



Website lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net
Facebook facebook.com/groups/460005185436947

SEPTEMBER 2024
Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

For up-to-date information, visit the LCV website calendar! Press Ctrl + Click on below LCV website link:
<https://lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net/calendar/>



LCV SEPTEMBER CALENDAR EVENTS

Wednesday, September 4th
1:00pm - Afternoon Book Club (via Zoom)

Tuesday, September 10th
12:30pm – Mahjong

Thursday, September 12th
1:00pm-Crafting Group

Thursday, September 12th
6:00 pm – LCV Meeting & Potluck Supper

Wednesday, September 18th
3:00pm – Great Decisions

Tuesday, September 24th
6:30pm – Evening Book Club

NO Cultural Arts (Thursday October 3rd- Providence Walking Tour)

NO Gourmet Group

September Meeting & Potluck Supper

Thursday, September 12th
6:00pm

Saybrook Pavilion Saybrook Point
Old Saybrook

Domestic Violence Update: What’s new?
The community response and programs.

Nazmie Ojeda and Megan Foley
Safe Futures, New London CT

Welcome back! Update on this year’s plans and activities. **Bring a dish to share!** A small appetizer, main dish or dessert. Coffee/tea/soft drinks provided.

Voluntary individual donations to AAUW National will be collected.

AAUW LCV FACEBOOK PAGE

Please check out and join our AAUW Lower Connecticut Valley Branch Facebook page with **photos of our group members at recent events and other information!**

Press Ctrl + Click on below LCV website link:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/460005185436947/>



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

To all our members,

Let me be the first to welcome you to the start of another great year in the Lower CT Valley Chapter of AAUW.

The Board has been busy this summer updating our LCV website. (<https://lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net>). Please take the time to look at our website— your comments are always welcome.

We are having our meeting and annual Potluck Supper on September 12, 2024, at 6 p.m. at the Saybrook Pavilion, 155 College Street, Old Saybrook. Please bring a small appetizer, main dish, or dessert to share. At the meeting, we will have a speaker from Safe Futures (an organization committed to helping those who are victims of domestic violence).

There will be information and sign-up sheets that night for the various interest groups, such as Great Decisions, Hiking, Crafting, etc. I encourage everyone to participate!

We will be updating our membership booklet, which will be distributed at the October meeting. Please be sure you have paid your membership dues by the September 12th meeting, so you will be included in the booklet.

We will also be collecting donations to support AAUW National’s fellowship grants, and programs such as Tech Savvy and NCCWSL.

The LCV is a place where we can learn new things, enjoy different activities and most of all— enjoy each other. It is going to be another great year!

Jeannette Santovasi, LCV President

MEMBERSHIP

We have had 19 new members join our branch since the Spring --- and 82 renewed members – for 98 to date.

We will be welcoming all our new members at our September 12th Potluck Supper Meeting at the Pavilion at Saybrook Point. Information will be provided about AAUW and our LCV Branch activities and we hope that everyone will join us.

We had another successful **Shape the Future** campaign and have earned three (3) free national memberships. Those taking advantage of this will have to only pay \$38 for State and Branch dues! That is a savings of \$72. If you have a qualified friend, neighbor, or family member who would like to join our LCV AAUW Branch at this discounted rate, please let us know, have them complete a membership application (lowerctvalley-ct.AAUW.net) and have them mail or deliver a check for \$38 using one of the methods below. Only the first three (3) new members will be eligible for this \$72 discount.

Most of our 2024-25 membership dues were due on June 30th. To date, we have 19 members who have not yet renewed and reminders have been sent to those members. To be included in our 2024-25 Membership Directory, dues must be paid by our first monthly meeting on September 12th. **There are a variety of ways to pay the dues:**

***mail a check for \$110 (\$72 National Dues, \$10 State Dues, \$28 Branch Dues) or \$38 (for those taking advantage of free national dues) made out to LCV AAUW to:**

AAUW Membership, PO Box 379, Old Saybrook, CT 06475

***bring a check to the September 12th LCV AAUW Potluck Supper meeting; or**

***online at www.aauw.org (for renewals, use the instructions emailed to you).**

New 2024-25 Directories will be available at our October meeting. Please send any changes of information (address, email, phone number, etc.)

by September 12th to margierice@comcast.net so it can be included in our new Membership Directory.
. ---Margie Rice and Deb Herskovitz, Co-chairs

SCHOLARSHIP

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to present on the final page of this Newsletter, the six students who will receive the \$4000 Educational Grants from the Lower Connecticut Valley AAUW branch. We also received reflections from the three students who attended the AAUW NCCWSL conference in June.

