Sandia’s Al Zelicoff searches for clues to Soviet super smallpox strain

New details of 1971 outbreak provide unsettling evidence

By John German

The evidence mounting against the Russians isn’t definitive. But it’s enough to make Labs senior scientist Al Zelicoff (5320) and other non-proliferation experts uneasy.

For almost a year, Al has been trying to track down what he believes is a virulent strain of weaponized smallpox tested by the Soviet Union in the early 1970s — a biological weapon Russian officials today won’t acknowledge even when confronted with evidence from their own archives.

The international arms control community wants the Russian government to disclose details about the strain, which Al believes is a particularly potent modification of the virus, so the rest of the world can defend itself from it.

Without the genetic code of the strain, he says, preferably gleaned from a live sample provided by the Russians, doctors and pharmaceutical companies are unable to develop vaccines to blunt the virus’ effects should it fall into the wrong hands.

Last week, Al appeared on ABC World News Tonight and NBC Nightly News and was interviewed by a US News & World Report reporter about the alleged super strain.

The missing strain became newsworthy early last week when the CIA announced it was following leads provided by an informant who claimed a late Russian bioweapons researcher might have given the smallpox strain to Saddam Hussein’s government during a visit she made to Iraq in 1990.

A report published in June by the Monterey Institute of International Studies provided unsettling evidence that the CIA is following the leads.

This strain could, for the first time, be used to weaponize smallpox, a virulent strain tested by the Soviet Union in the early 1970s.

A recent report by the National Academy of Sciences said the smallpox strain might be weaker than the original strain used by the Soviets, but it could still be effective.

If true, this strain could be used to weaponize smallpox, which has the potential to kill millions of people.

By Neal Singer

If a surgeon in New York wants the opinion quickly of a specialist in Cairo, she probably would send medical X-ray or MRI files as e-mail attachments or make them accessible in Internet drop zones.

But jointly viewing and interacting with the images — a more effective way to discuss problems — currently takes minutes for each turn of a visualization. This could be too time-consuming to help a patient on the operating table. In less extreme cases, with medical specialists being paid by the clock, the time delays during extensive consultations could soon lead, as the late Senator Everett Dirksen put it, to real money.

Now a team of Sandia engineers has applied for a patent on interactive remote visualization hardware that will allow doctors (or engineers, or oil exploration teams, or anyone else with a need to interact with computer-generated images from remote locations) to view and manipulate images as though standing in the same room. The lag time between action and visible result is under 0.1 second even though the remote computer is thousands of miles away.

“The niche for this product is when the data set you’re trying to visualize is so large you can’t move it, and yet you want to be collaborative, to share it without sending copies to separate locations,” said Lead Engineer Lyndon Pierson.

The team has tested their visualization hardware with medical images, engineering drawings and computer-aided design images.

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Self-styled curmudgeon and Grouch Marx fan Bill Murphy (12640) says we need a new strategy for announcing the latest fastest supercomputer. “IEM and LLNL have announced ASCI Purple, a 1-teraflops machine whose speed rivals the speed of the human brain (says The Times of London’s breathless headline). Guys, we need to announce our supercomputers a lot faster if we expect to keep up in this game. Let’s leapfrog the competition and get our petaflops machine — and we need to do it now! We’ve done ASCI Red and Red Storm; in the game of escalating sexy-sounding names, how about we call our petaflops machine Scarlet Hurricane? (That still leaves us with Maroon Typhoon to use when we go to the next next generation announcement.)

“Boy, these supercomputer announcements are fast!”

My predecessor in this space, Oklahoma’s favorite son Larry Perrine, walked into my office recently, fulminating about a “pet peeve,” which is not necessarily a pet peeve, but may certainly make me scratch my head in puzzlement every time I see it. The “it” is the insistence by some to spell the name of our planet with a small “e” rather than the capitalization that at least Larry and I believe it deserves.

We capitalize the names of all the other planets in our solar system — and other solar systems. We capitalize the names of fictional planets, like Superman’s home, Krypton. We even capitalize the names of the moons of other planets in our solar system, for crying out loud, not to mention the names of places like Dales, which is just a location along the BNSF line between Belen and Los Lunas. We capitalize the name of the Mule Barn restaurant, Tucumari, and Day’s Billiard Parlour (a sissy place I liked to hang out in when I was a teenager).

So, what’s the deal with the name of the planet we live on? Is there a shortage of big E’s, or something?

And while I’m on the subject, does our star have a proper name, or is it just “the sun?” And what about our satellite? Is it as important as Ganymede or Io, or is it just “the moon?”

* * *

Gerry Quinlan (9224) wondered recently if Sandia has become a political party, and with reasonably good reason. Scanning news on the CNN financial website, he found the following from Reuters news service: “A massive supercomputer to be built by Sandia National Laboratories and Cray Inc. will use soon-to-be-available next-generation microprocessors from Advanced Micro Devices Inc. . . . ’Laborite’ . . . .

Retiree John Kirkland sent a note about the piece here a couple of issues back that quoted an e-mail a Sandia received from someone complaining that a “Silicon Neuron Device was implanted into my persons,” causing her to be tortured “by means of Satellite Ionizing Radiation.”

