

**Lower Connecticut Valley AAUW  
Branch Meeting  
December 11, 2025**

Members Present: There were approximately 35-40 members present at the meeting held at the Old Saybrook Pavilion.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by President Jeannette Santovasi.

Jeanette welcomed everyone and had Catherine Branch introduce our evening speaker, Rick Friswell, from Wesleyan University. Rick's topic was on "The Origins of Democracy-The Spark of Liberty."

Rick's presentation started in the early 1600's with lessons from Charles the 1<sup>st</sup> of England who challenged the idea of a king and the power of the church, through the French and Indian Wars, and up to the 1776. Rick shared ideas from several of the enlightened thinkers, such as, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Wollstonecraft, whose philosophy influenced the writers of Declaration of Independence and eventually our Constitution. Concepts such as "consent of the governed, the three branches of government, freedom of speech and religion, human rights, independence from British rule, and women deserve the same rights as men," came from many of these enlightened thinkers. These concepts found their way into our Constitution and Bill of Rights.

As a sidenote, Rick shared that Paul Revere did not say 'The British are coming!' on his midnight ride because everyone was British. He said, "The Regulars are Coming!"

To conclude, copies of the Declaration were passed out to a few members who read meaningful portions of it. An interesting and meaningful evening was had by all!

**Business Meeting**

After a break for refreshments, Jeannette called the meeting back to order.

**Treasurer Report:** Barb Dimburg gave the LCV treasurer report for November:

Checking Balance: \$4,411.37

Money Market Balance: \$19,186.28

\$580-Amount collected from the November Raffle and donated to AAUW National Public Policy

**Scholarship:**

Olga Saubermann reported that the Scholarship recipients have been invited to the January 10<sup>th</sup> tea.

**Interest Groups:**

Each interest group shared what their focus is and when and where they meet.

**January 10<sup>th</sup> Tea:**

Deb DeHertogh and her assistants will run the raffle.

**Web Site Coordinator NEEDED**

Jannette is asking for a member to volunteer for this position. All that is needed to do is to collect information that interest group leaders send to you. Then you would email the information to AAUW National who would post it our website. If we don't get a volunteer to do this, information on the calendar and other information will not be available for members to access.

**Next Branch Meeting:** January 10, 2026- January Tea

Jeannette wished everyone a Happy Holiday and New Year! The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectively Submitted,

MaryAnn Iadarola