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Kaiser Aluminum Salaried Retirees Association

A MESSAGE FROM THE KASRA PRESIDENTS

Greetings Fellow Retirees and Surviving Spouses:

As we are well into the summer season, it is time for our annual membership drive. On behalf of the KASRA board, we thank all current members and encourage all members and non-members to complete and return the "Dues Renewal" form.

As you are aware, the VEBA Board of Trustees has declared the 2018 benefit amount up to \$4,700 per Family Unit, the highest amount for a given year since the Trust was established. As we have reported, VEBA generates income from two primary sources, earnings on investments and a contribution from Kaiser based on a profit sharing formula, with a maximum contribution of \$2.9 million for any given year.

This year represents the third consecutive year Kaiser's contribution has been at or near the maximum based on the formula. As a result, we thought it timely to give everyone a brief update on the Company's makeup and activities. Today, Kaiser Aluminum produces only semi-fabricated aluminum products with an emphasis on non-commodity, value added products. The company operates 12 production facilities in nine states and one Canadian province. Kaiser is focused on three primary markets:

- 1) Aerospace and other high strength applications:
Products destined for these markets include a broad range of hard alloy

sheet, plate & coil as well as rolled, drawn and extruded shapes.

- 2) Automotive:
The company produces and supplies a broad range of extruded products to this market.
- 3) General Engineering:
Sales into this sector are primarily through service centers and include the following types of applications and end uses.
 - Military vehicles
 - Ordnance
 - Tooling plate
 - Machinery and equipment parts
 - Bolts, screw, nails, & rivets

Semi-fabricated products supplied include, sheet & plate, rod & bar, seamless structural extruded tubing, cold finished rod & bar and standard extruded shapes.

From a financial perspective, we can say that the new Kaiser Aluminum is a vibrant, successful, profitable company with excellent prospects for sustained profitability looking forward. Sales are consistently slightly above or below \$1.4 billion annually, with strong cash flows and net income. As a result, Kaiser has been able to invest over \$600 million in the past 10 years in capital projects to expand capacity, enhance product quality, increase efficiencies and lower costs. In addition, the company has a consistent record of increasing dividends paid to shareholders. They have a strong balance sheet and an excellent credit rating. Aluminum manufacturing is and will continue to be a cyclical industry. All of Kaiser's primary markets will experi-

WHAT'S GOING ON

Accomplishments . . .

Congratulations to **Bob Irelan** (Rancho Murieta, CA) on the recent publication of his first work of fiction. His novel entitled *Angel's Truth* was recently published by Outer Banks Publishing Group and is available on Amazon.com. The former Corporate Vice President, Public Relations, enjoys dealing with fiction instead of the facts he's used to writing about. "In retirement, I found the time to attempt writing this novel," he says. "It's liberating to shape a story, make it believable, but not be bound by actual happenings." Bob says the story was shaped partly by his exposure to a public defender while on a jury. "I was impressed by how hard he worked on behalf of his client, a minority." So, Bob created Angel Gonzales, a Mexican-American teenager, charged with horrible crimes in Richmond, Texas. Although acquitted by a jury, the residents of the town are convinced of his guilt. Angel and his public defender attempt to prove his innocence and encounter prejudice, deceit and a sheriff and district attorney who put politics and ambition above all else.

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

Sheridan M. Post (El Dorado Hills, CA) travels between his California home and another in Tucson, AZ. His last job with Kaiser was as Business Center Manager, Fluoro Chemicals. In 1980, Sheridan, who notes that he would like to hear from former associates, likes to golf, read and garden. "I also spend many an hour at



Sheridan Post at his home in the El Dorado Hills area of California.

Home Depot." **R. Thomas Smith** (Cascade, CO) recently moved from Colorado Springs, CO.

Still recuperating, **Betty Lou Koska** (Winnemucca, NV) has been using her walker for over a year. Her doctor, who has been monitoring x-rays of her back, has also been treating Betty's daughter who had a serious surgery. "She is doing well," Betty notes, before adding, "I hope I will be lucky also."

Birthdays and Anniversaries . . .