Oh, the milestone? Well, Sandia student intern Stephen Yao (2612), was the 10,000th person to access the Sandia workbox. He submitted a Web-Cars request at 1:35 p.m. on Sept. 13.

Here at the Labs the web workbox/workflow capability was initiated in March 1998 to provide automated document routing and approvals. At the time, it was largely a proof-of-concept project with untried technology. Since then, workflow and business process management has become standard industry practice. Sandia now has 22 applications using workflow, including Foreign Trade, Foreign National Request System, WebCARS, and Workflow Enabled Unsatisfactory Reports. In addition, at Sandia, you can access the corresponding Delegation of Authority application from within the workflow box. In FY03 and beyond, proposals are in process to leverage this capability to automate these processes for mission systems. “This growth is evidence of the productivity of the Workflow group and the benefit of the Workflow infrastructure to the Sandia Enterprise,” says James Hutchins (now 9514), one of the original workflow developers.

We are very proud of the current Workflow team and the Workflow pioneers.

Pioneer Team: James Hutchins (9522), Dave Schoch (9523), John Abbott (9322), Larry Hendal (9512). Current Team: Pat Kaufmann, Brian Podojil, Julie Fillinger (all 9515).

What’s what

Sandia LabNews

Sandia National Laboratories

http://www.sandia.gov/LabNews

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Sandia’s 2002/2003 annual report, using the theme “Helping Our Nation Secure a Peaceful and Free World Through Technology,” is now available through Pub-

lic Relations and Communications Center 12600.

The 68-page color publication emphasizes the many ways that Sandia contributes to national security. Information co-

ordination is organized by the Labs’ strategic business units and strategic management units, and a unique feature this year was the Sandia’s community involve-

ment programs at both major sites.

Editor Larry Perrine (12640) says the publication features selected Sandia capabilities and technical work that should be of particular interest to Sandia cus-

tomers and the public, especially projects of spe-

cial significance since 9/11/01. It does not include administrative accomplishments that are covered in the Lab News’ annual Labs Com-

plishments issue published each February.

More than 2,000 copies have been mailed externally to individuals and groups interested in Sandia’s work. Single copies are sent to all Sandia managers and above, and multiple copies are provided to Sandia’s recruiting offices and other selected departments for distri-

bution to prospective employ-

ees, customers, and others interested in Sandia’s work.

Employees wanting indi-

vidual copies can call Media Relations and Communica-

tions Dept. 12640 at 844-4902. The new annual report and ones from recent years can also be download from

www.sandia.gov/news-

center/publications/annual-

report/index.html.

Sympathy

To Lillie Peters (3532) on the death of her mother, Winnie Brundage, Oct. 27.

To Gila Yaniv (3532) on the death of her mother, Hella Yaniv, Nov. 2.

To Tara Allen in/out (2912) on the death of her mother, Betty Allen, at sea, Nov. 10.

To Glenn Machin (9312) on the death of his father, Ed Machin, in Albuquerque, Dec. 2.

Sandia Annual Report available now
Newest Nobel winner in chemistry taught and continues to influence Sandia researchers

By Nancy Garcia

Bob Gallagher (8361) had a surprise as he planned to visit his old alma mater for a joint recruitment / 150th anniversary event: He learned his thesis advisor had been named a co-recipient of the 2002 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and Fenn was one of three students who will spend at least one summer working at Sandia and include a Sandian on their research committee.

Recruiting at Yale

Planning to recruit this fall within Yale’s engineering, applied physics, and computer science programs, Bob arrived a couple of days before a weekend celebration of 150 years of engineering education at Yale. By then, word had arrived that his thesis adviser John Fenn was one of three researchers to receive this year’s Nobel Prize in Chemistry for pioneering work that has helped create a new field of biology, proteomics, by speeding chemical analysis of proteins and other large, fragile molecules.

Bob arranged for testi monials, including a personal reminiscence by Fenn’s daughter, to be delivered at a dinner attended by about 300 people.

He himself spoke that evening as one of Fenn’s students; in fact, Bob was Fenn’s first doctoral student at Yale, having followed him there.

Over the years, Bob says, the pair became good friends, and Fenn—who is now 85 and on the research faculty of Virginia Commonwealth University—was also a Sandia consultant. Bob returns annually to Yale, where “they sort of view me as a member of the family,” Bob said, “He completed his thesis work in 1972, about the time Fenn had begun exploring the ideas that led to the Nobel recognition.”

When elephants fly

Fenn’s invention was to gently ionize jets of large, intact molecules for analysis by mass spectrometry, a tool that identifies molecules based on size and charge as they travel through an electric field.

“That big breakthrough,” Bob said, “was figuring out how to ionize these molecules without destroying them,” a feat likened to “making elephants fly.” If proteins were mishandled, their structure would become scrambled not unlike the way a raw egg is altered by heating in a frying pan.

“Their invention was to gently ionize jets of large, intact molecules for analysis by mass spectrometry,” said Bob. “That big breakthrough, Bob says, was figuring out how to ionize these molecules without destroying them.”

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“That big breakthrough,” Bob said, “was figuring out how to ionize these molecules without destroying them.”

