

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

FEBRUARY 2025
Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

LCV FEBRUARY CALENDAR EVENTS
(Details inside/on LCV Website Calendar)

Monday, February 3
1:00pm-LCV and ESP Board Meetings

Wednesday, February 5
1:00pm – Afternoon Book Discussion

Saturday, February 8
12:00pm – Foodies-Galentines

Tuesday, February 11
12:30pm - Mahjong

Thursday, February 13
11:30am-Valentine’s Luncheon

Monday, February 17
3:00pm – Film Group-The Piano

Wednesday, February 19
3:00pm – Great Decisions

Thursday, February 20
12:30pm – Hiking Group

Tuesday, February 25
7:00pm – Evening Book Discussion

NO Cultural Arts

NO Crafting

LCV Valentine’s Luncheon
-and-
General Meeting

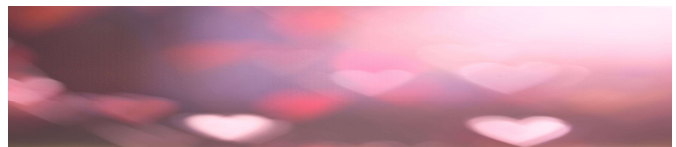
Thursday, February 13th
11:30am-2:30pm

Acton Public Library
Old Saybrook

11:30 am-Catered Lunch and soft drinks
provided

1:00 pm-Speaker: What’s happening with the
kids? ADHD & Anxiety: Definitions ...
Behaviors... How to respond effectively. Kim
Pereira, ADHD Coach

Wear Red!



AAUW LCV FACEBOOK PAGE

Please check out and join our AAUW Lower Connecticut Valley Branch Facebook page for event photos and more! Press Ctrl + Click on below LCV website link:<https://www.facebook.com/groups/460005185436947/>



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Members:

The January Tea was an enjoyable event to start 2025. Four of our six scholarship recipients were able to attend, it was wonderful meeting them. The Trivia competition was so much fun, with prizes for the winners. Many thanks to Penny Hein, Deb DeHertogh and Cheryl Barnum for running the Tea this year.

February will feature, our annual Valentine's Luncheon from 11:30 to 2:30 pm on Thursday, February 13, 2025, at the Acton Library. We will have lunch catered so just come and enjoy. Our speaker, Kim Pereira, will speak on ADHD and Anxiety in children.

April is our Book Author's Luncheon at Saybrook Point Inn with author Amy Bloom as guest speaker. Tickets are so easy to purchase via the website: <https://lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net/> We encourage everyone to attend.

Jeannette Santovasi, LCV President



MEMBERSHIP

We are now up to 113 members. Welcome to new member, Ioana Badara! Please add her information to your membership booklet:

Ioana Badara
95 Pinto Lane
Monroe, CT 06468
Jbadara@outlook.com

A reminder that our Book Author Luncheon on April 5th will be a "Shape the Future" event qualifying new members to 50% off National membership dues. New members do not need to attend the luncheon to receive this discount. To receive this 50% discount new members must pay by cash, check, or if at the luncheon by credit card. For more information contact: djherskowitz@gmail.com or margierice@comcast.net if you have a qualified friend or family member that would like to join.

Margie Rice and Deb Herskowitz,
Membership Co-chairs

LCV Website Updates

AAUW National's "upgrade" of all branch "look and feel" worked well. If you are on the new site and have difficulties navigating, **clear your browser cache**

- For Google Chrome – [Click here](#)
- For Iphone/Ipad – [Click here](#)
- For Mac Computer – [Click here](#);

Education and Scholarship Program
501(c) 3 section is updated with legally required tax and other filings and documents;

Position descriptions for the new Foodies and Film Interest Groups are posted with links in the "About Us" menu.

SCHOLARSHIP

We hope you enjoyed **meeting four of our Educational Grant recipients** at the **January tea and trivia meeting**. They are impressive women who have demonstrated admirable achievements in their studies and career goals.

The Scholarship Selection Committee is meeting to plan publicity for the **Educational Grant program**. We will begin **posting information** and the application in **late winter**. The **deadline** for Educational Grant applications is **June 9, 2025**. Eligible students must be 20 years old, reside in New London or Middlesex Counties, and be enrolled in an accredited two- or four-year college program.

We learned recently that the national AAUW has passed **the organization and presentation of the National Conference for Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) to NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (www.naspa.org)**. We have been in contact with NASPA with questions about the upcoming conference. We will continue to monitor information about the conference and decide if we want to sponsor students to attend this spring. **We expect to learn more about NCCWSL in February.**

If you know a local college student who might be interested in attending this conference, please let us know.

