



Chris Laszcz-Davis  
KASRA President

Visit website at  
[www.e-kasra.com](http://www.e-kasra.com)

Do you know a retiree who has not signed up for the VEBA? Suggest they call KASRA at (925) 685-1313 or email at [kasra@e-kasra.com](mailto:kasra@e-kasra.com)

### *Kaiser Aluminum Salaried Retirees Association*

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE KASRA PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Retirees/Surviving Spouses:

It's the close of yet another year, and we again have much to be thankful for! I'd like to thank you for letting me serve as your President and placing me in touch with so many people I'd worked with over the years!

As you know, KASRA's main objective is to provide a vehicle for our retirees and surviving spouses to communicate current information about benefits and other retirees via the newsletters, website and mass e-mailing; answer queries about matters concerning retirement by phone, regular mail or e-mail; and share information about their many activities with colleagues and friends. To enable us to keep in contact with you, *it is important that you inform us of any change to your mailing address, e-mail or phone number.* This way, we can continue to keep in touch with you and also facilitate communications between you and the many former colleagues and lifelong friends with whom you have shared a common path during your association with Kaiser.

After serving out their terms on the Board, Secretary **Ed Westerman** and Treasurer **Paul Flores** will earn well-deserved retirements from the Board, with **Steve Ping** moving into the Secretary role and **Erach Tarapore** into the Treasurer's role. We can't thank Ed and Paul enough for their time, skill and thoughtful perspectives. We plan to have some additional shifts in roles as the new year

unfolds.

I would also like to acknowledge our other Board members, staff and retirees who make the KASRA efforts possible: **Ed Quinnan, Doug Mann, John Schnitter, Dan Dahlen, Klaus Adler, Carol Brown, Bob Irelan, Dick Kauffman, Carlos Xavier, Joanne Gutierrez, Bill Alsup, Sharon Fraetis, Sally Hogarty (freelance journalist), Steve Abernathy, Kari Dahlen** and **Michelle Alviso of A-Mailing**. Without their help and that of the retiring members mentioned above, none of our objectives could have been met.

I would be remiss if I did not thank our regional directors (**Tom Summerson, Norm Manger, Dave Whitman, Bob Eisenbach** and **Bob Mohr**) and plant reporters (**Tim Healy, Charlie Alexandre, Chuck Schimmel, Dan Petrus** and **Bill Snyder**) --for keeping us all informed of news in their respective regions. I am also thankful to the many members who have shared their activities in the "What's Going On" section of the newsletter.

And finally, a special thanks to **Doug Allen, Art Donaldson** and **Jed Daniel** for their invaluable stewardship on VEBA matters.

**Special note:** Many Kaiser Aluminum salaried retirees may not know the details surrounding the formation and operation of KASRA, nor how the Association's leadership, membership and mission have changed over its 25-year life. This rich story is recounted in **Ed Westerman's informative overview "KASRA-Past,**

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### Birthday and Anniversaries . . .

**Hazel Hunt** (Mead, WA), surviving spouse of **Clayton Hunt**, recently celebrated her 90th birthday with a great family birthday party. She still lives in the home she shared with Clayton when he worked at Trentwood, WA. **Eleanor (Ellie) Comfort** (Newman Lake, WA) and her husband celebrated their 60th anniversary in June. The former storeroom office manager at Trentwood Works in Spokane, WA, has found several creative outlets in retirement. She does quite a bit of painting and arts and crafts including original tiny historical figures. She also repairs family heirloom quilts with materials from 1930-40.

Congratulations to **Howard Nelson** (Alamo, CA) and his wife Dorothy Ann on their 57th wedding anniversary. Previously with Kaiser's Chemical Division in Cleveland, OH, Howard and his wife travelled to Washington, DC, in April to see their daughter Ann inducted into the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). Ann is a professor of physics at the University of Washington in Seattle. A very special Happy Birthday to **Orville Benjamin** (Coeur d'Alene, ID). The former Trentwood, WA, worker turned 102 in September. He keeps his mind sharp by reading and working jigsaw puzzles.