Bob Gallagher (8361), who shared the Nobel Prize in Chemistry this year for the advance that launched new fields through rapid identification of large, fragile molecules.

In California and New Mexico... Open Enrollment changes final deadline is Dec. 31

A reminder from Benefits:

Remember that if you are enrolled in the Health Care or Day Care Reimbursement Spending Account (RSA), or the Vacation Buy Plan during Open Enrollment, you can change or cancel (by selecting a zero amount) your election up until 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31, 2002. If you cancel your election, you cannot re-enroll in the RSA and/or Vacation Buy Plan until the next Open Enrollment period.

You can also change your medical premium tax election or you can waive your medical coverage through 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 31, 2002. Please remember that if you decide to waive your medical coverage, you will not be allowed to call back into the system and re-enroll for medical coverage. In addition, if you waive your medical coverage through the phone system, you must also complete the Waive of Medical Coverage Form that is included in your Open Enrollment booklet, and it must be received by the Benefits Customer Service Center by Dec. 31, 2002.

To make any of these changes, call the Open Enrollment Phone System at 844-3200 (if outside Albuquerque, call 1-800-417-2634, then 844-3200).

If you have questions, call the Benefits Customer Service Center at 845-BENL (2363).

Another member of the Sandia/DOE “family” trained by Prof. John Fenn is Vic Reiss, former DOE Assistant Secretary, Office of Defense Programs, who was Fenn’s first doctoral student at Princeton.
Smallpox
(Continued from page 1)


A research ship of the Aral fleet came 15 kilometers away from the island (it was forbidden to come any closer than 40 kilometers). A November 2001 interview of Gen. Pyotr Alma-Ata to Moscow be forbidden to stop at Defense and requested that the train from the chief of the general staff of the Ministry of Aralsk on Aug. 11 or 12, not on board the ship on Aug. 6, the documents contend.

Interview supports Voz Island hypothesis

A November 2001 interview of Gen. Pyotr Burgasov, a former chief sanitary physician for the Soviet Union, indicates the Soviet government knew of the Voz Island hypothesis. According to Patient 1 and official accounts of the Lev Berg’s expedition, 13 days prior to the onset of Patient 1’s symptoms, about July 30, the vessel was sailing somewhere south of Vozrozhdeniye Island.

International arms control experts know the Soviet Union conducted offensive biological weapons testing on the island, known as Voz Island, beginning in 1936. By 1971, it was the major proving ground for the Soviet Union’s biowarfare program, according to former Soviet officials who worked on the island.

Although historical documents do not detail an open-air test of smallpox on Voz in 1971, the Soviets are known to have been experimenting with the variola virus (the causative agent of smallpox) as an offensive weapon at the time, and several tests of other biological agents dispersed by aerosol sprayers and explosive bombs are recorded during that time. Al believes the Lev Berg might have strayed too close to the island as smallpox viral particles, alighted on the wind by a Soviet weaponizing additive, floated across the ship’s decks, where Patient 1 netted fish day and night.


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SMALLPOX VIRUS, growing in the cytoplasm of an infected cell. Thin section of infected chick embryo cell. Mature virions are brick-shaped, but here immature forms are also visible. Smallpox virus was globally eradicated from human populations in 1977 by an international vaccination campaign. Magnification approximately x25,000.

(Photograph from: F.A. Murphy, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California, Davis)
Smallpox

(Continued from preceding page)

would be an important step in that direction."

Appeal for openness

In July, Al co-signed a letter to Lev Sandakhchiev, Director of Vektro, the official Russian repository lab for smallpox. The signatories included Joshua Lederberg, winner of the 1958 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine; Peter Jahrling, Principal Scientific Advisor, US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID); and Tom Monath, Chief Scientific Officer of vaccine maker Acambis Inc.

The letter urged Sandakhchiev to encourage the Russian government to report details of any open-air smallpox tests in 1971 on Voz and to cooperate with international authorities to turn over samples of any undisclosed variola strain.

“This unfortunate outbreak occurred over 30 years ago, under the Soviet regime, and prior to the coming in force of the Biological Weapons Convention,” the letter states. “A new era is upon us, and we hope that information from these dangerous experiments can help us to work with you to prevent the use of smallpox as a biological weapon. We know that you share with us a passionate attachment to that goal. We have little interest in raking up the past, except where that is necessary to protect our future.”

Al says he continues to press the issue with Russian and US officials. He’s briefed numerous government officials, including an individual at the deputy undersecretary level in the US Department of Defense. More important, says Al, Jahrling, the United States’ most respected smallpox expert, has taken the message even higher.

Al’s analysis “provides strong circumstantial corroboration of suspicions that Soviet bioweaponsers conducted open air testing of smallpox virus on Vozrozhdeniye Island” and “elevates the theoretical concerns about variola virus as an agent of mass destruction to a new level,” wrote Jahrling in a commentary of the CNS report.

“The main significant finding in Aralsk was that smallpox could be successfully aerosolized over long distances,” says Al of his study conclusions. “That the virus strain in Aralsk may have caused worse-than-usual disease is suggested, but not proved, by the statistical analysis. "I believe that eventually our Russian friends might come around,” he adds, perhaps as the result of political pressure, a desire to do the right thing, or both. “After all, this is one area where their help could truly be important and life-saving,” he says.