Margaret Zaffran (Homedale ID), surviving spouse of Chalmette, Kaiser Aluminum employee **Edwin Zaffran**, "has had an enjoyable and awesome winter and spring once again with my children." In December, she was in Hilo, HI, where her daughter Monie and her husband Jim live, to celebrate her 90th birthday. Many of her family were able to attend. In January, she enjoyed a delicious crab festival



Margaret Zaffran celebrated her 90th Birthday Party (12/18/17) at the home of her daughter Monie and son-in-law Jim on the Big Island of Hawaii. The family displays their watercolor works of art (L-R) daughter Monie Gentry, grandson Chance Gonyer, Margaret, daughter Lisa Zaffran holding Margaret's great grandson Oah, son Edwin Zaffran, son-in-law Mike White and (kneeling) Chance's wife Alyssa Pavese.

(What's Going On, from Page 2)

in Fort Bragg, CA, with daughters Monie and Lisa. In February, she traveled to Palm Springs, CA, with daughter Val and her husband Harvey. A ride on the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway from the floor of the Coachella Valley to relatively near the top of San Jacinto Peak was a highlight of the trip. Margaret also raves about the end of her odyssey: "I returned to Idaho via Utah's Zion, Bryce Canyon and Moab which was an unbelievable experience of God's many breathtaking sights." Her daughter Lisa adds, "We are all grateful that she is capable of traveling and still enjoys doing so. She is a blessing!"

Congratulations to **Paul Mestemaker** (New Weston, OH) and his bride of 65 years, Mary, who celebrated their wedding anniversary on June 17, at the Wendelin Sports Club in Ft. Recovery, OH. They began the day with a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Bernard's Catholic Church in Burkettsville, OH., the same church in which they were married on



Paul and Mary Mestemaker shown here on their wedding day.



Paul and Mary Mestemaker shown here on their 65th wedding anniversary celebrated on June 17, 2018.

June 20, 1953 by the Rev. John Zeller. The Mestemakers have 22 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren, with two more arriving soon. They have been blessed with nine children [listed here with spouses]: David and Annette of New Weston, OH; Dennis and Vickie of Versailles; Dale and Dot of Ball Ground, GA; Donna and Corey [deceased] Shaw of Morris, IL; Chris and Judy of New Weston, OH; Randy and Stephanie of Ansonia, CT; Lori and Zane Keller of Ansonia, CT; Nancy Leugers of Cranberry, PA; and Jerry and Charlene of New Weston, OH.

Also celebrating a wedding anniversary is **Henry Gally** (Elizabethtown, PA). The former employee at the Kaiser plant at Belpre, OH, and his wife Martha celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on June 20.

Best Wishes . . .

Our condolences to the families of surviving spouses **Florence Loreen** and **Mildred Abadie** who recently passed away.

MEMBER PROFILE: RON RADAKOVICH

Ron Radakovich epitomizes the American dream. Born of Serbian immigrants, Ron was raised in a small iron ore mining town in Northern Minnesota. His first job following high school was in the mines where he saved his money to go to college. Years later, this first generation American has both a law degree and a master's degree and has achieved the position of Vice President of Corporate Industrial Relations at Kaiser Aluminum.

Ron and his wife now live in Walnut Creek, CA. They have two sons and three grand-children.

Tell us about growing up in a mining town.

We had just about every ethnic group from Europe living there: Norwegians, Swedes, Finns, Poles, Serbs, Croatians, Slovenians, Czechs, Italians. They spoke one language at home with another, English, at school and the playgrounds. Most everyone worked at the mines. It was dangerous work. Two of my closest friends lost their fathers in the mines. With that reality, the miners (just wanted

an education for their children to keep them out of the mines. The mining companies helped by providing top shelf education in the towns. After high school, I got my first job in the mines paying a whopping \$1.09 an hour! A great motivator for pursuing college.

What happened after you left?

I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Law at the University of Minnesota, which you could do at that time. I realized that I did not want to be an attorney, so I joined the Army Reserve. After six months active duty, I returned to the U of M and attended the Carlson School of Business where I received a Master's Degree with an emphasis on Industrial Relations.

