



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 the Delta Fund Administrators toll-free at (888) 344-8322 or email [VEBA@deltafund.com](mailto:VEBA@deltafund.com).

### *Kaiser Aluminum Salaried Retirees Association*

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE KASRA PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Retirees/Surviving Spouses:

**As of May 1, 2015**, I'll be stepping down after four very fulfilling years as KASRA's President (eight if you count my full tenure on the KASRA Board)! Passing on the baton gives me some "pause" to reflect on my life, both personally and professionally — my start with Kaiser in 1979, reporting to Dick Harrison, Jim Donovan and Art Woodward... a career that spanned 23 years (with increasing responsibilities at all levels of the "changing" organization in a variety of roles, including the executive ranks, and across all the business units, both here and abroad), and an ongoing opportunity to remain connected to folks (you) who often "made a difference" in your families, with your co-workers, and in your communities.

I joined Kaiser back in 1979, while also considering a great job offer with Chevron (at a 25% higher base salary). Why Kaiser and not Chevron back then? Simply, the people I interviewed with exuded promise, enthusiasm, loyalty and passion — characteristics that I found in the majority of my Kaiser colleagues throughout my career. My KASRA membership has allowed me to remember and appreciate all the good people I worked with through such a meaningful and rewarding part of my life. Of course, if I'd gone with Chevron, I might be sitting on a pile of money today, but what the heck — it's been a great ride with plenty of opportunity and very few regrets!

I am very pleased to announce that our new President will be **Doug Mann** whom

a number of you have worked with over the years. Doug's role within Kaiser was predominantly purchasing, but his travels through the system and alliances developed were always very positive, collaborative and memorable. He will bring enthusiastic and dedicated leadership to a deserving Board and membership. I leave the Board officially in very capable hands!

**KASRA membership....**Each year in July, we send out a hard copy of our newsletter to all retirees and surviving spouses, regardless of KASRA membership status, along with a dues enrollment form. The purpose is to invite those who are not currently members to join. The dues are modest and are used primarily to defray the costs of preparing, printing and mailing newsletters (not everyone prefers an electronic version). This is a marvelous communication tool enabling all of us to keep in touch with fellow retirees and surviving spouses around the country and, indeed, around the world. If the cost poses a hardship for you, please let us know, and **we will continue to include you** in our newsletter distribution. For your information, as of March 1, 2015, we have 1,461 KASRA member retirees, 495 surviving spouse members, 42 friend members and 923 non-KASRA member retirees.

**News from the VEBA ...** The Board of Trustees will be mailing out 2015 reimbursement request forms to VEBA participants in late April/early May. Copies will also be available on the KASRA website at [www.e-kasra.com](http://www.e-kasra.com). If you have personal questions concerning the VEBA Plan, please contact the Delta Fund

## WHAT'S GOING ON

### Accomplishment . . .

Congratulations to **E. Allen "Al" Holbrook, Jr.** (Richmond, NH) who received the 2015 Town Cane for being the oldest living resident of Richmond, NH. Al turns 96 on June 9, 2015. "The cane is a custom in most New Hampshire towns," he explains. "But I don't need to use mine yet!" Al will join other friends in July in Coopers Town, NY, to see the new inductees into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

### Birthday and Anniversaries . . .

**Robert W. Gambill** (Troy, MT) celebrates his 92nd birthday this month. The former Valco, Ghana, West Africa employee spent the winter in Washington but planned to be back in Montana at his Bull Lake home in time for the birthday festivities. **Bud Caro** (Fairfield, CA) and his wife Mary Louise recently celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary as well as Bud's 85th birthday. After 12 years in Portland, OR, they have returned to California where they are closer to family who live in Northern California. "We hope anyone passing through this area will stop by and say hi," Bud adds.

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

Photography, family outings and working part-time as a computer consultant keep **William "Bill" deBruler** (Biloxi, MS) busy. He also manages to find time to volunteer at his local hospital and belong to the



**Tom Hazlett** takes time out from Chalmette's March luncheon for a photo opportunity

Hibernia Marching Society of South Mississippi. Genealogy keeps the interest of former Chalmette worker **Theodore (Ted) Aucoin, Jr.** (Slidell, LA). "Our family tree contains 3,000 names and extends back 1500 years," he says. Ted, who retired from Kaiser in 1975, spends three days a week at the Cross Gate Athletic Club and volunteers up to 20 hours a week at the Slidell Memorial Hospital.