*---Sue Aberbach and Olga Saubermann,
Scholarship Committee Chairs*

2025 BOOK AUTHOR LUNCHEON

Registration and Ticketing: All LCV members and 2024 luncheon guests should have received an email with Book Author Luncheon information and links to our online ticketing system. If you did NOT receive the email and/or wish to have information sent to prospective guests, email Linda Frigon: lindafrigon51@gmail.com.

Online ticketing is up and running with great success! **We're half-sold out of tickets** and expect another sell-out! **Click here to purchase tickets!** **Margie Rice will support anyone who requests it.** Email: margierice@comcast.net.

Sponsorships are coming in including StoneRidge retirement community (Mystic), Goodspeed Musicals, Rehab Concepts (Old Saybrook), Norman Needleman and Jacqueline Hubbard, Reynolds Subaru and more...

Auction: Auction solicitors are having great success with exciting donations ... **including Seabird Cruise** picnic or sunset cruise for six, Kayak Rentals, **Valley Shore YMCA 1 year Family Membership**, Personal Tour of Wesleyan Natural History Museum, **Fenwick Golf...**

Help! Baskets Needed!

Baskets of all sizes are needed to package silent and chance auction items. Please contact Dede Volz if you have any, email: dedevolz@email.com or call (860) 798-1145.

---BAL Committee

ESP to Fund Full-Credit Trinity College Course at York Correctional Institute

The ESP Board has approved funding for sponsorship of a one-credit summer 2025 course at York Correctional Institution (YCI) to be delivered by faculty of Trinity College, Hartford.

Some of you may remember a presentation by **AAUW National Fellow Anna Terweil last April at the Joint Shoreline meeting.** Anna is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Co-Director of the Trinity Prison Education Program (TPEP) along with **Co-Director Joe Lea**, Visiting Lecturer in Human Rights. Trinity College has been offering courses at YCI for the past 12 years. Quinnipiac, Wesleyan, and Three Rivers also offer courses at YCI. Trinity also offers courses at the Hartford Jail to men and women.

ESP's contribution is \$10,000 which covers the compensation for the professor, the stipend for the monitor for Study Hall, and books and materials for the students. The TPEP/LCV collaboration is a one-time program without expectation or commitment to future possibilities.

The students are women incarcerated at YCI. There is always a wait list for the courses. Of the four or five course openings that occur each year, there are about twenty applications for the seats. When an opening occurs, the York staff clears students in terms of security and the Trinity faculty reviews the applications in order to select students. The enrollment is capped at 12. Some students have taken several courses over time as part of a cohort. Others leave when they are released. **Some continue their education at CT colleges to achieve a certificate or degree.** One student, **Marisol Garcia**, enrolled at Trinity and is currently in law school.

The courses emphasize writing and critical thinking. Two examples of courses taught by Trinity faculty are "Law, Gender, and Empire" and "Friends and Enemies."

Anna explains that the **goals** for the TPEP include (1) **reduce educational inequities** as very few of the students have a college degree; most incarcerated women are people of color and poor; (2) **support people during incarceration**; Joe says the courses offer hope for inmates and their families; the students can think of themselves as college students which gives them a new identity; (3) **the courses support successful re-entry**; research indicates a **43% reduction in re-incarceration and a 13% increase in employment** following release.

Judith Slisz, a member of the Scholarship/Education Grants committee, will serve as liaison to the TPEP/LCV collaboration. She will coordinate communications and program evaluation with Trinity and work with the ESP Board through program completion.

Among the **benefits of this TPEP/LCV collaboration** are the following:

- The infrastructure, process, facilities, tutoring staff and experience exist from 12 years of the Trinity-York program. LCV could not establish a program on its own.
- Relationships with York and the CT Dept of Corrections are well established.
- Trinity's vetting and review of applicants for admission and ongoing participation assures responsible use of funds with no additional overhead to be funded by ESP.

Upon receiving word from Judith of the approval of the funding, Joe said **"We mentioned to the students the possibility of a summer course and they were thrilled."**

---Judith Slisz, Program Liason

INTEREST GROUPS

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Date: **Wednesday, February 5**

Time: **1:00pm**

Location: **via Zoom**

Book: ***Breaking Through: My Life in Science* by Katalin Kariko**

The Afternoon Book Group met on **January 8th** to discuss ***The Lioness of Boston* by Emily Franklin**, a novel about the life of **Isabella Stewart Gardner**. **Sara Keaney** led our discussion which ranged from Gardner's life as she navigated as an outsider in proper Boston society to her eventual founding of the eponymous museum filled with the collection of the art and artifacts from her travels around the world.

