



## October Branch Meeting Oppenheimer– The Man and the Movie

Dr. Philip Nash, PhD

October 10, 2024 10:00 AM

Murrysville Community Library  
4130 Sardis Road, Murrysville

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It is with great pleasure that we welcome back Dr. Philip Nash, PhD, as our speaker at the October 10<sup>th</sup> AAUW Branch Meeting. Dr. Nash will be presenting “Oppenheimer: The Man and the Movie”. Scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer was a complex figure whose rise and fall reveals important truths about America during World War II and the Cold War. Dr. Nash will provide a brief overview of his life and discuss the accuracy of the 2023 movie *Oppenheimer*, followed by Q & A. Philip Nash is Professor of History at Penn State Shenango, where he has taught for 25 years and won three teaching awards. In addition to being a Professor of History, he is the Coordinator, Multidisciplinary Studies Baccalaureate Program and Coordinator, International Studies Certificate at Penn State Shenango. His specialties are women in US foreign relations and America in the nuclear age. He earned his PhD from Ohio University, and he has held a post-doctoral fellowship at Harvard University and a Fulbright Visiting Professorship at the National University of Singapore. He is a frequent guest on the “Professor Buzzkill” history podcast, at [professorbuzzkill.com](http://professorbuzzkill.com). And he is author of three books, most recently *Clare Boothe Luce: American Renaissance Woman* (2022).

Many may remember Dr. Nash’s February, 2023, presentation “Breaking Protocol: America’s First Women Ambassadors”. Please come and listen to Dr. Nash discuss J. Robert Oppenheimer.

The presentation is open to the public and all are welcome to attend. There is no registration required.



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## President's Letter



Anticipating Dr. Nash's presentation on Oppenheimer at our October meeting, I find my thoughts turning to POWER, whether the power of the atomic bomb, or the existential threat of artificial intelligence

as described in a recent article in Time magazine, or the amazing power of friendship as a life-changing force which Time also explored in the same issue.

Described as a power "beyond belief", and "an existential threat to humanity", artificial intelligence's potential to surpass human intelligence is seen as a power which will touch the lives of billions. We know that Dr. Oppenheimer's atomic bomb, with its supersonic shock wave, intense heat, and radiation poisoning killed 70,000 people and destroyed 67% of the buildings in Hiroshima instantly. Citing the Hindu text, the Bhagavad Gita, Oppenheimer is said to have quoted, "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds." These are indeed examples of power which we all acknowledge and fear.

You may be wondering what these reflections have to do with AAUW? Of course, we anticipate the Oppenheimer program, but I also propose that AAUW is a source of another great power – FRIENDSHIP - recognized in the Time article, and exhibited at each of our meetings.

From a neuroscience perspective, friendship improves our mental and physical health, protects against depression, creates a source of belonging and acceptance, and enhances our feeling of self-worth. At our next meeting, while we listen and learn about Oppenheimer, and then relax with friends during our Cookie Social, may we remember that the power of these simple social interactions may indeed make us wiser, happier and healthier.

I hope to see you in October for Dr. Nash's lecture – and for cookies with friends afterwards!

Best regards,  
Diane Kaufmann  
President, Murrysville Area AAUW



## Meet New Member Judy Oates

I graduated from Mt. Lebanon High School in 1965 and went to California State College. My degree in 1969 was in Elementary Education and my first job was a teacher in the Pittsburgh Public School System. I have been a substitute teacher for Franklin Regional Schools since 1988. I have been a resident of Murrysville since 1973 after my marriage to Robert Oates in December of 1971. We raised three sons Robert(1974), Terence(1977), and Michael(1981) all graduates of Franklin Regional and Penn State University. I now have 9 beautiful grandchildren living in the Pittsburgh area. Bob passed away in June of 2022. I have been involved in many volunteer positions over the years in the community and Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church. I enjoy reading, quilting, and many outdoor activities including kayaking, swimming, skiing, hiking and biking.





## Join the Fun as a Book Sale Volunteer and Spread the Word!

We need volunteers to help in various ways for another successful Used Book and Puzzle Sale (UBS). Please read the options below, and then contact me as to how you can help. Thank you!!

- **Culler and sorter of donated books and puzzles.** We need a dozen cullers and sorters — one for each day — Monday through Saturday each week from October 1 to November 11 to process the donated books and puzzles at the Murrysville Library. I will train any new cullers and sorters who are interested in this extremely important job. If you like to be the first to see the wonderful donations we receive *and* find satisfaction in turning piles of assorted boxes, bags and stacks of books into neatly sorted, packed and labeled uniform boxes, this is the job for you!
- **Used Book Sale Set Up.** We will set up for the UBS on Wednesday, November 13 (time to be determined). In the morning, the library staff will arrange the empty tables that we will use for the sale. Once the tables are set up, we will arrive to arrange the books in categories for the sale. If you like to arrange things in organized and pleasing ways *and* find satisfaction in admiring the results of your efforts, this is the job for you!
- **Work at the Used Book Sale.** We need help at the UBS on November 14, 15 and 16. We have a morning shift (9:30am - 1:00pm) and an afternoon shift (1:00pm - 5:00pm) each day. Helpers at the UBS keep the tables neat, greet and help customers, and shop for themselves! If you like working with others and perusing books *and* find satisfaction in keeping things organized, this is the job for you!
- **Used Book Sale Take Down.** We need help packing away the books and puzzles that do not sell when the UBS ends at 3:00pm on November 16. If you like packing things quickly *and* find satisfaction in putting things back to the way they were, this is the job for you!