"This unfortunate outbreak occurred over 30 years ago, under the Soviet regime, and prior to the coming in force of the Biological Weapons Convention. A new era is upon us, and we hope that information from these dangerous experiments can help us to work with you to prevent the use of smallpox as a biological weapon."

Visualization

(Continued from page 1)

"We expect our method will interest oil companies, universities, the military — anywhere people have huge quantities of visualization data to transmit and be jointly studied."

"We want the user to experience sitting right at the supercomputer from thousands of miles away." says Perry. "What you can do in software at these high resolutions will eventually feed back into US military capability."

In addition to Perry, John, Lyndon, and Ron, the design team also included Karl Gass (1751) and Tom Pratt and Edward Witzke (both 9336).
Annual ECP/LEAP campaign exceeds $2.3 million

‘People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care’

By Iris Aboytes

Sandians have done it again. This year’s donations to our communities set new records.

“We had a very successful ECP [employee contribution plan] campaign this year, raising a total of $2,327,000,” says Fred Sexton (1762), chairman of the ECP campaign this year. “Because of the generosity of Sandia employees and retirees, we will exceed the $2,092,000 to United Way of Central New Mexico and $235,000 through the Sandia Livermore LEAP campaign to help the most vulnerable members of our community toward self-sufficiency.

“While this is the fourth year in a row that we have raised a total of more than $2 million,” Fred says, “this is the first time we have broken the $2M level for the United Way of Central New Mexico contribution. Thanks to everyone who participated in ECP, and thanks especially to Mexico contribution. Thanks to everyone who reached the $2M level for the United Way of Central New Mexico.

When good deeds happen once in a while, it is wonderful. When they happen often, it gets to be a habit. When goals are reached, it is a way of life. The generosity of Sandians makes the impossible possible.

“Sandians care!” says Jack Holmes, President and CEO of United Way of Central New Mexico. “Individually they give thousands of hours and dollars quietly helping those in need in our community. This tremendous commitment is continuous, day after day, year after year. That’s when you know people’s efforts to care are individual and personal, when it happens consistently and they don’t care who gets the credit. I congratulate Sandians for the quality of people they are and the dedication they show to care for those most vulnerable. I also commend those ECP representatives for their extra dedication to make it all work every year.”

The planning for this year’s campaign began when last year’s campaign ended. The success came because of a variety of people behind the scenes. Programmers who made it easy to enroll, payroll clerks who input data and checked for accuracy, Sandia retirees who helped make our country strong, the mailroom for their accurate information deliveries, the print shop for printing all retiree letters, and so on. The real behind-the-scenes people were Sandians who contributed in a quiet and humble way.

This year’s leaders were Fred Sexton, chairman; Juaniata Sanchez (12660), project manager; John Merson (9712), 2003 chairman; and VPs Lenny Martinez (14000) and Al Romig (1000), co-champions. Thanks to them for their leadership and guidance.

Sandia President C. Paul Robinson’s words ring true, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

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UK visitor to Sandia: An appreciation

We all know Sandians are great people, but it’s always nice to get a grateful thank-you from an outside visitor.

“I am writing to acknowledge with appreciation the honesty of an unknown member of the Sandia workforce,” says a letter faxed this week to the Lab News. It is from Neil Bluett of the UK Ministry of Defence Defence Procurement Agency in Bristol, UK. “During a recent work visit, one lunchtime I had reason to sample the delights of your main staff restaurant. Unfortunately having stuffed myself to the gunwales, and feeling dozy with jet lag, I left the building but leaving my ‘pam bag’ on the back of the chair. You can imagine my feelings when I discovered my loss, with all the travel essentials now missing and a possible security alert for a suspect package imminent!

“After a high-speed return to the scene of the incident, my heart dropped to see a huge fire tender drawn up outside the main entrance. Fortunately this was nothing to do with my black bag, and my spirits were raised to find that some kind soul had indeed handed it in to the cashier for safe keeping. However, I have no name to pass on my thanks to. “Maybe you could put some words about my experience in your newsletter, in the hope that whoever it was will know that their good deed was much appreciated (and allowed me to get back across the water)!” We’re glad to do that.

Can you keep a secret?
‘Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa!’

Secret Santas are very rare treasures. You read about them, and wish you would meet at least one or two. With Sandia’s efforts to care are individual and personal, when it happens consistently and they don’t care who gets the credit. I congratulate Sandians for the quality of people they are and the dedication they show to care for those most vulnerable. I also commend those ECP representatives for their extra dedication to make it all work every year.”

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Lab News reader service

The Sandia Lab News is distributed in-house to all Sandia employees and on-site contractors and mailed to all Sandia retirees.

Retirees (only): To notify of changes in address, contact Carol Wade, Benefits Dept. 3341, at 505-845-9705, e-mail cawade@sandia.gov, or Mail Stop 1021, Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, NM 87185-1021.

Others: To receive the Lab News or to change the address of your retired contact Michelle Fleming, Media Relations and Communications Dept. 12640, at telephone 505-844-4902, e-mail mlemmons@sandia.gov, or Mail Stop 0165, SNL, Albuquerque, NM 87185-1016.

