

Supersniffer SuperHENC may be a supersaver



A Laboratory-developed waste characterization tool called SuperHENC will help clean-up efforts at Rocky Flats, shown in this view looking to the northwest. Photo by Imaging Services (IM-4)

by Todd Hanson

The Laboratory's SuperHENC waste characterization tool has been delivered to the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site near Denver, Colo.

SuperHENC, which stands for Super High Efficiency Neutron Coincidence counter, will eventually allow Rocky Flats dismantlement workers to begin loading standard waste boxes, or SWBs, without segregating different materials. Use of SuperHENC not only will reduce the potential for worker radiation exposure, the device may help speed up the dismantlement schedule and save an estimated \$100 million in the cost of the Rocky Flats remediation.

SuperHENC is a trailer-mounted passive neutron counter that can measure the trace amounts of plutonium present in mixtures of metals, combustibles and debris packed in

SWBs. The instrument provides accurate measurements of transuranic waste and certification of waste for disposal at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in Carlsbad.

The system includes a SWB handling capability and weight indicator device or load cell that can handle and measure loads up to 5,000 pounds, and yet is more accurate than the current WIPP Quality Assurance Objectives for smaller packages.

SuperHENC works by counting the neutrons produced by the spontaneous fission of the plutonium isotopes. The neutron counting process, called coincidence counting, uses special electronic circuitry to distinguish between the neutrons emitted two or three at a time by the fission process and the typically single, random neutrons emitted by alpha particle reactions. By

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Welcome to the Los Alamos News Letter

by Kathy DeLucas

We are pleased to introduce LANL (Los Alamos News Letter) to Los Alamos employees and retirees. This bi-weekly publication replaces our monthly Reflections, but will continue several of Reflections' features, such as the Spotlight on employee activities, stories about noteworthy scientific and programmatic achievements, a look at Lab projects and organizations that may not be familiar to you, and "people" items about awards, appointments and other forms of recognition.

With a more frequent schedule than Reflections, LANL will allow us to be more timely in presenting information to employees in a printed format. Together with the electronic Daily Newsbulletin, LANL will better meet employees' expectations for regular and relevant information — or such is our intention and hope.

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Director's Q&A

The following questions are from the online "Ask the Director" located at <http://www.lanl.gov/worldview/news/director/ask-director.html>.



Demise of the Nambe Service Award Program

Q: What's gonna take its place? Suggestion: How about allowing the 25-, 30-, 35-year person to park as close to the entrance to the building they work in? Oh for, say, a month for 25, six months for 30, a year for 35. I think that's a nice little reward, do you? Costs nothing, maybe a placard that entitles him/her to do so.

A: I have heard this rumor several times. The Nambe wear service awards are *not* being discontinued. However, we are looking at additional options for service awards so that people can have a wider range of choices — a preference that we have heard from many employees. Your proposal to grant special parking privileges as a service award is an interesting one. The drawback as I see it is that the ease of parking varies tremendously across the Laboratory and preferential parking would be highly desirable at some sites and meaningless at others. However, perhaps it should be one of the options available to people. Thanks for the suggestion.

Family Days

Q: Seven years ago, I attended a LANL "Family Day" celebration. I work behind the fence, and it afforded my family a chance to see where I work and what I do. When will we have another one? I think that seven years is long enough, and I think that the time has come to open the Lab again to families. Any comments would be appreciated.

A: I fully agree that we are overdue for another Family Day. We had planned to have one in 1999, however the first major security problem came along and caused a postponement. We began work on a security plan for summer 2000 and were hit first by the Cerro Grande Fire and then by the second large security incident, which caused another postponement. I am asking the Community Relations Office (CER-3), Public Affairs (CER-2) and the Security and Safeguards (S) Division to resume planning for the next Family Day, which would likely take place in mid-2001.

Welcome ...

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Kathy DeLucas,
editor, LANL

Launching a new publication always brings a certain amount of trepidation. Will it satisfy the audience? Will it consistently meet our own standards and goals? How the heck do we get all the copy written and approved in time to meet our tight deadlines?

Time will tell. You can help us out: We

look forward to hearing your response to LANL, things you like about it, stories you'd like to see in it and how we can make it better meet your needs and desires for Lab information. Lab News will certainly evolve as we gain experience with it, and we'll be glad to receive your input as part of that process.

