

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.

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Main Gate: Joyce Wolff (505) 709 0797
Health Care: Norman Delamater, Patricia Wing
Webmaster: Paul Lewis

Laboratory Retiree Group Website: www.lalrg.org

To join the LRG or to renew your membership find an application form on page 7.
For information contact Dale Thompson, PO Box 546, Los Alamos, NM 87544 or
board@lalrg.org, president@lalrg.org

Health Care Committee Report

Norman Delamater and Patricia Wing

We are looking at the Laboratory benefits policies as well as policy issues at the State and National levels and how that may affect LRG members. For 2019, the Laboratory has maintained the same level of retiree benefits as was the case in 2018. The monthly premium increase in retiree health plans has been kept to less than 5% due to favorable claims experience of the group. The policies of the Blue Cross/Blue Shield supplemental plans for LANL from bcbsnm.com have not changed from 2018, although the drug plan formulary is always updated. Check with BCBS to see if your prescriptions may be affected by any changes to the drug formulary. For some generic drugs it sometimes happens that a better price is obtained when using some national discount programs www.goodrx.com instead of the BCBS mail order program, just compare the goodrx.com coupon price with whatever you may be paying now for a particular generic drug. Also, pharmacies at Walmart, Smiths, Walgreens, CVS and independents have discounts on low cost generics available without using the BCBS insurance which can bring cost below insurance co-pays for some generics. It is always best to shop around for the best deals with prescription drugs.

For the most part, Medicare has few changes for 2019. The monthly Part B premium is now \$135.50 for most, but the premium may go up depending on income. Medicare had a change during 2018 in that the \$2100 cap on physical, speech and occupational therapy treatment was removed, so now those treatments are fully covered under Part B when medically necessary. Those on Medicare should have received a new Medicare card without social security numbers by now; if not, please call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE. Another possible benefit for Lab retirees is long term care insurance. Medicare does not cover long term care, except in limited circumstances connected with hospital stays; it can cover stays in skilled nursing facilities for a limited time. If you worked for University of California for part of your Lab career, you are eligible to apply for long term care insurance through the CalPERS long term care program. For details, please see www.calperslongtermcare.com. Also, Genworth insurance company genworth.com provides individual long term care insurance.

For those LRG retired members not yet on Medicare, the same health plan coverage is available as current Lab employees have. Please remember to sign up with Medicare Parts A and B when you turn age 65. LANL requires all retirees to sign up for Medicare Parts A and B in order to maintain retiree health benefits. When you are retired and enrolled in Medicare, you will then enroll through Empyrean in one of the Lab retiree health plans which are coordinated with Medicare.

If you are age 65 or over, and still receive a paycheck and employee benefits from LANL, you need to sign up for Medicare Part A when you become age 65, and you may be able to delay Part B enrollment until you actually leave LANL employment. Please check with LANL benefits for the current requirements for your particular situation if you are actively employed at LANL and over age 65. Please do not forget to sign up for Medicare Part B to avoid penalties as soon as you actually leave LANL employment and then enroll through Empyrean for the retiree benefit plans of your choice.

We will be following any possible changes to LANL Retiree benefits later in the year and we hope to have some meetings during open enrollment again at the Senior Centers in White Rock and Los Alamos when more details might be known about retiree benefits. Stay tuned for more information throughout this year.

Pleasant Hike Through the Himalayas

Hank Oona

I was invited to go along on a hiking trip through one of the world's natural wonders, the Himalayan mountain range. I was fortunate to go with a group of geologists from the University of Arizona. This made the trip not only for fun but it was also educational. The Los Alamos Laboratory retirees group has many curious people that are interested in unique things and places. They asked and I volunteered to write a short report about my experiences.

The Himalayas are the tallest and the most rugged and beautiful mountains on the earth. Mt. Everest is 29028 ft tall, where commercial jets fly. It was explained to me by the geologists that the Himalayas came into existence about 50-100 million years ago due to continental drift. At that time there was a large landmass (Gondwana) that included Africa, Antarctica, South America and others that started to break up. One of the small pieces (India) moved north at a geologically fast rate of 10 cm/year and plowed into Nepal. It went underneath Nepal like a snowplow, and forced up the mountains, which are still growing at a couple millimeters per year. Before India started the journey north, it was attached to the landmass that we now call Antarctica.