### A Little of This, A Little of That . . .

Golf and reading occupy **Doug Hughes** (Granville, OH). He is

the surviving spouse of former Newark, NJ, employee **Barb Hughes**. Also previously with Kaiser's Newark, OH, plant, **Frank McCoy** (Utica, OH) recently retired from the Knox County Career Center where he was a career-based intervention supervisor and teacher. Still working is **Edward Marshall** (Pawtucket, RI). Formerly with Kaiser's Wire and Cable Division in Portsmouth, RI, Ed now works for GTech Corporation as a logistics analyst. He recently traveled to Las Vegas and New Hampshire and enjoys golf and fishing.

Former Gramercy Works, LA, worker **Frank "Beef" Lewis** (Baton Rouge, LA) still finds time to golf when not volunteering on board the U.S.S. Kidd DD661 Museum Ship. The former destroyer is moored in Baton Rouge, LA. His next project is to visit the Gulf Coast beaches. **Jim Caldwell** (San Antonio, TX) likes to travel, both in the United States as well as Western and Eastern Europe. When at



Thirty-nine retirees attended Belpre, Ohio's September luncheon held at the Western Sizzlin' Steak House. Previous Plant Manager Dave Whitman gave a short talk bringing everyone up to date on Kaiser happenings, followed by blue grass and gospel music performed by retiree Everett Jarvis and his son Calvin. (L-R) First Row: Betty Blair and Mary Bayer; Second Row: Paul Beegle, Dave Whitman, Elven Jones and Don Scott.

*(What's Going On, from Page 2)*

home, he spends time with his grandchildren, volunteering at his church and at Meals On Wheels.

**Alfred Zucker** (Sunrise, FL) sends greetings to his former co-workers at Woodbury Extrusions in New York. "We had a great team and enjoyed being a part of the Kaiser Corporation," he says. An active member of the Jewish War Veterans,



Enjoying Chalmette, LA's September luncheon are "Los Cinco Amigos" (L-R) **Bob Pressen**, **Jerry Lambert**, **Linda Duhe**, **Tom Hazlett** and **Ralph Veller**.

Alfred, who turned 94 in August, enjoys reading, crossword puzzles and watching TV. He is the Home Healthcare aide to his wife of 73 years, Jeanette. Unfortunately, hip and leg problems are keeping **Irene Harker** (Walla Walla, WA) close to home these days. "I'm afraid I'm mostly homebound since walking is difficult and I'm not able to drive," says the surviving spouse of **William Harker**, who worked at Trentwood, WA.

Playing golf keeps **James Hitchings** (Harvel, IL) busy. He also works part-time for C.P.S. Crop Services in Morrisonville, IL, and volunteers to take people to and from the hospital for blood tests and dialysis appointments. Between

his many activities, James finds time to visit his children and their families in Ohio, Colorado, Montana and California. Congratulations to **Bob Schoen** (Baton Rouge, LA) who retired from Noranda Alumina (formerly Kaiser Gramery, LA) this past September. Also recently retired is **Wayne Rickard** (Pasco, WA). Wayne, who worked at Kaiser's Mead, WA, plant, has been working for Umatilla Chemical

Depot. He still likes to fish, go boating and play ice hockey. Recent travels include cruises to the Hawaiian Islands.

Former Ravenswood, LA, employee **Raymond Sansbury** (Tusculumbia, AL) spends his time hunting, fishing, golfing and traveling around to see "all the places of interest." Although she celebrated her

91st birthday last March, **Nancy Brown** (Severna Park, MD) still lives to play golf as well as Duck Pin bowling. The surviving spouse of **Lafayette Brown, Jr.**, who worked at Kaiser's Oakland, CA, facility, Nancy spends her winters in Sarasota, FL, with friends. When home, she volunteers as an information specialist for the Annapolis and the Chesapeake Bay area. She recently moved to the Sunrise Independent Living apartments and celebrated the birth of her second great grandson.

**Allen Lightner** (Ponchatoula, LA) loves to fish and tend to his garden. Unfortunately, repairing lawn equipment takes up quite a bit of his time. The former pot repair supervisor at Chalmette, LA, spent

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the 4th of July in Slidell, LA, with his grandson Major Matthew Wolfe and his family. Two former Kaiser employees are looking out for each other in Louisiana. **Anthony Gerace** (Madisonville, LA), who worked in Materials Control at Chalmette, LA, and his wife have been having health problems that keep them close to home. Another Materials Supervisor from Chalmette, LA, **Harold Rosselli**, lives close by and has been stopping by to see if they need anything.