If you have suggestions or comments, please send them our way at Mail Stop C177, electronically to newsbulletin@lanl.gov or call us at 7-1455.

I also wish to acknowledge the dedicated work PAO staff put into Reflections for four years. That publication produced some articles I will long remember, and I hope it brought you enjoyment, too.

Supersniffer SuperHENC ...

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analyzing the number of double or triple neutrons recorded by a counter within a specified period — usually around 128 microseconds — workers can determine the plutonium content of the material in the SWBs.

Currently, three commercial vendors have begun the licensing procedure to manufacture more SuperHENC devices. Because of the quality of the current system, none are likely to make any modifications to the Los Alamos design.

SuperHENC is part of a family of sophisticated detectors designed by Lab scientists to aid in the management and control of nuclear materials and wastes.

It is the result of a collaboration among members of Safeguards Science and Technology (NIS-5), Advanced Nuclear Technology (NIS-6), the Environmental Science and Waste Technology (E) Division and the Rocky Flats site. Funding was provided by the Department of Energy through Rocky Flats. Additional funding came through an Accelerated Site Technology Deployment project from the Office of Science and Technology of DOE Environmental Management.

LANL

LANL, the Laboratory bi-weekly publication for employees and retirees, is published by the Public Affairs Office in the Communications and External Relations (CER) Division. The staff is located at TA-3, Building 100, and can be reached by e-mail at newsbulletin@lanl.gov, by telephone at 7-6103, by fax at 5-5552 or by regular Lab mail at Mail Stop C177. The individual telephone numbers are listed below.

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Please recycle

PTLA does more than check badges

by Kathy DeLucas

Protection Technology Los Alamos employs more than 500 people who, in partnership with the International Guards Union of America Local No. 69, do a wide variety of tasks ranging from protecting entry points to running the Laboratory's Central Alarm Station to the armed defense of the Lab, its employees and information.

"Our security officers and armed security police officers patrol 43 square miles, protect 19 nuclear facilities, and ensure the safety and security of 6.5 million classified documents and more than 40,000 classified parts," says Operations Director Mike Wilson. "We provide physical security 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to all Lab facilities."

The PTLA force also maintains a unique relationship with Los Alamos County by operating the CAS — the 9-1-1 emergency and fire dispatch center serving both the Lab and the county.

Mike Sisneros has been a member of the Protective Force and is now on the PTLA staff. He joined the IGUA 17 years ago when he was 18 years old, making him one of the youngest security officers at the time. He then worked his way up to managing the CAS and is now the Labor Relations Officer for PTLA.



Protection Technology Los Alamos Security Police Officer Frank Godfrey (with radio in hand) and Security Police Officer Vincent Martinez are controlling traffic during the Cerro Grande Fire last May.

Photo courtesy of PTLA

Sisneros was a key player in establishing a countywide 9-1-1 system. Not only do the CAS officers monitor and dispatch all county fire and 9-1-1 calls, they also monitor and send response to all Laboratory security and fire alarms.

Beyond their normal scope of work, PTLA officers also provide security for presidential visits, demonstrations and expanded security for the many colloquiums hosted by the Lab.

Most officers were kept very busy during the fire. Sisneros says that during the first week of the Cerro Grande Fire, PTLA CAS and field officers worked an average of 96 hours per officer — sometimes at great personal risk. Officers also maintained roadblocks and traffic control, ran food to emergency personnel, and served on numerous fire-watch posts — part of the eyes and ears for the fire department around Lab facilities.

The PTLA force was honored by New Mexico's Governor Gary Johnson as "Heroes of the Cerro Grande Fire." It received a formal resolution from the state legislature for heroic actions in assisting with the evacuation of Los Alamos and with the fire response, as well as receiving special recognition from Lab Director John Browne.

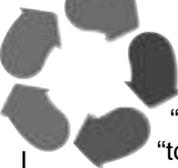
Organizationally, PTLA consists of five divisions: Operations; Business Operations; Environment, Safety and Health; Plans and Procedures; and Community and Economic Development.

