



September Branch Meeting Railroad Riot and Steel Strikes: The Labor Movement in Pittsburgh

Charles McColleston, PhD

Thursday, September 14, 2023

Meeting Starts 10:00 AM Member Social 11:30 AM

TechNook in Murrysville Community Library
4130 Sardis Road
Murrysville, PA

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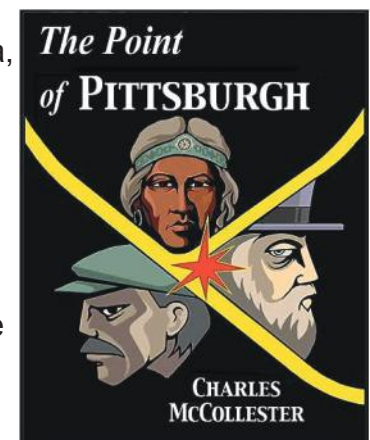
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Railroad Riots and Steel Strikes: the events that shaped Pittsburgh around the turn of the century are the underbelly of the Gilded Age of Pittsburgh. The 1877 Rail strike quickly turned violent and was the bloodiest event in Pittsburgh labor history. The steel strikes of 1892, 1919 and 1959 were consequential in the evolution of Pittsburgh industry and are essential to understanding the history of our region. Our speaker, Charles McColleston, renowned historian of these events, will enlighten us during his September 14 presentation.

The odyssey of Charles McColleston, a transformation from student in Rochester NY to a revered labor historian, is as compelling as that penned by Homer of Odysseus' journey home after the Trojan War.

Charlie was formally educated in the liberal arts, acquiring a PhD in Philosophy from Institute Superieur de Philosophie, Belgium, broadly educated by immersive travel throughout Europe, Africa, Middle East, Central America, and educated in practical matters while a civil rights activist, anti-war activist and as a labor worker and Union Steward with Union Switch and Signal in Swissvale, UE Local 610.

Join us to hear Charlie McColleston for an informative experience – an experience sure to bring our shared history to life.



President's Message



Saying thank you is usually an act associated with end-of-the-year recognition, yet I find myself anticipating a new year of AAUW activities with a heart full of gratitude!

I am grateful that our Branch works in close collaboration with the Murrysville Community Library to provide stimulating programs for everyone. Invited by the library staff to participate in the August Cookies and Community event, AAUW had the opportunity to present visitors with a close look at the activities we offer and to advertise our November Used Book Sale to children and their parents! We are grateful for this opportunity!

I also wish to extend words of gratitude to Diane Conway, Janet Sutton, and Andrea Cole who worked diligently over the summer to secure wonderful speakers for the coming year. From labor upheaval, mob violence, Vladimir Putin, Pittsburgh steel and STEAM classes, to eagles, Norvelt, and banned books, each month's program promises to give Branch members much to think about. Please give these ladies an enthusiastic thank you when you see them in September.

As one not native to Pittsburgh, I eagerly look forward to our first program with gratitude for the chance to learn about the history of labor in this region. Just days after Labor Day, we will welcome Charles McCollester (Director of the PA Center for the Study of Labor Relations at IUP, President of the PA Labor History Society, and Secretary of the Homestead Foundation) to speak to us on the topic of "Railroad Riots and Steel Strikes". There is much to learn about the lives and labor of ordinary people who made this city great!

In closing, I am grateful for each of YOU, our members, for the gifts that each of you bring to AAUW, and for the friendship, encouragement, and support we share.

I look forward to seeing everyone on September 14th!

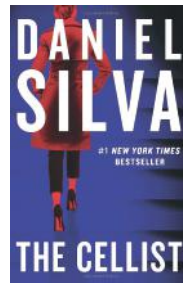
Diane Kaufmann

In Memoriam



Patti Vargo
July 16, 2023
With gratitude for her friendship
and service

Reading for Pleasure



I hope you all have had a pleasurable summer of reading. Rather serendipitously I picked up a book at an airport bookstore that introduced me to a wonderful author. I was on my way to help my daughter when she required emergency cervical surgery July.

So my summer had its ups and downs (Sharon is still recovering from ACDF but, so far, is doing well), but the new author Phaedra Patrick and her books pulled me thru—that is the beauty of books.

Our first RFP meeting will be on the fourth Thursday, September 28th. We start our Reading for Pleasure season with a book by Daniel Silva—*The Cellist*.

Diane Eldridge will be our reviewer and Bjoerg Granger will be our hostess. Bjoerg's address is as follows: 29 Winding Way, Verona, PA 15147, which is in Longwood At Oakmont Retirement Community. Bjoerg would prefer that we carpool if possible. She says there is parking available (four visitor parking slots on one side of her and eight possible slots on the other side of her). She emphasized that no one should park blocking a garage entrance. Please let me know if you are planning to be at Reading For Pleasure by the week before if possible by text or email.

On a very sad note, I know we will all miss Patti Vargo who was always generous in offering to host our Reading for Pleasure meetings.

