

**Lower Connecticut Valley AAUW
Branch Meeting
October 10 2024**

Members Present: There were approximately 60 members and 1 guest present at the meeting held at Saybrook Point Pavilion.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by President Jeannette Santovasi.

Jeanette welcomed everyone and called on Joanne Kennedy, Program Chair, to introduce the evening speaker.

Evening Speaker: Joanne Kennedy introduced our guest speaker, Ronald Shurin, Professor Emeritus from UConn's Political Science Department. His topic was "The Electoral College: Quaint Relic, Loaded Gun, Or Something in Between."

- Professor Shurin spoke of the pros and cons of the electoral college.
- He shared how voting took place from the time of George Washington through to the present time pointing out particular nuances that occurred with the electoral college.

Business Meeting

Safe Futures: Collections for Safe Futures will take place at the November meeting. Gift cards, toys, household items and personal items are welcomed. Please put the dollar amount on gift cards and include the receipt when possible.

LCV Treasurer's Report: Barb Dimberg reviewed the September report as follows:

- Beginning Balance: \$3,267.06
- Ending Balance: \$5,049.10
- Money Market: \$21,295.12

Membership: Margie Rice and Deb Herskowitz reported that we currently have 110 members with two new members. Margie updated the roster and it is on the website. The booklets are ready and on the back table. Deb will try to deliver or mail booklets not picked up at the next meeting in November.

Hospitality:

DeDe Volz reminded members that she needed members to sign up to bring cookies to the November meeting. She explained that no one had signed up for tonight's meeting so Board members who had already signed up for other meetings brought cookies for members to enjoy.

Monthly Programs

Cultural:

Liz Weinstein reported that the November 7th trip to the Mystic Planetarium at Mystic Seaport will cost \$25. The topic is "Women in Astronomy" starting at 10:00 am. Plan to meet at 9:00 am. Lunch will follow with a session on glass blowing at 1:00 pm.

Interest Groups:

Evening Book Group - Mary Jane Peterson reported that *The Watch Dog* will be discussed on October 22nd at her house at 6:30 pm. Please let her know if you are attending.

Afternoon Book Group - Sue Aberbach reported that the next meeting is Wednesday Nov. 6th at 1:00 pm on Zoom. *An Unfinished Love Story* by Doris Kerns Goodwin will be discussed.

Great Decisions - Karen Christman reported that the next meeting is on Wednesday, Nov. 16 from 3:00 - 5:00 at the Acton Library. The topic is "High Seas Treaty." Books for 2025 are \$40.

Gourmet - Beth Brewer needs volunteers and houses for a November brunch. She usually has six to eight people per house. Everyone brings something: appetizer, salad, main dish, dessert.

Mah Jongg - Carole Otto reported the group meets the second Tuesday of the month. The October meeting will be at Carole's house. The November meeting will be at Mary Jane's house, and Margie's house in December.

Hiking - Margie Rice and Kathy Heebner told us that the next hike is on October 17th. It will be on the Heritage Trail in Hartman Park in Lyme.

Crafting - Kathy Heebner reported that the next crafting session will be held on October 20th in Centerbrook. The craft will be soap making. In December holiday wreath making will take place at Acer Gardens.

AAUW-LCV Historical Information: Jeannette asked Linda Frigon to share the information she had researched, organized, and put together on the history of our LCV Branch for members to view. Linda passed around some of the data and visuals that she collected and asked that Branch members share any information they may have about our Branch members and activities. She would like to have this historical data placed on the "Members Only" section of our website. Thus far, she has twenty-eight (28) pages of information along with visuals. Linda feels that the goal is to keep this project up to date and that someone needs to be assigned to do that.

ESP Treasury Report:

Linda Frigon reported that the total balance in the AAUW LCV Education and Scholarship Program checking plus Market Advantage Savings account is \$36,573.48.

Annual Giving: Linda spoke about Annual Giving and how it can benefit area student recipients who receive the scholarships that our Branch offers to them. Eileen Browne spoke to why she donates and the benefit her donation offers to area students in need of assistance along with the good feeling she has because she has helped someone. She also shared that because she donated through a charitable trust, it isn't difficult to do. She explained that she told her finance person the amount of the donation she wanted to make, who it goes to, where it goes and her finance person takes care of making out the check and mailing it.

A brief discussion took place when a member asked why the ESP Scholarship money isn't sent to AAUW National. It was explained that at the September Branch meeting members were asked to donate for National AAUW. The amount collected was \$120. More money will be collected at future Branch meetings for National. ESP Scholarship money is designated for area students chosen by our local scholarship committee.

Both Linda Frigon and Margie Rice were recognized for the work they have done for our Branch. Linda for all she did to help our Branch become a 501c3 and her work on the history of the Branch and Margie for her work on Membership and the development of our Branch Booklet. Each were awarded with flowers and an abundance of applause.

Jeannette reminded us that the November 14th meeting is the White Elephant Auction.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectively Submitted,
MaryAnn Iadarola