



May Branch Meeting, Members only
A New Park for Westmoreland County

Betsy Aiken, BA, MBA

Thursday, May 13, 2021 10:30 AM

Outdoors at Veterans Field, Sardis Road, Murrysville, PA

(Just north of the library by the Murrysville Public Works)

Betsy Aiken, Executive Director of the Westmoreland Land Trust (WLT), will speak about the WLT's recent acquisition of land known as the "Schwarz Farm," situated just north of Greensburg. The exceptionally scenic 96-acre farm, located at 504 Beech Hills Road, was purchased by the Westmoreland Land Trust with the help of funding from the Colcom Foundation and the Allegheny Foundation. It will be conserved as a nature and art park with meadows to provide habitat for pollinator and upland meadow bird species.

The future park will incorporate outdoor works of art and can become a valued and important destination for visitors as well as a catalyst for related cultural and economic development. This summer, the WLT will engage a consultant to coordinate planning that will include consideration of the natural and cultural qualities of the property, resources and constraints, and how the future park can best serve the needs of nearby communities and the region.

See the article on page 3, "Naming Westmoreland County's Newest Park." It explains how you can submit suggestions for a "banner" name.

Reminders: Please wear a mask, bring a cushion or chair, and continue to be mindful of social distancing. The meeting starts at 10:30 AM.

Enjoy demonstrations on growing sprouts and micro-greens.

Enter your name for a seasonal DOOR PRIZE!

Please join us!

Contents

Branch Meeting	p. 1
President's Letter	p. 2
Dues Are Due	p. 2
Election Info	p. 3
Park Naming	p. 3
Member Profile	pp. 4,5

Board Meeting

Thursday, May 6

9:30 AM

Online Meeting

President's Letter

The trees have turned green, the weather is warmer, and many of us are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Please join us for an outdoor Branch meeting at Veterans Field pavilion in May. Please wear a mask and continue to be mindful of social distancing. Bring your own chair, or a cushion if you want to sit at one of the picnic tables under the pavilion. Planning for a beautiful day, the meeting will start one hour later than usual at 10:30 AM, hoping that the outdoor temperature will be comfortable. Following a brief business meeting, and an interesting program with Branch member Betsy Aiken, we can stay, socialize, and catch up with friends.

Don't forget your \$85 check for dues made out to AAUW, and a check for \$32 if you wish to purchase the book for the Great Decisions discussions.

Starting in September, look forward to our meetings in the Murrysville Community Center, where the larger room will allow more social distancing.

Thank you for voting to confirm our nominees for Branch officers who will be installed at the May meeting. We are fortunate in that those newly re-elected officers made significant contributions to the board during the last two years.

Branch Officers for 2021-2022

President	Janet Sutton
Vice-President, Programs	Diane Conway
Vice-President, Membership	Laura Livingston
Secretary	Diane Kaufmann
Finance Officer	Carol Gezon

Janet Sutton and Sassy
President Assistant to the President



Dues Are Due in May (But you could mail that check today)

This year dues are continuing to be \$85 for members and \$25 for affiliates, and since we are planning to meet in person in May you will be able to pay me at the meeting or mail your check by June 1.



AAUW operates on a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30, and we have to provide payment for the coming year. The \$85 breaks down to \$62 for AAUW National dues, \$10 for the State Association, and \$13 for our branch operating budget. And remember \$59 of the National dues is tax deductible because AAUW is a 501(c)3.

Checks should be made out to AAUW and either mailed or handed to Carol Gezon on or before June 1, 2020.

Please also include any changes in address, phone number or email, so that the branch directory may be updated.

If you have questions contact Carol or Laura Livingston

Laura Livingston, Membership
Carol Gezon, Finance



Wake Robin and Trillium
'Duff Park is blooming'

Naming Westmoreland County's Newest Park



The Westmoreland Land Trust (WLT) invites suggestions for a short (one or two word) banner name for the Carl A. Schwarz Memorial Park, reflecting the future nature/art park's beauty, conservation value, or Westmoreland County heritage. Please send your suggestions to: westmorelandlandtrust@gmail.com or

Westmoreland Land Trust
218 Donohoe Road
Greensburg, PA 15601

For some time the property will only be open to the public during Visitors Days, to be announced on the WLT's website and Facebook page. Please call or email Betsy Aiken at 724-325-3031 or westmorelandlandtrust@gmail.com if you would like more information about this project, or would like to be placed on a mailing list for the park.

Betsy Aiken
Photo courtesy of Dick Byers



Election Information

This year, the Municipal Primary Election will take place on Tuesday, May 18. Important dates to be aware of include:

Monday, May 3: The last day to register or change registration to vote

Tuesday, May 11: The last day to request an absentee or mail-in ballot

If desired, you can quickly change your voter registration online to reflect a change of party or residence at the election website: votesPa.com. This website also provides the capability of requesting a mail-in ballot.

This year, our Branch has decided not to hold a Candidates Night prior to the municipal election. The offices that will be on the local ballot are: Mayor, Council and School Directors.

In State-wide races, we will be electing: Justices of the Supreme Court, Superior Court and Commonwealth Court. There are four ballot questions to be voted on separately:

1) Statewide referendum--Act 2020-91:
Making fire and emergency medical services companies eligible for loans

Joint Resolution No. 2021-1:

2) Proposed Constitutional amendment:
Article III, Section 9: Relating to termination or extension of disaster emergency.

3) Proposed Constitutional amendment
Article IV: Disaster emergency declaration and management.

