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MARCH 2025

Meet the Candidates for AAUW Board 2025.

The following are our nominees for this year's election which will be held on April 22, at the Branch Members Sup and Shop Annual Meeting at the Bethlehem Municipal Ice Rink.



Debbie Matz has been nominated for Membership VP for 2025 - 27. Prior to retiring, Debbie was a training consultant in the Professional Learning Department at CIU 20. Prior to that position she was a Reading Specialist/Literacy Coach at Nazareth Area Intermediate School. Additionally, she has worked as a Reading Specialist at the elementary and middle school levels in the Bethlehem Area School District and for CLIU 21 as an Act 89 teacher. Debbie holds an Ed.D. in Reading/ Language Arts from Widener University. She has done adjunct teaching at Moravian University, and Cabrini University. Additionally, she has presented at state and local literacy conferences. Debbie fueled her passion for literacy by engaging

in professional development opportunities at Summer Reading and Writing Institutes and workshops at Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, Columbia University.

Natalie Chickey has been nominated for Membership VP for 2025-27. Natalie retired from Bethlehem Area School District in 2018. A graduate of Lycoming College and Lehigh University, she taught English at Liberty High School where she also served as English Department Chair. She presently works at Moravian University as an adjunct professor and as a supervisor for Secondary Student Teachers. Natalie is an avid reader, theater enthusiast, and is trying to improve her golf game. She and her husband enjoy traveling to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina to visit their two grandchildren.



Janet Bauer has been nominated for the position of Financial Officer for our branch. Janet was born and raised in Pottsgrove Township. She graduated from Lebanon Valley College with a BS in Chemistry and is ACS Certified. For 43 years, Janet worked in quality control, laboratory information management, and systems calibration software. She also served as treasurer and president of Lehigh Parkway PTA, and treasurer of Union Terrace Athletic Association. She and her life partner, Richard have one daughter and one grandson. She enjoys spending time with her corgi and pursuing her hobbies; reading, embroidery and knitting.

Looking Forward to March Program...

Fraud, Scams, and How to Prevent Them With David Shallcross



**Saturday, March 22, 2025
10:00 AM
Moravian Village Dining Room**



David Shallcross is Director of Senior Protection in the PA Office of the Attorney General. For over 30 years, David has served the residents of PA in various law enforcement positions. He was assigned to special projects for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security from 2007-2008; in 2008 Dave joined the Office of Attorney General as a Community Liaison in the Public Protection Division's Elder Abuse Unit. In this capacity he has conducted hundreds of seminars and senior expos. He was promoted to Senior Community Liaison and Coordinator of the Elder Abuse Unit in 2011.

Please RSVP to Fran Bentkowski (fbentkowski@verizon.net) if you plan to attend

Fran Bentkowski and Kristina Hollingsworth, Program VPs

Greetings From Membership

Remember our membership table will be set up for the David Shallcross Program on March 10th, providing applications for membership. This event is a Shape the Future event and eligible for the \$51.00 half price membership pricing. You must sign up and pay at this event. Bring a friend or neighbor who might be interested in joining our AAUW Branch.

Who is Elon Musk?

Are you concerned about Elon Musk's influence over this administration? Are you shocked that a person who has not been elected, has no security clearance, no government experience, and conflicts of interest has been given the power to dismantle our government? In just 4 weeks, he has turned government agencies and worker's lives into chaos.

So, who is Elon Musk? He is a 53 yr old South African, worth \$394.2 BILLION dollars. His mother is Canadian which allowed him to become a Canadian citizen. At 18 he moved to Canada, probably to avoid the South African military, and studied at Queen's Univ. in Kingston, Ontario. At 21 he attended U of Penn on an Exchange Visitor Visa. In 2002, at age 31, he changed to a work visa and became a US citizen.

He has 13 children by 4 women, all boys except for 1 girl. He has two sets of twins and one set of triplets. Many of his children were conceived through IVF and some through surrogacy. He has a compound in Texas where the children visit. Musk believes in large families because the world has an underpopulation crisis, "We must create the next generation of humans or spiral into oblivion".

Musk amassed his fortune over the past 20 years using loop holes to pay little or no income taxes while he earned millions of dollars annually. He voted for Biden in 2018. During that time, he was vocal about his dislike for Donald Trump. So, what changed his mind? 1st, in 2022, Congress was ready to pass the Billionaire Minimum Income Tax Act. This would greatly impact Musk's plan to buy Twitter. 2nd, he blames the "woke" agenda for his transgender daughter. His son "is dead, killed by the woke mind virus". 3rd, he wants to "use his money to get humanity to Mars". His political allegiance changed and in 2024 he donated \$288 million to the Republican election campaign.