**Peggy Wittrock** (Santa Rosa, CA), surviving spouse of **Henry Wittrock**, lives quietly with her son Robert. Shortly after Henry's death in 2010, Peggy became disabled and is now confined to a wheelchair. She still finds time, however, to be the leader of her church's Bible Study Circle. Her other son Tom still keeps in touch with his childhood friend Leonard, son of fellow former CFT worker **Frank Krill**. Although a major stroke several years ago has confined **Ludwig John** (Monterey, CA) to a wheelchair, he always looks forward to receiving the KASRA newsletter and keeping up with former colleagues.

**Aprina Leavy** (Oakland, CA) continues to enjoy going to the theater, exercising and, occasionally, traveling. Having her five children close by brings joy to **Hazel Hunt** (Mead, WA), the surviving spouse of **Clayton Hunt**. Family also



Enjoying Erie's breakfast meeting in February are **Ray O'Donnell, Don Askins, Ike Pickens, Teresa MacDonald, Rich Wagner, John Kozak, Carl Lupp, and, down in front, Jeff Lynch.**

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keeps **Guy Robicheaux** (Slidell, LA) busy who spends quite a bit of time doing projects for and entertaining an assortment of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. He also finds time to do artwork (he's the treasurer of the Slidell Art League), woodwork and helps out a physically restricted Marine Corps buddy. Surviving spouse **Gretta Byrne** (Haines City, FL) enjoys playing cards, dominos, crocheting and reading. She's also looking forward to her 90th birthday on July 8.

Former Mead Works employee **Gary Blair** (Surprise, AZ) spends his time traveling and playing golf, which is exactly what occupies former Oakland worker **Rodney LaRocque** (Las Vegas). "I developed a breathing problem and am going to pulmonary rehab sessions twice a week," he says. "This should have me back to playing golf in a short time." **Jacqueline (formerly Hutchcraft) Clements** (Palm Desert, CA) also lists golf as her favorite hobby, as does **Edward Marshall** (Pawtucket, RI), who also works part-time at Home Depot. Meanwhile, non-golfer **Betty Koska** (Winnemucca, NV) is looking forward to being involved in the local fair again this summer.

Although **Virginia Thiesies** (The Dalles, OR) is happy to be near her teenage



**Ray Bates and Gary Bennett were accidentally listed in the January 2015 newsletter as attending the December luncheon at Trentwood. It was Tacoma's luncheon!**

grandchildren, she will miss her co-workers luncheon meetings in Spokane, WA. The former Trentwood employee enjoys gardening, sports, cooking and church activities. She also volunteers

with the American Red Cross and loves to visit her grandchildren in Kelowna, BC, Denver, Colorado (which includes a 2-year-old great granddaughter), and White Salmon, WA. Amateur radio keeps **William E. Nadwornick** (Greenacres, WA) busy when not traveling. Also enjoying being a ham radio operator is **Joseph Darling** (Bristol, RI).

### **Best Wishes . . .**

Former Baton Rouge employee **Julian Smith** (Baton Rouge, LA) lost his wife of 69 years Velva on March 13, 2015. "We used to enjoy traveling across the United States in our motor home," says the 91 year old. February was a difficult month for two retirees who lost their spouses -- **George Austin** (Colbert, WA) lost his wife Ardell and **Patsy McCullough** (Heath, OH) lost her husband Robert. Suffering the loss of their wives during the summer of 2014 were **Curtis "Curt" Harrison** (Saratoga, CA), who lost his wife Joanne, **Carl Hinger** (Spanish Fort, AL), who lost his wife Alice, and **John Principe** (Pantego, TX), who lost his wife Precilla.



**Earl Bellanger and Dr. Frank Incaprera renew old friendships at Chalmette's March luncheon.**

*(What's Going On, continued Page 4)*

## MEMBER PROFILE: Newman and Vondrak Children Recall Growing Up as “Kaiser Brats”

Two families—the **Vondraks** and the **Newmans**—leapfrogged across the country and around the world as they followed the former Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corp. through its postwar expansion until the 1980s. Their children, now in their fifties and sixties, recall Huck Finn childhoods in Ravenswood and relocations halfway across the globe as **Otto Vondrak** became a plant manager, **Lee Newman** a technical superintendent, and their wives, Charlotte and Martha, masters of the move. The families lived near each other—sometimes only a few doors apart—in Spokane, Ravenswood, suburban Oakland, Dusseldorf, and Bahrain. They became so intertwined that Otto’s brother, a furniture restorer in New York, refinished two identical Chinese chests with the names “Vondrak” and “Newman” concealed in the design.

