

April 2026



The Y's Women Newsletter

GENERAL MEETINGS

Open to members and their guests

Place: Green's Farms Church, 71 Hillendale Road, Westport
10:45 am Coffee and Conversation
11:20 am Announcements
11:30 am Speaker

NOTE: Extra parking is available in front of the large lot on the grass and across the street in front of the Minister's house.

April 13 – Bill Harmer, a Library Visionary



[We scheduled Bill Harmer to speak to Y's Women in both January and February – on the two days that turned out to have the largest blizzards of this rough winter. Let's hope this third time is a charm!]

Bill Harmer, Executive Director of the Westport Library, stands out as a dynamic advocate for public libraries, asserting their crucial role in today's society. With more than 20 years in the field, he has redefined library management, fundraising, strategic planning, programming, and community development.

Bill came to Westport in 2015 from Michigan, where he was Executive Director of the Chelsea District Library. He has made a significant impact at the Westport Library ever since, elevating it to national recognition for innovation and community engagement. His strategic leadership resulted in a remarkable 50% increase in fundraising revenues and the successful management of a major \$21.5 million renovation, revitalizing the library into a modern, multifunctional space. His efforts boosted attendance by 30% and program participation by 40%, earning Westport a prestigious 5-star rating and placing it among the top 1.6% of US libraries.

A visionary in incorporating cutting-edge technology and digital resources, Bill was selected by the Bill and

Melinda Gates Foundation as one of 120 global library leaders. His visionary approach and his unwavering commitment have significantly transformed libraries into dynamic, essential centers for learning, culture, and community engagement in the 21st century.

In this presentation, Bill will be speaking about the Common Ground Initiative and some other upcoming highlights that the library has in store.

April 27 – George R. Kalan, 'A Successful Failure: The Rescue of Apollo 13'

George Kalan began his career as an aerospace engineer with the Charles Stark Draper Laboratory (formerly MIT Instrumentation Laboratory). After an initial assignment redesigning the backup attitude-control system that was eventually used in the rescue of Apollo 13, he served as Lead Engineer responsible for software development, testing, mission support, and astronaut training activities for Apollo 12 through Apollo 15. During the Apollo 13 rescue mission, he coordinated all autopilot-related activities with MIT from a control room at the Houston Manned Spacecraft Center, as a member of the team that later received the Presidential Medal of Freedom for the rescue operation. After Apollo, he managed a joint MIT/FIAT project in Torino, Italy until leaving the Laboratory to pursue an MBA.



George subsequently served as an international management consultant, first with Booz-Allen & Hamilton and then as founder and president of Kalan-Sutton-McGraw, a management consulting organization specializing in growth and diversification strategies for technology-driven Fortune 500 companies. He later co-founded and served as Managing General Partner of Orien Ventures, a unique venture capital partnership with Mitsui & Co. that managed two

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George R. Kalan*(continued from page one)*

early-stage high-tech venture capital funds and pioneered the concept of strategic corporate partnering between small US ventures and large Japanese companies. He also founded and co-sponsored the Indonesia Growth Fund, one of the first venture capital funds in Southeast Asia.

Currently semi-retired, George is a mentor in the Fairfield University Startup Program, an advisor and mentor to the Lantern Point Labs venture accelerator, a member of The Explorer's Club, and Chairman of the Y's Men Ancient Mariners sailing and boating group. He has a BS degree in Electrical Engineering from Case Institute of Technology, an MS from The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and an MBA from The Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration.



The **Jewels of Westport** will be visiting MoCA on Friday, April 24 at 2:30 pm. Join us for a personal tour by Ive Covaci of the Westport Art Collection, Curator of the Art, Jazz & the Blues exhibit. The cost is \$8. Please contact Jilda Manikas at jildam00@yahoo.com if you're interested.

INTEREST GROUPS**(Y's Women Members only)**

NOTE: All Y's Women who participate in meetings held at the Westport Center for Senior Activities must be registered with the Center and check in before each meeting.

Book Group 2 will meet at the Westport Center for Senior Activities on Thursday, April 9 from 1:15 - 2:45 pm. We will be discussing *Miss Morgan's Book Brigade* by Janet Charles. Please contact Nancy Bloom at nancyerb@aol.com if you have questions.

Book Group 3 will meet on Friday, April 10 at 10:30 am at the Westport Center for Senior Activities to discuss *The Blind Assassin* by Margaret Atwood. Marie Coppola will lead the discussion. For more information, please contact Doris Levinson at drjlevinson@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE**Spring Picnic and Annual Meeting**

Wednesday, June 3, 12:30 pm

Boathouse Restaurant
Saugatuck Rowing Club

More information to come in the May newsletter.