We talked about many topics including her husband Jack's support of Isabella, and the **many people who surrounded her**, including **Harvard professor Charles Eliot Norton**, writer **Henry James**, and her art advisor and dealer **Bernard Berenson**. We compared notes about our visits to the Museum and its flower-filled atrium, **viewed the portraits of Isabella by John Singer Sargent and Anders Zorn**, and the **infamous still unsolved robbery of the Museum in 1990**. As we often do, we discussed the nature of **historical fiction**, especially since the **author invented a series of letters interwoven in the novel**. We have read many historical novels, some more satisfying than others, and it's interesting to talk about why this is so.

Many thanks to Sara for a fascinating discussion of a memorable book!

Upcoming meetings:

--At the **February 5th** meeting, we will talk about ***Breaking Through: My Life in Science* by Katalin Kariko**, a memoir by the **2023 winner of Nobel Prize in**

Physiology or Medicine whose research led to the **COVID vaccine**. **Judith Slisz** will lead the discussion.

--Our **March 5th** meeting will focus on ***The Demon of Unrest* by Erik Larson**, a non-fiction work about the early time of the Abraham Lincoln's presidency before the Civil War. **Mary Jane Peterson** will lead our discussion.

Email Sue at aberbach@aol.com to receive a Zoom invitation to the meetings. I hope you can join us soon!

---*Sue Aberbach and Elaine Quayle*,
Afternoon Book Group organizers

GREAT DECISIONS

Date: **Wednesday, February 19**

Time: **3:00pm - 5:00pm**

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

Leader: **Pat Prendergast**

Our **topic** for this month is “**AI and American National Security**” briefly described on the Foreign Policy Association website as:

The AI revolution is the leading edge of a larger high-tech revolution which promises to transform the world. Experts argue that international cooperation is needed to expand the opportunities these new technologies hold while protecting societies from their dangers. What are the key policy debates in this area, and what are the opportunities and limits on global AI rules of the road? How will the AI revolution impact American national security? What are its policy options to secure the benefits of AI and guard against its dangers?

For good and for bad, AI has become an enormous part of our lives. The NASDAQ

had a meltdown January 27 with the news that **Chinese startup DeepSeek** had caught up with American AI at a tiny fraction of the cost. **US chipmaker Nvidia alone lost \$600 billion in valuation** as DeepSeek called into question how the US is building out its AI at great expense, both monetarily and environmentally.

Pat is going to bring us up to speed on AI before diving into its **importance from a security standpoint**. Please join us to learn more about AI and why we should be watching its advancements very carefully.

---Karen Christman, Great Decisions Chair

CULTURAL ARTS

No events planned for February.

May 2025 New York City Trip-Update

There has been a request to bring back a very well received trip to NYC which includes a **Morgan Library and Grand Central Station Tour**. We are awaiting confirmation from the Morgan Library for a definitive date (**May 1st or May 6th**). There is a maximum of 20 attendees allowed. There are currently seventeen (17) individuals who have committed to the trip. It will be the first to sign up with a waiting list if those interested go beyond twenty. Once our date is confirmed I will send out a registration and payment form via our new ticketing platform (Ticket Tailor).

Schedule

9:00 - 9:30 am. Train from New Haven to Grand Central Station.

Lunch (11:30 to 1:00pm). Multiple options available.

It is a 10-minute walk from Grand Central to Morgan Library.

1:30 - 2:30 pm - Morgan Library highlights tour.

3:00 - 4:30 pm - Grand Central Terminal Official Tour | Walks Tours takewalks.com

4:30 - 5:00 pm - Return Train - Grand Central to New Haven arriving in New Haven around 7pm. Take a later train if you wish.

Costs

Round trip train New Haven to NYC (Grand Central Station) \$36.75 (Peak and Senior)

Morgan Library Tour \$23 adults and \$15 seniors

Grand Central Station tour \$36

If you are interested in doing this trip, please email Linda Frigon at lindafrigon51@gmail.com.

---Pat Prendergast and Liz Weinstein, Co-Chairs



HIKING GROUP

Date: Thursday, February 20

Time: 12:30pm

Location: Canfield/Meadow Woods, Deep River/Essex

Our February hike will be on Thursday, February 20th at 12:30 at Canfield/Meadow Woods in Deep River/Essex. An email will go out to all in the hiking group with details.