These “Kaiser brats,” as Kaiser children were sometimes called — Charlotte Vondrak Sproul, Joe and John Vondrak, and Anne and Stagg Newman — credit their nomadic lives within a close-knit

corporate family for their lifelong love of travel and strong sense of community. Their jobs reflect their global outlook: Charlotte runs educational alumni travel programs around the world for Cal Berkeley; John is head of international automotive accounts for CSX Transportation in Southern California; Anne works for a global business magazine in New York; Stagg globe-trots as a broadband consultant to McKinsey & Co., these days mainly via the Internet from his home in the North Carolina mountains; and Joe ... well, read on for Joe’s story.

**“Donna Reed’s World:”** It was in Spokane in the early ’50s, where the families lived a few doors apart near the Spokane River, that Anne says she first discovered her sense of adventure as a preschooler. Unfettered in those times by “helicopter parents,” she, young Charlotte, and Stagg played on the riverbank, acting out everyone from Annie Oakley to TV moms and dads. By 1957, when Kaiser built the largest consolidated aluminum plant in the world near Ravenswood, more than doubling the size of the town, the families again were neighbors. Engineers moved in from around the country, as did West Virginians seeking an alternative to mining, and the town newspaper adopted the logo “Living Is Good in Ravenswood.”

Charlotte, age 7 when the family arrived, remembers childhood in Ravenswood “as truly something from Donna Reed’s world.” She recalls playing Kick the Can in the street on summer evenings and going back and forth among friends’ homes “without worrying about anything more than the bats that came out when it was approaching dusk.” Anne played



Ravenswood, circa 1964, Christmas dinner (L-R): Judge Petree (Charlotte’s father), Charlotte Vondrak and daughter, Charlotte; Anne Newman; Joe and John Vondrak; Lee Newman; Otto Vondrak (far right). Not pictured: Stagg and Martha Newman.

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Lee Newman, 90, and Martha, 82, in 2006 after their granddaughter's bat mitzvah in New Jersey.

King of the Hill with Stagg, Joe and friends on the ubiquitous dirt mounds left by all the housing construction; when the rains swept across the Ohio River and up through town, the kids donned their oldest bathing suits and swam in a deep ditch beside the road leading to the new Henry J. Kaiser elementary school. By 1960, Ravenswood was on the politicians' map, and John F. Kennedy came campaigning. "I got his autograph, and I still remember the thrill," says Charlotte.

You could say that the rickety clubhouse a nine-year-old Joe built in the Vondraks' back yard (Anne hung the curtains) launched his career. Owner for the past 32 years of the multimillion-dollar Pacific Crest Construction near Gresham, OR, where he and his wife, Wendy, live, Joe and his crew are known for their renovations of historic buildings in the Northwest. "He always had a toolbox," Anne recalls. On weekends, the kids took off for the extensive woods behind Ritchies' Hill overlooking town, discovering deserted cabins, cooking up sloppy Joes in the lean-tos they lashed together. "We lived back there," Joe recalls. Winters were sledding down the hill onto a pond below or ice-skating on

one of the lakes outside town. "It was truly an age of innocence," Charlotte says.

That love of the outdoors ripples through the generations. Settling on opposite coasts, the Kaiser brats ensured that their own children got hefty doses of camping, hiking, rafting and outdoor adventure. Stagg tromps in the muck daily on his 50 acres near Asheville, NC, where he and his wife, Cheryl, are immersed with their six Arabian horses in the world of endurance riding. An Eagle Scout, he tells Anne's son, a recent Eagle Scout, that the lessons he learned in Ravenswood from Scoutmaster Jim Burbank have carried him far.

**A Bigger World:** Charlotte was 16 when Otto was transferred from Ravenswood to Kaiser's Oakland headquarters. Ready for something "bigger and more exciting," she spent her senior year at Campolindo High School in Moraga. Two years later, the Newmans followed. It was 1969, and a naïve Anne dressed in her Sunday finest to go with Joe to San Francisco to see Janis Joplin. "Our clothes reeked of marijuana after that concert," Joe remembers. Campolindo's spring concert featured the Grateful Dead.