Listing himself as “one of the world’s oldest body surfers,” **Dennis (Denny) Seymour** (San Diego, CA) keeps active with his water sports and golfing. He also volunteers at the Pomerado Hospital and is a San Diego Maritime docent. He loves traveling as part of the Road Scholar programs, which provide educational travel adventures for adults. He has gone to San Francisco, CA, Washington, DC, and Sante Fe, NM, in the past year with the group, which is run by Elderhostel. Full of creativity, **Ruth Eichhorn** (Tracy, CA), enjoys creating scrapbooks for each of her 11 grandchildren, and she includes

lots of her own art work as well.

**Dale Doerr** (Oroville, CA) says that reading about **Bill Snider’s** Honor Flight adventure reminded him of his own. Honor Flight is a nonprofit organization that transports veterans of World War II to Washington, DC, to see the monuments and for a special lunch. “My trip was in May 2012, and it was something to remember,” says Dale. It brought tears to my eyes when we landed at Washington, DC, and then returned to San Francisco, CA. In both places, groups of school children cheered us like we had done something special.” Dale encourages all veterans to contact Honor Flight. “They have wheel chairs for those who can’t walk,” he adds.

Working as a hair stylist and helping care for her family keeps **Sherry Hellyer** (Ravenswood, WV), surviving spouse of **Homer Hellyer**, quite busy. But, she did find time to take a 15-day trip to Alaska last year. **William “Rocky” Hill** (Sunrise, AZ) and his wife Dianne spend part of their retirement volunteering on



**William “Rocky” Hill and his wife Dianne love volunteering on the USS LST 325 ship, which landed tanks and soldiers during World War II.**

the USS LST (landing ship, tank) 325 ship. Used in World War II to land tanks, vehicles, soldiers and supplies onto enemy beaches, it is now moored in Evansville, IN. For more information on the ship, go to [www.lstmemorial.org](http://www.lstmemorial.org). Rocky previously worked at Trentwood, WA,

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## MEMBER PROFILE: Rick and Brenda Merkel

**Rick Merkel** and his wife, **Brenda**, both enjoyed long, varied careers with Kaiser Aluminum. The couple now lives in Columbus, Indiana, where they both continue to have busy careers, as well as volunteer with a number of philanthropic organizations.

### When did you begin working for Kaiser?

**Rick:** Which time? I began my career in 1979 at the Houston Can Plant in Houston, TX, and eventually transferred to Union City, CA, in 1980. When it was sold in 1984, I was sold with it and became Plant Manager for the new Continental Can owners. I returned to KACC in 1986 as Production Superintendent for the Permanente Foil Plant in Cupertino, CA. In 1990, I was transferred to Oxnard, CA, as Plant Manager of the Oxnard Forge Plant.

**Brenda:** I worked for Kaiser Trentwood, WA, my entire career, beginning in 1976 until I “retired” in 2001. I started



**Brenda and Rick Merkel enjoying a night on the town.**

in Remelt, then moved to the Hotline, where I stayed until 1987. Then I moved to Inside Sales and remained there from 1987 – 1994. In 1994, Rick was transferred and I moved my job to Erie, PA., still reporting to Trentwood Inside Sales, but now relocated to the Erie, PA, Forging Plant. The next move was to the Farmington Hills Sales office, when Rick moved to the Southfield, MI, office.

### How did you and Brenda meet?

**Rick:** We had mutual friends who introduced us in the early ‘90s. We enjoyed dinner a few times and a long distance relationship developed between Oxnard, CA, and Spokane, WA. I was transferred to Erie, PA, as Works Manager in 1994. We were engaged by then, and the thought of a three time zone relationship didn’t make much sense. We were married in March of 1994, and Brenda joined me in Erie in May of 1994.

