

THE READING BRANCH LINES

Volume 58 No. 5

May/June 2023

Reading, PA



**Branch Annual June Picnic
Thursday, June 15, 2023, 4:30 PM
Red Bridge Recreation Area
2141 Tulpehocken Road
Wyomissing, PA 19610**

The branch is again planning to get together for a June picnic as our last meeting for this program year. More information about the picnic will be provided after the May board meeting. We are inviting this year's scholarship recipients to join us for a dessert social after the picnic meeting. A separate picnic invitation will be sent with more details and a contact person after this week's board meeting.

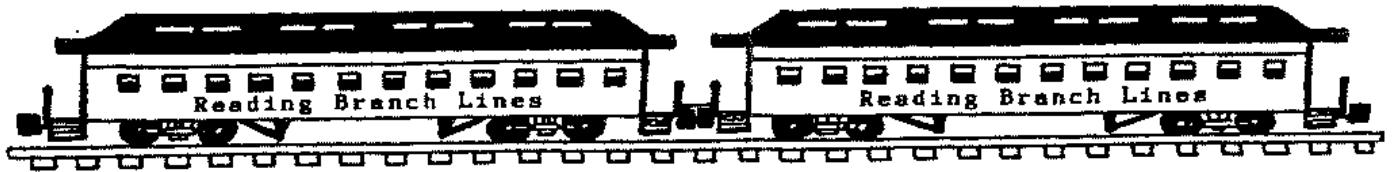
Directions – From route 222 take the Broadcasting Road Exit. Turn toward Penn State Berks Campus. Drive to the end of the road. Turn left. Red Bridge Recreation Area will be on your right (.4 mi.) just past the Grings Mill Recreation Area.

New Branch Officers – Members voted for these new officers for 2022-2024 at the March General Meeting

Treasurer – Pat Hummel, Director of Bylaws – Karen Weiss, VP Program – Virginia Schulze-Johnson, VP Membership – Carolyn Smith

Branch Honorees

1. Outstanding Woman – Pat Hummel
2. Achievement Award – Virginia Schulze-Johnson
3. Gateway to Equity – The League of Women Voters
4. Named Gift Honoree – Delite Hawk



Interest Groups

May

Culinary Arts: Wednesday, May 17
Seasons Café'
15 Village Center Drive, Reading, PA 19607
(610)401-0303
Contact: Joanne Wrigley

Fine Arts – Wednesday, May 24, 11:30 AM
Berkshire Country Club
1637 Bernville Road, Reading, PA 19601
(610)374-8244 – Planning Meeting
Contact: Donna Weik

Cultural Arts: No events planned
Contact: Ellie Hunt

Literature – Monday, May 22
Location – The home of Kate Hoh
Planning meeting
Contact: Virginia Schulze-Johnson

Home Arts: Wednesday, May 3 – Noon
No information provided
Contact: Judy Druckenmiller

June

Currently there are no other interest group meetings scheduled at this time.



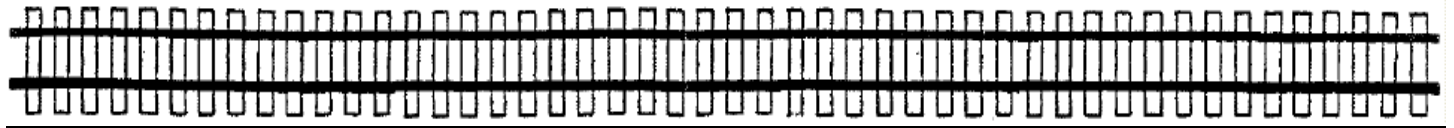
AAUW Reading Branch 2023 Senior High School Honorees

Antietam: Carolyn Worrall
Berks Catholic: Evelyn Nguyen
Boyertown: Tanisha Johri
Brandywine Heights: Ashley Delong
Conrad Weiser: Abigail Robinson
Daniel Boone: Mella Kanaovicz
Exeter: Peyton Seamans
Fleetwood: Jenna Tregear
Governor Mifflin: Brynna Sue Bentz

Hamburg: Taylor Swartley
Kutztown: Leah Zettlemyer
Muhlenberg: Skyler Kock
Oley Valley: Joelle Glick
Reading: Taina Santana
Schuylkill Valley: Emily Gao
Tulpehocken: Vanessa Van Tiggelen
Twin Valley: Rebecca Goldman
Wilson: Kyrianna Nemitz
Wyomissing: Jenna Abousaab & Maya Abousaab

Condolences.: Sincere condolences to the family and friends of Nan Morrissey. We will miss seeing Nan at our meetings.

Sincere condolences to the family and friends of Sylvia Heckler. Sylvia was a past member of our branch. Her friends in the branch who knew Sylvia will miss her.



It's personal

By Judith Kraines, Public Policy Chair

The most important thing you can do in May is VOTE!

Tuesday, May 16 is our Municipal Primary election. This is the election when the main political parties, the Democrats and the Republicans, choose their candidates for November. And we are electing the leaders who are closest to home: those who are responsible for plowing our streets and managing our schools.

But wait! There's more. At the top of the ticket are judicial candidates to serve on three appellate courts. They will make decisions on whether our laws are just. They have had the final say on school funding, gerrymandering, and other issues too important to ignore.

At the local level, we are selecting two of three candidates in each party to be Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. They are allowed to "cross-file" which means they can run on both ballots. And seats are contested in three magisterial district judge races.

At the County level, we are selecting two candidates for County Commissioner. There are four candidates on the Democrat ballot; five on the Republican ballot. Two candidates are vying for the Recorder of Deeds slot on the Republican ballot.