Kaiser had a different path for Joe and John in high school. Otto became plant manager in Voerde, Germany, and the family moved to nearby Dusseldorf, where Joe graduated from high school. By the time John graduated, his parents were in Bahrain. Their next-door neighbors? The Newmans.

**Globe-trotters:** For Kaiser brats in college, "home" was wherever their parents lived (with a smokestack usually in sight), and Kaiser paid air fare. "For

### 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.



Otto Vondrak and Charlotte, both 92, Christmas 2012, Bend, Ore.

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holidays, I went wherever Mom and Dad were,” says Charlotte, who spent her junior year in Aix-en-Provence and traveled throughout Europe with her family; her parents later lived in Sardinia, Australia, and New Zealand. Recalls Joe: “Bahrain was halfway around the world from Oregon State. I never would have gotten there had I not had that opportunity.” Anne went “home” to her folks several times to Anglesey (off the northwest coast of Wales), then to Bahrain — on Christmas break from Duke, she dodged scorpions while playing golf on the desert course there — and later, Ghana, Lee’s last post overseas. (Stagg, married and on his own by then, missed out on the Kaiser-subsidized travel, but has more than compensated since, crisscrossing the globe often for work and with his wife and friends).

**Connections:** The families remain connected to friends from those nomadic years. The Internet and social media have brought them closer and helped

them find old acquaintances. John and his wife, Karen, are heading soon for India, where a documentary filmmaker is a good friend of John’s from Dusseldorf. Anne has reconnected with Kaiser veteran **Alan Phillips**, of Spokane, whom she first met



**The Newman/Nadler family, 2014, Courmayeur, Italy (L-R): Joel Nadler, Anne, Elizabeth and Paul Nadler.**

when he was a young Ghanaian destined to become general production manager at VALCO, and has tapped the wisdom of his wife, Amowi, for a project at her son’s high school. And, although she graduated from Campolindo, she returns to Ravenswood for high school reunions.

The ultimate connection may be Charlotte’s: Decades ago, a California attorney named Bob Sproul, Jr., son of the legendary University of California president, did some work for Kaiser and met Otto on a visit to Ravenswood. In 1969 in California, while a student at UC Santa Barbara, Charlotte had a blind date with Robert Gordon “R.G.” Sproul III, both unaware that their fathers had met in Ravenswood. In 1975, she and R.G. married. “My husband’s wedding band was purchased in the gold market in Bahrain,” says Charlotte, “and our wedding gift was a silk Persian carpet that I picked out from a rug merchant in Tehran, Iran, on a trip there during the Christmas holidays in 1974. To say that the travel I did [with Kaiser] was a huge influence in my life would be an



**The Sproul family, 2014, at their son’s wedding: R.G., Alex and Nick Sproul, Charlotte, daughter Carly and husband, Christopher Cook.**

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understatement.”

Otto and Lee both lived to 93, long enough to see all the permutations of Kaiser and the aluminum industry after they retired. Lee died in Asheville, N.C., in 2009; Martha followed less than five months later, at age 85, of a heart

attack while watching her beloved Duke basketball team play archrival UNC. Two years ago, Otto passed away in Bend, OR, where Charlotte, now 95, still lives. Her secret? Maybe the stamina required to follow the erstwhile Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corp. around the world, family in tow.



Cheryl and Stagg Newman, 2013, riding near their North Carolina home.

(President's Message, from Page 1)

Administrators, LLC directly at: Delta Fund Administrators, LLC; P.O. Box 2308, Stockton, CA 95201-2308. Telephone: Toll-Free (888) 344-8322. E-mail: VEBA@deltafund.com. As of December 31, 2014, 93% of retiree Family Units eligible to participate in the VEBA Plan had enrolled.

hogarty@gmail.com.

If you have missed any of our previous newsletters, we encourage you to visit the newsletter page on our website at [www.e-kasra.com](http://www.e-kasra.com). In addition to the VEBA reimbursement request form, the website contains VEBA enrollment forms, other communication and contact information. The website also lists lunch bunch schedules and photos from all the regional gatherings.