### I understand that Kaiser and its customers also benefited from your marriage.

**Rick:** They certainly did. When we got



**Brenda and her mother, former Kaiser employee Mary McKinley, prepare Christmas dinner.**

### Send KASRA Your News & Pictures

Write us your news, travels, stories... humorous tales welcome. Send a note to Sally Hogarty, P.O. Box 84, Canyon, CA 94516 or [sallyhogarty@gmail.com](mailto:sallyhogarty@gmail.com).

\* Photos encouraged.

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married, Brenda was a senior inside sales person for Trentwood, WA. Meanwhile **Dave Fenton**, who was a friend to both of us, had been dealing with east coast customers who wanted real time access to the status of their orders and bills. So Dave suggested that Brenda move to an office at Erie's Forging Division and be the first remotely located Trentwood, WA, employee. It worked flawlessly.



**Brenda and Rick sample the nightlife in Tokyo with Mitsubishi Corp. executives and their wives.**

**Brenda:** I could talk to east coast customers in real time and also connect to the Trentwood system, letting them know the status of their orders. If there was a problem, I could call the mill and get things remedied. When Rick was transferred to Southfield, MI, I just moved my remote location to a sales office in nearby Farmington Hills, MI.

#### **What made you decide to work for Kaiser?**

**Rick:** I was working at Proctor & Gamble in Macon, GA, in their "Fats and Oils Division", making soybean oil products when Kaiser offered me a position as Plant Engineer of the Houston, TX, Can Plant. Frankly, making two million

beer cans on a daily basis for Budweiser seemed lots more exciting than making oil to cook fish and fries.

**Brenda:** At the time, Kaiser was the largest employer in Spokane, WA, and they offered many opportunities. My mother and stepfather, **Mary** and **Del McKinley**, were also employed at Kaiser Trentwood.

#### **What was your biggest challenge at Kaiser?**

**Rick:** Reconfiguring the Erie Forge Plant from a multi-market Kaiser facility into a joint venture between Kaiser and Accuride, Inc. in order to focus on manufacturing Class 8 heavy-duty truck wheels for customers like Paccar and Freightliner.

**Brenda:** My first years were in somewhat nontraditional roles for a female. Usually men held supervisor and foreman positions on the factory floor. Several other women and myself moved into the first "foreman training program" created by then Plant Manager **Bob O'Neal**.

#### **What was your best memory or most satisfying project at Kaiser?**

**Rick:** Working with the people in all the plants that I managed and being mentored by guys like **Steve Booth**, **Joe Bernat**, **Dave Fenton**, **Mike Magroarty**, **Steve Ping**, **Jack Hockema** and others. I was exposed to all phases of management, from union negotiations to the technology of products from aluminum cans to aerospace parts.

**Brenda:** Along with the challenges came the opportunities to meet the executive leaders. While I was in inside sales, I remember traveling to McDonnell Douglas Long Beach, CA,



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with **Dick Evans** and a few others to make a customer call. It was quite an experience to have exposure to top level management like **Ray Milchovich, Jack Hockema, Bill Sydow** and **Dave Fenton**, to name a few. I worked in the Operations and Sales Departments and felt fortunate to see the business from the inside and the customer's perspective as well.

#### When did you leave Kaiser?

**Rick:** I left in 1998 when it was evident that Kaiser couldn't maintain all the operations. I was under 50 at the time and thought I'd be more employable if I made a move then.

**Brenda:** I stayed on until 2001 when Kaiser started downsizing.

#### What are you and Brenda doing now?

**Rick:** I'm the executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Enkei America. Enkei America is a part of the Enkei Group, the largest cast aluminum automotive/light truck wheel manufacturer in the world. Privately held, Enkei is headquartered in Hamamatsu,

Japan, a two-hour bullet train ride southwest of Tokyo. They operate over 20 aluminum wheel plants in Japan, China, Southeast Asia, India and North America with customers such as Honda, Nissan, Subaru, Toyota, GM and others.

I'm really grateful to Kaiser for all the exposure I had in downsizing, reorganization, union contracts and technology. It allowed me to hit the ground running at Enkei and get up to speed very quickly. Thanks to my contacts at Kaiser, I was able to call people like **Steve Ping** and **Ron McHaney** when I had a problem, and they'd help me find a solution.