We traveled from the eastern end to the western end of the Himalayas by various forms of transportation. These included: by four wheel drives; by foot; by airplane circumventing the Himalayan mountain range; and by elephant back (Figure 13) for a short excursion toward India. We met many friendly people, including kids going to school. The school kids were polite and greeted us with "Namaste" (a friendly hello). The pictures that follow show a rugged but beautiful place. The picture of Mt. Everest (Figure 8) shows the peak poking thru the clouds at an elevation where commercial jets fly. A young lady from Tibet (Figure 5) comes from the other side (north) of the Himalayas to sell her artwork to the tourists like us. Glaciers, rivers and wind have sculpted the mountains and made the area into a scenic place. I feel fortunate that I have had a chance to see it and take pictures, and experience walking in it.



Figures 1 and 2 The hiking crew on the left picture. The Sherpas on the right. They carried most of our heavy stuff. They also carried our dining room table.



Figure 3 Rope bridge across the river. There are many along the trail. Start of the hike.



Figure 4 Old cottage near the hiking trail. Old but beautiful.



Figure 5 Girl from Tibet selling her artwork. She walks across the mountains to do this.

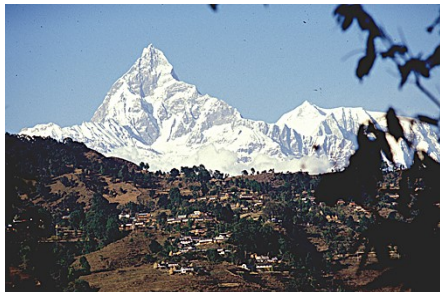


Figure 6 Fishtail or Machapuchare Mtn. This mountain has never been climbed.



Figure 7 Beautiful scenery in the middle of the Himalayas.



Figure 8 Mount Everest or Sagarmatha, the tallest peak in the center of the picture. It is 29028 ft tall. The highest point on the Earth.



Figure 9 The Sherpas carrying our equipment.



Figure 10 Mt. Annapurna and village at bottom of picture.



Figure 11 The peak of Annapurna. The top is at 26545 ft.



Figure 12 Friendly girls going home from working in the field.



Figure 13 Another form of hiking. A half-day excursion on elephant back.

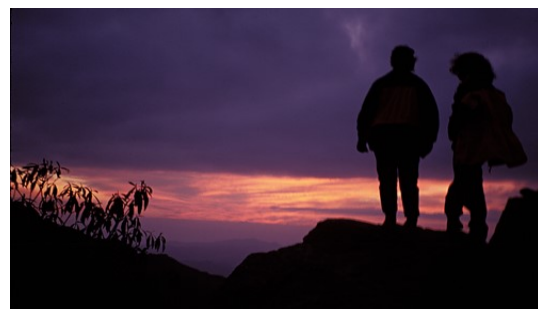


Figure 14 Sunset in the Himalayas.



LANL In Memoriam



October 2018—February 2019

By Jack Clifford



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

**We can always use articles for the
Main Gate.**

**Experiences, humor, travels, work,
with or without pictures.**

**From a paragraph to a page and a
half.**

E-mail to:

jwolff@lomalobo.com

Coffee and Conversation (and Breakfast)

1st Tuesday of the month

8:30-10:30 a.m.

Morning Glory Restaurant

***1377 Diamond Drive
Across from the High School***

**Full breakfast menu
Coffee or tea provided by the
LRG.**

Robert Nance	Helen M. Byers
Warren E. Crowe	Merle Roberts
Margaret P. Lucas	John J. Malanify
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John P. Balagna	Lois F. Gritz
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Ray Allenson	Albert Trujillo
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Lois M. Bustos	Edward Joseph Dowdy
Leroy G. Antencio	Emilia "Luchi" Guevara
Patricia A. Kelley	James McNally

*Swift passage of time
Marches with relentless beat
Then falters in step.*

JJW

Thank you, Shari
Mills and Richard
Henderson with-
out whose help
this Main Gate
would never have
gone to press.



Spirit of the West Award

No one is more deserving of the Spirit of the West Award than Jack Clifford. The Community Assets Award is given annually by the Champions of Youth Ambitions, a local non-profit organization, “celebrating the young and the young at heart.”

