

Los Alamos Branch AAUW February 2009

Women's Issues in China Presented by Dr Lee Liu Tuesday, February 3, 2009, 7 pm Bethlehem Lutheran Church 2390 North Road

Dr Lee Liu will give our third talk in a series centering on the current challenges facing women in different countries of the world. Dr Liu will address issues in contemporary China, including family, education and religion. Dr Liu was born in Beijing where, after attending dental school, she focused on traditional Chinese medicine (acupuncture, Chinese herbology and Tuina therapeutic massage) as well as internal medicine in TCM, obtaining her license in 1980. In 1991, after marriage, she came to Santa Fe where, in 1996, she obtained her license to practice in New Mexico and now has a thriving practice in Los Alamos. In February 2003, she was appointed by Governor Bill Richardson to the State Licensing Board and elected chairman, a role she fulfilled until 2005. Dr Liu visits her family in China regularly and, as a single mother of one son, currently in college, is well aware of issues affecting mothers both here and in China.

Branch News: Let's Read Math:

Seven teachers attended the January workshop. Based on the book Measuring Penny, (Penny is a dog), stuffed animals were 'measured'. Pine cones were used to demonstrate the fibonacci number sequence. To help with future Let's Read Math activities (we will train you), contact Helena or Natalie.

In this photo, teachers share classroom techniques, and study workshop handouts.



Here, workshop presenters verify the "golden ratio" (about 1.6) after having measured arm lengths.



We have a new member, Karen Markin.

Karen is a teacher, currently working as an instructional assistant at Barranca School. Karen has 2 young children and is the daughter of branch member Natalie Markin. Karen's phone number is 661-9716 and e-mail is: ravenblade2@yahoo.com. Please add her information to your membership directory.

Study Group Schedules are posted at:
http://aauw-nm.org/los_almos_study_groups.html

Book Group: The February book is Ines of the Soul, by Isabel Allende. The February 2nd evening meeting will be held at the home of Angela Coop, 332 Aragon at 7:30pm. The February 3rd day-time meeting will be held at 2pm at the home of Rozelle Wright, 213 Barranca Road.

Non-Fiction Book Group: The next meeting will be Monday, March 16. The book is Soldier's Heart: Reading Literature through Peace and War at West Point by Elizabeth Samet. The reviewer is Margo Batha. We need a hostess; contact Denise George or Rozelle Wright to volunteer your home.

The World Cultures through Foods: All dinners are at 6pm. Contact Marilyn Minshall (672-3499) for more information. The February 28th dinner is called Gutenberg Gourmet.

Great Decisions: Carroll Thomas (672-1937) is the coordinator of the day-time group. The day time meetings are held at Mesa Public Library on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 10am. The schedule is:

Jan 12	Organizational meeting
Jan 26	Afganistan and Pakistan/ all
Feb 9	US and Rising Powers/ Doolen and Gerstl and P. Mendius
Feb 23	Global Food Crisis/ Tan and Graser
Mar 9	Energy/ Roberts
Mar 23	Egypt/ Hyman and E. Petschek
Apr 13	Cuba/ M. Petschek and Beurss
Apr 27	Artic Age/ Hahn
May 11	Human Rights/ George

The evening group is coordinated by Helena Whyte (672-9153). The schedule will be posted on the study group web site page:
http://aauw-nm.org/los_almos_study_groups.html

Bridge: Contact Jane Sherwood if you would like to play this year.

Study group chairs are asked to send schedules and any changes to Denise at georgeje@acm.org

Note from our Membership Chair:

For those of you who check the box on the membership form reading: "_ Occasionally AAUW' s membership list is made available to carefully screened companies or organizations. Check here if you do not want your name included", there is no way for our membership person to record this information on the AAUW database. According to AAUW the only way to remove your name from these shared lists is to call (800/326-AAUW) or send email to <mailto:connect@aauw.org>

Future Branch Events:

February 8, Winter Leadership Team Meeting, Santa Fe hosting.

February 9, AAUW Legislative day. Contact Rosmarie Frederickson to carpool.

February 18, 4-7pm at LAHS DECA Cafeteria Let's Read Math at Discover E. Engineering and scientific professionals from local technical societies and businesses, along with advanced students and Girl Scouts, volunteer to provide interactive demonstrations for northern New Mexico's kindergarten through high school students. AAUW Los Alamos has planned an activity involving making art with fractions of circles. This will be much fun, but we need volunteers. Contact Helena Whyte to participate.

April 24-26. Los Alamos hosts the AAUW New Mexico State Convention.