The majority of the protective force resides in the Operations Division. This division leads the uniformed force responsible for the day-to-day operations plus the special operations force, a highly trained special response team—equivalent to a big city SWAT team. The

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ISM Corner

Lab meets 'stretch goals'



Director John Browne at a recent managers' meeting extended his thanks to divisions and groups for meeting the Lab "stretch goals" for reducing the number of "total recordable incidents" and "lost work cases," statistics used by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to measure incidents that impact employees.

In October 1998 Browne set a goal for the Lab of reducing TRIs and LWCs by 50 percent. The Lab achieved that goal on time, meeting a standard regarded by industry as "best in class."

This achievement needs to be celebrated by all. During this holiday season, we can all reflect and be thankful that 170 fewer of our friends and colleagues were injured during the last 12 months than during the 12 months ending in October 1998. The ISM Program Office is looking for ways to celebrate our achievement. Send your ideas to Fran Talley, Public Affairs Office (CER-2), Mail Stop C177 or e-mail flt@lanl.gov.

When the weather outside is frightful ...



by Steve Sandoval

When it's snowing outside, do you wondering if the Lab will be open or on a delayed schedule? There's a new, toll-free employee hotline that employees can call to find out. That toll free number is 1-877-723-4101.

The number provides easy access to the UPDATE phone number that employees should call to find out if the Lab's operating schedule is affected by winter storms. The local phone number for Santa Fe and Los Alamos residents is at 667-6622. The message on the machine will not change unless there has been a change in schedule at the Laboratory or new information concerning an emergency.

The Laboratory's Early Dismissal/Closure/Delayed Opening Plan for determining the Lab's operating schedule during inclement weather involves several resources. Gene Darling of Emergency Management and Response (S-8) said the on-duty EM&R officer keeps up with the latest local forecast and usually knows if a weather system may affect the Lab's schedule.

In the case of closures or delayed openings, the process usually begins around 3 a.m. The on-duty EM&R officer obtains the latest information on road conditions, progress in clearing sidewalks and parking lots, and current and forecast weather conditions, then discusses the situation with other EM&R personnel before calling the Director's Office.

The contact in the Director's Office confers with DOE. The final decision and authority on whether to close entirely, delay opening or dismiss early rests with the DOE Los Alamos Area Office.

Once such a decision has been made, the duty manager at EM&R is contacted; EM&R personnel call the primary contact in Public Affairs (CER-2). The individual places the message on the UPDATE information hotline first, then types the information on a new Web-based pager system for completely deaf employees. If it's a delayed opening or closure, he or she then calls various radio and television stations, asking them to report the Lab's operating status.

In the case of an early dismissal, the information is immediately put on the UPDATE Information Hotline and the Daily Newsbulletin. E-mail announcing the early dismissal also is sent to master management and administrative distribution for dissemination to all employees.

The entire process for delayed opening or Lab closure usually is completed before 5:30 a.m., giving Lab and contractor employees time to find out ahead of time what the situation is at the Lab. Darling says the plan works relatively well when bad weather occurs early in the morning, but there's really not much EM&R can do when bad weather strikes the area unexpectedly after 5 a.m. "There's just no time to adequately respond to the situation," he said.

If you are at work and want to know if the Lab is closing early, periodically call the UPDATE hotline (667-6622) or check the daily Newsbulletin (remember to click the "Reload" button if you have previously accessed the site).

If you are at home and want to know if the Lab is on a delayed opening schedule or is closed for the day, call the hotline first when you get up in the morning. Listen to the news on radio or television stations. For more information about the Lab's Early Dismissal/Closure/Delayed Opening Plan, call 7-6211.

Keep on truckin'

by Steve Sandoval

The Laboratory's vehicle fleet has been augmented by 10 of 20 new electric-powered Ford Ranger EV trucks.

Powered by lead-acid batteries, the electric Ford Rangers are being tested as a possible alternative to petroleum-fueled vehicles, explained Brett Ray of Property Management (BUS-6).

"The 1999 Ranger EV produces no smog-contributing emissions," said Ray. "In addition to the environmental benefits, electric vehicles



Christopher Vigil, left, of LANSCE-FM inspects the engine of an electric-powered 1999 Ford Ranger pickup at the Los Alamos Neutron Science Center (LANSCE). The truck uses no motor oil and has no gas tank. Thirty-nine eight-volt batteries power the truck. Photo by LeRoy N. Sanchez

cost less to operate, require less maintenance and have improved energy efficiency compared to gasoline-powered vehicles of similar type and size."