--a talk on how to design your post-grad life and “the importance of combining your work view and life view.”

--a motivational speech reminded students “that success is not only about personal gains but also about lifting others and contributing to societal progress.”

We sponsored three local students to attend the 2024 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders: Sydney Swann from Emerson College, Madeline Rice from Emerson College; and Grace Jacaruso from the University of South Carolina.

The experience of NCCWSL was formative to all three students: “The opportunity to connect with peers and learn from successful women leaders was invaluable.” Another student commented: “NCCWSL exceeded any and all expectations...I know I am leaving Maryland a changed person. NCCWSL taught me not only that I deserve to feel empowered, but also how to feel empowered.” A third student wrote: “the NCCWSL conference inspired me to dig deep and find my voice amongst the commotion in society.”

Describing their experience as “enriching and empowering,” the women attended keynote speeches, workshops, networking sessions, and informal meetings with the other 800 attendees who gathered this June at the University of Maryland’s College Park campus from around the country.

The three students expressed their gratitude to the LCV branch for the opportunity to attend NCCWSL. “I am immensely grateful to NCCWSL for organizing such a powerful and enlightening conference...thank you so much to the Lower Connecticut Valley AAUW for nominating me to attend.”

Some of the students’ comments about their NCCWSL experiences include:

--a talk on authentic leadership “emphasized staying true to oneself while leading with compassion and understanding in order to be an effective leader.”

--a workshop on appropriate salary negotiation “highlighting how to articulate your value to your employer.”

--a session on communicating your personal brand included “how to write an elevator pitch” which will be useful in searching for an internship.

Thank you all so much for all your efforts to support these students in their educational and career goals!

PROGRAM

Date and Featured Author Selected for Book Author Luncheon (“BAL”)

Date: April 5, 2025 at The Saybrook Point Inn

Featured Author: ***Amy Bloom***, *New York Times* best selling author and National Book Award Nominee will be our featured author! We are thrilled that this three-time novelist, short story and children’s book writer and author of the memoir, ***In Love***, will inspire and entertain us. ***Save the date!***

Fall Programs

An exciting year ahead.... Fall programs at the Saybrook Point Pavilion include an expert on presidential elections! What could be better timed?

Date	Time	Description	More
Sept 12- Thursday	6 pm	September Meeting and Potluck Supper! Domestic Violence Update: What's new? The community response and programs. Nazmie Ojeda and Megan Foley Safe Futures, New London CT	Welcome back! Update on this year's plans and activities. Bring a small appetizer, main dish or dessert. Coffee/tea/soft drinks provided. Voluntary individual donations to AAUW National will be collected.
Oct 10- Thursday	7 pm	October Meeting The Electoral College - a Refresher Overview and Conversation. Professor (Emeritus) of Political Science Ronald Shurin, UConn Storrs.	Bring novels for women incarcerated at York Correctional Institution. Gloria Gery is collecting.
Nov 14 – Thursday	7 pm	November Thanksgiving Party Update: CT AAUW National Fellows. Chance White Elephant Auction benefiting AAUW National. Bring an unwrapped item... buy an item! Get lucky and win something fun!	Bring Holiday Donations for Safe Futures! Gift cards preferred (\$25-\$50) for CVS, Target, Walgreens, Walmart, Stop & Shop, etc. or new toys, clothing, personal items for Safe Futures Women's Shelter. Assigned members to bring appetizers & desserts.

---Joanne Kennedy, Cathy Branch and Gloria Gery, Program Co-Chairs.

Join the BAL Committee?

Work begins in September. If you'd like to solicit auction items, obtain sponsorships or work on event logistics, please contact Gloria Gery, event chair at gloriagery@gmail.com. It's fun, rewarding and a fantastic way to get to know other LCV members.



INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Date: **Wednesday, September 4th**

Time: **1:00pm**

Location: **via Zoom**

Book: ***James* by Percival Everett**

The Afternoon Book Group nominated and voted on titles for our group to read this coming year: for the September, October and November meetings, they are:

September 4th meeting--*James* by Percival Everett—a retelling of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* from the point of view of Jim—here known as James. Sue Aberbach will be the discussion leader (if you are interested in being a co-leader for the discussion, please let me know!)

October 2nd meeting--*The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution* by Marci Shore—a history of the 2013-2014 uprising on the Maidan which began the Ukrainian resistance to the Russian invasion. Judith Slisz will lead the discussion.

November 6th meeting--*An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s* by Doris Kearns Goodwin--Dick and Doris Goodwin, both American writers, were married for 42 years and witnessed important moments of American history through their work with John F. Kennedy, LBJ, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., all of whom played a role in pivotal events in the 20th century. Dot Beaulieu will lead the discussion.