May 15 from 4:30 to 6:30PM. Mark your calendars for the Spring Membership Tea at the Unitarian Church. The NM Co-Presidents Nina Thayer(our own) and Mary Sanford will be presenting. Be sure to come to meet Mary.

July 13, Let's Read Math Program at Mesa Public Library, 7pm.

Nobel Prize Winner of the Month:

Rosalyn Sussman Yalow

(excerpt from her autobiography)

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/medicine/laureates/1977/yalow-autobio.html



I was born on July 19, 1921 in New York City and have always resided and worked there except for 3 1/2 years when I was a graduate student at the University of Illinois. Perhaps the earliest memories I have are of being a stubborn,

determined child. Through the years my mother has told me that it was fortunate that I chose to do acceptable things, for if I had chosen otherwise no one could have deflected me from my path. Neither parent had the advantage of a high school education but there was never a doubt that their two children would make it through college. By seventh grade I was committed to mathematics, but when I went to Hunter, the college for women in New York City's college system, my interest was diverted to physics. In the late '30's when I was in college, physics, and in particular nuclear physics, was the most exciting field in the world. It seemed as if every major experiment brought a Nobel Prize. I was hanging from the rafters when Enrico Fermi gave a colloquium on the newly discovered nuclear fission - which has resulted not only in the terror and threat of nuclear warfare but also in the ready availability of radioisotopes for medical investigation and other peaceful applications. My family thought the most desirable position for me would be as an elementary school teacher. Furthermore, it seemed most unlikely that good graduate schools would accept and offer financial support for a woman in physics. However my physics professors encouraged me and I persisted. As I entered the last half of my senior year, I was offered what seemed like a good opportunity. Since I could type, one of my physics professors obtained a part time position for me as a secretary to a leading biochemist at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons

(P&S). This position was supposed to provide an entrée for me into graduate courses, via the backdoor, but I had to agree to take stenography. On my graduation from Hunter in January 1941, I went to business school. Fortunately I did not stay there too long. In mid-February I received an offer of a teaching assistantship in physics at the U of Illinois. It was an achievement beyond belief. I tore up my stenography books. At the first meeting of the Faculty of the College, I discovered I was the only woman among its 400 members. The Dean congratulated me on my achievement and told me I was the first woman there since 1917. It is evident that the draft of young men into the armed forces, even prior to American entry into the World War, had made possible my entrance into graduate school. On the first day of graduate school I met Aaron Yalow, who was also beginning graduate study in physics at Illinois and who in 1943 was to become my husband. The first year was not easy. From junior high school through Hunter College, I had never had boys in my classes, except for three courses. Hunter had offered a physics major for the first time in September 1940 when I was an upper senior. As a result, I had to work hard to catch up. I was delighted to receive a straight A in two of the courses, an A in the lecture half of the course in Optics and an A- in its laboratory. The Chairman of the Physics Department, looking at this record, could only say "That A- confirms that women do not do well at laboratory work". But I was no longer a stubborn, determined child, but rather a stubborn, determined graduate student. The hard work and subtle discrimination were of no moment. Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 brought our country into the war. The Physics Department was becoming decimated by loss of junior and senior faculty to secret scientific work elsewhere. The campus was filled with young Army and Navy students sent to the campus by their respective Services for training. There was a heavy teaching load, graduate courses, an experimental thesis requiring long hours in the laboratory, marriage in 1943, war-time housekeeping with its shortages and rationing, and in January 1945 a Ph.D. in Nuclear Physics. Since my research was in nuclear physics I became skilled in making and using apparatus for

the measurement of radioactive substances. The war was continuing. I returned to New York without my husband in January 1945 since completion of his thesis was delayed, and I accepted a position as assistant engineer at Federal Telecommunications Laboratory, a research laboratory for ITT - the only woman engineer. When the research group in which I was working left New York in 1946, I returned to Hunter College to teach physics, not to women but to returning veterans in a pre-engineering program. My husband had come to New York in September 1945. We established our home in an apartment in Manhattan, then in a small house in the Bronx. Homemaking and a full-time teaching position at Hunter were hardly enough to occupy my time fully. By this time my husband was in Medical Physics at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx. Through him I met Dr. Edith Quimby, a leading medical physicist at P&S. I volunteered to work in her laboratory to gain research experience in the medical applications of radioisotopes. She took me to see "The Chief", Dr. G. Failla, Dean of American medical physicists. After talking to me for a while, he picked up the phone, dialed, and I heard him say "Bernie, if you want to set up a radioisotope service, I have someone here you must hire." Dr. Bernard Roswit, Chief of the Radiotherapy Service at the Bronx Veterans Administration Hospital and I appeared to have no choice; Dr. Failla had spoken. I joined the Bronx VA as a part time consultant in December 1947, keeping my position at Hunter until the Spring Semester of 1950. During those years while I was teaching full-time, I equipped and developed the Radioisotope Service and started research projects together with Dr. Roswit and other physicians in the hospital in a number of clinical fields. The VA wisely made a commitment to set up Radioisotope Services in several of its hospitals around the country because of its appreciation that this was a new field in which research had to proceed in parallel with clinical application. Our hospital Radioisotope Service was one of the first supported under this plan. In January 1950 I chose to leave teaching and join the VA full time. That spring when he was completing his residency in internal medicine at the Bronx VA, Dr. Solomon A. Berson and I met and in July he joined our Service.