Employees: To change the number of copies of the Lab News your Mail Stop is receiving, please contact Horacio Ansaya, Mail Services Team 10268-4, at 844-3796. (At Sandia/California contact the Mail Room at 294-2427.)
When Sandians return from the holiday break, there will be some obvious changes. Many of our friends will have retired. The year will be 2003 and not 2002. And Jane Elson, the familiar face in the Executive Office, will be gone.

You will be greeted by the executive office by Trudy Blake, who has been at Sandia 10 years. She came to Sandia as an OAA (Office Administrative Assistant), after actually teaching herself shorthand in order to pass the OAA test. She says she valued and enjoyed her time as an OAA. "It is there," she says, "where the nerve center of the entire organization resides."

Most recently Trudy was business manager of Center 5900. As the new assistant to Labs President C. Paul Robinson, she looks forward to learning more about the Labs and increasing her contributions.

After 18 years at Sandia, 11 of those years working with Paul Robinson, Jane is beginning a different phase in her life. She plans on letting her artistic side shine through. Playing the piano, quilting, painting, reading, and spending time with her grandchildren are what she is looking forward to doing. There will be no pools becoming stagnant in this retiree’s life.

Jane came to Sandia to help augment her four children’s educations. Having done that, her personal challenge to become a better thinker and doer will be approaching her retirement. She plans on letting the EER system be more stable. "The EER system is not something we have been considering the past 12 months," Jane says. "When Sandians return from the holiday break, there will be some obvious changes."

Who are you and what have you done with Jane Elson?

BY IRIS ABOYTES

Feedback

Q: Recently I have had numerous occasions when I have been trying to fill out an electronic expense voucher and the voucher system is either down and won’t allow me to log in or, worse, it allows me to fill out the voucher but won’t allow me to save it, wanting the time spent filling it out. Can something be done to fix the system, or better yet, provide a way to fill out a voucher offline and upload it later? The second option would be particularly welcome when accessing the network via a dial-up connection.

A: The electronic expense voucher is generally available for use from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. and may be available during other hours, but unsupported, depending on database backups, routine maintenance, and upgrades to the server, network, and database. Without knowing when and while this “numerous occasions” occurred when the EER was not available there is not enough information to address your concern about system down time or when the system won’t allow you to log in. The application server in which the EER application resides experienced above-normal instability problems during the weeks leading up to fiscal-year end processing. Should you like more details about availability please contact CCHD at 845-2243 and they will direct your question to the applications support person. If you include your name the support person can contact you directly.

Currently, if you have begun filling out an expense report and need to do some other work or get distracted, you can always go to the last screen and save the report. The saved report can then be retrieved at a later time and you can resume filling out the report. The EER system is being migrated to a more stable application server environment with the migration to be completed by early November 2002. As part of the migration a feature is being added so you will be able to save the expense report you are working on from any expense report screen. However, the availability of the application will remain the same as described above, other than the server environment should be more stable. Your observation about providing a way to fill out a voucher offline and upload it later is something we have been considering the past 12 to 18 months. Unfortunately, there are a limited number of resources available and any new feature must compete with policy changes and Sandia business needs. Hopefully there will be a limited number of new process and business changes/needs in the future so suggestions for new features, such as yours, can be addressed.

—Thomas Ferguson (9513) **

Q: I am one of the Sandians who come to work at 6 a.m. Most of the year it is still dark as night when I report to work. Because KAFL is very poorly lit, it is very difficult to see the lines on the street (especially on Hardin) and the paint on the median (turning north off Hardin toward gate 10). Another problem area is the lane designator lines on Randolph Street, which runs east/west in front of the Air National Guard. I take this street because I enter the base through the Truman Gate. It’s bad enough that there are not enough street lights to begin with, but to make matters worse, the lines that designate the lanes and the aforementioned median are badly in need of a fresh coat of reflective paint. It seems like it has been several years since these have been repainted. Would it be possible to arrange for these to be repainted? This is a potentially dangerous situation.

A: Thank you for calling our attention to these areas of concern. Both Hardin and Randolph are USAF property and under their control. They have agreed to evaluate the condition of the center strips and repair as budget allows.

—Ed Williams (10849)
New hope for the geothermal energy industry comes in form of polyurethane grout

By Will Keener

Members of Sandia’s Geothermal Research Department have added a new approach to aid in the often-difficult task of coaxing usable energy from the earth’s crust with a drill bit. Their secret: polyurethane grout. Specially formulated grouts—dense foam-like materials—can now be used to seal voids in fractured rock formations, allowing geothermal drilling to go forward.

A demonstration last year proved the concept can work. Now testing is proceeding to improve the materials and techniques for delivering them, says A. J. “Chip” Mansure (6211).

In the past, rock fractures and voids—termed “lost circulation zones” by drillers—have drained drilling mud away from wells, damaged drill bits, pinched off drilling pipe in the hole, and resulted in collapses and abandonment. These problems mean big bucks—industry-wide as much as 20 percent of geothermal drilling costs.