**Brenda:** After "retiring" in 2001, I was fortunate enough to play a little and do some volunteer work with United Way and several local agencies. About two years ago, I started a part-time job with a local insurance company. One thing led to another and, before I knew it, I was working full-time and currently am the Vice President of Client Services, for Southern Indiana Health Organization – quite a transition from aluminum to healthcare. I am slowly learning about the healthcare industry and have responsibility for the client services operations of this growing business.

**Rick:** It's kind of ironic that, as I'm winding down my manufacturing career, hers is speeding up. I used to be the one coming home at 6:30 or 7 p.m. and now she's the one.



**Rick Merkel receives the 2012 Delivery Performance Award from the President of Honda North America.**

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for 36 plus years as Maintenance General Foreman. He hopes to see other former Trentwood, WA, employees to look for him in December at the donut shop in Spokane. His latest hobby involves learning "brain games" on his wife's iPad. "Trying to teach an old dog new technology isn't easy, but I'm determined not to let it beat me down," says the 88 year old.

**Lavonne Ginty** (Clearlake Oaks, CA) certainly keeps busy these days. After her husband passed away, she and her son started travelling all over the world. "We spent a year going to every continent," she says. Now, the former worker in Raw Materials/Reduction in Oakland, CA, is an instructor and director for duplicate bridge, who also makes sure seniors have a merry Christmas by sending them See's Candy. But, her passion is rescuing boxer dogs. "I feed them meatloaf made of ground steak because they have suffered enough," she adds.

Ravenswood, OH, retiree **Mary Basham** (Charleston, WV) keeps her hands busy knitting hundreds of items for the Ronald McDonald House. Her baby hats,

booties and mittens all go towards the operating expenses for the nonprofit that provides services to children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. **A.J. Abadie** (Vacherie, LA), who worked at Gramercy, LA, sings in the church choir and cares for his wife, who has Alzheimer's.

### **Traveling Near and Far . . .**

**Robert McKechnie** (Highland, IN) spent part of June in Williamsburg, VA, and enjoyed a trip to Las Vegas, NV, in August. The former Extrusion worker at Dolton, IL, also enjoys camping, lawn work, being active with the United Methodist Church Mission Committee, his local food bank and the Masonic Lodge. **Ralph Hatlen** (Burlington, WA) and his wife Doris recently tallied up their many cruises and the number was over 70.

**Richard Humphrey** (Shingle Springs, CA) spent the fall touring the National Parks in Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons. Last fall, he toured the parks in Utah. Formerly with the Oakland, CA, reduction plant, Richard also enjoys photography. Still handy with her hands, **Bonnie Ebert** (Wanatah, IN) has been on

two basket-weaving cruises. Hawaii called to **Rick Kuhlmann** (Spokane, WA). When not traveling to the islands, the former Mead, WA, Works employee enjoys golf, fishing, kayaking, woodworking, RC airplanes and gardening.

Former Oakland, CA, Refractory Division



Renewing friendships at Tacoma, WA's June luncheon are Carol Hamm, Janet Mohr and Carolyn Brennan.

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worker **Paul Holbrook** (Garner, NC) is planning to travel down the Mississippi River. When at home, he delivers Meals on Wheels and is active in the local Methodist Church.

*(President's Message, from Page 1)*

Present, and Future” which can be found on the KASRA News page of the KASRA website. Read it and gain a new appreciation for our extraordinary organization! Thank you, **Ed Westerman**, for crafting this masterful piece!

Please continue to send in your pictures and your news stories. Also, be sure to check out the KASRA website at [www.e-kasra.com](http://www.e-kasra.com) for forms, archived newsletters and new pictures from regional lunches and dinners. One last and final thought: **If you have not filed your VEBA claim for reimbursement of up to \$2,100 per family unit for medical premiums paid in 2012, you must do so before the December 31, 2013 deadline. You have until December 31, 2014, however, to file your VEBA claim for reimbursement of up to \$2,250 per family for medical premiums paid in 2013.** These reimbursement forms can be found on the KASRA website as well.

Enjoy the holiday season wherever you may be these days! Here's hoping you enjoy the memories of family, friends and colleagues as you gather round the table for a fine holiday meal. Our prayers and thoughts are with you all!

