

Reaching Out From a  
Common Experience

### ***"Reaching Out From a Common Experience"***

Greetings from a unique group of people - the retirees of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The Laboratory Retiree Group (LRG) is a non-profit corporation which seeks to maintain communications with and to serve the needs and interests of retirees from LANL. If you wish to join our organization, an application is available in this newsletter. For more information, please contact our President Charles R. Mansfield at [coyote2@swcp.com](mailto:coyote2@swcp.com) or by mail at P. O. Box 546, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

#### **LRG Officers and Board Members**

President: Charles R. Mansfield [coyote2@swcp.com](mailto:coyote2@swcp.com)

Vice President: Dale Thompson [dalethompson@losalamos.com](mailto:dalethompson@losalamos.com)

Secretary: Mary Menzel [jlmenzel@netzero.com](mailto:jlmenzel@netzero.com)

Treasurer: John Stewart [jns@rt66.com](mailto:jns@rt66.com)

Board Member: George Best [georgehbest@cs.com](mailto:georgehbest@cs.com)

Board Member: Norman Delamater [ynormdel@earthlink.net](mailto:ynormdel@earthlink.net)

Board Member: Sheila Girard [sgirard@losalamos.com](mailto:sgirard@losalamos.com)

Board Member: Lester R. Hoak [mhoak@q.com](mailto:mhoak@q.com)

Board Member: Mary L. Mariner

Board Member: Bob Meier [bobmeier@mac.com](mailto:bobmeier@mac.com)

Board Member: David Schiferl [dsconsult@centurylink.net](mailto:dsconsult@centurylink.net)

Board Member: Cecil Stark [cecilstark@gmail.com](mailto:cecilstark@gmail.com)

Board Member: Alan Wadlinger [awadlinger@vla.com](mailto:awadlinger@vla.com)

#### **Committee Chairs**

Health Issues: Glenn Lockhart, (505) 672-3784, and Ken Wilson, Co-Chairs

Health Care Premium Working Committee: Glenn Lockhart, (505) 672-3784

Computer Literacy: Mary L. Mariner, (505) 672-1950

Membership: Sheila Girard, (505) 672-3497

*Main Gate*: John Stewart, (505) 662-7158

**Web Contact:** LRG Web Master: Don Reid [lrg271a@gmail.com](mailto:lrg271a@gmail.com)

The **Laboratory Retiree Group** web site is [www.losalamoslrg.org](http://www.losalamoslrg.org).

## **Health Issues** by Glenn Lockhart

An old problem may have reared its ugly head. After LANS (Los Alamos National Security, LLC) took over LANL (Los Alamos National Laboratory), the eligibility administrator (Hewitt & Associates) was dropping dependents from health insurance coverage when the principal died (generally the husband, but sometimes the wife). This was caused by the procedure of closing out the principal's coverage but not assigning a new coverage for the dependents. Things got better after a number of cases were reported to Hewitt and LANL Benefits. A new case was brought to my attention this week, which I have reported to LANL Benefits. If this happens to you, please call Empyrean Solutions (1-844-805-0002), LANL Benefits (1-505-667-1806), and then call me (1-505-672-3784). When the LANL communication tree asks you to press 1 if you are a retiree, DO NOT PRESS ANYTHING. This will take you to a person or voice mail in LANL Benefits. IF YOU PRESS 1, you will be diverted to Empyrean.

Retirees are beginning to worry about what happens to our health insurance when the prime contract for LANL management is competed in 2017 or 2018. That is entirely up to the Department of Energy/NNSA. LRG speculated that the contract could be competed before the contract expired on September 30, 2017, and began forming the Coalition for LANL Excellence (as existed in 2005 and 2006) to participate in the RFP (Request for Proposals). We did not anticipate NNSA offering a one year extension to LANS. Participants agree that we need to keep provision H-36 in the RFP and campaign to keep our present style of health insurance. We do NOT WANT a stipend system (a flat amount is paid to the retiree and they must find their own insurance). The stipend system has been implemented for retirees at Sandia National Laboratory, Livermore National Laboratory (\$2,400 per year per insured), Savannah River, Hanford, Nevada Test Facility (\$1,500 per year per insured), Brookhaven National Laboratory, Oak Ridge National Laboratory (Y-12), and Pantex. The change to a stipend system correlates highly with a change to a for-profit prime contractor. LANL is the only exception that we have identified.

The University of California Regents adopted a policy that they will work toward paying no more than 70% of health insurance costs. They have also adopted a stipend system (\$3,000 per year per insured) for UC retirees who live outside the State of California.

LRG established a legal fund from donations in 2010 when DOE/NNSA coerced LANS into making retirees pay 80% of health insurance costs. LRG has used most of the donations to that fund for mailing costs and legal fees, but a small balance remains.

