**AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch**

**November Program**

**Glass Ceilings in Outer Space? Women in Rocket Science**

Ingleside at King Farm – Ellicott & Derwood Rooms

Saturday, November 11, 2023, at 10:30am

1615 Piccard Drive or 701 King Farm Boulevard, Rockville

Map is attached.

Join us for a bi-generational panel discussion with Yvonne Simms and Veronica Otero about their own experiences as women in Aerospace and Aeronautical sciences. How have women been accepted in such male-dominated fields then and now? Has higher education welcomed these women? What challenges have there been the workplace including hiring and promotion?

As you may know, Yvonne Simms is a long-time member of AAUW and a relatively new member of the Kensington-Rockville Branch, and Veronica Otero is the niece of branch member Beatriz Ostria Calvo. These women will provide thought-provoking insights and personal experiences as “women in space”. Their brief bios are found below.

We welcome guests to this most interesting program.

Branch Co-Program Vice Presidents

Anita Rosen & Bobbe Mintz

[anitarosen123@gmail.com](mailto:anitarosen123@gmail.com)

**Bios of the speakers:**

**Yvonne Simms** is a Fellow of the Society of Women Engineers. She retired in 2014 from Boeing after thirty-five years, having worked primarily on human spaceflight programs. Yvonne is a contemporary of the 1978 NASA class of Space Shuttle astronauts which included the first women. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Michigan Technological University and a Master of Aeronautical Science degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Yvonne designed hardware that first launched on the Space Shuttle Challenger STS-41G mission, which also included the first spacewalk by a female astronaut, Kathryn Sullivan. It was the second flight for Sally Ride. Yvonne participated in several “firsts” throughout her career, as a design, systems, and mission operations engineer on the NASA Space Shuttle, International Space Station, and Space Launch System programs.

**Veronica Otero** is Branch Head for the Thermal Engineering Branch at Goddard Space Flight Center. Ms. Otero completed a bachelor’s in mechanical engineering and a master’s in aerospace engineering from the University of Maryland. She has over twenty years of experience with lead roles in the thermal engineering discipline, supporting programs such as NASA’s Shuttle Small Payloads Project Office, Space Environment Testbeds (SET) program, Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellites (GOES-R) program, ICESat-2 program, and Landsat program. She recently served as Thermal Systems Lead for the upcoming Mars Sample Return (MSR) / CCRS Mission. Her experience ranges from early development and design of instrument payloads, integration, and testing of space hardware, and launch and early mission operations support. Ms. Veronica Otero was also an Associate Branch Head for the Goddard Space Flight Center Thermal Engineering Branch for nearly eight years prior to accepting a position as Branch Head.

**Presidents’ Message**

**Looking back**.

AAUW Maryland’s Fall Conference, hosted by the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Branch on September 30th, offered an outstanding pair of speakers on climate change. Bob Deans, Director of Strategic Engagement for the Natural Resources Defense Council, updated us on the International Agenda, in which he found some reasons for cautious optimism amid all the gloomy news. Almeta Cooper, a lawyer with expertise in health equity and environmental justice, reported on her work with Moms Clean Air Force. This organization, previously unknown to me, has focused on interesting and effective ways to get its environmental messages and recipes for change out to a broad audience succinctly and efficiently.

Now batting 0 for 2 on being there, I was crushed having to miss our October visit to “Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts” at the George Washington University Textile Museum, which I am not surprised to hear was a treasure led by an outstanding docent. An all-nighter in the emergency room (5+ hours, Anna, for your legislative lobbying data) left me nothing with which to leave my bed in time to get there. (Brian’s severe neck pain proved to be nothing dangerous and he’s now nearly fine.) I know what I missed and will get there on my own—or with you if you, too, had to forego.

**Looking ahead**.

I can’t wait for November’s program, Women at NASA, featuring two NASA career women special to us. Yvonne Simms transferred her membership from Huntsville some months ago, and Veronica Otero is a niece of Beatriz Ostria-Calvo, one of our newer members. Their perspectives will represent a wide range of time spans, locations, and experiences.

Our Kensington-Rockville Branch will host the 2024 AAUW Maryland Convention on April 20th in Ingleside’s Cultural Arts Center. We are responsible for handling logistics, food, registration, and off-site lodging. The state handbook provides excellent guidelines for what needs to be done and by when. We have a leadership team in place—thank you, co-chairs Barbara Gressman and Terry Sayler—but there are many tasks that will need short-term effort. This “one-shot” opportunity is a great way to build relationships as we work together in small groups. Do sign up!

