

**T**oday eleven of us met to reflect on our memories of the Vietnam War (1965-1973) and enjoy Ann's delicious fresh lunch of gazpacho and chicken salad served on croissants with champagne and cupcakes for dessert. In remembrance of the Vietnam POW and MIA's Ann displayed a black and white commemorative flag and our table was adorned with yellow roses tied with yellow ribbons. I'm sure we all remember the classic "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree" from that era.

Ann began by telling us how she selected this book. She was having dinner with her niece in Texas and some of her friends. They began talking about books and her niece told her friend Paige, to tell them about the book her mother was in. Her mother turned out to be Andrea Ranger, one of the most active members of The League of Wives. Ann was intrigued and listened to the audio version of the book by Heath Hardage Lee. *The League of Wives* is a fascinating story about the POW-MIA advocacy group begun by Sybil Stockdale, and a few other women including Jane Denton, Louise Mulligan, Phyllis Galanti, and Andrea Ranger whose husbands had been taken prisoners during the Vietnam War.

After four years of research drawing from personal interviews, diaries, letters, oral histories, and other archival records, Lee tells the story of The League of Women who banded together from all across the US to bring their husbands home and to improve the horrific conditions these prisoners were enduring in Vietnam. Sybil Stockdale was the wife of the highest ranking Navy officer and was instrumental in organizing the women to advocate for their loved ones with US government officials through countless meetings, letters, and phone calls.

All of our members had various memories from the Vietnam War and several had personal connections through family members or friends who served in the war or who were mentioned in the book. We were extremely impressed by the courage the women showed sending coded messages in their letters to their husbands and by the Morse Code one prisoner used during a television interview by blinking his eyes to relay the horrid conditions and means of torture the men were enduring.

Lee also covered the celebrations and reunions the prisoners had with their families upon their return to the United States. There are still approximately 1,500 MIAs from the Vietnam War and the Defense POW-MIA Accounting Agency continues to search for and recover the remains of these individuals.

Mickie brought our attention to several happenings, weekly and monthly events at the Summit County Senior and Community Center. Check their website at [www.summit50plus.org](http://www.summit50plus.org) for more information.

## **Upcoming**

- May 9- Lunch at Panera Bread in Dillon
- June 13- Donna hosts to discuss *All the Colors of the Dark* by Chris Whitaker
- July 11- Maggie hosts to discuss *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon
- August- Barb hosts TBA
- September 12- Nina hosts to discuss *Sylvia's Second Act* by Hillary Yablon

## **Recommended Books**

- *The Second Life of Mirielle West* by Amanda Skenandore
- *The Other Einstein* by Marie Benedict

Congratulations, Laura! You were unanimously voted to be our new secretary! We know you'll do a fabulous job! We are hoping that Mickie's granddaughter Abigail will take over our website!

Happy Spring and Happy Easter!

*Elaine*