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Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter
MARCH 2023

MONTHLY 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.

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.



MARCH CALENDAR

- Mar. 1 Wed –1pm Afternoon Book Club (via Zoom)
- Mar. 7 Thu – 7pm LCV Monthly Meeting**
- Mar.14 Tue – 12:30pm Mah Jongg
- Mar. 16 Thu –11:30am Cultural Trip
- Mar. 21 Tue – 7pm Evening Book Club
- Mar. 25 Sat –11:30-2:30pm Book Authors Luncheon**
- Mar. 30 Thu – Hiking Group (email sent with information)

(No Gourmet Group this month.)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

February was jam-packed with AAUW activities! On the 15th more than 45 of us enjoyed a delicious lunch and heard a great talk on the preservation of Long Island Sound. There was also a fascinating tour of the Museum of British Art at Yale. Both book groups were joined by the authors of their February book selections----Fiona Davis discussed her book, The Magnolia Palace, with the afternoon group and Lindy Elkins-Tanton talked about Portrait of a Scientist as a Young Woman with the evening group. Plus, there was a group hike, Mah jongg game, and a gourmet group brunch. Know we are still trying to form a Bridge group, so contact me if you are interested in playing.

We are eagerly awaiting our Book Author Scholarship Fundraiser at the Saybrook Point Inn on March 25th. There will be fantastic gift baskets as well as Silent Auction items ranging from a gorgeous colorful Indian rug to paintings by local artists. I look forward to seeing you all there!

--- Deb, President

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.

Emails sent from National on January 19th announced the proposed amendments, the voting timeframe (April 5th - May 15th), and provided a link to the National Election Page on the AAUW website. Each of the 8 changes, and rationale for each change, is explained. No changes are proposed for Public Policy Priorities, but members can comment and offer suggestions.

Please take a few minutes to read the information on the website and consider the proposals. Voting begins in April. 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
at 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 guest authors.

The AAUW-LCV Book Author Luncheon is almost here!

**Saturday, March 25th
Saybrook Point Inn
11:30 am to 2:30 pm
(Only 10 tickets remaining!)**

Our Authors, Heather Webb and Amy Poeppel will have recently released new books. 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 been rated at 4.5 stars by Goodreads. Amy's publication date for her new book, The Sweet Spot, was January 31st. The book, featuring a large cast of characters in a Greenwich Village brownstone where "delightful chaos" ensues, 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.

Fabulous chance and silent auction items at this year's event include:

- Beautiful Paintings
 - Lunches with newscasters Mark Zinni and Lisa Carberg
 - Theater and Museum packages
 - "Dine around the town" Restaurant packages
 - A 9x12 Indian Design Rug
 - Designer Jewelry
 - Salon packages
 - Fitness packages
- Bring cash for the chance tickets (tickets are 10 for \$10 and 25 for \$20).
 - Cash, check, or charge card accepted for the Silent Auction purchases and books!
 - If your friends join AAUW at the luncheon, they will receive a discounted membership.
 - Bring a "Generous Spirit" – all profits go to scholarships for local women.

--- Linda, Fundraising Co-Chair



AAUW LCV FACEBOOK PAGE

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



MEMBERSHIP

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 \$72 National Membership dues. **Dues will be good for the 2023-24 year.** (That's a savings of \$36 of which \$35.50 is tax deductible.) Membership applications will be available at the luncheon and the \$67 dues (\$21 branch, \$10 state & \$36 national) can be paid by check or charge. (Note: AAUW National has increased dues by \$5 starting on April 1st.)

Our New Members' "meet up" luncheon was instead held as a Zoom "meeting" on Tuesday, February 28, due to weather.

---Margie and Deb, Co-chairs

SCHOLARSHIP

The Scholarship Committee met recently to discuss publicity for the Educational Grants and NCCWSL. We have identified one student to attend NCCWSL, AAUW's conference for college student leaders, which will be held from June 1 -2 at the campus of the University of Maryland. We can sponsor one more student. If you know of a college woman who would benefit from this leadership conference, please let us know.

We will begin accepting applications for the LCV branch's Educational Grants using the application on our website and Facebook page. The deadline for Educational Grants is June 12, 2023.

---Sue and Olga, Co-Chairs



INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

The Afternoon Book Group met on Wednesday, February 1st to discuss *The Magnolia Palace* by Fiona Davis. Our discussion leader was Pat provided background information on the author, the subject, the Frick family, and their establishment of a museum and art library in their mansion in Manhattan. Thanks so much for your guidance, Pat! Author Fiona Davis joined our discussion via Zoom to share some slides of the Frick family, their mansion's design, and some intriguing details about the inspiration for one of fictional characters, Lillian Carter, an artists' model who became the assistant to Henry Clay Frick's daughter, Helen, in the novel. Lillian is based on real-life model, Audrey Munson, who posed for statues throughout New York City, including one at the Frick Mansion. Here is a map of the location of some of these statues across New York City: [The+Magnolia+Palace-book+club+kit.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

Fortunately, Fiona Davis shared her experiences in writing this book with us. She's a favorite author of our LCV AAUW branch as we've read her previous novels. Fiona's next novel, to be published June 2023, is titled *The Spectacular* and set in 1956 at Radio City Music Hall. Something to put on our To-Be-Read lists!