Mark your calendar for our future hikes, all on Thursdays: February 20; March 20; April 24; May 15; June 5.



January Hike at The Preserve in Old Saybrook

Please email margierice@comcast.net to be added the Hiking Group list.
---Margie Rice & Kathy Heebner, Co-Chairs

MAHJONG

Date: **Tuesday, February 11**
Time: **12:30 p.m.**
Place: **Home of Carole Otto, 116 Meadow Woods Rd. Deep River**

Our next AAUW Mahjong gathering will be on **Tuesday, February 11** at 12:30.
Where? Carole Otto's home, 116 Meadow Woods Rd, Deep River.

Please let me know if you plan to come or not. Email ottocarole@gmail.com or call if you have any questions.

---Carole Otto, Mahjong Chair

FILM GROUP

The Piano Lesson
Date: **Monday, February 17**
Time: **3:00 – 5:30pm**
Location: **Home of Gloria Gery**
The Piano Lesson viewing has been moved from Garde Theater to **Gloria Gery's house**. If more than 5 viewers want to join Gloria, we will seek a second hostess to accommodate. The date has been changed

to Monday February 17 at 3:00 pm. Please let Gloria know, gloriagery@gmail.com, if you would like to attend.

The Film Group has also started some **pop-up events**. We will try to find local matinees of OSCAR nominated films and inform the Film Group members of the location, date and time. **No RSVPs needed**. Just appear at the selected theatre a few minutes before the showing. We will handle discussion informally depending on the size of our group and viewers' desires. The **first two events** were "**The Room Next Door**" and "**The Brutalist**". Both were at the **Madison Cinema** which has really **comfortable seating and welcoming staff**.

Please contact Eileen Browne, browne.eileen@gmail.com, if you are interested in becoming a member of the Film Group.

---Eileen Browne, Film Group Chair

EVENING BOOK GROUP

Date: **Tuesday, February 25**
Time: **7:00pm**
Location: **Via Zoom**
Book: ***The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride**

The February meeting of The Evening Book Group will be on Zoom at 7 pm on Tuesday, February 25. We will be discussing ***The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride**. **Pat Prendergast** will lead the discussion. Members will receive a **Zoom invitation** several days before the meeting. If you are not an official member of the group but wish to participate, please email Mary Jane Peterson at mjpostct@comcast.net to receive a Zoom invitation.

---Mary Jane Peterson, Evening Book Group Chair

FOODIES

Galentine's Tea

Date: **Saturday, February 8, 2025**

Time: **12 noon – 1:30 p.m.**

Place: **Old Lyme Inn, 85 Lyme Street, Old Lyme**

Cost: **\$45 per person plus tax and gratuity to be paid that day.**

Join us for a sampling of delicious tea sandwiches, petite sweet treats and enjoy Harney & Sons Fine Teas. We've reserved a table for 12 and recommend that you sign up soon.

Note: Please email Carole Otto at ottocarole@gmail.com and Gail Briggs at gail.briggs1@comcast.net to register.

UPCOMING FOODIES EVENT

Wine—Women—Wednesdays—Gris Wine Bar Gathering

Date: **Wednesday, March 26, 2025**

Time: **5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

Place: **The Griswold Inn, 36 Main Street, Essex**

Cost: **No advance fee—just plan to pay your own check that night.**

Join us for a festive evening of well-curated wines by the glass, half-price for women (on Wednesdays), plus a mix of appetizers, small-large plates and desserts.

Note: Please email Carole Otto at ottocarole@gmail.com and Gail Briggs at gail.briggs1@comcast.net to let us know you're coming.

CRAFTING GOUP

No events planned for February.

In **January** we participated in an **Introduction to Pottery** at the **Earth and Fire Art Studio in Old Saybrook** led by **Julie** the owner.



Seven of us participated, starting with **getting our tools and choosing a wheel** to sit in front of. Next, we were given our clay which we used our palms to round out like a snowball. Then, we were off learning techniques to bring the shape up and then back down until **we finished with bowls in various shapes**. We each had the opportunity to paint glaze on a finished item and keep what we made on the wheel for an extra charge. Six out of the seven of us are **having them fired and will glaze after that is done**. Everyone had a great time and we **would recommend this fun to anyone**, since we were all newbies.



In **March**, there will be a **basket class** which **Kathy will teach**. We will let you know the date and time.

---Kathy Heebner, Crafting Group Leader