Anyone interested in becoming a member, email Sue Aberbach at aberbach@aol.com to be added.

All meetings take place at 1 p.m. on Zoom. Reminders with meeting link are sent a few days before each meeting. Happy reading!
---Sue Aberbach and Elaine Quayle,
Afternoon Book Group organizers

CULTURAL ARTS

Event-Providence Walking Tour

Date: **Thursday October 3rd (Rain Date Oct 4th)**

Meet: **8:30am / I95 Exit 70 commuter lot**

Tour : **10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Providence Riverfront**

Lunch: **Federal Hill, Providence**

Cost: **\$28/person admission + Lunch**

Note: **Mail check to Pat Prendergast BY 9/26 if attending**

Please join us on Thursday 10/3 for a fun guided tour in Providence and lunch in the Federal Hill section. The 1.5-mile flat (mostly) walking tour starts at the beautiful 2019 Van Leesten Pedestrian Bridge, walks along the eastern shore, and crosses over to the market & customs areas.

Learn about the city's inhabitants over the past 500 years and the role rivers have to play in the development and prosperity of a city. Look at historic buildings and compare old photographs and paintings with the current appearance of the city.

If you'd like to attend, please make out a \$28 check to 'Pat Prendergast' and mail to her at: 65 Neptune Dr, Old Saybrook, 06475 - Please indicate if you are willing to drive.

We will meet at 8:30 am at exit 70, I 95 in Old Lyme, to carpool to Providence. Rain date is Friday, October 4th.

---Mary Jane Peterson, Sharon Howell, Pat Prendergast, Co-chairs

HIKING GROUP

Date: **Wednesday, September 25th** (Raindate Thursday, September 26th)

Time: **TBD (email to be sent with details)**

Location: **Haley Farm State Park in Groton and Groton Long Point**

We have had such a nice time at Groton Long Point the past two Septembers that we decided to go there again this September on Wednesday the 25th! (Rain date Thursday September 26).

We've once again been graciously invited to bring our lunches and eat at Sue Aberbach's house at Groton Long Point after our hike at Haley Farm State Park. (Thank you, Sue!) The hike at Haley Farm shouldn't be too strenuous so we'll probably take a short walk at Groton Long Point too. Details will be emailed to hiking group members closer to the hike date.

Please email margierice@comcast.net to be added to the hiking group email list.



---Margie Rice & Kathy Heebner, Co-Chairs

GREAT DECISIONS

Date: **Wednesday, Sept 18**

Time: **3:00pm - 5:00pm (usually done by 4:30pm)**

Place: **Acton Library, Second Floor Meeting Room**

Our topic for this month is "Science Across Borders," (Topic 3 in our books), briefly described on the FPA website as: Scientific advances benefit from collaboration between researchers, but what happens when material, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) is controversial and important to a nation's national security? Is there a middle ground

between sharing information and denying access? How can we regulate cooperation?

Mary Jane Peterson will lead our discussion. Please see www.fpa.org for additional information (under Great Decisions 2024) and to purchase a book.

Please contact Karen Christman at kmc112@comcast.net with any questions or to join.
---Karen Christman, Chair

GOURMET GROUP

The Gourmet Group is looking for new members! We will try to have our first event later in the Fall. Call Beth Brewer at 860-510-2140 with any questions.

MAHJONG

Date: **Tuesday, September 10**

Time: **12:30 p.m.**

Place: **Home of Jeannette Santovasi, 28 Beaver Dam Trail, Old Saybrook**

Hoping everyone had a wonderful summer thus far! As you all know, we meet at 12:30 on the second Tuesday of the month. MAHJONG will meet on Tuesday, September 10 at 12:30 at Jeanette Santovasi's home. The address is 28 Beaver Dam Trail, Old Saybrook.

Please RSVP to Jeannette so that she will be prepared with enough games and tables. Carole Otto will be out of the country on September 10 but back for the October meeting. Please let her know what month you might like to host. You can call, 860-575-4718, or email her, ottocarole@gmail.com with any questions. Come and join the fun!
---Carole Otto, Chair

CRAFTING GROUP

September Event-Card Making

Date: **September 12th**

Time: **1-2:30pm**

Location: **Papercraft Clubhouse
440 Boston Post Rd, Old Saybrook**

The Crafting Group has activities scheduled for September and October. Please note deadlines below and payments due before the event.

Contact Kathy Heebner to join the group, ksslalikos@gmail.com.

