

## Los Alamos Branch AAUW February 2008

**There is no general meeting in February -- keep reading for lots of interesting information**

### **Future Branch Events:**

**March 4, Tuesday, 7:30pm, Bethlehem Lutheran Church: An International Relations event about Iran** arranged by our International Chair, Cas Mason. Two Iranian women: both of whom were born and raised in Iran, will give us an introduction to Iran, with emphasis on the challenges faced by women in contemporary Iran, including family, education, and religion. Iran is a large country with cultural regional variations. Our two speakers come from different regions of Iran and have different experiences although both received their university education outside Iran. The women provided these biographies.

F.J. grew up in Tehran/Iran. After graduating high school, F.J. went to the UK to continue with her higher education. Subsequently she received a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Wales, UK, M.S. in Mechanical Engineering with emphasis in Fuel Technology from the University of Portsmouth, UK, and her Ph.D. and DIC in Chemical Engineering, with emphasis on Combustion, from Imperial College, London, UK. F.J. married in summer of 1988 in London, UK, and then joined her husband in Princeton. During her time at Princeton F.J. worked as a NSF Post-Doctoral Fellow at the John von Neuman Supercomputer Center, and then in 1991 she took a position with Praxair Inc., NY. F.J. joined Malcolm in 1994 in College Station TX, and worked with private companies and Texas A&M University as a research and teaching faculty. F.J.'s time in Texas involved research, teaching, program development and leadership positions. F.J. came to Los Alamos in June, 2005.

Ms. F M was born in the northern part of Iran and moved to Paris in 1977 to study architecture, where she earned her masters degree in architecture. Late in 1984, love or fate brought her to the US. Ms. M has two beautiful children, a 20-year-old son and a 16-year-old daughter. While in the US, she worked for the private sector and the state government in the fields of architecture, engineering and project management. Ms. M has been at LANL since 2004 in architecture and planning group. So far it has been an interesting ride.

**March 10, 2008, Wednesday, Los Alamos Public Schools, 9:00-11:30 am, Let's Read Math Workshop.** The branch hopes to present the workshop for teachers in 2 local elementary schools. Contact Natalie Markin (662-9399 or [natalie@lanb.com](mailto:natalie@lanb.com)) if you would like to become involved.

**April 2, Wednesday, Expanding Your Horizons Conference.** Marilyn Minshall has been our liaison with Los Alamos Women in Science for this event. She is looking for help. Contact Marilyn at 672-3499.

**April 24, Thursday, 7:30pm, Bethlehem Lutheran Church:** Program on pay equity.

**May 9, Friday Bethlehem Lutheran Church :** Spring Membership Tea.

---

### **Branch News:**

**Science Fair Report:** The 2008 Science Fair was held Saturday January 26, 2008 in the DECA room of the High School. The judges this year were Louise Mendius, Mary Ann Lindahl and Rosmarie Frederickson. There was a large variety of projects at the Elementary level this year. AAUW gave \$20.00 awards to two Class projects. Mrs. Souza's

1<sup>st</sup> Grade class “Do you have an Admirer? Static Electricity” and Mrs. Altherr’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Class “Sunglasses’ Test”. Both of these came from Mountain School. All other projects were individual projects and each was awarded \$5.00. The following projects were selected:

- Alexander Wang How the Paper Crumples
- Esteban Abyeta How strong is an eggshell
- Trisha Barks Bye, Bye Bridges
- Alex Csandi Acoustic Properties of Oak Sound Boxes
- Nate Bublitz Does the beak choose the menu
- Jenna Erickson Effective Exercise
- Matthew Ticknor Sugar Loaded Plant

**Study Group Schedules** are posted at:

[http://aauw-nm.org/los\\_almamos\\_study\\_groups.html](http://aauw-nm.org/los_almamos_study_groups.html)

Study group chairs are asked to send schedules and any changes to Denise at [georgejc@acm.org](mailto:georgejc@acm.org)

*Book Group:* The next meeting will be Monday, February 4, 7:30pm at the home of Doris Lodwig, 79 Mesa Verde. The book is *The Space Between Us* by Thrity Umrigar.

*Non-Fiction Book Group:*

The next meeting will be at the home Peggy Lazarus, 2539 35th, March 17 at 7:30 pm. The book is *Nickle and Dimed*, by Barbara Ehrenreich.

*The World Cultures through Foods:* The March 1 dinner has an Chinese theme. Contact Marilyn Minshall (672-3499).

Carroll Thomas is the coordinator of the day-time *Great Decisions* group. All meetings of this group are held at Mesa Public Library at 10 a.m. in room 1. The dates are as follows: Feb. 11 (U.S. Defense Policy) and 25 (Foreign Aid), March 10 (U.S.-China) and 24 (Europe), April 14 (Latin America) and 28 (Russia), May 12 (Blacklisting the enemy).

The evening *Great Decisions Group* contact is Helena Whyte (672-9153). Meetings are Feb. 13 (Europe) Feb. 28 (Enemies) Mar. 11 (Russia) Mar. 24 (Latin America) Apr. 10 (China) May 1 (Philanthropy) May 15 (U.S. Defense).

**National News:**

AAUW's *Behind the Pay Gap* report and the subject of pay equity was prominently featured on the *NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams* special series "[The Truth About Boys and Girls.](#)" The segment featured Catherine Hill, author of the report and AAUW director of research, and Janet Conney, a former LAF plaintiff and an AAUW member.