“Imagine drilling into a wall at home with a long, thin bit and a hand-crank drill,” says Chip, who leads Sandia’s effort for developing the grout plugs. “If the bit chatters or bends or wobbles or sticks, it creates problems. In the geothermal industry, these problems translate to costs. Beyond chowing away rocks with a drill bit, successful drilling must bring the rock fragments out of the well bore. To do this, “mud” solution is pumped down the inside of the drill pipe and out through the bit. The mud carries rock chips back up through the well bore to clear the hole. But in a fractured zone, the mud may leak away without bringing the rock chips up. Chip explains.

Heat and pressure—givens for geothermal areas—add to the problems of sealing these zones with most materials. And “cross-flows,” a condition where fluids enter a well bore from one fracture and leave through another, make it difficult to keep sealants in place long enough to harden.

Zones of lost circulation also make it difficult to cement casing in place in the well. Unlike oil and gas wells, where casing can be “tacked” to the rock formation at key points, the rigors of steam and heat in a geothermal well require that the bore be fully cemented.

Switching gears, changing plans

With colleague Jimmy Westmoreland, Chip had been working on a full-scale experiment to test polyurethane materials as a potential seal, when a phone call from Nevada changed their plans. “We took a breath, switched gears, and failed,” says Chip. “But we also knew that more work remains to be done. Much work remains to be done.”

Instead of a full-scale test in Tech Area 3, Chip and his colleagues found themselves headed for Rye Patch, Nev. A geothermal well there had been designated by DOE for special funding to resolve a cross-flow problem that had resulted in abandonment of the well. “We took a breath, switched gears, and put a total project together,” Chip says.

Past experience and laboratory testing had shown Chip that successful seals would result only if the loss zone was carefully isolated, or “packed off” in the well bore and then the polyurethane squeezed in to sweep out other debris and fill the void. This called for careful coordination in drilling out a temporary plug in the existing well and testing the new sealant. The Rye Patch project would need to involve the operators of the site, Mount Wheeler Power, the drilling contractor, drilling engineer, project managers, the chemical manufacturers and distributors, and other consultants and helpers. “This was technology transfer right from the beginning,” says Chip.

Chip acted as project manager and involved George Staller (now retired) in design of the project. Ron Jacobson was instrumental in fielding the equipment, and Jim Grossman (all 6211) provided software and programming support.

Brave new world of geothermal

The project, conducted in spring of 2001, succeeded in sealing the high cross-flow zone. Previously more than 20 attempts with other types of plugs had failed. In addition to the polyurethane grout, the effort used a special drilling rig, which removed rock cuttings with a stream of air, and a nitrogen foam cement to bond the casing to the rock.

“The Rye Patch well demonstrated the suitability of the polyurethane materials,” says Chip. But much work remains to be done.

Changes in the geothermal industry as it matures are affecting technology development.

(Continued on next page)

Geothermal potential high in the western US

Existing electrical generation from geothermal power in Hawaii, California, Utah, and Nevada totals more than 2,000 megawatts of installed capacity. Geothermal energy is a unique form of renewable energy as it can be relied upon for firm generation. That is, it operates in a steady state and is available when needed. In fact, capacity factors at many geothermal plants are as high as any other form of electrical generation, including conventional power plants.

Most other Western states—including New Mexico—are considered to have significant geothermal potential, as well. The key to their exploitation in many cases is cost-effective drilling methods. Geothermal drilling has been adapted from the oil industry in large measure, and advancements that are specific to the industry are now in development. This has become the focus of many of the efforts by Sandia’s Geothermal Research Department (6211).

According to DOE figures, geothermal energy generation is equivalent to burning 60 million barrels of oil annually. Geothermal power displaces emission of 22 million tons of carbon dioxide and 200,000 tons of sulfur dioxide each year. It also offsets 80,000 tons of nitrogen oxides and 110,000 tons of particulate matter, compared to conventional coal-fired generation.

A $1.5 billion-dollar-per-year industry, geothermal producers provide enough power to meet the electrical needs of 6 million residents.

For more information, check out this website: http://www.eren.doe.gov/geopoweringthewest/geopowering.html
Geothermal

(Continued from preceding page)

Chip says. Past domination of geothermal production by large multi-resource energy companies has given way to smaller firms with a primary focus in geothermal. At the same time drilling is beginning to require deeper holes because the known, easily recoverable resources have been exploited. “Drilling costs go up more or less exponentially as you drill deeper,” Chip says.

Chip and his colleagues have developed a series of “best practices” as a template to help industry drillers and service companies make best use of the new plugging materials.

Targeting deeper wells

Up to 90 percent of lost-circulation problems are encountered in the shallow going of geothermal wells — at depths of a few hundred feet and temperatures below the boiling point of water. But deeper targets may mean formulations of foam that can be injected at a few thousand feet and temperatures nearly in the 400 degree F range. “We are now studying what techniques and practices we can use on these deeper targets,” Chip explains.

Another issue is working within the economic constraints associated with “real world” drilling projects. “A high cost chemical in an industrial setting like this isn’t going to be feasible,” Chip says. “We are working with the manufacturers on cost-effective formulations and we will be testing these.” It appears polyurethane plugs can be provided at about 30 percent of the cost of traditional lost circulation sealing methods.

