

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**

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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:** (Need a web master)

The **Laboratory Retiree Group** web site is [www.losalamoslrq.org](http://www.losalamoslrq.org). (inactive at present)

## Health Issues by Glenn Lockhart

No big topic for this article, just some small ones.

**The LANL Contract:** DOE has extended the LANS (Los Alamos National Security, LLC) contract by one (1) year to September 30, 2018. In my opinion, this reduces the probability that LANS will change the health care plan administrator (presently Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Mexico). A two (2) year term for a new administrator is too short a period to recover the cost of competing the administrator contract.

HOWEVER, if DOE directs LANS to compete the contract then LANS **will** compete the contract.

**Diabetic Supplies:** An infrequent (but interesting) question is asked about coverage for test strips and other diabetic supplies under Medicare and LANL plans. This question was most frequently asked after Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Mexico took over as plan administrator from United Health Care. Diabetic supplies are covered as a medical expense under Medicare Part B (80% paid by Medicare, 20% co-insurance paid by retiree or insurance). United Health Care also covered diabetic supplies under Medicare Part B rules. Then came the change to Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Blue Cross/Blue Shield covers diabetic supplies under the pharmaceutical program (a copay paid by the retiree, the rest paid by Blue Cross/Blue Shield).

I have pointed out to Blue Cross/Blue Shield that this coverage is inappropriate for a diabetic who is covered under the National Medicare Supplement plan. The National Medicare Supplement plan provides for a zero copay for medical expenses covered by Medicare. Under present coverage, LANS is paying for Medicare's benefit; Medicare pays zero. /Blue Cross/Blue Shield has refused to change. I suspect that their reluctance has to do with the fact that PrimeMail would have to become a Medicare Part B provider (most retail pharmacies are MEDICARE Part B providers in order to administer flu shots). PrimeMail does not administer shots.

**Explanation of Benefits Error:** The Blue Cross/Blue Shield Explanation of Benefits **sometimes** has an error of ~\$.33 on the "Amount You May Owe Provider" line. I had one error for \$.33 and one for \$.32. I have the National Medicare Supplement plan and the amount should have been zero. I called Blue Cross/Blue Shield and they issued a correct Explanation of Benefits.

**Questions?:** 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 (this Zip Code will become 87547 on July 1, 2016).

### **Los Alamos Employees' Scholarship Fund (LAESF) Administered by the LANL Foundation**

LAESF would welcome financial contributions of any amount from members of the Laboratory Retiree Group (LRG), and in particular contributions from retirees who would be interested in funding a pre-established LAESF LANL Retiree Scholarship. If interested in supporting this fund with a tax-deductible donation, please visit the LANL Foundation's website and download and complete the general pledge here: [www.lanlfoundation.org/Docs/LAESF\\_GeneralPledgeForm.pdf](http://www.lanlfoundation.org/Docs/LAESF_GeneralPledgeForm.pdf). Please be sure to write "Designate to Retiree Scholarship" in the giving options if you wish for your gift to be applied to the Retiree Scholarship Fund. Or, if you desire, you may designate your contribution on the pledge form to the General Fund. You may mail the form to the address specified on the form. For more information, please contact Tony Fox, Scholarship Program Officer with the LANL Foundation, at 505-753-8890 x116 with any questions you might have regarding the LANL Foundation or the scholarship fund.

## Operation Castle Memories by Ed Stein

It was great news to me when I was told in early 1954 that I was going to participate in Operation Castle at the PPG (Pacific Proving Grounds - Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls ). I was in Group W-1, but had never seen a live nuclear test or been in the Pacific area, so I was looking forward to the experience. When I told wife Jeannie about the trip and that it would involve a stop in Hawaii, she said "I wanna go". Of course I told her that it would cost too much and besides we had no one to look after our two daughters (Karla, 5 1/2, and Karen, 4). I exaggerate only slightly when I state that within 15 microseconds she had arranged for her mother in Albuquerque to babysit in case we went, and had got a job as a waitress at the Golf Club dining room. She earned about \$600.00 waiting tables while I took care of the kids in the evenings in the weeks prior to the trip. We did in fact stop in Hawaii on my way over to the PPG, and did touristy things there for about a week. Our hotel put us up in one of their cottages for the first couple of days, where we were entertained all night long by Hawaiian beach party music. Since we were awake, we could see all the six-legged critters that lived in the cottage and only came out after dark. We requested a move and were put up in a nice room on the sixth floor, overlooking the swimming pool.

I will always remember my feelings when we left Hawaii. I was to depart for the islands on a MATS plane at 0~Dark-Hundred hours one morning, while Jeannie was to return to the states at a later, more reasonable time the same day. I had a feeling of utter desolation as I stood on the tarmac in what seemed stygian darkness waiting to board the MATS carrier. I was going thousands of miles in one direction, and Jeannie was going thousands of miles in the other. I thought we might never see each other again. I was utterly disconsolate. Of course, as soon as I boarded the plane and talked to other people, I was OK. Of course, everything worked out fine. Jeannie played bridge with Roy Reider and friends all the way to California.

On MATS, we flew non-stop to Eniwetok. I remember a customs-type MP going through my luggage after we arrived. Shortly, Bert Heil, my Lab office mate and early Lab mentor, took me under wing, and got me over to Parry Island where we were housed. The chronology is gone, but I recall that Bert showed me around, I bought khaki shorts and getas, drank too much at a beach steak fry the first night, and probably spent a day or two just getting oriented.

My first technical job was with Bert. We were to perform the nuclear arming on a Livermore test device - the very first nuclear test that Livermore had ever fielded, and it would be the first live nuclear explosion that I had ever seen. It was a thermonuclear device, but Los Alamos had furnished the fission part of it so the Lab was responsible for its operation.