Annie S. Rivers



2023-2024 Branch Meeting Programs

September 14, 2023

"Railroad Riot and Steel Strikes: The Labor Movement in Pittsburgh"
Charles McCollester, PhD

October 12, 2023

"My Career Fighting the Mob in Youngstown, Ohio"
Paul Gaines, JD

November 9, 10, 11, 2023

AAUW Book Sale in conjunction with the Murrysville Community Library

December 14, 2023

"Post Soviet Russia and Vladimir Putin"
Charles Hier, PhD

January 11, 2024

"Pittsburgh, Forged in Steel"
Susie Toma

February 8, 2024

"Advancing STEAM & Future Ready Learning in the Alle-Kiski Valley"
Colleen Smith, BA, M.Ed

March 14, 2024

"Eagles and the Importance of Biodiversity"
Don German, US Steel Plant Manager

April 11, 2024

"The History of Norvelt"
Sandy Schmizzi, Author

May 9, 2024

"Banned Books"



Used Book Sale Coming November 9, 10, 11, 2023



WE ARE DOING IT AGAIN! Our AAUW Branch, in partnership with the Murrysville Community Library (MCL), is sponsoring a Used Book Sale in November. Last year's sale was very successful, and we look forward to repeating our success this November. We are gearing up for the event and will have sign-ups for volunteers to "cull and sort" during the month of October. We need volunteers to help set-up on Wednesday, November 8th and to work Thursday, Friday and Saturday during the sale.

Books donated during the month of October will be sorted into **fiction**, **non-fiction** and **children's** categories. Puzzles and video games will also be collected. Some donations have to be culled because of mustiness. Other books (i.e., medical, textbooks, etc.) will be culled as inappropriate. These books will go to Half Price Books before the sale.

The sale will be during library hours (9:00 AM to 5:00 PM) on Thursday and Friday, and 9:30 to 3:00 on Saturday. Take down will start at 3:00 PM on Saturday. Volunteers are needed to help then and to take leftover boxes to Half Price books (HPB) within the following week. Once again library workers will load boxes in cars and Half Price Books workers will unload boxes.

Please plan to be a part of this endeavor. It's fun to work with fellow members. Betty Hollingsworth (724-733-8064) is once again in charge of the volunteer sign-up list. Library staff and library volunteers will take care of the heavy lifting. Let's all work together and do this!

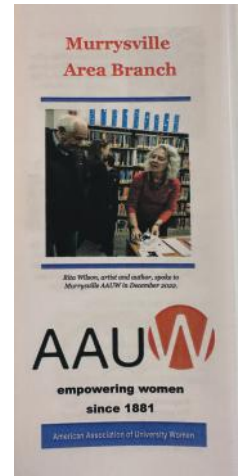
Jane Kerr

AAUW Joins Area Organizations at Cookies and Community Event

Librarian Amy Reigner invited AAUW to sponsor a table at the Cookies and Community Event on August 15th from 5:30 to 7:30 PM in the Murrysville Community Library. This back-to-school resource fair offered children's activities – AAUW offered a coloring page advertising the November Used Book Sale – and a chance for parents to learn about AAUW activities. Local organizations ranging from the Garden Club, to Westmoreland County Head Start, to local Girl Scout Troops, and Be Smart (a gun safety group) set up tables to explain what they offer to the community. The AAUW table featured a new tri-fold brochure designed to convey our mission to mothers and grandmothers who stopped by to chat! Ten people signed up to receive the Focus each month!



AAUW Table



Brochure



Family Sign-up



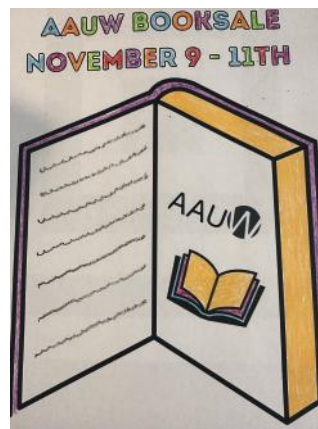
Members on Library Board



Floral Display



Raffle Display



Coloring Page



Signing Up for Focus

***The Extraordinarily Ordinary Kittens* by Nina Damato**

Lines were long and activities plentiful at First Methodist Church in Murrysville as readers young and young-at-heart gathered on July 22, 2023 to celebrate the publication of Branch member Nina Damato's new book, *The Extraordinarily Ordinary Kittens*. Nina and illustrator Rebecca Ehalt Svetina were on hand to greet readers and to sign copies of the book.

Nina's book tells the true story of two blind kittens told by a rescue dog named Sneakers who helps children learn about caring, acceptance, and loving. Fifty percent of the proceeds from the sale of the book will go to animal rescue.

Nina will be with us as we gather for our first Branch meeting on September 14th. Copies of the book, which Nina will be happy to sign, will be available for purchase at the meeting (and on Amazon should you wish to order a copy later). Please plan to stop by to see this beautifully illustrated publication!



Nina Signs Books



Book Cover



Sneakers




**Boccelli and Braille
The Two Kittens**



Books for Sale

September 2023

4	Mon.		
14	Thurs.	10:00 AM	Branch Meeting - TechNook† in the Murrysville Community Library.
18	Mon.		Deadline to email Focus articles to Donna Beard
22	Fri.	9:30 AM	Duplicate Bridge at the home of Donna Beard. If you plan to attend, please let Donna know. If interested in joining the duplicate bridge group, please call Dodie Hagan.
28	Thurs.	10:00 AM	Reading for Pleasure at the home of Bjoerg Granger. If you plan to attend, please let Annie know..

† The Murrysville Community Library (MCL) Meeting Room is located at the entrance to the Murrysville Community Library, 4130 Sardis Road. The TechNook is located in the main library room just before the main stacks.



The FOCUS is published monthly, except in July and August, by the Murrysville Area Branch of the American Association of University Women. President: Diane Kaufmann, 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.