The electric vehicles will be assigned to personnel at the Los Alamos Neutron Science Center (LANSCE) at Technical Area 53 and
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Good ideas cook in the minds of New Mexicans

by Michael Carlson

After two years and an estimated \$3 million, the Johnson Controls Commercial Kitchen is ready to nurture the entrepreneurial spirit that has smoldered quietly in the hearts of Northern New Mexico residents.

With a grand opening last March, the facility is serving Northern New Mexico's agricultural and small business community by providing services in the form of education, equipment and workspace.

The kitchen is a cooperative effort between Johnson Controls Northern New Mexico and Northern New Mexico Community College, and is intended to aid food producers in the manufacture and sale of indigenous products marketing them to suppliers and retail outlets.

The goal, according to Mike Shepherd of JCNM, is to get companies to buy products that were created in Northern New Mexico, and eventually have such items as part of normal inventories throughout the country.

Students enrolled in the Food Science and Technology degree program will be able to earn a two-year

degree through courses at the commercial kitchen, which includes training in nutritional analysis, U.S. Department of Agriculture food and drug requirements, food safety and sanitation, packaging requirements and marketing.

Services also available through the kitchen, but not necessarily part of a degree, include a one-day food safety class, as well as an equipment training course. Non-students who desire to use the kitchen in an effort to produce goods for the market or for the home are required to take short credit courses before its use.

According to Cecilia Garcia Whitehead, the new food science director at NNMCC, the courses are intended to educate kitchen users about cleanliness, proper food preparation and equipment handling procedures.

Whitehead is working with farmers to develop and market "value added products." Such items include jellies, jams, powdered chili and tomatoes.

"We turn a product into something for the shelf, as opposed to culinary food that goes from the kitchen to the table," she said.

As part of a commitment by the



Cecilia Garcia Whitehead, the Food Science Director for Northern New Mexico Community College, prepares food in the Johnson Controls Commercial Kitchen. Photo by Michael Carlson

Lab and its subcontractors to help diversify the Northern New Mexico economy, local residents will have "first crack" at many new jobs created through the center, according to officials from NNMCC. The 3,000 square-foot kitchen is part of a 15,000 square-foot business park that includes an incubator designed to cultivate small businesses in an effort to stimulate local economies.

Use of the kitchen costs \$8.50 an hour, or ten dollars for a three-hour minimum.

For more information, contact Whitehead at 505-753-8952.

Keep on ...

continued from Page 4

the Environment, Safety and Health (ESH), Materials Science and Technology (MST), Engineering Sciences and Applications (ESA) and Facility Waste Operations (FWO) divisions. They will be used primarily for transporting employees as well as engineering and environmental equipment.

The electric truck is ideal for certain Laboratory technical areas that are contained within defined areas, such as LANSCE, said Harriett West, also of BUS-6.

The trucks have a range of about 60 miles and a top speed of about 75 mph, according to information provided by Ford Motor Co.

Alternative fuel vehicles include electric-powered, compressed natural gas, ethanol or vehicles that can run

on either compressed natural gas or gasoline, West said.

Currently, 244 of the Lab's more than 1,400 fleet vehicles are alternative fuel powered, mostly ethanol/ gasoline, she said. The Laboratory is working closely with the Department of Energy and the Clean Cities program to install an ethanol fueling station in Los Alamos.

The trucks' 39, eight-volt sealed lead acid batteries sit on a special compartment underneath the frame of the truck. The truck can be charged with a regular 220-volt circuit in about six hours. A power cord from a 220-volt outlet attaches to a plate on the front grill of the truck.

Ray said the Lab installed 20 charging stations strategically around the Lab.

A gauge on the dashboard indicates the number of miles the truck can be driven before recharging. The range varies with driving conditions. The truck has no gas tank and doesn't require motor oil.

Flicker selected as X-4 group leader



Dawn Flicker

Jon Weisheit, Applied Physics (X) Division director, has announced the selection of **Dawn Flicker** as group leader for Primary Design and Assessment (X-4).