This test was at Bikini Atoll, about 180 miles from Eniwetok, as I recall. We rode over on the USS Curtiss, a seaplane tender that provided support for Operation Castle. Bert got officers' quarters for the overnight trip, as we "scientists" were supposed to. But, as usual, I wasn't on the list, or they ran out of rooms, or somebody didn't like my looks. Anyway, I ended up in a hammock down by the keel. The ship rolled all night and it was not a pleasant trip.

Shortly after we got there (perhaps hours or a day or so) Bert and I were helicoptered to the sand spit where the Livermore device was emplaced. Nuclear arming was of course absolutely necessary, but it was also a fairly simple operation. Bert and I had performed the procedure mentally many times and were not at all doubtful about our ability to do the real operation. After we had finished, a helicopter brought in Jack Clark and two others for explosive arming and took Bert and me back to the Curtiss.

# New Church Building in Town

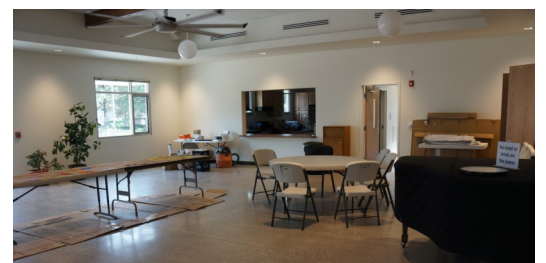
## The Unitarian Church



Top: Looking Northwest at the front. Above: Looking North at the front.



The Sanctuary



Fellowship Hall



# 19th Annual Kite Festival at Overlook Park

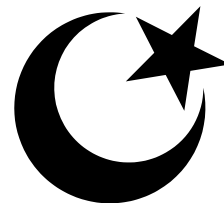
Photos from the Los Alamos Daily Post





# LANL In Memoriam

02-23-2016—06-22-2016  
By Jack Clifford



Richard L. Henderson  
Lucien Black  
David A. Padilla  
James W. Gordon  
Mark A. Mathews  
Paul Kraemer  
David H. Beddingfield  
Alice Evans \*  
James L. Anderson  
David W. Carroll  
Ralph A. Schmidt  
Gloria Cordova  
Nathanel Farnham  
Hillard H. Howard  
Gordon M. Albury  
Richard J. Bard  
Bill Olson  
Frances M. Harrison  
Robert N.R. Mulford  
Russell F. Shaw, M.D.  
Mabel P. Grey-Vigil  
Dennis R. Montoya  
Clella "Billie" Calvert  
Charles D. Aimes  
Marilyn A. Bendt

George M. Campbell  
Nellie Schachowskoj  
Jesse D. Kornegay  
Lorry M. Griffin  
Augustine (Gus) Lujan  
Eula Mae Chappell  
Alex L. Smith  
Audrey Boyer  
Bob Comer  
Gerard D. Kendall  
Luis G. Sanchez  
Pavlo S. Quintana  
Karen Ann Young  
Ernestine T. Farrar  
Marcie Zellman  
Leah R. Phelps  
Donald R. Gibbons  
James F. Andrew  
John M. Valencia  
John E. Dougherty  
Louisa M. Benton  
Mike Backsen  
Dennis D. Simmonds  
Mary Louise Keigher  
William F. Romero  
James Walton  
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 M. Maxwell  
Mildred C. Romero  
Jose B. Montoya  
Marion L. Scott  
Kenneth I. Mullen  
Pauline M. Farmer  
Romero J. Ortiz  
Rudy P. Rodriguez  
Thomas Spickermann  
Ronnie D. Vigil  
Jewell N. Roberts  
Margaret Davis  
Howard O. Richardson  
Douglas W. Lier  
Joseph L. Parkinson  
Clifton (Skip) Collins, Jr.  
James R. Eichor  
James L. Desilets  
William Eberhardt

\* Los Alamos Schools

## Be Compassionate

Trying to hear can be exhausting, frustrating and at times humiliating. "People don't want to be shouted at or treated like [they aren't] smart," says Ronald Hoffman, an otolaryngologist at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary. So when you raise the topic of a hearing test, be compassionate.

## 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.

**Hey people, we need help from you.**

**Please, Please**

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

Experiences, humor, travels, work.

With or without pictures.

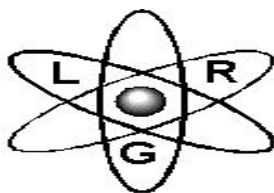
From a paragraph to a page and a half.

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

**Q: What do you call a baby kangaroo?**

**A: A pouch potato.**

**White Rock Zip Code  
Is changing to 87547 July 1.**



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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 next morning, early and very dark, we were on the bridge with lots of other folks waiting for the big bang. Someone gave me a pair of dark glasses and told me where to look. I looked. Countdown zero passed and I had seen nothing. Pretty shortly, someone in the group said "It didn't go" or "It fizzled" or words to that effect. I immediately got a panicky feeling. I think Bert did, too. We got together, went over everything we had done, considered foul-up possibilities, and finally decided that it could not have been our fault. Several weeks later, after we had returned to the Lab, Bill Carter told us that he and Edward Teller had discussed the device design while strolling the streets of downtown Honolulu one evening and decided that it was a Livermore design flaw. (Carter was W-7 Group Leader and served as the W-Division honcho while Bert and I were at the islands.) Why I never saw any detonation flash I don't know. The device did give a significant yield. Maybe I wasn't looking at the right spot, or maybe we were too far away. So much for witnessing my first test.

(To be continued in the Fall (November) *Main Gate*)