The President picked his largest campaign donor to run DOGE (Dept of Govt. Efficiency). Musk has 30 "Lieutenants" known as "Troops" by the White House. In the past month DOGE made buyout offers to 2 million federal workers with a promise of 9 month's salary. They have dismantled or downsized 15 agencies, especially those that help the neediest citizens. They are seeking our personal data, and anything that has to do with DEI. That includes WOMEN! We are part of diversity. But, has Musk shown any proof of waste? No, just HIS word.

Congress is unwilling to use their power to stop this rampage. Lawsuits are pending, So what can you do? Our Constitution begins, We the people... so it's up to us to do something. Ask your bank what it's doing to protect your financial information. Download the easy App "5 Calls". It provides legislator's phone # and a script you can use to make your voice heard. Letters and emails just get tossed. The week of March 7-14th, Nationwide boycott of Amazon protest over DOGE to eliminate DEI programs.

Speak Up! Show Up! ACT!

Joan Howe, Policy

Sarah King, Certified Aromatherapist



We had 30 people attend the Aromatherapy program on February 8, at Moravian Village. Sarah King, a certified Aromatherapist, explained how essential oils applied to your skin or used in a diffuser help you embrace the essence of letting fragrances lead you toward joy, balance, and better health. Sarah explained the uses of plant-based medicines in helping with our health and well-being.

After the presentation, guests were able to ask questions and smell samples of different natural oils and fragrances.

"A VISIT WITH BILL WHITE, MORNING CALL COLUMNIST" Presents: It's Not Easy Being Gray"



Bill White and Kristina Hollingsworth,
VP of Programs

Bill White, a former full-time columnist for The Morning Call for over 25 years and now a semi-monthly contributor and blogger, presented a program titled "It's Not Easy Being Gray" to AAUW members and guests at Moravian Village. A graduate of Lehigh University and a Masters from Ohio State University, Bill also received the Kiplinger Fellow in Public Affairs Reporting.

Trust in journalistic news today is alarmingly low, with only "telemarketers, car salesmen, and Congress members" having a lower ranking. The line between news and opinion is increasingly blurred. Journalists were once the "gatekeepers" of our news, but now vast amounts of information are easily accessible on our electronic devices and often reflect only one perspective, depending on the source.

Newspapers are becoming obsolete, much like phone books, pay phones, and handwritten letters. The news landscape is dominated by misinformation, manipulated images, and AI-generated deceptions, leaving us uncertain about what we can trust.

The polarization of our elected officials is perceived in black-and-white terms, where issues are viewed as right or wrong. We seem to move from crisis to crisis, often unable to agree on most topics. Our ability to work together or find common ground in the "gray areas" is diminishing. Many seem to support "compromise and common ground" only if it aligns with their own views.

As Kermit the Frog famously said, "It's not easy being green." Today, it's not easy being gray either.



BOOK FAIR

COUNTING DOWN: HELP!

There is something EVERY Branch member can do to help with the 63rd Annual Used Book Fair (“BF”) and we hope every member will respond in some way. You can:

- Email a BF flyer to everyone in your contact list
- Post a flyer at your place of worship, apartment building, etc.
- Post a message in your “Next Door” or neighborhood online group such as “The AAUW Used Book Fair is accepting donations of gently used books, CDs, DVDs and vinyl records at the Municipal Ice Rink on Illicks Mill Rd from April 1-April 22.

WE DO NOT accept textbooks, technology, health & fitness, self-help, dictionaries, encyclopedias, Readers Digest, Chicken Soup, business”

- Sort books from 9-noon April 1-21 as often as possible
 - Volunteer to assist a Section Chair
 - Volunteer for 1 or more shifts during the sale April 24-28
- Attend “**Sup & Shop**” on April 22nd, 6-8pm at the ice rink.

We are looking forward to a great Book Fair! Please add these important dates to your 2025 calendar:

- **Kick-Off Meeting at the rink: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 10am**
- **Donation Dates: Tuesday, April 1-Monday April 21, 2025**
- **Book Sorting: April 1-April 23, 2025; Monday through Saturday, 9am-Noon**
- **Sup & Shop: April 22nd at the Rink, 6-8pm**
- **2025 Sale Dates: Thursday, April 24-Monday, April 28, 2025**

Joan Howe and Debbie Spinney, co-chairs New Year!