While the Rye Patch project required many people on site as well as a great deal of preplanning, a more typical application will have to be accomplished by a much smaller crew and on shorter notice. “We are working to design an approach to bring this process more in line with industry practices,” says Chip.

Near-site quality child care available to Sandians

Sandia parents make one of their most important decisions in life when they choose a particular child care arrangement for their child or children. Whether in-home care, family child care, or center-based care is chosen, children have basic needs that must be met by the adults who have responsibility for fostering their growth and development.

Sandia believes that to maximize productivity in the national interest the Labs should support quality child care to the greatest extent possible. With this in mind Sandia has supported two quality childcare resources available to Sandia parents — the development of the La Luz (The Light) Early Childhood Center located in the Research Park complex and the administrative transition of the Shandiin (Navajo for Sunshine) Child Development Center located on base behind the DOE complex.

The past year has been active for both centers. The La Luz Board addressed facility design, operator selection, and many other activities leading to its grand opening on Aug. 1. Shandiin, on the other hand, was equally busy but was addressing issues concerning the transition from a national chain provider to a board-operated facility. Both were successful in addressing their objectives and are providing quality care for many Sandia parents.

The La Luz center is located inside the new Sandia Laboratory Federal Credit Union building at Research Park. It champions low ratios and quality relationships as program cornerstones. For more information go to http://www.laluzec.org or call (505) 237-7237. The Shandiin center, located on base behind the DOE complex, continues to promote individualized play-based programs, a family-friendly feeling, and maximizing family participation. Contact Kathy or Desiree at 845-5013 for more information.

Conference looks at ‘strategic indirect warfare’

T.J. Allard, top photo center, Manager of Sandia’s new Homeland Security Department (50), makes a point with Peter Probst, left, Vice President and Director of Programs for the Institute for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence, and M.K. Narayan, retired director of Intelligence Services in India, during a break at the Sandia-sponsored Strategic Indirect Warfare 2002 Conference last week in Albuquerque. Conference organizer Dick Burcham, an analyst in Weapon Use Control Systems Dept. 2113, says the three-day meeting was held “to bring together experts to understand the nature of the worldwide war on terrorism.” Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., and U.S. Rep. Heather Wilson, R-N.M., at left, helped kick off the conference. Other speakers included John Alexander, author of Future War, Milt Bearden, former CIA agent assigned to the agency’s Afghan desk; and Ben Schellenberg, Chief, Office of Asymmetric Threats, Missile Defense Agency, Department of Defense. (Photos by Randy Montoya)

Feedback

Q: The doors (inside and outside) to the loading dock of Bldg. 891 are always left open. The building heats the outside in the winter, and cools it in the summer. Seems like a waste of money and energy.

Can automatic doors be installed on the loading dock so they work like the wheel/hair access doors that are only open for a short period of time and then close? The doors must also be prevented from being held open longer than the automatic setting. I think this will help to conserve energy and money.

A: The doors at the rear of Bldg. 891 have automatic door closers and as such should always be closed. This problem arises due to personnel propping the doors open. Since it is not cost effective to install the type of openers that are already on the west doors of the building, the building manager for 891, Moss Tallant, will send an e-mail to all building occupants indicating that propping these doors open results in negative effects to the heating and cooling systems and wasting of energy. He will also monitor this situation to make sure that this practice is stopped. Thank you for your notification of this issue.

— Dave Corbett (10800)

Q: It seems I’m supposed to make sure I’m not wearing my badge in public. Why? It makes me feel like I’m trying to hide the fact that I work for Sandia, as if I should be ashamed or something.

A: The purpose of your badge is for identification while on DOE premises. It is good OPSEC not to wear your DOE standard badge in public and more so now, with the present security threat, it makes sense not to advertise where you work. You are not hiding the fact you work at Sandia but you are following basic security guidelines about wearing a DOE standard badge. For more information about wearing your badge, please refer to CPR 400.3.11 and the Security Briefing Booklet dated September 2002.

— Al West (3100)
Mileposts

New Mexico photos by Iris Aboytes
California photos by Bud Pelletier

Ralph French
25  8941
Johnny Ellison
25  8514
Anthony Baca
20  10861
Jeffrey Bobbe
20  5932
Craig Boney
20  5712
Jerome Cap
20  9125
Martin Carr
20  5932
Ronald Coleman
20  9122
Ronald Franco
20  2664
Terry Garner
20  8517
Mark Garrett
20  9122
Jeffrey Kern
20  5710
Ronald McIntosh
20  3132
Jeffrey Miller
20  10254
Daniel Pettiford
20  14404
Ray Ortiz
20  2666
Marilyn Warrant
20  6544
Bruce Winchell
20  12100
Sheldon Tieszen
20  9132
Fred James
38  2662
Douglas Garbin
31  1612
John Brabson
28  6544
Patrick Drozda
27  9132
David Schroeder
20  14192
Marilyn Warrant
20  6544
Bruce Winchell
20  12100
David Gardner
15  9233
Donna Edwards
15  8112
Fred James
38  2662
Douglas Garbin
31  1612
John Brabson
28  6544
Patrick Drozda
27  9132
David Gardner
15  9233
Donna Edwards
15  8112
Juanita Valdez
21  10263
Donald Coates
17  10000
Cactus Cooper
12  15412

Take Note

Retiring and not seen in Lab News pictures:
Nellie Denio (5932), 16 years; David Ortiz (9623),
23 years; Roy Palmer (9328), 37 years; and Mary
Ida Romero (9335), 23 years.

