

MARCH 2021

# KASRA NEWS



Steve Ping  
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KASRA  
Co-Presidents

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 CO-PRESIDENTS

Dear Fellow Retirees / Surviving Spouses:

After a particularly bleak year there is once again hope on the horizon. Vaccinations are being administered, with seniors being given priority. Many of you will already have received your vaccination by the time this newsletter is published, and if not, you will receive it shortly. And with vaccinations should come a reduction in the fear of contracting the virus. Both of these will be most welcome developments. We are grateful for modern science, which has successfully developed not one, but several, different vaccinations against Covid in what would previously have been considered an impossibly short period of time. Now we just have to wait and see how the endgame plays out on the pandemic.

Everyone is probably anxious to get back to a normal lifestyle where they can meet freely with family and friends, and travel once again. But it is still early and the full extent of protection afforded by the vaccine is not yet completely understood. So please continue to exercise caution in the next few months until all of this information becomes available. We hope to know a lot more by midsummer, by which time a lot more of the general population will also have received their vaccine. Hopefully by then, the case rates will no longer be a prominent part of the daily news and we can all breathe easy once again.

VEBA – This is to remind you that you have until the end of this year (December 2021) to file for your VEBA benefits for the 2020 calendar year. So it may be a good time to collect all those necessary documents from last year and send off your request for reimbursement to the VEBA. Remember that the maximum benefit for each Family Unit in 2020 was \$4,000. If you have questions, please contact the VEBA by phone at the toll-free number of 1(888) 344-8322 or by email at [VEBA@deltafund.com](mailto:VEBA@deltafund.com).

As soon as you are out and about again, we encourage you to send in pictures you have taken recently along with your What's Going On forms. Please identify everyone in your photos to make the pictures more meaningful to your fellow readers of KASRA News. Please send photos to Sally Hogarty, our Newsletter Editor, at [sallyhogarty@gmail.com](mailto:sallyhogarty@gmail.com) or by mail to the address on your What's Going On form.

We wish everyone good health and congratulate you on weathering this terrible storm. Enjoy the coming Spring and the warmer weather ahead. We look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible during the year with "What's Going On ...".

All the best!

Erach Tarapore, Mike Venie and  
Steve Ping  
Co-Presidents, KASRA

## WHAT'S GOING ON

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

Metallurgist **George Binczewski** (Moraga, CA) remembers fondly his association with world renown scientist Li Heng-Da. The nuclear physicist and materials scientist was a founding academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering and a well-respected professor at Tsinghua University in Beijing. He passed away in 2019 and has recently received unprecedented honors in China.

George remembers being in the same graduation class at the University of Pennsylvania with Heng-De, whom he called Hank. "We kept in touch over the years and he even visited CFT in Pleasanton when in this country." Hank and his family were often house guests of George's as well. "I was very honored when he invited me to his retirement party at Tsinghua University, which was a huge affair," said George. "I presented him with a replica of the top of the Washington Monument, which is made of aluminum, a metal relatively unknown in



**Tony Procanik and his wife Kathy (far right) with son Jim and grandchildren Shayla, Kayleen and Thomas at the famous Mayan pyramid in the city of Uxmal, Mexico.**



**(L-R) Scientist Li Heng-Da, Vice President of Tsinghua University Gong Ke and Kaiser's George Binczewski, who presented the University with a replica of the top of the Washington Monument, which is made of aluminum. The replica is still on display at the university in Beijing.**

1884 when the Washington Monument was constructed."

### Traveling Near and Far . . .

**Tony Procanik** (Merida, Mexico) and his wife Kathy have been enjoying getting to know the colorful history of Merida, Mexico, the Yucatan state they now call home. Tony and Kathy were recently joined by their son Jim and his family. "We showed them around the famous Mayan pyramid outside the city of Uxmal. Our grandchildren were fascinated and educated on a bit of Mayan culture. This is also the area where

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

chocolate was developed. We're praying this pandemic will be over soon so more sites like this can reopen!"

### **Birthdays and Anniversaries . . .**

A very special Happy Birthday to **Bill Snider** (Newark, OH) who turned 90 in February. Before he retired, Bill was a general foreman at the Heath Rod, Bar and Wire facility near Newark.

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

Our condolences to the families of surviving spouses **Reta Bergquist (Edward Bergquist)**, **Phyllis Glubka**, **Mary Hutchcraft (Steve Hutchcraft)**, **Lucille Jones**, **Calvin Liu (Rose Liu)**, **Erma Payne (Ray Payne)** and **Helen Schlanker**.