I started interviewing and narrowed my offers to working for General Motors in Flint, MI or Kaiser Aluminum in Spokane, WA. Spokane won over Flint; plus Kaiser was a young company and I thought I'd have more opportunity. That was in 1960.

What were those early days with Kaiser



(Seated) Ron Radakovich (2nd from left) and Bob Petrus (3rd from left) with members of the clerical and technical union at Trentwood, WA.

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like?

As an industrial relations trainee at the Mead Reduction plant in Spokane, I worked with some great guys who were all capable and experienced. They wanted to mentor young people to learn and grow because the company was booming in 1960. Kaiser was building plants around the world and opportunities were abundant.

After three years, I moved across town to the Trentwood plant for a year. Trentwood was a sheet and plate plant, a whole different business. It was also unique because it had the only clerical and technical union, in addition to a production and maintenance local union, another learning experience.

The employees at both Mead and Trentwood took pride in working for Kaiser Aluminum and the company had the reputation of treating people right. I think that all goes back to **Henry J. Kaiser**. He said, "If our people want to have a union, they can have a union, and we'll work with them honorably and honestly." And he was true to his word.

Your next two assignments were quite different. Tell us about them:

After four years in Spokane, I transferred



(L-R) Ernie Cappel, Ron Radakovich and Dick Humphrey



(L-R) Mick Seidel, Steve Hutchcraft and Ron Radakovich negotiating a contract with the Steelworkers Union.

to Chalmette, LA, where I spent two years. At that time, Chalmette was a totally racially segregated plant - separate lunch rooms, drinking fountains, restrooms, everything. For a Minnesota guy who had been in the military, which was integrated, this came as quite a surprise. I did labor relations and grievance handling. Then I found myself back in Spokane at the Mead facility for a year as Supervisor of Labor Relations before being transferred to Ravenswood, WV, in 1966 which was a different kind of surprise.

I found much distrust of management at Ravenswood. In my opinion, this was based in large measure on management behavior in the coal mining industry. The employees were good workers, but we had many slowdowns and wildcat strikes that caused the International Union to assign a staff rep to the plant four days a week.

Ravenswood being both a reduction plant and a sheet and plate plant also presented problems. According to the union contract, members could transfer from one plant to the other but the work was very different, so management was constantly training, affecting efficiency.

(Member Profile, continued Page 6)

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Because of the significance of the plants to the entire company's operation and profit, anytime we had disturbances, the corporate office just shuddered! We were told to find a way to just get them back to work...and that was my job!

Through it all, I found myself working with a good local union president, **Doc Hunter**. He had the respect of his fellow union employees and he helped in so many difficult situations. He was actually so effective, the International Union promoted him to an international representative and assigned him to another part of the state -- a loss for Ravenswood.

Tell us about your transfer back to Chalmette where things were changing rapidly.

It was 1968 and I returned to Chalmette as the Industrial Relations Superintendent. In addition to dealing with the three unions: Aluminum Workers, District 50 Mine Workers and the Steelworkers, Chalmette was desegregating rapidly. We had various government agencies: EEOC, OFCC,

NLRB monitoring our efforts. Kaiser was very aggressive in enforcing the Civil Rights Law, something that was not always popular with our workers or the local politicians. It was a difficult time, but we had great corporate support, especially **Tom Bowdle**, who was Corporate Director of Equal Employment, and **Fred Lawson**, the Division Industrial Relations Manager. In addition, Chalmette had two superb Plant Managers: **Lee Hunt** and **Dick Humphrey**. I also had the good fortune to have **Ernie Cappel** on my staff. Ernie had been the local union president before coming into the Industrial Relations Department. He had credibility with line management and the various plant union adversaries, and he was instrumental in solving many complex issues. It was a very interesting four years at Chalmette.

Your next stop was the Corporate Office in California, right?