*Chris*

Chris Laszcz-Davis  
President, KASRA

## *In Memoriam*



*John H. Alderson  
New Haven, WV\**

*John Robert Angell  
Walnut Creek, CA*

*Clarence P. Bingham  
Brentwood, CA\**

*Edwin D. Donnell  
Walnut Creek, CA*

*Arthur W. Funk  
Mayfield Heights, OH\**

*John Hambrick - Ripley, WV*

*John W. Holeman  
Baton Rouge, LA*

*Richard W. Martin - Post Falls, ID*

*David J. Pellerin - Slidell, LA*

*Lee J. Pesavento - Alamo, CA*

*James G. Robinson - Salinas, CA*

*Leo Stagg Jr. - Tacoma, WA*

*Jules H. Tucker - Meraux, LA*

*Conrad L. Vaughan - Zachary, LA*

\* Died more than one year ago.

Please inform us of a retiree or spouse passing. Include date of death, city and state, and first name of surviving spouse. If possible, a copy or link to the obituary or name of the newspaper would be helpful. Contact Klaus Adler, 1127 Rachele Rd., Walnut Creek, CA 94597 or (925) 935-2938 or [kcharlie34@comcast.net](mailto:kcharlie34@comcast.net).

The Board of Directors expresses its deepest sympathy to families and loved ones.

P.O. Box 1171  
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## KASRA Board of Directors

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We're on the Web!

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[www.e-kasra.com](http://www.e-kasra.com)

**Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 9** **Mead**  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. at Cathay Inn, North Division St. Contact Danny Petrus (509) 483-2171 or dpj70@comcast.net.

**Nov. 19** **Trentwood**  
Lunch – meet at 11:00 a.m. with lunch served at 11:30 a.m. at The Valley Eagles, 16801 E. Sprague Ave. Mead retirees are always welcome. Following lunch, the program will be musical entertainment by The Project Joy group. Contact Steve Harvey (509) 924-1132 or siharv3y@comcast.net.

**Dec. 2, Jan. 6** **Los Angeles**  
Lunch is usually held at noon on the first Monday of each month at The Elephant Bar, 1403 Firestone Ave., La Mirada. Contact Bob O'Leary at (714) 898-7463 to confirm time and location.

**Dec. 2** **Bay Area (KARLA)**  
Social hour at 11:00 a.m. Lunch at noon at Wedgewood Banquet Center, San Ramon Golf Club followed by guest speaker Charlie Bamforth of U.C. Davis who delivers a very humorous yet informative talk entitled "The Brilliance of Beer." To receive a mailed invitation or for more information, contact Sharon Fraetis at (925) 934-4334 or lafnatv@silcon.com.

**Dec. 4** **Chalmette**  
Christmas lunch 11:00 a.m. at La Rosetta Trattoria, 348 Robert Blvd., Slidell. Cost \$20.00 Contact Chuck Schimmel at (985) 643-0437 or schimcol@aol.com.



Joanne and John D'Antonio also enjoyed renewing acquaintances at Chalmette, LA's, September luncheon.



Bill deBruller and Gordon Richerson catch up on old times at Chalmette, LA's September luncheon.

**Dec. 4** **Tacoma**  
Lunch – 11:30 a.m. at Johnny's Dock, 1900 East "D" St., Tacoma. Contact Bob Mohr at (253) 820- 6569 to confirm.

**Dec. 6** **Ravenswood**  
Winter Christmas dinner at Green Hills Country Club. Contact Lee Corder at (304) 273-9457 or Dave Whitman at (304) 273-5548 or dwhitman@gmail.com to confirm.

**Dec. 10** **Newark**  
Lunch at 11:00 a.m. at Stacy's Hometown Buffet, Heath. Lunch is paid for by the Newark plant, Contact Bill Snider at (740) 403-8328 or colbill44@roadrunner.com.

**Jan. 24** **Belpre**  
Breakfast 9:00 a.m. at Shoney's Restaurant on Garfield Ave., Parkersburg. Visitors always welcome. RSVP Betty Blair (304) 489-1337 or bettylou13@suddenlink.net.

### History of KASRA

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