Flicker received her bachelor of science degree in atmospheric science from the University of California, Los Angeles and a doctorate from the University of Oklahoma.

She came to the Laboratory in 1987 as a postdoc in the Accelerator Division where she did research on automatic control of neutral particle beams before she moved to X Division in 1988. Flicker has worked in advanced design, enhanced surveillance, certification and radiographic analysis. She was ASCI co-project leader.

Flicker grew up in Los Alamos and is a Los Alamos High School graduate.

Swift to receive ASA Silver Medal



Greg Swift

Lab physicist **Greg Swift** will receive the Silver Medal in Physical Acoustics from the Medals and Awards Committee of the Acoustical Society of America.

The ASA's Silver Medals are presented to individuals for contributions to the advancement of science, engineering, or human welfare through the application of acoustic principles or through research accomplishments in acoustics. The Silver Medal in Physical Acoustics has been awarded to only eight other people

during its 25-year history.

Last year, Swift, of Condensed Matter and Thermal Physics (MST-10), and Chris Espinoza and Scott Backhaus, also of MST-10, received an R&D 100 award from R&D Magazine for their Acoustic Stirling Heat Engine.

Swift has been at the Lab since

1981. He earned a bachelor's degree in physics and math from the University of Nebraska in 1974 and a doctoral degree in physics from the University of California, Berkeley in 1980.

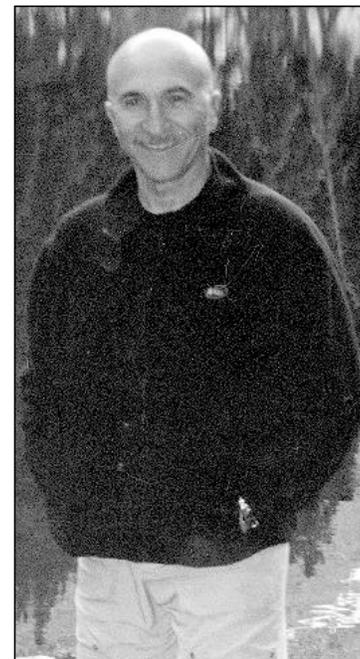
Swift will receive the Silver Medal Dec. 6 at the next meeting of the Acoustical Society of America.

Richard Morgado teaching, researching in Portugal

Richard Morgado of Advanced Nuclear Technology (NIS-6) is presently on professional research and teaching leave for one year at the University of Coimbra, Portugal.

Morgado is an invited professor in the Atomic and Nuclear Instrumentation Group of the university's Physics Department. While in Portugal, he also will conduct research on applications of gas proportional scintillator detectors, including a detector with applications for treaty verification.

He left for Portugal after helping coordinate the successful completion of the Fissile Material Transparency Technical Demonstration. The demonstration, before a delegation of Russian officials, showed how new technology could effectively monitor nuclear materials removed from weapons.



Richard Morgado

In Memoriam

Frank M. Jackson

Lab retiree Frank M. Jackson died April 21. He was 69. Jackson came to work for the Lab in 1950 with the former Stockrooms and Warehouse (SP-3) group. He retired from the Lab with the former Dynamic Testing (M-DO) in 1991.

John 'Dick' Phillips

Lab retiree John R. "Dick" Phillips died June 14. He was 77. Phillips earned his bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Denver. He served in the U.S. Air Force as an aircraft mechanic during World War II in the South Pacific. Phillips came to work for the Lab in 1947 in the former Water Boiler (P-2) group. He retired from the Lab in 1979 where he worked on the Omega West Reactor and was featured in the motion picture "Our Mr. Sun."

Everette E. Shaw Jr.

Lab retiree Everette E. Shaw Jr. died April 22. He was 78. He entered military service in 1941 as pilot in the U.S. Air Force and served until 1945. Shaw attended

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In Memoriam ...

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the University of Wyoming and Montana State University, earning a master's degree in mechanical engineering in 1955. He came to work for the Lab in 1952 in the former Explosives RND (GMX-2) group. Shaw retired in 1979 after working in the former Down Hole Design (J-7) group.

Gerald L. 'Jerry' Bone

Lab employee Gerald L. "Jerry" Bone died Oct. 3. He was 57. Bone received his bachelor's degree in business and marketing management from the University of New Mexico. He came to work for the Lab as a contract specialist in 1976. Bone worked for the last 20 years as a buyer and contract administrator for the Lab and received numerous awards for his contribution towards the development of small businesses.