Dian Belanger,

with Maritsa George

KR Co-President

**Remembering Jennie Forehand**

Jennie Forehand, a long-time Rockville, then Kensington-Rockville AAUW member, died in Indianapolis in October. 3, 2023, after a long struggle with Alzheimer’s Disease. She was known for her civic involvement in Rockville before serving 36 years in the Maryland Legislature, first in the House of Delegates and then the Senate. Jennie’s fight to reduce deaths from tobacco use was legendary. As a freshman on the House Appropriations Committee, she arrived early one day for their meeting and hid the then-customary ash trays. Shortly thereafter, smoking in legislative buildings became prohibited, and later, thanks to her efforts, smoking at Camden Yards and other public places was restricted. She was ahead of her time.

The truth is, Jennie was ahead of her time on countless issues. As president of the Women’s Caucus, she successfully led their strategizing against harmful Judiciary Committee amendments to a key bill, earning an editorial cartoon with her feet propped atop her desk. She and I, as legislative colleagues, worked together to protect funding for the ICC, now Route 200. She was very careful with public funds as well as her own. She also helped others with tips for bargains and other ways to save money.

Jennie used her innate charm to good effect. A lobbyist said she was one of the nicest people I ever met in Annapolis. Many would agree.

Carol Petzold,

Fortunate to be a close friend and colleague of Jennie’s.

**Woman of Distinction for the 2024 AAUW Student Leadership Conference**

It is a great pleasure to announce that Dian Belanger has been selected to be the 2024 Woman of the Distinction for AAUW Maryland. We, and all who have known her and worked with her, are not surprised that she has been so honored.

Dian's contributions to AAUW are many; she has held office as National Director and Vice President and been a member of AAUW for 50 years as well as being active in Lobby Corps and the AAUW Archives.

We all remember the fabulous lectures she has given describing her work in the Antarctic, the many insightful tours she led for us at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, where she is a docent.

Historian and writer of three books, Dian has accomplished a great deal in her life.

She is also good fun to be with and she’s a woman who is quick to offer support.

So, as we Greeks say, AXIOS, Dian! Worthy! AXIOS!

Maritsa George

Co-President

**Discussion Groups:**

**Literature Group-Live!**

Joyce Graf  [joyce@regraf.com](mailto:joyce@regraf.com)

The AAUW Kensington Rockville Literature Group will meet

in person.  Everyone is welcome.  The November 14 selection is **A Long Petal of the Sea** by Isabel Allende.   In the late 1930's civil war gripped Spain.  When General Franco and his Fascists overthrow the government, thousands flee in a treacherous journey over the mountains to the French border.  A pregnant young widow and the brother of her deceased love marry to survive.  As unlikely partners, they embrace exile and emigrate to Chile as the rest of Europe erupts in World War.  They face civil unrest in Chile, as well.

The meeting will be Tuesday, November 14 at the home of Ella Iams; the discussion will begin at 1:00.  Please RSVP to  [ellaiams@gmail.com](mailto:ellaiams@gmail.com)

There will not be a December meeting.

**Le Groupe Français**

**Ruth Spivack** [raspivack@gmail.com](mailto:raspivack@gmail.com)

The **Le Groupe Français**will meet on Monday, November 13 at 7 p.m. via ZOOM.  The Zoom link will be sent out prior to the meeting.  We will continue reading “Une Femme” by Annie Ernaux, starting on page 52.

Rsvp to Ruth so you can be included in the Zoom.

**Great Decisions-Live!**

Anita Rosen [anitarosen123@gmail.com](mailto:anitarosen123@gmail.com)

Bobbe Mintz Bobbeand herb@comcast.net

The group will be discussing our last Chapter of the Year!

**Chapter 8: Climate Change, Environmental Degradation, and Migration**

**Time: Friday, November 10, 2023, 11am.-12:30pm.**

**Place:** Derwood Room at Ingleside King Farm. 701 King Farm Blvd., Rockville, MD

Coffee and drinks available for purchase. Cafe available before or after for lunch or BYOL.

The Chapter 8 **Video Master class** will be shown twice on Zoom, Thursday Nov. 9th at 7:00 and 7:30 pm. A URL will be sent to participants and those who are interested in viewing the 27-minute video.

If you are interested in joining the group for the new 2024 year and wish to order a book, contact Anita or Bobbe.

**Deadline for the next Newsletter is November 20.**

Newsletter Editor Circulation Editor

Margery Sullivan Ruth Spivack

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

***The Afternoon Literature Group***

Judy Burr [judyb429@verizon.net](mailto:judyb429@verizon.net)

October 17, 2017, the group will be discussing My Brilliant Friend by Elena Ferrante

**AAUW Vision Statement: *AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.***

**AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For more than 135 years, we have worked together as a national grassroots organization to improve the lives of millions of women and their families.**

**In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks and inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.**

**AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch**

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