

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 Dale Thompson at dalethompson@losalamos.com or by mail at P. O. Box 546, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

LRG Officers and Board Members

President: Dale Thompson dalethompson@losalamos.com

Vice President: Leigh House hagar@newmexico.com

Secretary: Sheila Girard sgirard@losalamos.com

Treasurer: John Stewart jns@rt66.com

Board Member: George Best georgehbest@cs.com

Board Member: Norman Delamater ynormdel@earthlink.net

Boord Member: Lester A. Hoak mhoak@q.com

Board Member: Paul Lewis plewis0@comcast.net

Board Member: Charles R. Mansfield coyote2@swcp.com

Board Member: Mary L. Mariner

Board Member: Bob Meier bobmeier@mac.com

Board Member: David Schiferl dsconsult@centurylink.net

Board Member: Erika Spallitta Erika.joseph@hotmail.com

Board Member: Cecil Stark cecilstark@gmail.com

Board Member: Alan Wadlinger 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

Membership: Sheila Girard (505) 672-3497

Main Gate: John Stewart (505) 662-7158

Web Master: Paul Lewis plewis0@comcast.net

The **Laboratory Retiree Group** web site is www.lalrg.org.

Health Issues by Glenn Lockhart

Some personal comments on the replacement for the Affordable Care Act (now before Congress):

We need catastrophic long term care insurance under Medicare Part A. The present benefit is 100 days per year + six month hospice unless the patient establishes a trust (puts in resources and income) or does spend down to establish eligibility for Medicaid.

Non- coverage by individuals should have a high penalty. Part B and Part D have LIFETIME PENALTIES. Medicare Part B has a 10% penalty for each 12 months that the eligible person is not insured. Medicare Part D has a 1% per month penalty for each month that the eligible person is not insured.

The exchanges should not try to offer a one size fits all plan. Instead, follow the example of Medicare -- catastrophic services in Part A (hospital); other services in Part B (medical); coinsurance plans A to N (Medigap); Managed Care in Part C (Medicare Advantage); drugs in Part D. This system has worked well. It allows freedom of choice for both coverage and premiums, and the METHODOLOGY IS TESTED.

Setting lifetime maximums needs to be avoided.

Much ado has been made over children being allowed to stay on their parent's plan until they are 26. Why should they not be covered under the general ACA Medicaid eligibility (133% of poverty)? I don't see Congress changing this because it would cost federal dollars.

Allowing preexisting conditions will probably be retained. The only disagreement seems to be how to pay for the benefits. A high risk pool seems to be popular now. Under the Affordable Care Act, AVERAGING the cost in with the overall population resulted in constantly increasing premiums.

The present Medicaid income eligibility is a step function (you are eligible for all Medicaid benefits until your income or resources exceed a fixed amount), then you lose ALL benefits. This should be converted to a ramp function (you pay a higher premium based on your earnings and resources until you reach the cutoff amount, then transition to an exchange plan.).

I have not seen plans to furnish coverage for employees of small employers and other uninsured persons. Until there is a plan, there will be about the same number of uninsured as existed in 2009.

For questions and problems with claims/coverage, call 1-505-672-3784, e-mail mandmlockhart@cs.com, or snail mail at 91 Mimbres Drive, White Rock, NM 87547

Red Cap: Los Alamos Ambassador by Vernon Kerr

The Los Alamos Retiree Group is a civic minded group of retired Laboratory employees that is constantly looking for projects to better the community. They have already received some Red Cap material. They have accepted the promise to wear the cap downtown and to engage any tourists they meet.

Vernon Kerr noted that the town needs more eating places as one board member expressed it, "If I come to Los Alamos on a weekend, I can't find anything open to get a meal.", There are no downtown shops to buy souvenirs. Although the town is surrounded by Indian, Spanish and Mexican cultures there are no shops nor anything related to the history of the Manhattan Project evident. At the Bradbury and historical Museum, some tourist mementos can be purchased, but there needs to be more locations and items of interests for tourists. There was once the Wooden Indian shop owned by Ed Grothus but when Ed passed away the shop passed too.

REMEMBERING VELA SATELLITES

By Jack Asbridge

The first pair of Vela Satellites was launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida, on October 17, 1963. That's over 50 years ago! The sixth and last pair was launched on April 8, 1970. These satellites contained instruments to detect nuclear tests in deep space, built by Group P-4 in Los Alamos, and in the atmosphere, built by Sandia Laboratory.

How and why did this happen?

Radioactive contamination in the atmosphere and in crops, caused by nuclear testing, had been detected in the 40's and 50's. The United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom had for several years tried to negotiate an agreement to ban nuclear testing. These negotiations broke down and the Soviets resumed testing in 1961. So the United States conducted some tests in 1962.

Then in the Fall of 1962 (October) the Cuban Missile Crises occurred when the Soviets began installing nuclear devices on missiles based in Cuba. The United States could not tolerate this action. Our President John Kennedy and Soviet Premier Khrushchev realized how dangerously close we had come to Nuclear War.