In **September**, join Tracie at Papercraft Clubhouse in Old Saybrook and learn how to craft beautiful, handmade greeting cards from scratch. We will make two cards, one birthday and one thinking-of-you. Since this is an introductory class, the Clubhouse will provide everything from tools and adhesives to paper and stamps. Who knows, you may find a new hobby! Minimum of 6 people to have the class.

Cost \$17/per person (must be paid to Kathy Heebner by check or venmo by Sept. 3rd).

October Event-Floral soap

Date: Sunday October 20th

Time: 1:00-3 or 3:30pm

**Location: Spectrum Gallery
61 Main Street, Centerbrook**

In **October**, evoke the feeling of Fall while exercising your creative spirit. You will learn to infuse several bars of soap with botanicals and scent them with essential oils. Natural clays will add color and healing benefits. Using a variety of molds, you will create your own flower-shaped soaps. All levels welcome, minimum of 8-10.

Cost: \$50 plus a \$10 material fee paid to the instructor at the workshop. (Pay Kathy Heebner \$50 by October 1st Check or Venmo to hold your place.)

--- Kathy Heebner, Chair

EVENING BOOK GROUP

Date: Tuesday, September 24th

Time: 6:30pm

Location: Liz Weinstein's – 175 Ferry Rd. Unit 24, Old Saybrook

Book: *Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese

Notes: RSVP Liz Weinstein if you are attending

The first meeting of the Evening Book Group will take place on Tuesday, September 24, at 6:30 pm at

the home of Liz Weinstein, 175 Ferry Rd. Unit 24, Old Saybrook.

We will be discussing *The Covenant of Water* by **Abraham Verghese**. Please call or email Liz at 203-710-0801 or liz.d.weinstein@gmail.com if you plan to attend. If anyone is interested in leading the discussion, please let Mary Jane Peterson know as soon as you can. Also contact her if you are willing to host a meeting in the months ahead.

A good number of book suggestions for the upcoming year have been received. If you have not made a suggestion yet, please send no more than two ideas by September 10. I will send out a list of the suggestions, with brief summaries, a week before our meeting. We usually like to select some fiction, some nonfiction, a biography, a book with a science orientation, and a classic. It's been great to consider a variety of genres in our discussions. Happy Reading!

---Mary Jane Peterson, Evening Book Group Chair

LCV Newsletter/Website Updates

* **LCV Newsletter** is now behind the Members Only page;

***Scholarship recipients** listed on Home and Scholarship Pages; and

***Calendar updated for the new year.** All meetings and interest group dates are on the **Calendar**. Detailed information updated monthly on interest group events.

PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING KRISTEN OWENS FOR SPENDING COUNTLESS HOURS OVER SEVERAL YEARS PREPARING AND DELIVERING OUR NEWSLETTER, UPDATING OUR WEBSITE, SENDING MEMBER NEWS BLASTS AND TRAINING HER REPLACEMENT. HERS ARE MIGHTY DIFFICULT SHOES TO FILL. THANK YOU KRISTEN! YOU ARE A STAR!



Lower Connecticut Valley AAUW Educational Grant Recipients 2024



Taylor Roy, a Waterford resident, is a nursing student at the University of Connecticut with the goal of eventually becoming a Nurse Practitioner. Her volunteer work includes founding the Warrior Princesses Project, an effort to provide tiaras to women and children receiving medical treatment, as well as work at Windham and Backus Hospitals where she used her skills in Spanish to assist patients.



Uliana Makarenko is a student in the cybersecurity program at Western Connecticut State University. She was a high school exchange student in Kansas when her Ukrainian homeland was invaded by Russia, stranding her in the United States. She was accepted as a student at WCSU and met the computer board advisor and Old Saybrook resident Keith Schlosser who sponsored her to stay in the U.S. Uliana is also employed as a cybersecurity consultant at AXIS Capital.



Ariana Seldon, an Oakdale resident, is a sociology major in the B.A./J.D. program at Howard University in Washington, D.C. She works as a college resident assistant and manages a fitness center. She is a volunteer in the District of Columbia corrections system and at a Montville School community center for young people.



Abbey Butler is a senior in the Social Work program at Charter Oak State College with the goal of working with adolescents with learning disabilities. A resident of Essex, she has worked in an independent social work practice and as a lifeguard supervisor.



Hailey Tompkins is a student in the Avery Point/ University of Connecticut Accelerated Nursing Program. She has served in the Army National Guard where she worked in the Horn of Africa as well as locally as an Emergency Medical Technician. She is a resident of New London.



Ashley Doak is pursuing a B.A. in English from Charter Oak State College. She is also the Head of Circulation Services at East Lyme Public Library where she has worked since 2014. She hopes to eventually pursue a Master in Library Sciences and is a resident of Niantic.