**One final very important point – when you move, please remember to notify both KASRA and the Third Party Administrator (address noted in previous paragraph) of your change of address.**

Remember, we are here for you!

*Chris*

**Send in your news...** This newsletter is for and about YOU. Please continue to send in your news contributions and photos to Sally Hogarty, P.O. Box 84, Canyon, CA 94516 or email her at sally-

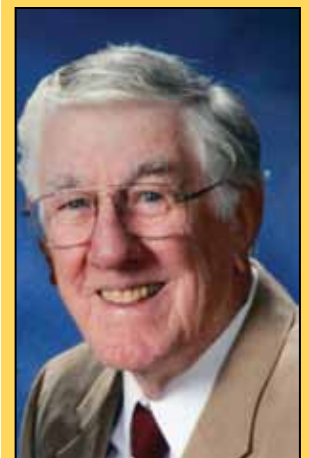
Chris Laszcz-Davis  
President, KASRA

### New KASRA Board Member

**Tom (TJ) Summerson** began working for Kaiser in the Department of Metallurgy Research at Trentwood, WA, in 1951. When his department moved to Pleasanton, CA, TJ and his wife Sue, who also worked for Kaiser, moved as well and became part of the rapidly growing Center for Technology. His position allowed TJ to interface with the fabricating plants and their customers as well as various aircraft companies and the U.S. Coast Guard. In 1990, TJ was transferred back

to Trentwood as the technical coordinator on the high-speed coater line. Following his retirement in 1995, Kaiser rehired him twice to work on special projects.

TJ and Sue live in Spokane, WA, where both are active in the local KASRA branch. TJ served on his local KASRA board for many years before becoming a regional member and now a member of the main KASRA board. TJ and Sue have two children and two grandchildren.



TJ Summerson

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We're on the Web!  
See us at:

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

### May 4, Jun 1, Jul 6 Los Angeles

Lunch is normally held at noon on the first Monday of each month at Marie Calender's, 540 N. Euclid, West Anaheim. Contact Bob O'Leary at (714) 898-7463 to confirm time and location.

### May 14, Jun 11, Jul 7 Mead

Lunch 11:30 a.m. at Cathay Inn, North Division St. Contact Danny Petrus at (509) 483-2171 or dpjr70@comcast.net to confirm.

### May 16, Jun 20, Jul 18 Erie

Breakfast 8:30 a.m. at Shirley's Country Kitchen, Wattsburg Rd. Erie. Contact Tim Healy (814) 474-3536 to confirm.

### Jun 3 Chalmette

Lunch 11:00 a.m. at La Rosetta Trattoria, 345 Robert Blvd., Slidell. Cost \$20. Contact Chuck Schimmel (985) 643-0437 or schimcol@aol.com to confirm.

### Jun 9, Aug 11 Newark

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

### Jun 27 Ravenswood

Picnic – 1:00 p.m. at Pt. Pleasant River Amphitheatre/shelter. Hot dogs and Hamburgers will be served. Bring your own Salad, Vegetables, or dessert to share. Also bring your own Beverage. Parking at Post Office, or behind People's Bank, Or Lowe Hotel. Contact Lee Corder (304) 273-9457, Dave Whitman (304) 273-5548 or dwhitman@gmail.com to confirm.

### Aug 29 Belpre

Lunch 12:00 noon at Western Sizzlin Steak House Lubeck Ravenswood Exit, Parkersburg. Visitors always welcome. RSVP to Betty Blair (304) 489-1337 or bettylou13@suddenlink.net.



Billy Doyle, Cathy Johnson and Jennielee Allain enjoy Chalmette's March luncheon at the La Rosetta Trattoria in Slidell.

## In Memoriam

*William Edward Atchison,  
Baton Rouge, LA*

*Arza K. Dillard, King City, CA*

*Harry Lloyd "Hot Rod" Lorentz,  
Spokane Valley, WA*

*John A. Metzler Sr.,  
Covington, LA*

*William "Bill" C. Nutter,  
Puyallup, WA*

*Richard Norman Racek,  
Tacoma, WA*

*Louis Edward "Ed" Siniff,  
Spokane Valley, WA*

*Ronald W. Smith,  
Sandpoint, ID*

*Larry Joseph Swick,  
Jackson, TN*

*Francis V. Tryson,  
Malden Bridge, NY*

*Norman Elmer Whitford,  
Otis Orchards, WA*

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.