- **Transporting Unsold Books to Half Price Books after the Sale Take Down.** We sell the unsold books to Half Price Books in the week after the UBS. If you like a job that does not involve lifting or does not take hours to complete *and* find satisfaction in dotting that last “i” or crossing that last “t” in the *total profit* for the UBS, this is the job for you!
- **Donating books and puzzles to the Used Book Sale.** We need you, your family and your friends to donate books and puzzles to the Sale. From October 1 to November 11 at the Murrysville Community Library, we will accept children’s books, teen and adult fiction and nonfiction books, as well as puzzles for all ages. We DO NOT accept CDs, DVDs, encyclopedias, religious books, manuals, text books, self-help books or musty and moldy books. If you like finding new homes for things *and* find satisfaction in making space on your book shelves or in your closets, this is the job for you!
- **Shop the Used Book and Puzzle Sale.** The UBS will be a **Cash or Check Only** Sale held at the Murrysville Community Library on  
Thu, Nov. 14 from 9:30am to 5pm @ \$15 a bag  
Fri, Nov. 15 from 9:30am to 5pm @ \$10 a bag  
Sat, Nov. 16 from 9:30am to 3pm @ \$5 a bag  
Spread the word far and wide about our Used Book and Puzzle Sale!

Please text, email or call me to let me know how you will help with this important fund raiser. Proceeds from the sale are shared with the library to support various library programs and our own speakers’ programs. Thank you all very much for your time and continued support!

Jane Kerr  
UBS Chair  
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## Reading for Pleasure

From twentieth century Manhattan to fifteenth century China, Reading For Pleasure selections take us around the world and over the centuries. Lisa See's *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* transports us to a different world, a different time, and a very different culture. Come and discuss with our discussion leader, Carol Gezon, this *New York Times* bestseller!



Author See researched her subject thoroughly and has written a historical novel inspired by the true story of a woman physician in 15<sup>th</sup> century China. Our October meeting is on the fourth Thursday of the month, 10/24/2024, at the home of Carol Gezon, 3309 Hermar Court..

As I mentioned in my September *Focus* article, my summer was spent reading and listening to books—a true pleasure! But September brings life into focus and I haven't had as much free time to indulge. That doesn't mean I lacked reading pleasures. One of my favorite authors Phaedra Patrick published her seventh novel, *The Year of What If*. I enjoyed it and her so much.

As I love all things set in France, I picked up Sophie Beaumont's *The Paris Cooking School*, a sweet story of three women and second chances (and of course, French food). Ironically when I checked on Beaumont's page on the *Goodreads* app, I found out that in November, 2024, her next book is coming out: *A Secret Garden in Paris*! I can't wait!

During the summer I had picked up Rob Hart's *Assassins Anonymous* and laughed out loud on this take on Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) but from the prospective of the most dangerous killer-for-hire trying to reform—"It's a kill-or-be-killed situation, but the first option is off the table. What's a reformed hit man to do?". Intrigued with this author, I listened to a couple of his Ash McKenna series and then while searching through my "books waiting to be read" pile, I

discovered I had an earlier book by Rob Hart called *The Paradox Hotel*. This was a time travel book with a twist and I thoroughly enjoyed it ("An impossible crime. A detective on the edge of madness. The future of time travel at stake.").

Book covers ( and titles) always intrigue me and when I saw Edward Dolnick's *Dinosaurs at the Dinner Party: How an Eccentric Group of Victorians Discovered Prehistoric Creatures and Accidentally Upended the World*, I had to buy it. The non-fiction book was fascinating and the author writes to the layman so the book was a delight. I'll have to look into some of his other books.

I continue to listen to Terry Pratchett's Discworld series. Of the forty-one Discworld novels, I'm on my 20<sup>th</sup> or so. I just finished *Maskerade* which is a hilarious take on opera and "The Phantom of the Opera" specifically. If you see me driving and laughing, I'm probably listening to Terry Pratchett.

I hope to see you on October 24<sup>th</sup> for *Lady Tan's Circle of Women*.

Annie S. Rivers  
RFP Co-Chair  
cell phone [412-354-1411](tel:412-354-1411)

## Book Sale Donations

October 1 - November 11


Murrysville Community Library

Books and puzzles in GOOD condition

No CDs, DVDs, encyclopedias,  
religious books, manuals, text books,  
self-help books or musty and moldy  
books

Puzzles with no missing pieces

It's time to free up those shelves!

October 2024			
3	Thurs.	9:45 AM	<b>Board Meeting</b> - in the Library Meeting Room†: Board members please let Diane know if unable to attend.
10	Thurs.	10:00 AM	<b>Branch Meeting</b> - Murrysville Community Library TechNook†
14	Mon.		<b>Deadline</b> to email Focus articles to Donna Beard at <a href="mailto:djbeard2@gmail.com">djbeard2@gmail.com</a> .
24	Thurs.	10:00 AM	<b>Reading for Pleasure</b> - at the home of Carol Gezon, 3309 Hermar Court
30	Thurs.	TBD	<b>Duplicate Bridge</b> - at a location to be announced.
31	Thurs		Happy Halloween 

† 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.



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