Thus was to begin a 22 year partnership that lasted until the day of his death, April 11, 1972. He did not live to share the Nobel Prize with me. During that period Aaron and I had two children, Benjamin and Elanna. We bought a house in Riverdale, less than a mile from the VA. With sleep-in help until our son was 9, and part-time help of decreasing time thereafter, we managed to keep the house going and took pride in our growing children: Benjamin, now 25, is a systems programmer at the CUNY; Elanna, now 23, is a third year doctoral candidate in Educational Psychology at Stanford.

But to return to the scientific aspects of my life, after Sol joined our Service, I gave up collaborative work with others and concentrated on our joint researches. Our first investigations together were in the application of radioisotopes in blood volume determination, clinical diagnosis of thyroid diseases and the kinetics of iodine metabolism. We extended these techniques to studies of the distribution of globin, which had been suggested for use as a plasma expander, and of serum proteins. It seemed obvious to apply these methods to smaller peptides, i.e., the hormones. Insulin was the hormone most readily available in a highly purified form. We soon deduced from the retarded rate of disappearance of insulin from the circulation of insulin-treated subjects that all these patients develop antibodies to the animal insulins. In studying the reaction of insulin with antibodies, we appreciated that we had developed a tool with the potential for measuring circulating insulin. It took several more years of work to transform the concept into the reality of its practical application to the measurement of plasma insulin in man. Thus the era of radioimmunoassay (RIA) can be said to have begun in 1959. RIA is now used to measure hundreds of substances of biologic interest in thousands of laboratories in our country and abroad, even in scientifically less advanced lands. It is of interest from this brief history that neither Sol nor I had the advantage of specialized post-doctoral training in investigation. We learned from and disciplined each other and were probably each other's severest critic. I had the good fortune to learn medicine not in a formal medical school but directly from a master of physiology, anatomy and clinical medicine. This

training was essential if I were to use my scientific background in areas in which I had no formal education. Through the years I have enjoyed the time spent with the "professional children", the young investigators who trained in our laboratory and who are now scattered throughout the world. In my laboratory the emphasis has been not only in learning our research techniques but also our philosophy. I have never aspired to have, nor do I now want, a laboratory or a cadre of investigators-in-training which is more extensive than I can personally interact with and supervise. The laboratory since its inception has been supported solely by the Veterans Administration Medical Research Program, and I acknowledge with gratitude its confidence in me and its support through the years. My hospital is now affiliated

with The Mount Sinai School of Medicine where I hold the title of Distinguished Service Professor. I am a member of the National Academy of Sciences. Honors which I have received include, among others: Albert Lasker Basic Medical Research Award; A. Cressy Morrison Award in Natural Sciences of the N.Y. Academy of Sciences; Scientific Achievement Award of the American Medical Association; Koch Award of the Endocrine Society; Gairdner Foundation International Award; American College of Physicians Award for distinguished contributions in science as related to medicine; Eli Lilly Award of the American Diabetes Association; First William S. Middleton Medical Research Award of the VA and five honorary doctorates.

Branch Calendar

Feb	2	Convention planning meeting, 7pm, Mesa Public Library (floor3)
Feb	2	Book Group, Angela Coop's, 332 Aragon, 7:30pm
Feb	3	Book Group, Rozelle Wright's, 213 Barranca, 2pm
Feb	3	General meeting, Dr Lee, 7:30pm BELC.
Feb	9	Great Decisions, MPL, 10am
Feb	18	Let's Read Math for Discover E at LAHS, 4pm
Feb	23	Great Decisions, MPL, 10am
Feb	28	World Culture through Foods, Gutenberg Gourment

Coordinating Council for 2008-2009

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