The Movie Club will meet on Wednesday, April 15 at the Westport Center for Senior Activities. We meet informally at 2:00 pm to give members a chance to socialize, and our discussion begins at 2:30. Our room often changes, so be sure to ask the front desk about our location. We are limited to 25 attendees, so please confirm your attendance with Margaret Mitchell by April 12.

We will discuss the movies *Train Dreams* and *Lilly*. Both movies are available on Netflix.

Train Dreams (2025) is a quiet, poignant Netflix film adaptation of Denis Johnson's novella, chronicling the life of Robert Grainier (Joel Edgerton), a stoic early-20th-century railroad laborer and logger. After a devastating wildfire destroys his home and family, Grainier traverses decades of profound grief and loneliness, witnessing a rapidly modernizing American West.

Lilly (2024) is a dramatic film based on the true story of Lilly Ledbetter, an Alabama tire factory supervisor who battles gender discrimination and unequal pay. After discovering she is paid half as much as male colleagues, she challenges the company, taking her fight to the Supreme Court and eventually sparking the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

If you wish to be added to the email list for future events, please contact Margaret Mitchell at 255-9094 or margaret06824@yahoo.com.



Lunch & Trivia meets every month at the VFW Hall.

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Lunch and Trivia will meet at noon on Thursday, April 16 at the VFW Hall. The cost is \$25 (cash only). If you wish to attend, contact Vicki Alli at victoria.alli@gmail.com or Pat Winter at 303-324-5805.

NewsTalk: Interested in national and world affairs? Join other Y's Women for lively and informative discussions at NewsTalk. We meet the fourth Thursday of each month. Our next meeting is scheduled for April 23 from 10 - 11:30 am at the Westport Library, McCall Room. For information, contact Becky Ruthven at bruthven06880@gmail.com.

Solos will be going to **Via Sforza**, 243 Post Road West, Westport for lunch on Thursday, April 23 at 12:30 pm. Parking is in back of the building, and there are two handicap spaces in front. We will be able to order off the menu and have separate checks. For reservations, please contact Terry Queirolo at 858-1470 or tmq44@icloud.com by Sunday, April 19.

The **Mah Jong** group will meet each Thursday in April at 1:00 pm at the Westport Center for Senior Activities. This game is for Mah Jong "mavens" who are experienced players. For information, contact Mona Unser at mona.unser@gmail.com.

The New Yorker Discussion Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 10:30 am until noon in the Westport Library, Room 213. Each participant chooses an article from one of the previous month's issues and leads a short discussion about it. Participants who are not able to meet personally can participate on Zoom. If you are interested, please contact Ellen Cahill at ellenjcahill@hotmail.com or 856-6561 for details.

Scrabble meets every Tuesday at 10:30 am at 214 Lansdowne in Westport. Please contact Pennie More at pcm2@gmail.com to reserve a seat at the table.

IN MEMORIAM: GLORIA STASHOWER

We are sad to report that Gloria Stashower passed away peacefully on March 2, surrounded by her family. She was 96. Gloria was very active in forming Y's Women some 30 years ago, and she served as one of our earliest presidents.

CARPOOL & GO!

On Thursday, April 30, Carpool & Go will travel to Farmington, CT to visit the **Hill-Stead Museum**. A Historic Landmark Colonial Revival Mansion, Hill-Stead features Arts & Crafts Barns and graceful "English Landscape" grounds, including a sunken garden designed by B. Farrand in 1920. The Museum houses important Impressionist paintings and prints by Monet, Degas, Manet, Cassatt, Whistler, and others as well as ceramics, furniture, books, photos, and documents. Collected by Alfred and Ada Pope and their daughter and son-in-law, Theodate Pope Riddle and John Riddle, the collection also features a large number of pieces from Japan, showing the influence of Japanese art and craft on the Impressionists. A special exhibit, **The Great Wave: Japonisme at Hill-Stead**, illustrates this connection. We will have a docent-guided tour of the house (museum), the grounds (without buildings), and the sunken garden starting at 11:00 am, after which we will lunch at **Woodntap**, 1593 Farmington Avenue (860-773-6736), which features a view of the Farmington River.

We will meet at Trader Joe's / Wells Fargo parking lot at 9:00 am for a 9:15 departure. Please contact Lydia Menendez at lydiamnndz12@gmail.com or 319-1110 to reserve your spot, and send her a \$20 check (docent fee), made out to Lydia, to 388 Oldfield Road, Fairfield, CT 06824. The gas reimbursement for drivers is \$8 in cash. Also, please indicate if you are willing to drive – drivers are always needed and appreciated!



Donations to Mercy Learning Center

Please bring donations of nonperishable food, diapers, and female daily necessities to the first Y's Women meeting each month. They can be left at the back entrance of the Green's Farms Church prior to the meeting. Thank you for whatever you can do.