



March Branch Meeting

Breathing Life Into Local News

Andrew Conte, PhD

Director, Center for Media Innovation

March 13, 2025 10:00 AM

**Murrysville Community Library TechNook
4130 Sardis Road, Murrysville**

Murrysville AAUW is pleased to have Andrew Conte speak about the changes occurring in the local news. The talk will discuss the many efforts underway across southwestern Pennsylvania to ensure the news has a robust present and future, the role of an independent press in our democracy, and the ways that citizens are taking control of the news more than ever.

Andrew Conte serves as founding director of the Center for Media Innovation at Point Park University in downtown Pittsburgh. Previously, he worked as an investigative journalist, and he has authored several nonfiction books, including *Death of the Daily News* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2022). In addition to running the Center, Andrew has taught in Point Park University's School of Communication since 2005. Andrew also serves as vice president of the Press Club of Western Pennsylvania.

Andrew holds a Ph.D. in Community Engagement from Point Park University, a master's degree from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism and a bachelor's degree from Dickinson College. In his free time, Andrew enjoys long-distance bicycling trips, camping with his wife in their VW bus, international travel, and time with his grown children, who live in New York City.

This program is presented in conjunction with the Murrysville Community Library and the public is welcome. Please join us!

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Snow Policy

If FR Schools are closed, AAUW meetings are canceled.

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

President's Letter



Lucky Us!

It's March and our thoughts turn to luck as we observe St. Patrick's Day and the wearing of the green (perhaps as a signal that we are tired of winter's white and long for the green of spring).

What is luck? Is it simply the good fortune of having wonderful things happen to us by chance, a happy, fortunate, providential turn of events? Is there more than this agency of chance in luck?

I think that people who are lucky are prepared and ready to seize the opportunities that come their way. They are optimistic, open-minded, resilient, and good at taking advantage of the good choices life presents to them. In short, they have the characteristics of our AAUW members!

These essential qualities help us to share our good fortune with others. As AAUW members, we are -

- ✻ Lucky to support a national organization recognized for championing the advancement of women.
- ✻ Lucky to provide our community with an excellent speaker series right here in our own "backyard".
- ✻ Lucky to contribute to our local library through our semi-annual used book sales and thus to support the love of books and life-long learning.
- ✻ Lucky to share ideas and our love of books as we participate in Reading for Pleasure
- ✻ Lucky to play Bridge with friends and to offer others the chance to learn the game.
- ✻ Lucky to meet and socialize with friends during the Cookie Social which follows our monthly programs.

We are indeed lucky to be members of Murrysville Area AAUW!

I look forward to seeing everyone on March 13th as we gather to hear Dr. Andrew Conte's presentation on "Breathing Life Into Local News".

May the luck of the Irish – and AAUW – be with you!

Diane Kaufmann

AAUW Programs

The program committee encourages our members to submit suggestions for programs for 2025-2026 to Janet Sutton or Andrea Cole. If you have attended a program that you think would be a good fit for AAUW, or if there is a topic of interest to you that you would like to learn more about, please let us know. We are working on inviting speakers for next year.

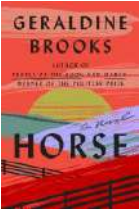
Cookie Social

Our Cookie Social continues to be very popular; a time to relax and get to chat and socialize after our programs. Please consider how you can help us to keep this going, by volunteering to oversee the coffee and tea, bring cookies or chocolates, help with set up before the program, or clean up afterwards. Contact Andrea Cole and let her know what month you can help and what you would like to do to help us continue offering the Cookie Social.

Janet Sutton



Reading for Pleasure



In March we will be discussing *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks at Debbi Ulusoy's home. Please let Debbi know if you are attending on Thursday, March 27th.

Call/text or email her. The meeting will start at 10:00 AM. Debbi will be leading the discussion. *Horse* is a historical novel based on "the true story of the record-breaking Civil War-era thoroughbred Lexington, the people who cared for him, the artists who painted him, and the scientists who study his bones". The novel spans the eras from the 1850's to the 1950's and on to our times 2020.

