Museum, Old Lyme.

CULTURAL TRIP: FEBRUARY

Event: Yale Center for British Art **Date:** Tuesday, February 7th

Location: 1080 Chapel Street, New Haven, CT

Time: 11am Tour / Lunch after **Fee:** \$5 Tour/per person + Lunch

Thank you to Sue for conducting a most interesting and informative January Cultural Arts tour at the Florence Griswold Museum entitled "Dreams and Memories".

We had a great turnout and enjoyed a follow up lunch at the Hangry Goose.

The next Cultural Arts trip will take place on **Tuesday, February 7**, with a tour of the Yale Center for British Art at 11 AM

There is a **limit of 15 participants** with a \$5 donation per person. The tour will be followed by lunch at The Study at Yale.

We will meet at the larger parking lot at the Westbrook Train Station (right off of Exit 65 on I 95) at 10AM to drive to the museum.

If you would like to reserve a spot, please email or call Mary Jane. Send her or drop off your \$5 **no later than Friday, Feb 2**. Please indicate whether you will participate in lunch. **Drivers will be needed.**

---Mary Jane and Sharon, Co-chairs

**January Tea & Trivia:
LCV Members and Scholarship Recipients**



UPCOMING MARCH 2023 MEETING

**Thursday --- March 7th
7:00pm**

**Saybrook Point Pavilion
155 College St, Old Saybrook, CT**

**THE FACE OF HOMELESSNESS
IN CONNECTICUT:
Realities, Issues, and Trends**

**Speaker: Evonne Klein, CEO, Connecticut
Coalition to End Homelessness**

<https://www.cceh.org>

Sometimes we see it ----
and sometimes we don't see---
what Connecticut and the Shoreline are facing with
homelessness and housing.

Homelessness is NOT just a "big city" problem.

In 2022, the number of homeless persons rose from 2,594 to 2,930 likely due to the continued economic fallout from the pandemic, paired with inflation and a lack of housing, experts said.

While this number isn't HUGE -- if it's you or a loved one, the situation is frightening and seemingly hopeless.

Join us to understand the face of homelessness in Connecticut.