4) Proposed Constitutional amendment
Article I: Prohibition against denial or abridgement of rights because of race or ethnicity.

You may access information about the candidates running for State offices as well as non-partisan explanations of the ballot questions by going to vote411.org.

Susan Greenberg
Public Policy chair

Member Profile Diane Kaufmann

I met Diane Kaufmann for coffee so I could learn more about her for her profile. Diane, like many of you, said that there would not be much for me to write about but that was not the case at all.

AAUW Member and Common Interest:

Diane joined the Murrysville Branch of AAUW in 1978 but left when she moved with her husband to Brussels, Belgium in 1981. She rejoined after she retired in 2016 because she really liked the programs and the continuing education opportunities. Diane is currently the secretary for our Branch. She enjoys the meetings and socializing with the members.

She has a lot in common with the previous four members I have interviewed. She learned French as a “survival language” in Belgium (becoming more fluent in dealing with plumbers and the children’s emergency room staff than in gracious conversation). Addicted to Jane Austen and the poetry of T.S. Eliot, Diane loves to read, particularly historical fiction, and is currently reading *The Rise to Rebellion* by Jeff Shaara. She loves music and is helping to bring professional musical performances to the community through the Pittsburgh Symphony East, where she serves as Vice President. She loves to travel, especially to visit her grandchildren and is eager to do more now that Covid restrictions are easing. Besides watercolor painting, she does paper crafting, making beautiful cards and invitations, which she considers her “art therapy.”

Tell me about your life:

Diane was born in Frederick, Maryland. She had a wonderful childhood until her eighth grade year when tragedy struck and she lost her father. Then her mother died shortly after. Diane, who was then 13, and her two younger sisters, ages 6 and 7, were raised by their grandparents in rural Maryland. Many people would be bitter about this loss, but Diane was grateful for her grandparents.

Diane was a good student and worked for the Frederick Newspaper during high school. She really enjoyed this because she got to spend time in downtown Frederick. (She is the perfect secretary for us because she loves capturing information.)

Upon graduation from high school, Diane went to Lindenwood University in St Charles, MO which she attended on a scholarship for children of teachers. She double majored in English Literature and Philosophy and finished her degree in three years. Directly after college, Diane went to Goucher College in Baltimore, MD where she earned a Master of Arts in Teaching.

Diane next joined her husband John in Boston where he was attending MIT for electrical engineering.

Diane had met John in high school and they married in Emmitsburg, MD at the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at 7:00 AM as the sun rose over the mountains. Their application to be married in the Grotto was initially turned down, but six months later they received the Bishop’s approval because his nephew also wanted to have his wedding there.

They spent two years in Boston and then moved to Western PA when her husband took a job with Westinghouse at the Energy Center in Monroeville in nuclear instrumentation. Diane got a job teaching second grade at Mother of Sorrows in Murrysville.

John’s job took them to Brussels, Belgium twice. They were originally there for two years and lived in the center of things, within walking distance of the historic Grand Place. Diane got a job teaching kindergarten at the St. John International School but learned that she preferred the older students with longer attention spans. She loved living in Europe and had the opportunity to travel every weekend. By the time they returned to

Murrysville, John lamented that he had visited every Gothic cathedral on the continent.

The second time they lived in Belgium, their daughter Katie, age 4½ years old, welcomed a baby sister, Kathy. They stayed in Europe for four years and lived in Waterloo, on the edge of the great battlefield, where they could see the famous Lion's Mound memorial from their bedroom window.

Her two daughters and three grandchildren are so special to Diane. She lights up when she speaks about them. Katie is a partner in a law firm in Houston and has three children. Diane shares that Katie went to Stanford University by a very interesting change in career plans, from performance cello to law. Her younger daughter, Kathy, lives in La Jolla, CA. Kathy organizes high end African Safaris and recently returned from gorilla trekking in Uganda and Tanzania with her husband.

Both daughters had lovely destination weddings, but I will let her share those stories with you.



Diane with her two daughters at Kathy's wedding in Spain

Diane has had a wonderful career in education. When they came back to Murrysville in 1989, Diane worked with Franklin Regional's Gifted program for 10 years, including writing the curriculum. Franklin Regional was looking for a technical training specialist to implement the new computer technology program for kindergarten to fifth grade. She was initially told she would not get the position, lacking any formal computer training, but was still given a chance to take the test to be considered for the role. To her surprise, she got a call several days before school started telling her that she had scored the highest on the test and the job was hers. She loved the position with its constant challenges and opportunities to learn new skills. Diane retired from teaching in 2016.

Legacy and Conclusion:

Last, I asked Diane what advice or direction she would give someone, and she said that we need to be grateful. Diane realizes how blessed she is. She is always giving back and helping out. After our meeting, she was going to fill 500 plastic Easter eggs for a Children's Easter Egg Hunt at St Alban's Episcopal Church. Diane is a "good egg", no pun intended.

Laura Livingston

The FOCUS is published monthly, except in July and August, by the Murrysville Area Branch of the American Association of University Women. President: Janet Sutton, Editor: Donna Beard, Email: MurrysvilleAAUW@gmail.com. The American Association of University Women, founded in 1881, is open to all graduates who hold an associate degree or equivalent, or baccalaureate or higher degree from a college or university or academically accredited institution. In principle and practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class. Membership is not by invitation. AAUW advances equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education and research. The Murrysville Area AAUW has an affiliate membership available to anyone who does not hold an associate or baccalaureate degree.