He was nominated primarily for his many volunteer hours at the White Rock Senior Center making retirees feel welcome and cheerfully doing countless chores there. He is credited with over 8,000 hours of service. Thank you, Jack!

Photo courtesy of The LA Daily Post

LRG Annual Meeting

The 2019 **LRG Annual Meeting** will be on Friday, May 3, 2019, at the Betty Ehart Senior Center, 1101 Bathtub Row, Los Alamos, NM. Luncheon will include turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, veggies and a cookie. Sign-in begins at 11:00 a.m.; lunch (provided by LRG) begins at 11:30 a.m. Lunchtime presentations begin at 12:00 p.m., and the business meeting will follow presentations. A postcard announcement will be sent to members in April requesting an RSVP.

LRG Directory



LRG board member/secretary, Sheila Girard, is the keeper of the huge data base that is used to produce the LRG Annual Directory. The annual LRG directory came out in early March and was sent to every LRG member in good standing. You can update your membership and personal information, if necessary, by using the form inside the cover.

Thank you, Sheila!

Editor's Notes: In future issues of the Main Gate I would like to introduce some new features including a resource list of interesting, educational, and appropriate websites. In this issue I would introduce, if it isn't already in your “favorites” folder, the **Bradbury Science Museum**. You will find endless paths to the brilliant innovative work of the Laboratory, special events, outreach programs, and an excellent monthly newsletter.



Read a good book that might be of interest to fellow retirees? Share the word. It seems newly published books relating to Los Alamos are appearing regularly—but it need not end there.

Last I ask for your memories, old photos, or anecdotes, about the “old days” to be shared in a column called, **Old Timers May Remember**. The Main Gate is yours and should include what you want to see. Please share your thoughts and ideas.

Joyce J. Wolff

LABORATORY RETIREE GROUP (LRG) MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or RENEWAL FORM

LRG Works to Protect Retiree Benefits

Membership in the Laboratory Retiree Group, Inc. (Los Alamos) is open to any person age 50 or older who currently receives or expects to receive an ongoing financial benefit (health or other insurance, retirement income, or other forms of remuneration) from having worked or having an association with someone who worked for the prime contractor of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

ACTIVE MEMBERS (described above) pay \$20 dues per calendar year per household, have voting privileges at Annual Meetings, and are eligible to serve as LRG Officers and/or Board Members. Active members receive copies of the LRG Directory and LRG's 3-times/year publication, *The Main Gate*. Spouses of deceased Active Members remain members as long as yearly dues are paid.

FRIENDS are persons who support LRG. Friends pay dues of \$20 per year to cover the cost of printing and postage of issues of *The Main Gate*. Friends are unable to vote, hold office, or receive the LRG Directory.

MEETINGS. LRG has no regular meetings, but a Board Meeting is held once a month which is attended by board members and any interested members. Also, an Annual Meeting is held in May of each year for all members who wish to attend, and lunch is provided.

SOCIALS: All members are welcome to attend the "First Tuesday Breakfast" held once a month at a local restaurant from 8:30 to 10:30 am. Members purchase their own breakfast but receive a free "LRG drink" if requested at time of meal purchase.

WEBSITE: Check out LRG's website at lalrg.org.

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

Active Member: _____
Last Name First Name Middle

LANL Retiree? Yes No Year _____ System: UCRS PERS LANS OTHER (circle as needed)

Spouse and/or Active Member _____
Last Name First Name Middle

LANL Retiree? Yes No Year _____ System: UCRS PERS LANS OTHER (circle as needed)

Friend _____
Last Name First Name Middle

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Telephone: () _____ **E-mail?** No Yes: _____

Payment: Please mail this form plus \$20 per year dues payment by check to:
LRG, PO Box 546, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Date: _____ Dues
Check No: _____ Enclosed: _____

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

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The LAESF Workforce Retirees' Scholarship Fund is a newly endowed component of the Los Alamos Employees' Scholarship Fund. It has been funded with generous contributions from Laboratory retirees, including contributions from Laboratory Retiree Group members. The LAESF Advisory Committee will now be able to award a \$1000 annual scholarship to deserving students each year in the name of the "Workforce Retirees' Scholarship Fund". These awards will be based on both scholarship and financial need and will now be a part of the entire LAESF scholarship awards. Thanks to all LRG members who have contributed to this fund or may contribute in the future.