If you have a question about health care or other benefits, call me at (505) 672-3784, e-mail at [mandmlockhart@cs.com](mailto:mandmlockhart@cs.com), or snail mail at 91 Mimbres Drive, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

## **White Rock Senior Center**

By Jack Clifford and Annie Bard

Temporary Location; 134 State Road 4, Suite A2, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Located in the back half of the Revival Church building, between

White Rock Metzger's and Del Norte Credit Union

We have classes in Yoga, Zumba Gold, Tap Dancing, Line Dancing, as well as Low Impact Aerobics, Silver Sneakers and Strong Women for Graduates. Our work-out space offers a five-man weight machine, a treadmill, two stationary bikes and our elliptical machine we call "the Enterprise". Seniors share information through groups like the Computer User's group, the Wood Carvers, the Hookers and Stitchers, Women Living Single, and Spanish as well as French Speakers groups. There are 3 different Bridge groups you may join depending on your level preference. We also have an active Pinochle group that meets twice a week. Saturday morning is the time for Dominos and a good cup of coffee always hot and fresh here at the WRSC. For more information and hours of operation please call the WRSC at 505-672-2034 or visit us on the web at: [losalamosseniorcenter.com](http://losalamosseniorcenter.com).

## **LANL Contract Change Merits Attention More Than Worry**

By Robert Gibson from the Los Alamos Daily Post

Los Alamos, here we go again. Another change in the LANL management contract is coming in two to three years. What can we expect? What can we do about it? Few would claim that the Lab has been more productive under LANS than its pre-2006 predecessor, UC. How fault should be apportioned among this particular management team, the for-profit business model, or DOE's bureaucratic oversight is debatable. The first will change, the second may or may not. The third won't. In any case, the sun will keep rising. Virtually all employees, with the exception of some senior managers, will keep their jobs and their paychecks. Benefits already earned should be protected. There are clouds. Employee benefits going forward will warrant close watching. The direct issue for retirees is whether the Lab will continue to pay the largest portion of health insurance premiums as it always has but is not bound to. During the last contract transition a decade ago, the people of Los Alamos were strongly supported by our two U.S. senators. They both supported the Lab and its people (which are the Lab, after all) and had the seniority and political clout to positively influence the contracting on our behalf. That is less true today. In spite of the continuity that can be expected, uncertainty itself will affect people during this transition period. Stress will rise, with its attendant emotional, mental, and physical effects on individuals and those around them. People will tend to conserve their resources. Local retail businesses, collectively always struggling, will likely experience yet another pinch. The one potentially large collateral effect of the contract change would be to our county government. Well over half its general fund revenues come from LANS. While not real likely, the next LANL contractor could be a non-profit entity, like UC was. If so, county government revenues would fall dramatically. Of course, county government functioned quite effectively for many years before 2006 on much less money. Transition back to more modest spending levels, if it becomes necessary, would not be easy or pretty. It would require our elected leaders to make the kinds of hard choices they hate. The state government would also see a revenue drop if the next contractor is non-profit. Its loss would be on the order of one percent of the state budget. That is noticeable, but not dramatic. While most decisions will be made behind closed doors in Washington, we are not helpless. When the dust settles, the Lab will still be here. It and its people will still have work to do. For most of the community, the uncertainty during the next couple years will be the biggest problem. We need to take care of ourselves. We need to watch the contract negotiations closely, as we did last time. We need to continue to support our local businesses. We also need to watch our county and state governments to make sure they represent our best interests in this transition, which may well include a return to a non-profit contractor, even if it means leaner times for them. Once again, we are reminded of our fundamental need for true economic and intellectual base diversification to reduce our singular dependence on LANL. It would strengthen the community and buffer inevitable future changes at the Lab.

### **California Pensioners Beware** By Larry Sullivan

For those with California pensions, they are coming for your pension! Reed and DeMaio are San Diego and San Jose, CA. politicians fronting for those trying to destroy the contract between the public and the public workforce. In California they use the initiative process to attack the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS), the University of California Retirement System (UCRS), and other public pension funds. They call it pension reform.

The "pension reform" is based on a 401k personal retirement account. The 401k costs 25% more in funds than a defined benefit pension program. Most of that cost is born by the employee (retiree) but the taxpayer is required to pay more also. With defined benefit pension programs, government entities can take advantage of good economic times and lower their contribution levels while still fully funding their pension fund obligations. No such option exists with the 401k model. The 401k also delivers a lower pension amount to the retiree.