Negotiations then advanced rapidly, and while a total test ban could not be achieved, a Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was developed and signed by representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom in August, 1963. This treaty prohibited testing in the atmosphere, in space, and underwater.

The United States Congress would not ratify the treaty without a Monitoring System to detect any violations. There were other conditions not pertinent to this discussion. Los Alamos Laboratory and Sandia Laboratory were assigned the responsibility of providing the instruments for the Monitoring System. The two Laboratories had known they were to prepare this system, called the Vela Hotel Project, or Vela Satellite System.

The United States Senate ratified the Treaty on September 23, 1963. President Kennedy signed the Ratified Treaty on October 7th. Ten days later that first pair of Vela Satellites was successfully launched into geosynchronous orbit. Very unfortunately, a month and a half later, President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas on November 26, 1963.

The two Vela Satellites were launched into 12-hour elliptical orbits with apogee at geosynchronous altitude, about 6 Earth Radii out. At apogee the two satellites were separated, and the first one injected into circular orbit. The second proceeded back around earth and back out to apogee 12 hours later. By that time the first satellite was on the other side of earth. Now the second satellite was injected into circular orbit. Now we have two satellites on opposite sides of the earth in 24 hour orbits, so they stay positioned over a particular longitude of, say one over Moscow and the other half way around the earth. They get turned on, tested out and begin monitoring for nuclear detonations.

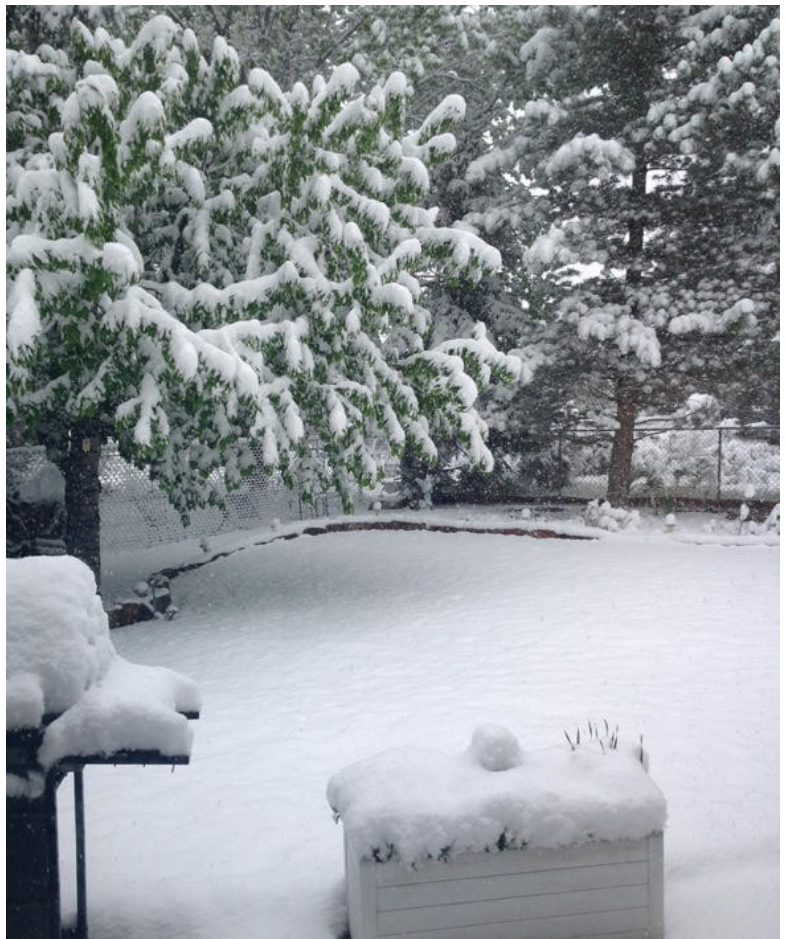
Los Alamos' instruments were X-ray, gamma-ray and neutron detectors, since those are the primary detectable radiations from a detonation in space. If the device is detonated in the atmosphere, those radiations are absorbed by the air, which fluoresces, creating a characteristic optical flash detectable by Sandia's optical detectors, called bhangmeters. Starting with the fourth pair of satellites, they were earth oriented, so that the bhangmeters pointed toward earth, necessary for continuous coverage of earth below the satellite. After the sixth launch, in 1970, we had 12 Vela Satellites roughly equi-distance apart, forming a constellation of detonation monitoring satellites fulfilling requirements to monitor the Test Ban Treaty.