AAUW Official Statement

"We are extremely frustrated at the National Archivist's refusal to publish the ERA. Her decision to side with the Trump administration and against legal scholars and the American Bar Association is reprehensible. Dr. Shogan, publish the ERA. Women around the country have waited long enough."

Gloria L. Blackwell, Chief Executive Officer

The Book Nook



Meet Ella: The Dog Who Saved My Life by James Middleton with Frances Hardy. James is the younger brother of Catherine Middleton who married William, British Prince. He struggled in school but loved animals. Eventually he got Ella, a black cocker spaniel who was very smart and very loyal to James. As he grew up he continued to struggle in school and in developing independence. Soon a fog, eventually diagnosed as depression, set in. One night he was ready to jump off a roof but thought of Ella and decided not to. Gradually he recovered, started some successful businesses, and read the Bible at Catherine and William's wedding. Through Ella he met a lovely young woman who became his wife. The book ends with Ella passing on and James' wife giving birth to their son. What is most interesting about this book is the writing about a child growing up with ADD, which of course he still has as an adult. The writing about James' depression is very detailed and descriptive, also.

Haben: The Deafblind Woman who Conquered Harvard Law, a memoir by Haben Girman. Haben was born with a little sight and some hearing in upper registers, but those gradually disappeared. Her family encouraged her education and she relied more and more on technology to communicate and to study. She also was able to get a wonderful seeing-eye dog. After college, through a special scholarship, she was able to attend Harvard Law School: the first Deafblind person to study there. After she graduated she found a job working as a disability advocate, traveling all over the world and meeting many people including American presidents. Her story is told through descriptions of many incidents, each one ending with a different reminder that disabled people deserve as full a life as non-disabled people. This was a quick read with an important message.

Book reviews by, Mardi Metzger



Information :

Bacchae: Bacchae met at Rita Bergstrom's house for our Feb. meeting, and we tasted and rated two wines from the Selby winery located in the Sonoma Valley. Rita had visited this winery when she was on vacation this past summer and highly recommended their wines. We were not disappointed! Unfortunately, the wines must be ordered from the winery because our state stores don't carry them. Our next meeting will be on March 13 at 3:00 at Louise Wisser's house. Amy Fields will serve as co-hostess. Any questions? Contact Phyllis Wargo

Mystery Paperback: We will meet on March 25th at 1:30pm to discuss *Bryant & May: Oranges and Lemons* by Christopher Fowler. Olga Conneen will lead the discussion and Linda Robbins will hostess. 414 Kenilworth Court, Bethlehem, PA 18018. Please RSVP to Linda Robbins.

Paperback I: Paperback I will meet on March 25, 1-3 pm at the home of Froy Thompson, 2621 Nottingham Rd. We will be discussing *Girl* by Edna O'Brien. Myra Saturen

Paperback II: On Tuesday February 18, 2025, 11 members of Paperback II gathered at the home of Debbie Spinney to discuss the National Book Award for Fiction *James* by Percival Everett. The novel is a re-imagining of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, but told from the perspective of Huckleberry's friend on his travels, Jim, who is an escaped slave. Pat Knoll led the discussion. We were amazed at the intelligence and language skills of Jim (James) and how he could switch from "slave talk" to discussing philosophy. The "surprise ending" took us by surprise.

There will be no meeting in March as we will have a group trip. For the April 15 meeting at Linda Zimmerman's home, no need for a reviewer as we will each read a biography of our choice. For the May 20 meeting, we are reading *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters. Our host is Mary Dawson, and the reviewer is Shirley Daluisio.

Public Policy Study Group: The Public Policy Study Group met on February 17th at Joan Howe's home. Our focus was on contacting our state senators, congress persons, and state attorney general using the 5Calls app which provide phone numbers and call scripts to address various current government actions. Any one interested in joining in these calls just download the 5Calls app from your App Store. Our next meeting is March 10, at Joan Howe's at 2:00 pm.

Out to Lunch Bunch: OTLB met at Lutzi's Courtyard Cafe in Easton, PA., on February 12. There was lots of travel talk and discussion of what was happening in Washington. We all enjoyed good American cuisine. Our next luncheon is March 12 at Braveheart at 12:30. Contact Amy Fields if you are interested in joining the group



Seated Left to right: Rita Bergstrom, Susan Seidel, Debbie Spinney, Cynthia Weber, Mary Dawson, Fran Bentkowski, and Jeanne Eroh



Ann Brown,
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