Yes. I worked in the Raw Materials - Reduction Division for two years dealing with staffing, compensation, etc. but my biggest opportunity involved going to Valco in Ghana to negotiate a labor

contract. The union was very sophisticated, and the chairman of the negotiations was a Ghanaian who had graduated from the London School of Economics. I found all the people there just fantastic. Unfortunately, communications



(L-R) Jim Presley, Larry Stewart, Ron Radakovich and Art Dietmeyer

(Member Profile, continued Page 7)

(Members Profile, from Page 6)

were not what they are today. To make a secure telephone call to the Corporate Office, we had to fly to London.

My last move was to the Corporate Industrial Relations Department then headed by **Larry Stewart**. Over the next 12 years, I helped negotiate and administer the Master Steelworker Agreement covering 13 plants. In addition, I negotiated concessionary agreements at various plants with the Teamsters, Chemical Workers, Operating Engineers, Auto Workers and Carpenters.

Jim Presley took over for Larry when he retired, and I replaced Jim when he retired.

For my last six years with Kaiser, I held the title of Vice-President of Corporate Industrial Relations. During that time, I had the opportunity to chair negotiations with the Steelworkers of what was left of the Master Agreement. By this time, we had sold Ravenswood, Chalmette had

shut down and we only had about seven plants in the contract. I was blessed by having an exceptional team who played a significant role in these negotiations: **Steve Booth, Bill Holzwarth and Charlie Alongi**. These individuals had total credibility with our union counterparts.

Tell us about your family.

I met my wife Mika at a Serbian wedding in Milwaukee. She was teaching school in New York City and I was working at Chalmette. The traveling back and forth got ridiculous, so we got married and she moved into my apartment in the Garden District of New Orleans, which I think was a major factor in her agreeing to marry me.

I then transferred back to Mead, where our son Steve was born. Our son Mike was born while we were in Ravenswood. Once we settled in Walnut Creek and the boys were in their teens, Mika decided not to return to teaching. She went



(L-R) Ron's son Mike holding his 2-1/2-month-old son Nikola, Mike's wife Lynn holding 2-year-old daughter Kata, Ron with his wife Mika (Mickey), Ron's daughter-in-law Katarina holding 17-month-old daughter Lika, and Ron's son Steve.

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.

* Photos encouraged.

SHARING MEMORIES OF HENRY J. KAISER

Henry Kaiser created an astute legacy with his business acumen, “can do” philosophy and fascinating personality. Thanks to him, we had the opportunity to work for an incredible company that shaped who we are today. A workman quoted in Albert P. Heiner’s book *Western Colossus* summed up Mr. Kaiser nicely:

“Whatever are we going to do?” the workman asked staring at a construction site following a violent storm. “Just look at this mud.”

“What mud?” Mr. Kaiser asked, “I see only that big sun shining down. It will soon turn that mud into solid ground.”

In honor of Mr. Kaiser, we are asking that you share your stories, pictures and memorabilia of this larger-than-life man. We



hope to reproduce these in our newsletter. Depending upon the quantity we receive, we may include remembrances of Henry Kaiser, Edgar and other family members in several upcoming newsletters.

Please send your submissions to Sally Hogarty, P.O. Box 84, Canyon, CA 94516. Thank you!

(Members Profile, from Page 7)

back to school and became a registered nurse. She worked for Kaiser Permanente Hospital for her first nursing job before going to a clinic in Pittsburg, CA.

We’re also fortunate that both sons and their families live in the Bay Area, Steve with his wife, Katarina, and 17-month-old daughter Lika in San Francisco and Mike in Los Altos, CA, with his wife, Lynn, 2-year-old daughter Kata and 2-1/2-month-old son, Nikola. Being grandparents is the best!

What keeps you busy now that you and your wife are retired?

When I first retired, I received a call from Kaiser’s former President, **Steve Hutchcraft**. He was Chairman of the California Symphony Orchestra and he asked me to negotiate the labor contract, pro bono with the musicians’ union. I

negotiated two such agree-ments. The musicians were the most entitled, pampered individuals I ever had to deal with. I told Steve that if you think the Steelworkers were tough to deal with, you ought to negotiate with the musicians’ union.