**Bill Snider turned 90 in February. Shown here with his first grandson.**



**Nadine Blansett and her husband Ken at a 1994 Kaiser party.**

### **In Memoriam Notes**

Nadine Blansett (Placentia, CA) worked for Kaiser for 35 years. Retiring in 1993, her last position was Administrative Manager for the western regional sales offices in Los Angeles. Following her retirement from Kaiser, she worked an additional five years for Reliance Steel. According to her family, she was diagnosed with dementia around 2005. "In 2009, the doctors changed her diagnosis to lewy body dementia," said her son Kenneth. "We kept her in home care until Dec. 18, 2020 when she finally passed away peacefully." Nadine is survived by her husband of 49 years, Kenneth Blansett and daughter Michelle Egnor of Santa Fe, NM. "Our mom had friends nationwide with Kaiser that I'm sure will want to know she has passed," Kenneth added.

## MEMBER PROFILE: DAVE FENTON

Dave Fenton (Oakland, CA) grew up in Connecticut, receiving his B.A. from Yale in Liberal Arts (Political Science, History and Sociology) in 1952. Upon graduation, he joined the Marine Corps as part of the Platoon Leaders Program. When he completed his First Lieutenant duty in 1954, he started working for Kaiser, where he stayed for the next 40 years. Dave and his wife Jackie live in Oakland, CA.

### How did you end up working for Kaiser?

Actually, my then father-in-law set up the interview. He was with First National City Bank in New York and did business with Kaiser. Of course, he also set up several interviews for me in the banking industry. But I really liked Kaiser. They had a sales training program where they hired 25 or more kids right out of college and took you around to the various plants as part of the training process.

### Tell us about your first positions with Kaiser.

Following training, I started my career as



**Dave and Jackie at his retirement party at the Clift Hotel in San Francisco, CA, in 1994.**

a salesman in Cleveland, OH. There was so much to learn, especially in the '50s and '60s when the aluminum business and Kaiser were expanding. Aluminum was replacing brass, copper and steel applications, so you weren't just selling aluminum to somebody, you were in many cases working with their purchasing and manufacturing people, converting a product.

When I moved to Youngstown, OH, one of my first assignments dealt with converting the steel doors on railroad



**Dave and Jackie with long-time Kaiser friends and their wives in 1997 (L-R) Kathy and Steve Bettcher, Chuck and Roz Bottke and Jim and Susie McKnight.**

*(Members Profile, from Page 5)*

cars to aluminum to get the weight down. Kaiser did a unique thing at the time by having a mechanical engineer on staff in all of our major sales offices. Instead of pulling someone out of product development or research, we had someone right there. It was a great plus.

Kaiser transferred me back to Cleveland after a few years and then Toledo in 1959. By 1961, I found myself in Oakland, CA, where I stayed for most of my career. I spent a few years in RBW and Sheet and Plate Marketing and then nine months at the Stanford-Sloan Management Program.

#### **Does a particular job stand out?**

Japan! In the mid-1960s, my family and I moved to Tokyo where I worked at Sky Aluminum, a joint venture with a large rolling mill owned by Kaiser and two Japanese companies.

What a great experience. My kids were 10, 8 and 6 and attended the excellent American School. In fact, when we moved back to Piedmont, CA, school was a breeze for them. We had a nice home in an area where lots of diplomats lived, and

we traveled a lot in the far East.

There were 100 of us in the main office, but only three Americans. Ralph Cheek and I at the main office and Bud Gardner at the subsidiary in Osaka. I helped with sales and marketing and Ralph with operations.

We stayed in Tokyo for three years and my family and I made life-long friends, both American and Japanese. Our kids did great and my oldest daughter is still close to a friend she made while living there. We returned to Oakland in 1968.

#### **Tell us more about your experiences with Kaiser.**

I really loved my career with Kaiser Aluminum and couldn't wait to start my day each morning. Such great people, products, customers and challenges.

From 1968 until I retired in 1994, most of my career involved working with Kaiser's Industrial Distributors, who were big customers of Sheet and Plate, Rod, Bar and Wire and Extrusions. I was Manager

of Distributor Sales for 10 years before being General Manager, Building and Construction Products for a few years. Then I moved to VP of Distribution, and, finally, VP of Sales and Marketing. I'm sure many retirees associate me with the distributors. It was the most rewarding part of my career.



**Dave remembers fondly several wonderful Kaiser friends from the '60s and '70s who have passed away. L-R: Art Woodward, Reid Edwards, Pete Dunston, Jack Watson and Gordon Anderson.**

#### **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.

*(Members Profile, from Page 5)*

Great customers. Many, along with their families, became life-long friends. At 90 year of age, I still keep in touch with some of them.

### **What were the more challenging parts of your career?**

In 1982, when Kaiser started shutting down marginal plants. I was General Manager of Building and Construction and ran about 20 small plants around the country. So many friends I worked with for years lost their jobs as the plants either closed or were sold. By the time I retired in 1994, I was more than ready. I took a few years off but, at 64, I was too young to completely retire.

### **What did you do?**

I became a consultant and worked with some of the same companies I did business with while at Kaiser. I became the go-between when the larger companies were looking to buy smaller ones. I knew the people and could facilitate a good match. Many of the smaller companies were family-owned, and I really enjoyed connecting with them again. Sometimes, when I'd show up, I'd find myself dealing with the son as



**Dave and Jackie Fenton enjoying a skiing vacation in Vail, CO.**

the father had retired.