Basil Lewis

Lab employee Basil Lewis of Waste Management and Environment Compliance (NMT-7) died last February. Lewis, who graduated from Buffalo High School in Wayne, W.Va., served in the U.S. Navy from 1961 to 1965. He joined the Lab in 1978 with Branch Shops (SD-5) as a prototype machinist. He also worked in the Design Engineering (WX) and Engineering Sciences and Applications (ESA) divisions before joining NMT-7 in 1995. (This is a corrected version of an obituary in the October issue of Reflections.)

Syndicated material

Removed at the request
of the syndicate

November service anniversaries

30 years

Elmer Garcia, ESH-5
Michael George, NIS-8
Eugene Lopez, MST-6
Diane Quintana, NMT-11
Charles Slocomb, CIC-DO
Epitacio Vigil Jr., ESA-WMM
Richard Vigil, ESH-4
Billie Wheat, ESA-WE

25 years

Gerald Coriz, NMT-11
Norbert Ensslin, NIS-5
Floyd Gallegos, LANSCE-6
Richard Lujan, ESA-DE
Jack Malcom, NMT-4
Allen Neuls, TSA-10
Ronald Scripsick, ESH-5
Kenneth Thomas, NIS-7

20 years

M.J. Aldrich, EES-1
Grace Archuleta, HR-5
Naomi Becker, EES-5
Sangkoo Hahn, NIS-4
James Hodges, BUS-5
Garlan Isom, NMT-15
Tamara Johnson, B-S1
John Maestas, BUS-4
Peggy Maez, ESA-WE
Florence Medina, BUS-7
Donald Mikkelson, ESH-1
James Ogle, DX-7

15 years

James Anderson, ESA-FM-ESH
Leona Baca, DX-1
Hong Bach, ESA-TSE
Jonathan Boettger, T-1
Thomas Boorman, CIC-5
John Bounds, NIS-6
Wilson Boyd, NIS-9

Gracia Coffin, E-ER
Steven Conradson, MST-8
David Dorsey, ESH-1
Richard Dyer, B-S2
Cameron Ethridge, ESH-13
Richard Fox, FWO-UI
Belinda Gutierrez, ESH-20
Richard Hughes, P-23
David Jones, NMT-3
Helena Korhonen, ESA-WMM
Eva Medina, NMT-11
Katherine Norskog, IM-1
James Ostic, NMT-DO
Pamela Padilla, OEO
Melissa Robinson, BUS-3
Beatrice Romero, NIS-7
Lorraine Segura, ESH-3
Patricia Serrano, DX-1
Stephen Sheffield, DX-1
Brian Thompson, E-ESO
C. Trujillo-Anaya, S-8
R. Scott Willms, STB-FE
Anna Zurek, MST-8

10 years

Cheryl Bequette, S-8
Chris Brislawn, CCS-3
Herbert Lunsten, NIS-1
Lynne Goodwin, B-N1
William Hargraves, ESH-5
Bette Korber, T-10
Timothy Nelson, NMT-15
John Pearson, X-8
Patricia Powers, C-25

5 years

Kristin Bennett, LANSCE-12
Michele Gross, MST-6
Drew Kornreich, TSA-7
Tina McKee, IM-1
Jose Ortega, NMT-5
Jim Rubin, NMT-16
Susan Terp, ESH-17

PTLA ...

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Plans and Procedures Division develops and published the normal and emergency orders directing the Protective Force actions. The PTLA Business Operations and ES&H aspects are similar to those divisions at the Lab.

The Community and Economic Development Division is responsible for developing business opportunities throughout Northern New Mexico. PTLA also has an education initiative with Northern New Mexico Community College.

The security force also is a major contributor to the United Way campaign, the Los Alamos National

Laboratory Foundation and many other local community activities, devoting more than 6,000 hours of community service last year. "Our folks are very involved in their communities," Wilson said. "We have people on school boards, coaching little league and soccer, and involved in leadership and support functions with various service organizations such as the Kiwanis, Boy and Girl Scouts, American Legion, Elks Lodge and Veterans of Foreign Wars, to name just a few."