In the City of Reading, there are three candidates for Mayor, and several contested City Council seats.

But perhaps most important is local school boards. In most districts, five of nine seats are up for election. They also "cross-file," so it is hard to know who is who. School director is an unpaid job and candidates usually spend less than \$250 on their campaigns. This year there are eight PACs – Political Action Committees – raising money for campaigns in Berks County.

So, how do you sort through this? First, to understand what each elected officer does, watch League of Women Voters Presents...What's on Your Ballot" at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C83NN6rhTaj>

To view your ballot and decide who you will vote for, I suggest the following:

League of Women Voters has an on-line voters guide: vote411.org. The local League contacted more than 330 local candidates asking for information. More than one-third had responded by the end of April. All you need to do is type in your address and it will show you who is on your ballot and how they have responded. Please note, it is new software and it is not separating the parties as it used to. LWVUS is trying to fix it.

The Berks League, in Cooperation with BCTV, has interviewed 31 candidates. You will find those interviews here:

<https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjul03soTP4G5VV8PJhClBkxkGjPrkX6b>

A public-interest non-profit journalism project called Spotlight PA has a guide to the state-wide courts and judicial candidates on their website:

<https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2023/03/pa-election-primary-2023-supreme-court-candidates/>

<https://www.spotlightpa.org/news/2023/03/pa-election-primary-2023-commonwealth-superior-court-candidates/>

And if you live in the Wilson School District, the Student Government is sponsoring a candidate forum at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, May 3rd in the Administration Building. It will be live-streamed on the Wilson website.

If you are voting by mail-in ballot, please remember to check for races on the back of your ballot. Please remember to put your ballot in the secrecy envelope before you put it in the mailing envelope. And if you want your vote to count, sign and date (with the date you signed it) the back of the mailing envelope. Mail it back only if it has at least five days to arrive. Otherwise, put it in a drop box at the Agricultural Center or the County Services Center. Both are open from 8 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday May 1 through May 5 and May 8 through May 12. The weekend before the election they are open Saturday 8 am to 1 pm, Sunday noon to 4 pm, Monday 8 am to 8 pm. And on election day they are open the same hours as the polling places: 7 am to 8 pm.

Membership Renewal

Please find enclosed AAUW dues renewal form. This year National Annual dues have increased by \$5 to \$72 of which \$69 is tax deductible. This is the third of the three-year increases instituted in 2020. State dues are increasing by \$2 to \$12 on July 1st. Renewals received before that date will remain at the previous rate of \$10. Branch dues remain the same at \$13. To take advantage of the lower state dues rate and pay \$95, **dues must be received by June 20.** If paying after June 20, the rate is \$97. We will collect dues at the picnic on June 15

AAUW READING BRANCH

1171 Schoffers Road
Birdsboro, PA 19508

Diversity Statement

In principle and in 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.

Mission Statements

AAUW advances equity for women and girls, through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

AAUW Educational Foundation provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change.

AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.

Branch Lines

Editor – Eileen Ritz **Web Site:** <http://reading-pa.aauw.net>

Book Bonanza

If anyone has not yet heard the news, Book Bonanza has been cancelled for 2022 due to lack of a suitable location. We expect to be located in the county building in Mohnton after renovations are completed.

Vintage Jewelry Sale

We are still collecting “vintage”, unwanted, jewelry items to sell to support our program and operating budget. Members sold jewelry at the Lunafest last fall. I plan to sell again at another flea market when possible again to support our operating budget. I did not go to flea markets during the pandemic. I do plan to go this summer. Thank you to everyone who has donated items to our cause. If you have any unwanted items please bring them to a meeting or call Eileen Ritz to arrange for someone to pick them up.

Redner’s tapes

Redner’s register tapes are also still being collected by our branch to support our operating budget. If you have any to contribute please bring them to a meeting or call Ellie Hunt about register tapes so we can arrange to get the tapes. Remember that we must submit the entire tape to Redner’s. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed tapes.

Board Meeting

The next branch board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 2:30 at Roessner Hall and on Zoom. If any members are interested in attending on Zoom contact Judith Kraines for a link.



DUES 2023-2024

Please check appropriate category or categories:

I am applying as a new AAUW Reading Branch member*. Dues are \$97 (\$95 if paid by June 20)
I was a member of another branch within the past five years yes___ no___

I am an annual member. Dues are \$97 (\$95 if paid by June 20).

(National - \$72, Pennsylvania - \$12 (\$10 if paid by June 20), Reading Branch - \$13)

Note: \$69 of the \$72 for national dues is tax deductible

I am a paid life member. Dues are \$25 (\$23 if paid by June 20).

(National - \$0, Pennsylvania - \$12 (\$10 if paid by June 20), Reading Branch - \$13)

Students \$18.81; Affiliate college students: \$0; e-student affiliates pay 0

I am an honorary (50 year) life member. No dues required

I would like to support the National AAUW Educational Foundation Contribution (OPTIONAL)
Amount: \$_____

I would like to support the Reading Branch, Educational Scholarship Fund (OPTIONAL)
Amount: \$_____

TOTAL CHECK AMOUNT: Amount \$_____

I would like the newsletter mailed (If not checked and an email address is provided, it will be emailed)

Please complete all information (information provided will be published in membership book):

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email _____ (If none, please write none on the line.)

This completed form and a check payable to AAUW Reading Branch should be mailed by June 30 to:

**AAUW Membership
1921 Sturbridge Drive
Wyomissing, PA 19610**