We travel extensively, and we often go to Serbia and Bosnia to visit our extended families. During the Civil War in the 1990’s in the former Yugoslavia, I was one of the spokespersons going to Washington D.C. representing the Serbian American Community. Also, for the past 25 years, my wife and I have been fundraising for the humanitarian organization, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). They aid and assist all peoples and all nations, especially the minority Christians in Islamic states.

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ence periods of reduced demand at some point, so while there is no guarantee that the company will make the maximum profit sharing payment every year, we believe they are well positioned in the markets they have chosen to serve and will continue to perform well. With over 2,600 family units eligible to receive reimbursement from the VEBA trust, Kaiser's financial performance has a significant impact on our retiree community and we wish them continued success in the years ahead.

All the best!

Erach

Michael Venie

Steve Ping

Erach Tarapore, Mike Venie and
Steve Ping

Co-Presidents, KASRA

In Memoriam

*Neva J. Carter
Mexico, MO*

*Roy Corley
Bay Minette, AL*

*Richard E. Gammage
North Port, FL*

*Warren Goodnow
Palo Alto, CA*

*Diane Lambert
San Leandro, CA*

*Anthony Monafò
Warren, RI*

*Darlene E Seebeck
Spokane Valley, WA*

*Jerome Rodney Thew
Spokane, WA*

*Gloria Villar Trosclair
Baton Rouge, LA*

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 email him at kcharlie34@comcast.net. The Board of Directors expresses its deepest sympathy to families and loved ones.



The Chalmations gathered on June 6 for a fun lunch at NOLA Lagniappe in Slidell. Shown here are (L-R) Frank Klaus, Guy Robicheaux (partially hidden), Bill deBruller, Liz deBruller, Randy Taylor and Charline Taylor.

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See us at:

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Belpre **Aug 25**
Lunch, 12 noon at Western Sizzlin in Parkersburg. Contact Betty Blair at (304) 489-1337 or email bettylou13@suddenlink.net.

Chalmette **Sep 5, Dec 5**
Lunch at 11 a.m. at NOLA Lagniappe, 1375 Gause Blvd., Slidell. Cost \$21. Contact Chuck Schimmel at (985) 643-0437 or email schimcol@aol.com.

Erie **Jul 21, Aug 18, Sep 15**
Breakfast at 8:30 a.m. at Peggy's, 3512 Liberty Street., Erie. Contact Tim Healy at (814) 402-1062 or email thealy1931@gmail.com.

Los Angeles **Jul 2, Aug 6, Sep 10**
Lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Marie Calendar's 540 North Euclid, West Anaheim. Contact Bob O'Leary at (714) 898-7463 or email robemmet39@gmail.com.

Mead **Jul 12, Aug 9, Sep 13**
Lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Cathay Inn, North Division St. - Contact Danny Petrus at (509) 483-2171 or email dpjr70@comcast.net.

Newark **Aug 14, Oct 9, Dec 11**
Lunch at 11 a.m. at Stacey's Hometown Buffet, Heath. Lunch paid for by the Newark plant. Contact Bill Snider at (740) 403-8328 or email colbill44@roadrunner.com.

Ravenswood **Sep 20, Dec 7**
Lunch at Green Hills Country Club. Noon Christmas Lunch on Dec. 7 at 1 p.m. at Green Hills Country Club. Contact Pete Westenhover at (304) 266-4109 or email Pete26164@gmail.com or call Lee Corder at (304) 273-9457.

Tacoma **Dec 5**
Lunch at noon at Johnny's Dock, 1900 East B St., Tacoma. Contact Bob Mohr at (253) 820-6569 or bobmohr1942@gmail.com or call Roy Brennan at (253) 535-4942.

Trentwood **Oct 16, Nov 20**
Meet 11 a.m. Meal served at 11:30 a.m. Valley Eagles 16801 E. Sprague Ave. Contact Steve Harvey at (509) 924-1132 or email slharv3y@comcast.net or call TJ Summerson at (509) 448-1228 or email tsummerson@aol.com.



Ravenswood retirees enjoyed a spring luncheon at Cedar Lakes in Ripley, WV, on April 18. "We always have a great fellowship," says Hazel Parsons.