PTLA's parent company is Day and Zimmerman, founded in 1901 in Philadelphia. Day and Zimmerman has service companies in construction, microelectronics, utility services, life sciences and security.

Old World charm in high-tech realm

by Michael Carlson



Kelly Hakonson doesn't write for therapy as some writers do. Instead, she writes to sell, entertain and educate. She is the author of the recently published children's book, "The Stump Fairies of Miller Hill," the first of a planned series about the lives and adventures of fairy

clans in various habitats.

A chemical technician with Applied Chemical Technologies (C-12), Hakonson was inspired to write the book while resting on a tree stump during a 1994 hike near Bandelier National Monument. Prompted to ponder what might live in the stump, she went straight home to start writing.

Intended to be educational and entertaining, the fictional book contains "take-home" lessons about such subjects as ecology and the food chain. Hakonson said she stretched the vocabulary so that children will be inclined to look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary.

The book is written for children 8 to 12, and has been hailed as a great read-aloud by young readers and their parents. The book is complemented by a Web site, <http://www.stumpfairies.com>, where readers can learn more about the Miller Hill habitat and future books in the series, and submit their questions and feedback.

Hakonson grew up reading books for entertainment.

Out of a passion for reading came her desire to write. An English professor at the University of Wyoming encouraged her to pursue her literary talents. She later took courses at the University of New Mexico, Los Alamos under instructor and author Shirley-Raye Redmond to learn more about the publishing process.

Before returning to school, she tried briefly to sell her book to a major publisher.

After she completed her degree, she began researching alternative publishing forums on the Internet. In her search, she found *1stbooks.com*, an online publisher that,

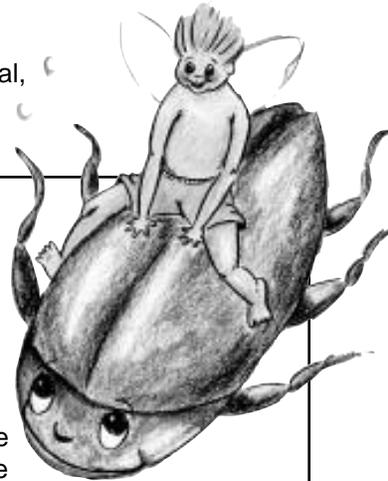
in addition to selling written work on the Web, produces paperback books.

Illustrations by Patricia Lou

Hakonson is happy with her new publisher due to the fact that she was able to retain the rights and is allowed involvement in the marketing aspect of her book.

The digital and paperback versions of the "The Stump Fairies of Miller Hill" are available on *1stbooks.com* and many other traditional and online book retailers.

Hakonson, who is published under the pen name Kelly Michal, is already writing a sequel.



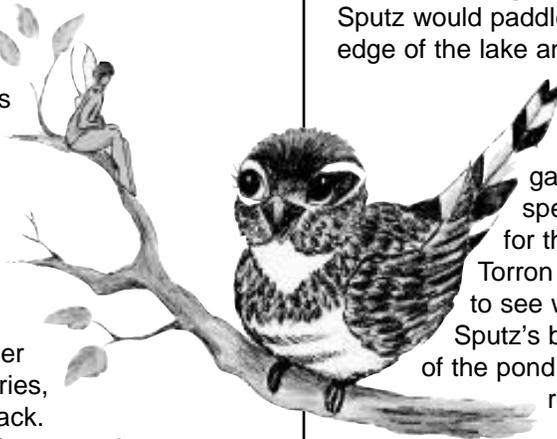
Fairykids and water bugs

"Early most mornings before it was light, Spitz and Sputz would paddle up to the edge of the lake and give the

fairykids rides on their broad, rounded backs. The fairykids had been at Learning, and the games with the water bugs were a special treat before they went home for the day. Divina, Landra and Torron and all their friends had contests to see who could remain intact on Sputz's back when he dove to the bottom of the pond. Torron was very proud to be the reigning fairykid champion.

"A dive with the water beetles required a hefty film of beeswax all over the skin to protect fairy skin from the cold water. Even in the summer, the water in the pond was very cold, and the beeswax helped insulate the delicate fairies from the frigid temperatures."

—from "Stump Fairies of Miller Hill"



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