At the last RFP meeting we mentioned the possibly adding a meeting to discuss an additional book on the fourth Thursday of April since the Used Book Sale would be later (May 1st, 2nd, and 3rd). Unfortunately, that won't work! During the Puzzle/Cookbook Sale in early February, several of us realized that because the Used Book Sale was happening on the first week in May, there would be a problem with scheduling the AAUW Board Meeting that normally occurs on the first Thursday of the month. The solution to avoid this conflict of events (which affects several of our RFP members, including yours truly) is to have our Board Meeting the **week prior to** the UBS – Thursday, April 27th. We will have our RFP May Luncheon when we pick our 2025-2026 Reading For Pleasure books to discuss. So start thinking about books you have read and would recommend for everyone to enjoy and discuss next year.

Well, I finished listening to all 41 DiscWorld books by Terry Pratchett by mid-January – it was lovely revisiting this humorous fantasy author but sad to leave DiscWorld and all its memorable characters. Happily one of my long-time favorite authors came out with her 120th plus novel three days later which I immediately bought and devoured. I discovered Jayne Castle's first novel, *Gentle Pirate*, in a used book store in Dayton, Ohio, when my kids were just getting out of diapers. Forty-six years later she is still publishing now under three different pseudonyms and genres and I buy everything

she writes: under Jayne Ann Krentz (contemporary romance/suspense); Amanda Quick (historical romance/suspense); and Jayne Castle (futuristic paranormal romance/suspense). It's escapism at its finest for me! An Annapolis friend recommended Robert Galbraith (J.K.Rowling's pen name for her private eye series). I read *The Cuckoo's Calling* and *The Silkworm* but when I opened *Career Of Evil*, and the first chapter describes a serial killer that plans to target a main character in the series, I put the book down and am not sure I want to continue with the series – maybe too gory? In between these more serious mysteries, I read a really enjoyable fun book – *A Miss Merkel Mystery: Murder At the Castle* by David Safier. This is the English translation of the first in a German series that has Angela Merkel as an amateur detective in her retirement. It's laugh-out-loud outrageous. Somehow Safier gets away with this comedic portrayal of the ex-Chancellor and her husband because there are several more books in the German series but so far only the first has been translated and published in English. I hope the entire series will be soon published in English. I can always use a good laugh.

Annie S. Rivers
Co-Chair RFP



Lexington, by Edward Troye

Photos from February Meeting



New Library Director Kay Neidig Receiving
Congratulatory Flowers from Janet Sutton



Program Speaker Michael Haritan
Discussing Presentation with
Debbi Ulusoy

Spring Used Book and Puzzle Sale

I am looking forward to the Spring Used Book and Puzzle Sale (UBS) on May 1, 2 and 3 at the Murrysville Library. I hope you are too! This fund raiser directly supports the Library and our own Speaker Series.

Donations of books and puzzles will be accepted from Tuesday, April 1 to Monday, April 28. We need 2 **book cullers and sorters** each day during this collection period. Please text or email me as soon as you can to volunteer for this very important part of the UBS. I will train any new cullers and sorters for this rewarding job. Once I create a schedule of volunteers, I will share it with each of you. Thank you in advance for your dedication to help with this essential step.


For those of you with talents to help in other ways with the UBS, I will put out the call for other volunteer jobs in early April. Thank you in advance for helping.

On a personal note: the part of our UBSs that I look forward to the most is working again with our wonderful return volunteers and meeting the always amazing new recruits!

Jane Kerr
UBS Chair



Member Chats

March 2025			
6	Thurs.	9:45 AM	Board Meeting - Murrysville Community Library Meeting Room†· Board members please let Diane know if unable to attend
13	Thurs.	10:00 AM	Branch Meeting - Murrysville Community Library TechNook†
17	Mon.		Deadline to email Focus articles to Donna Beard.
			
27	Thurs	10:00 AM	Reading for Pleasure - at the home of Debbie Ulusoy.

† 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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