After a few years of traveling across the country as a consultant, I was finally ready to retire. By then, I was in my 70s and it was time.

### **What have you been doing since you retired?**

I love to play golf and go skiing, biking



**Dave and Jackie (center) surrounded by Dave's five children and spouses and 11 grandchildren.**

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*(Members Profile, from Page 6)*

and, before the pandemic, my wife Jackie and I loved to travel and go on cruises. Our favorites were cruising the Mediterranean, the Greek Isles, the Dalmatian Coast, as well as the East Coast in the U.S. We also really enjoy bike trips and have been on some wonderful ones in Italy, France, and Cape Cod in New England as well as New Orleans and Puget Sound.

But one of my most fulfilling activities has been with Northern Light School in Oakland, CA. It's a non-profit, kindergarten through eighth grade, with approximately 170 children from mostly low to middle income families. Four Oakland teachers started the school in 1989 and connected with Cornell Maier, who became the school's leader and a major benefactor. A number of us from Kaiser Aluminum such as Jess Erickson, Bill Hobbs, Dick Evans, Arvind Jain and Ed Quinnan have helped out over the years. I've been on the board and head of development for most of the past 15 years. We raise a lot of money to sustain the great education and future



**Dave and Jackie at a Stanford Football game. She graduated from Stanford in 1956 and Dave completed the Sloan Management Program in 1965.**

## *In Memoriam*

*Nadine G. Blansett  
Placentia, CA*

*Carl D. Gabriel  
Goodman, MO*

*Bryan F. Hymel  
La Place, LA*

*Carlos M. Padiar Sr.  
Baton Rouge, LA*

*Richard Childs Schroter  
Walnut Creek, CA*

*Donald L. Wissink  
Mead, 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.*

opportunities for these children, virtually all of whom go on to high school and college and good jobs.

### **Tell us a bit about your family.**

Jackie and I have been married for 40 years. We have a blended family that includes eight children, 18 grandchildren and three great grandchildren. We're very lucky many of them are in the Bay Area. When things return to normal, I'll let out a big sigh of relief and maybe plan a cruise for Jackie and myself!

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With the vaccine available and more and more retirees receiving it, Lunch Bunch organizers are hopeful lunches can resume by summer or fall. Contact information for the groups is listed below, and, hopefully, in the July issue of the KASRA Newsletter, we will have a full listing of meetings!

#### Baton Rouge

Lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Juban's Restaurant, 3729 Perkin's Road. Email Bob Presson at [leilap3@cox.net](mailto:leilap3@cox.net), or Bob Schoen at [bobschoen@cox.net](mailto:bobschoen@cox.net), or call Bob Schoen at (225) 937-2984.

#### Baton Rouge

Email Bob Presson at [leilap3@cox.net](mailto:leilap3@cox.net), or Bob Schoen at [bobschoen@cox.net](mailto:bobschoen@cox.net), or call Bob Schoen at (225) 937-2984.

#### Bay Area, KARLA

Contact Sharon Fraetis at (925) 330-8533 or email [lafnatv@gmail.com](mailto:lafnatv@gmail.com).

#### Belpre

Contact Betty Blair at (304) 489-1337 or email [bettylou13@suddenlink.net](mailto:bettylou13@suddenlink.net).

#### Chalmette

Contact Chuck Schimmel at (985) 643-0437 or email [schimcol@aol.com](mailto:schimcol@aol.com).

#### Erie

Contact Tim Healy at (814) 402-1062 or email [thealy1931@gmail.com](mailto:thealy1931@gmail.com).

#### April 15 Los Angeles

Contact Bob O'Leary at (714) 898-7463 or email [robemmet39@gmail.com](mailto:robemmet39@gmail.com)

#### Mead

Contact Dan Coe at (509) 944-7264 or email [dancoe33@comcast.net](mailto:dancoe33@comcast.net).

#### Newark

Contact Bill Snider at (740) 403-8328 or email [colbill44@roadrunner.com](mailto:colbill44@roadrunner.com)

#### Ravenswood

Contact Pete Westenhaver at (304) 266-4109 or email [Pete26164@gmail.com](mailto:Pete26164@gmail.com) or call Lee Corder at (304) 273-9457.

#### Tacoma

Contact Bob Mohr at 253 820 6569 or [bobmohr1942@gmail.com](mailto:bobmohr1942@gmail.com).

#### Trentwood

Contact Steve Harvey at (509) 939-7132 or email [s1harv3y@comcast.net](mailto:s1harv3y@comcast.net).



A little over a year ago, Ray and Sandra Bates and Roger and Carolyn Hamm enjoyed Tacoma's January luncheon at Johnny's Dock. Hopefully, they will soon be able to gather there once again!