Our programmatic detectors responded to the various radiations and particle fluxes present naturally in our geosynchronous orbit. These contain information of scientific interest. Most of this could not be published in scientific literature because the instruments were classified Secret, and their exact capabilities could not be described. Gamma-ray bursts, probably from formation and decay of Super-novas in very distant galaxies, were discovered by the gamma-ray team, and pub-

(continued on page 8)

Spring Time Weather - April 28, 29, 2017

Photos from Los Alamos Daily Post



Los Alamos Flowers

Photos by Kok Heong McNaughton



Columbine



Tulips



Amaryllis



Daffodil



Nanking Cherry



Periwinkle



Orchid



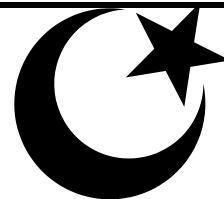
Crocuses



LANL In Memoriam

02-19-2017—06-22-2017

By Jack Clifford



Donald F. Cameron
Betty W. Peterson
Connie Kay Stephens
Pete Mygatt
Charles F. Hammer
Larkin E. Garcia
John L. Yarnell
Wilfred Gutierrez
Joann DeLuzio Marts
Mary C. Brooks
Guadalupe Guthrie
Arlene Beacham Post
Harold Halbig
Joyce A. Harvey
William C. Davis
Elizabeth Hansbury
Ronald G. Roberts
Lawrence R. Gurley
Larry R. Rhodes
Olive E. Doehling

Dennis E. Galvez
Jack Pickett
Fred O. Pulser
Chaim Richman
John L. Rand
Roger L. Rasmussen
Barbara Harmon
Delman A. Law
Joel Mann (Pete) Williams, Jr.
Richard J. Imprescia
Robb C. Minor
Phyllis E. Krick
Haskell Sheinberg
Michael S. Moore
Loren A. Carlson
Warren R. Doty
Joanne Barnes
Jack C. Fuller
Charlie A. Stallings
Dale W. Glasgow

Stuart D. Orbesen
Paul J. Moore
Albert Saxman
Douglas E. Nash
Beverly Washburn
Nicholas P. Armenis
Hugh J. Karr
Shirley J. Felton
Stuart D. Orbesen
Joseph W. Taylor
Marjorie L. Dube
Winnie W. Berry
Helen Lederer
Marjorie Wilson
John N. Horne
David B. Holtkamp
Charles R. King
Don R. Morrow
David B. Curtis

Quarterly Breakfast at Viola's Restaurant in Los Alamos

Professional Case Management (PCM) sponsors a quarterly breakfast at Viola's Restaurant in Los Alamos for LRG members who live in Los Alamos and White Rock. PCM pays for all expenses pertaining to the breakfast including invitations and food. They are sponsoring these breakfasts to educate people about the Department of Labor's program that compensates nuclear workers for health problems developed while working at a nuclear facility such as LANL. PCM only benefits if people qualify to enter the program and select their company to provide their health care services. Los Alamos and White Rock LRG members will soon be receiving invitations in the mail for the next breakfast in July.

+++++Volunteers Wanted+++++

DOE will begin competition for LANL's prime contract this year (2017). We do not know when our work will begin, but we do know that we have to protect our health insurance. LRG is seeking volunteers to write letters and postcards for mass mailings, make and answer phone calls, attend meetings, stuff mailings, and other unattractive but vital work.

To volunteer, write LRG, P.O. Box 546, Los Alamos, NM 87544 or e-mail

sgirard@losalamos.com with your Name, Mailing address, Home phone, and e-mail address.

Donations to the LRG Legal Fund will be accepted at P.O. Box 546, Los Alamos NM 87544.

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.

Please, need articles for the *Main Gate*.

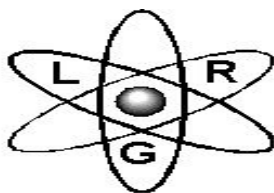
Experiences, humor, travels, work.

With or without pictures.

From a paragraph to a page and a half.

E-mail them to jns@rt66.com

White Rock Addresses are now "White Rock, NM 87547".



Reaching Out From a
Common Experience

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

(continued from page 3)

lished, a very important accomplishment. We were allowed to put some background measuring instruments aboard. We argued that, if a Nudet-like signal was detected, it must be unquestionably not caused by the environment, but must have been a nuclear detonation. So each satellite included an electrostatic analyzer to monitor charged particles. These provided probably the most complete and detailed measurements at that time on the Solar Wind (the expanding solar corona) and its interaction with the Earth's bow shock, magnetosphere, and radiation belts. Several of our physicists became quite famous publishing these observations.

To my knowledge, the Soviets never violated the prohibition of testing Nudets in deep space, we never detected any such violations. But Sandia's Bhangmeters detected and measured numerous detonations in the atmosphere, as the Chinese and French and others tested in the atmosphere.

We were fortunate to have a very talented and dedicated staff of physicists, electrical engineers, data processors and other support. Our relations with Sandia staff as well as the spacecraft and launch vehicle staff were exceptional. Overall the Vela Satellite Program was spectacularly successful, and all of us who participated were proud of our accomplishments.