*Behind the Pay Gap* examines the gender pay gap for college graduates. One year out of college, women working full time earn only 80 percent as much as their male colleagues earn. Ten years after graduation, women fall farther behind, earning only 69 percent as much as men earn. Controlling for hours, occupation, parenthood, and other factors normally associated with pay, college-educated women still earn less than their male peers earn.... The choice of major is not the full story, however. As early as one year after graduation, a pay gap is found between women and men who had the same college major....

What can be done about the gender pay gap? To begin with, it must be publicly recognized as a problem. Too often, both women and men dismiss the pay gap as simply a matter of different choices, but even women who make the same occupational choices that men make will not typically end up with the same earnings. Moreover, if “too many” women make the same choice, earnings in that occupation can be expected to decline overall... The pay gap between female and male college graduates cannot be fully accounted for by factors known to affect wages, such as experience (including work hours), training, education, and personal characteristics. Gender pay discrimination can be overt or it can be subtle. It is difficult to document because someone’s gender is usually easily identified by name, voice, or appearance. The only way to discover discrimination is to eliminate the other possible explanations. In this analysis the portion of the pay gap that remains unexplained after all other factors are taken into account is 5 percent one year after graduation and 12 percent 10 years after graduation. These unexplained gaps are evidence of discrimination, which remains a serious problem for women in the work force....

*The above quotes are from the executive summary – read it at:*

## **Biography of the Month**

### **Julia Bowman Robinson**

Julia was born in 1919 when the few careers open to women were teaching and nursing. Julia endured many hardships as a child. Her mother died when she was only two; she contracted rheumatic fever and was confined to bed for over a year; her father committed suicide when she was beginning college. Despite all these hardships, Julia's interest in mathematics persisted. Disappointed with the quality of the mathematics department at San Diego State, she transferred her senior year to Berkeley. Here her luck changed; she found many students and faculty as interested as she in mathematics, and she met her husband, Raphael Robinson, who was her instructor in number theory. As a result of heart damage from her bout of rheumatic fever, Julia was unable to have children. Dealing with her disappointment and depression, Julia continued her study of mathematics and received her Ph.D. Her professional career included a stint working for Rand Corporation where she proved an important result in game theory. Her most important result was a problem called Hilbert's tenth and involved determining if integer solutions exist for certain polynomial equations with integer coefficients. She worked on this problem for over twenty years. It was eventually solved via collaboration with a young Russian mathematician. The result is actually a negative – they proved that there is no

procedure to determine if the solutions exist. Julia became the first woman mathematician to be elected to the National Academy of Sciences. Julia received a MacArthur Foundation grant and was appointed a full professor at Berkeley.



## Branch Calendar

Feb	4	Book Group, <i>The Space Between Us</i> by Thrity Umrigar, 7:30pm, Doris Lodwig, 79 Mesa Verde
Feb	7	Council meeting, Pat Mendius, 124 Rover, 7:15pm
Feb	11	Great Decisions, Mesa Public Library, room 1, 10am, U.S. Defense Policy
Feb	13	Evening Great Decisions, Europe
Feb	25	Great Decisions, Mesa Public Library, room 1, 10am, Foreign Aid
Feb	28	Evening Great Decisions, Talking to our Enemies
Mar	1	World Culture through Foods, Chinese dinner.
Mar	3	Book Group, <i>Three Cups of Tea</i> ,
Mar	4	General meeting, Iran Panel, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7:30pm
Mar	10	Great Decisions, Mesa Public Library, room 1, 10am, China
Mar	10	Let's Read Math workshops in 2 elementary schools, 9:30 – 11:00am
Mar	11	Evening Great Decisions, Russia
Mar	17	Non-fiction book group, 7:30pm, <i>Nickle and Dimed</i> by Barbara Ehrenreich, at home of Peggy Lazarus, 2539 35th
Mar	24	Great Decisions, Mesa Public Library, room 1, 10am, European Integration
Mar	24	Evening Great Decisions, 7:30pm, Latin America: Shift to the Left?

### Coordinating Council for 2007-2008

Helena Whyte	Facilitator	672-9153	<a href="mailto:helenaw@lanl.gov">helenaw@lanl.gov</a>
Rozelle Wright	Treasurer	662-5490	<a href="mailto:rozelle@losalamos.com">rozelle@losalamos.com</a>
Bev Cooper	Secretary	672-9696	<a href="mailto:mcooper@cybermesa.com">mcooper@cybermesa.com</a>
Alahna Weller	Membership	672-9539	<a href="mailto:acweller@comcast.net">acweller@comcast.net</a>
Carroll Thomas	EF/LAF	672-1937	<a href="mailto:ctgb@earthlink.net">ctgb@earthlink.net</a>
Denise George	Newsletter	672-9688	<a href="mailto:georgeje@acm.org">georgeje@acm.org</a>
Susan Oldham	Communications	672-0778	<a href="mailto:oldham98@hotmail.com">oldham98@hotmail.com</a>
Mona Wecksung	Diversity	662-7084	<a href="mailto:wecksung2005@msn.com">wecksung2005@msn.com</a>
Cas Mason	International Affairs	672-1938	<a href="mailto:casmason01@msn.com">casmason01@msn.com</a>
Rosmarie Frederickson	Public Policy	662-5915	<a href="mailto:frederrh@yahoo.com">frederrh@yahoo.com</a>
Natalie Markin	Program	662-9399	<a href="mailto:natalie@lanb.com">natalie@lanb.com</a>
Jane Sherwood	Hospitality	662-3194	<a href="mailto:jane.sherwood@att.net">jane.sherwood@att.net</a>