



January Branch Meeting

The 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Western PA

Thomas Soltis, PhD -- WCCC

Thursday, January 13, 2021 10:00 AM

Murrysville Community Library Tech Nook

4130 Sardis Road

We, each, individually, and the world at large has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, just as our forefathers and the world at large was affected by the pandemic of 1918. Thomas Soltis, PhD, will share his extensive knowledge of the 1918 pandemic with us as we languish in the shadow of the present pandemic.

Dr. Thomas Soltis has been employed by Westmoreland County Community College since 1990. He teaches courses in Sociology and Anthropology. He won the Westmoreland County Community College "Outstanding Teacher Award" in 2001 and again in 2016.

Through Westmoreland County Community College, and in cooperation with local Community Partners, Dr. Soltis designed a series of events commemorating the impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Westmoreland County and surrounding areas. Over the past four years, Tom has presented this topic to numerous schools, social clubs, community groups, libraries, historical societies and civic groups.

The 1918 Influenza Pandemic affected the entire world. While the true number of deaths is unknowable, the most commonly accepted estimates range between 20-40 million victims. This presentation will summarize the arrival, spread, and impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Western Pennsylvania. By the autumn of 1918 the disease arrived in Pennsylvania with a vengeance. There were over 500,000 Pennsylvanians infected by the disease and over 50,000 deaths in Pennsylvania alone. Part of this presentation will look at the lessons from the 1918 Influenza Pandemic and how those can be applied to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr. Soltis' book, *An Unwelcome Visit From the Spanish Lady: The 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Western Pennsylvania* was published in 2019.

Please join us for this topical presentation at the Murrysville Community Library at 10:00 AM, and don't forget to wear a mask!

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Snow Policy

If FR Schools are cancelled, AAUW meetings are cancelled.
If FR Schools are delayed, AAUW meetings will be held as scheduled.

President's Letter

Thanks go out to our December speaker, AAUW member Arden Hamer, who had a rapt audience as she stressed the importance of reading to young children, and for adults to continue reading, whether for learning new things, or for entertainment, the pure joy of reading. Our Reading for Pleasure group has been meeting for fifty years, since the Murrysville Area Branch was chartered. Your reminiscences about the group would be a welcome addition to the Focus as we continue to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Branch.



Janet with Her Dad

Thanks to members' generous donations, Diane Kaufmann collected over 40 books at our December meeting that school counselors will give to children in kindergarten through second grade at Franklin-Regional's Primary School who lack reading material at home.

Substantial changes were made to our Directory by editor Diane Kaufmann, when she learned that capitalization in email addresses could interfere with delivery. Thanks, Diane, for ensuring that our emails reach all our members. Upcoming programs were also updated.

In a new initiative to increase Branch membership, contact Membership VP Laura Livingston to be part of her recruitment team.

Led by Membership VP Laura Livingston, the Board worked to develop a mission statement explaining who we are and what we do. AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. The Murrysville Area Branch, in partnership with Murrysville Community Library, provides social and educational opportunities for its members and the local community. This mission is accomplished through meetings with innovative programs, tours, small group activities, and special events, all directed toward

enhancing life-long learning in a welcoming environment.

Continuing our mission in 2022, Murrysville Area AAUW plans to meet in person, with a variety of speakers Program VP Diane Conway has already engaged. We also welcome program suggestions from our members.

Stay safe and warm as we welcome the New Year!

Janet Sutton

Reading for Pleasure

Thanks to all of you who participate in our group. Following is the schedule and list of books for the rest of the season. All meetings will be at the library at 10:00 AM.

January 27

The Paris Library by Janet Charles
Reviewer: Betty Hollingsworth



February 24

Dirt by Bill Buford
Reviewer: Annie Rivers

March 24

Sooley by John Grisham
Reviewer: Sally Haleen

April 28

Crossings by Alex Landragin
Reviewer: Carol Gezon

May 26

Book selection luncheon

Merry Christmas!

Bethia Schulz

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Many Thanks!

Diane Kaufmann notes that forty-seven books were donated to the Franklin Regional Primary School to help provide reading materials for children who do not have books in their homes. Thanks to everyone for the generous donations!

Great Decisions

The books for 2022 have been ordered and will be available for \$32 each. The topics for 2022 are:

- Outer Space
- Climate Change
- Russia and the U.S.
- Myanmar and Asean
- Quad Alliance
- Drug Policy in Latin America
- Industrial Policy
- Biden's Agenda


The start date for the 2022 sessions will be decided at a future Board meeting.

Barb Glozik

Drop-Off Book Event

I thank everyone who was involved whether it was in volunteering, donating, or participating in any way. For our first attempt at such an event, we did very well – \$631.50 as of our Branch Meeting on December 9th. On the day of the event, November 13th, in a four hour period: 135 boxes and 31 bags of books, CD's, DVD's, games, and a few puzzles were collected. Twelve volunteers took a carload each of the above items to Half Price Books and redeemed over \$600 dollars. Individual members also took their own books and donated to the event. Thank you!!

Annie S. Rivers
Book Sale Chair

January 2022			
1	Sat.		
6	Thurs.	9:45 AM	Board Meeting - MCL Meeting Room [†] Board members please let Janet know if unable to attend.
13	Thurs.	10:00 AM	Branch Meeting - Murrysville Community Library Tech Nook
17	Mon.		Deadline to email Focus articles to Donna Beard
27	Thurs.	10:00 AM	Reading for Pleasure - MCL Meeting Room [†]

† The Murrysville Community Library (MCL) Meeting Room is located at the entrance to the Murrysville Community Library, 4130 Sardis Road.

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.