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 1st on Zoom. We will discuss *Metropolis* by B.A. Shapiro, a novel set in a Cambridge, Massachusetts storage building, chronicling six characters whose lives become connected by a crime at the building. It is a suspenseful, engrossing novel with alternate points of view and time frames --before and after the crime. Elaine will lead the discussion.

The April 5th meeting will focus on *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri, a dramatic, memorable novel about a beekeeping couple in Syria who are forced to flee during the war, and eventually settle in Britain after a harrowing journey. We are looking for a member who is willing to lead this discussion. We would be happy to provide materials and support during the meeting.

For the upcoming Book Author Luncheon, the Afternoon Book Group is donating a basket inspired by the book and theme, "A Literary Tea Party," a cookbook with tea-time treats inspired by works of literature, including the *Narnia* books, *The Hobbit*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. We are currently collecting various "tea party themed" items. Should you like to contribute an item or nominal amount of money, let us know asap.

Thanks again to everyone who participated in the recent Zoom discussion!

Happy reading! See you soon!

--- Sue and Elaine, Co-Chairs



GOURMET

The Gourmet Group will have the next dinner on May 6th. More information will be in the April newsletter. New members are always welcome. There are recipes for all levels of cooking experience. Our first two events were a huge success. Recipes for the November dinner and February brunch are available by email. Please contact me with any questions.

--- Beth, Chair

MAHJONG

Mah Jong will be Tuesday, March 14th at 12:30pm. Location TBD. Thank you.

----Sharon, Chair

GREAT DECISIONS

Our first meeting will be Wednesday March 15th at 3:00pm at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook. "Global Famine" is our first discussion topic. Fears of global food shortages have followed Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has disrupted grain shipments from the major grain producer. But, what about countries and regions that were suffering before this impending shortage? How is famine defined, and how is it different from simple food shortages? What if any remedies are there?

--- Barbara, Chair

HIKING GROUP

We had a nice hike in February at the Canfield-Meadow Woods Nature Preserve in Deep River and Essex. Our March hike will be in The Preserve in Old Saybrook/Westbrook/Essex on Thursday, March 30th. An email with the details will be sent out to all on the email list.

--- Margie, Chair

EVENING BOOK GROUP

Many thanks to Barb for recruiting Lindy Elkins Tanton to speak about her book Portrait of the Scientist as a Young Woman on Zoom on February 21. Lindy was a most engaging, interesting, and inspiring guest! Questions revolved around Lindy's scientific pursuits and her approach to running an effective organization. She presently is the lead investigator for the NASA Psyche mission to the metallic asteroid, Psyche. The mission plans to launch in October 2023, so stay tuned!

Our March book is Isaac's Storm: A Man, a Time, and the Deadliest Hurricane by Erik Larson (a favorite author of our group). We will meet on **Tuesday, March 21, at 7 pm** in the home of Elaine. Dot will lead the discussion. Please email/call Elaine if you plan to attend. Note that the meeting is the 3rd Tuesday of March this month.

--- Mary Jane, Chair



CULTURAL TRIP: MARCH

Event: State Capitol and Supreme Court

Date: Thursday, March 16th

Location: Hartford, CT

Time: 11:30am Tour / 1:00pm Lunch

Fee: \$10 Tour/per person + Lunch

We will be touring the State Capitol at 10:15 am and continuing across the street to the Supreme Court for a tour at 11:30 am. Lunch will be at the Red Rock Tavern, a 4 minute walk down the street, at 1:00 pm. The cost for the tour is \$10, payable in advance. Those signed up need to send a check made out to **Sharon Howell** no later than Wednesday, March 8th. **Drivers are still needed.** On the date of the trip, the group will leave from the parking lot at Exit 3 on Rte 9 at 9:15 AM.

The tour is limited to 16 people and is presently full. If you are interested in the tour and wish to be put on the waiting list, please e-mail Sharon to add your name to the waiting list.

---Mary Jane and Sharon, Co-chairs

CULTURAL TRIP: APRIL

Event: Yale University Gargoyle Tour

Date: Tuesday, April 18th

Location: New Haven, CT

Time: 11am Tour / Lunch after

Fee: \$15 Tour/per person + Lunch

This is a walking tour. The group will meet our tour leader at 11 AM in New Haven for a tour of the Yale gargoyles lasting 75 minutes, followed by lunch. Cost is \$15, payable in advance to Mary Jane Peterson, with a limit of 15 participants. Signups will be available at the March 9th meeting or email Mary Jane. Drivers will be needed for this tour.

---Mary Jane and Sharonl, Co-chairs



Hiking Group at Canfield-Meadows in March.

UPCOMING APRIL MEETING

**Thursday, April 13th
7:00pm**

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

**JOINT MEETING WITH
SHORELINE BRANCH**

**Speakers: National AAUW Fellowship
Recipients**

**Think Social -
Thursday, June 15th.**

**6:00 to 8:00 PM
Westbrook Elks Club
Limit of 50 members and their
guests!**



**Two hours of special hors
d'oeuvres.
Cash Bar
\$35 per person**

Checks payable to LCV – AAUW