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# Outdoor Statues Around Ashley Pond





## Other Statues in Los Alamos



## Ashley Pond in Winter Time



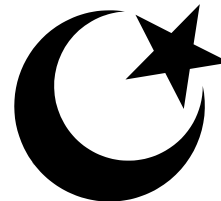




## LANL In Memoriam

10-28-15– 02-23-16

By Jack Clifford



Margaret Manthei

Gene W. Taylor

Don T. Cromer

Gilbert T. Fuentes

Mary Louise Keigher

William F. Romero

James Walton

Dennis D. Simmonds

Naomi M. Becker

R. Dean Taylor

William E. Keller

James D. Gallagher

Eulalia Q. Newton

Rodney P. Hardee

Jeanette M. Verre

Sandra J. Reichert

Calvin C. Maxwell

Mildred C. Romero

Jose B. Montoya

Marion L. Scott

Kenneth I. Mullen

Pauline M. Farmer

Romero J. Ortiz

Rudy P. Rodriguez

Barbara L. Storms

Melvin L. Prueitt

Booth Gallet

Paul E. Barbo

Hugh J. Karr

Edward R. Ferron

Oscar Hoselton

Annie Lujan

W. Clarence Courtright

Barbara Honey

Neil Zack

## Gasoline Stations

Los Alamos had three gasoline stations close last fall: the Chevron and two Metzgers. The two Metzgers have already had their storage tanks dug out and hauled away. The White Rock Metzgers will continue as a hardware store. The Diamond Drive Metzgers is closed including the garage. People had complained about the closing because of losing the garage. There is no news on the future of the Diamond Drive Metzgers or the Chevron.

### LRG Annual Meeting

**Saturday, May 14**

**4:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**Hamburgers and Hot Dogs**

Q: Why should 60+ year-old people use valet parking?

A: Valets don't forget where they park your car.

Q: As people age, do they sleep more soundly?

A: Yes, but usually in the afternoon.

### Coffee and Conversation (and Breakfast)

1st Tuesday of the month, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

**Morning Glory Baking Co.**

(Across from the High School)

Coffee or tea is free.

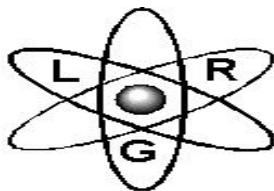
### Looking for articles for the *Main Gate*.

Experiences, humor, travels, work.

With or without pictures.

From a paragraph to a page and a half.

**E-mail them to [jns@rt66.com](mailto:jns@rt66.com)**



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## LABORATORY RETIREE GROUP (LRG) MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**LRG has two classes of membership.** Participation in all LRG social or educational events is open to **all members regardless of membership classification.**

**ACTIVE Member:** A Los Alamos National Laboratory employee who has retired from a prime contractor of LANL (UCRS, PERS, LANS or OTHER). Active members pay dues of \$12.00 per calendar year, have voting privileges at Annual Meetings, and are eligible to serve as LRG Officers and/or Directors. Active Members receive copies of the LRG DIRECTORY and LRG's publication, *The Main Gate*. A spouse (or ex-spouse) may become an Active Member upon death (or divorce) of the Active Member with payment of \$12.00 yearly dues.

**FRIEND:** A person who is not a LANL retiree but supports LRG. Friends pay dues of \$15.00 per year to cover the cost of printing and postage for issues of *The Main Gate*. Friends cannot vote, hold office or receive the directory.

### THE LABORATORY RETIREE GROUP, INC. (LRG)

- ☐ New Membership   ☐ Renewal   ☐ Friend   ☐ Change of Address  
☐ Check here if requested information remains unchanged (including phone no. and e-mail)  
☐ Check here if you DO NOT want to be listed in the DIRECTORY

**Lab Retiree:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Year Retired \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (MI)

System: UCRS   PERS   LANS   OTHER (circle one)

**Spouse:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Retiree? Yes No  
(Last Name) (First Name) (MI)

System: UCRS   PERS   LANS   OTHER (circle one) Year Retired \_\_\_\_\_

**Friend:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name) (First Name) (MI)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail?** No Yes: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment:** Please send dues payment by check to the following address:

LRG, PO Box 546, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Check#: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Dues \_\_\_\_\_ Los Alamos Employees' \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount:\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship Fund Donation:\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total:\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Laboratory Retiree Group  
LRG, Inc.  
PO Box 546  
Los Alamos, NM 87544

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
LOS ALAMOS, NM  
PERMIT NO. 152

Address Service Requested

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(Continued from page 3)

The Reed-DeMaio law would eventually end the defined benefit pension in California and at LANL. The law is clear that pension rights are property rights and so they can't dismantle the current program directly. They propose that all new employees would no longer contribute to the defined benefit pension program. Without continuing contributions from new employees, contributions drop and administrative costs increase. If their vision becomes a reality, the last few retirees left alive in the future are not getting their pension but are paying for the program to be run.

I'm RPEA Area IX Director and also President of the Greater Albuquerque Chapter of the Retired Public Employees Association of California. RPEA is a 25,000 -plus member organization advocating for defined benefit pension rights for all. RPEA is a CalPERS affiliated retiree group but our Los Alamos Chapter President is a UCRS retiree. I urge you to contact the Los Alamos Chapter of RPEA - Charles "Chuck" Anderson at 505-672-3376 or [ch.anderson505@comcast.net](mailto:ch.anderson505@comcast.net). University of California Retirement Systems retirees have two main groups advocating for their folks in Sacramento: the University Professors and the union of retired public employees. We're an organization of retired public servants and welcome all that support defined benefit pensions.