Congratulations

To Kathy (8529) and Robin (8727) Gilbert-O’Neil, a son, Aaron David, Nov. 1.
MISSOURIAN
Türkiye DEAR BAR, oak, marble top, 2 chairs, behind发展模式，$650. Telephone: 326-4000.
$200, other misc. items. Hostetter, Deb grr-064-3.
AMPS: Phoenix VE 60X-VE & 40X, $3,500,
ask for Amanda.
FURNITURE: large oak for fix size medium, excellent condition, $650.
Kiln, 922-9035.
CASE: oak, cherry finish, ask for Namita 480-
head design, $160 OBO.
Piano, small, player, antique, just tuned, $150 OBO.
CAMEL, 13, smoke, tobacco arsenal, pipe Dis-
Toro, 4-dr., 914, nice, excellent condition.
KEYBOARD, Casio C-30, $75, 10-in, music-
RIDING MACHINE EXERCISER, like new, paid $500, asking $125 OBO. Sodell, 235-
6699.
WCO: Dining room table, 7, $50.
CASON: RETAIL, $15, 10-in, 4-box.
WATERFORD, 2, waterfmd, bald, $50 OBO.
NATION: $15.
TENT: 4, person, 4-season, Sierra Designs few-
pockets, full, $150 OBO. Travis, 283-8684.
LEER 8000, 4-dr., 2 beds, $1,000 OBO.
LEWIN: BARREL, $125.
LUMINARIAS, support the AHS Bulldoggies
on the very top of Lab Nones home.
LA-Z-BOY chairs, 2, brown tones, good condition.
LUMINARIA SALE, support Highland High
PRINTER, HP920C, NIB, never used, $70.
LUMINARIA SALE, support Highland High
FIREPLACE, Heatilator, 3-sided glass, $400.
PLAYSTATION, used, 2 controllers, snow-
STEREO, 6-ft. wood cabinet, AM/FM, $250.
BABY PALI CRIB, made in Italy, high quality,
LUMINARIAS, support the AHS Bulldoggies
QUEEN-SIZE WATERBEDS, 2, w/6-drawer
KEYBOARD, Casio G1, new, $175; 10-in
AMPs: Phoenix Gold VX-600 & VX-400, $100.
OBO; air compressor, 12.5-hp, $1,000
CROSBY, case & extras, $250. Duvall,
chorus, distortion, almost new, $225
gauge/level, $75. Barnard, 856-1952.
lbs. of weights, $150; Kerosun
School softball, delivered by Dec. 21,
Swhalan, 286-2808.
boarder game, TV, $100 firm. Miller,
all accessories, must sell, $100.
3-13, $100.
31, 921-645; 4, 924, almost new, $39-
12/20/02, right to refuse, sold as is.
How to submit classified ads
1. Limit 18 words, including last name.
2. Include organization and full name.
3. Must be in English.
4. No abbreviations.
5. Phone numbers.
6. No e-mail.
7. No overnight mail.
8. Must be legible.
9. Ad is limited to one per category for 30 days.
10. Must be from employees.
12. Submit by one of these methods:
   - Online: sandia.sandia.gov (click on News Center, then on Classifieds).
   - Fax: 326-2511.
   - Email: classads@sandia.gov
   - Mail: Classified Ads, Building 206, MS 0110, Albuquerque, NM 87185.
   - Phone: 237-8688.
   - Drop box: Route 1, MS 0110, Albuquerque, NM 87185.
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Holiday helpers are everywhere at Sandia

By Janet Carpenter

Up and down the hallways, in and out the labs, Sandia elves and angels continue a giving tradition of caring about those in our community who would not otherwise have gifts and help without help. Here is a rundown of holiday drives the Lab News has learned about. Undoubtedly, there are others.

Giving walls

The Division 10000 Diversity Council sponsored families from United Way agencies Peanut Butter & Jelly Family Services, All Faiths Receiving Home, and Share Your Care Adult Day Care. The agencies provide lists of family members containing clothing sizes and a wish list for adults and children. Sandians select nametags from a “Giving Wall” and deposit their special gift donations in boxes provided in various buildings. The Giving Walls are located in Bldg. 802 (Finance), Bldg. 887 (Procurement & Facilities), Bldg. 957 (Logistics), and Bldg. 875 (Fleet Services).

“It is amazing the response we get from every- one,” says drive coordinator Terry Contreras. “When I call people in the various organizations for help and support, I always get a ‘You bet we can help’ attitude. For example, the deposit boxes that we use are made and delivered to me by the Logistics-Ship- ping Department.

Because of security concerns, the gifts provided by employees are not wrapped. “We meet at an off-site area (Research Park) to do all the gift wrapping,” she coordinates a date for the agencies to pick up the gifts so they can have them in time for their respective holiday parties,” she says.

“I feel that giving is just something that comes natural to us all, and the Org. 10000 family demonstrates its generosity for our holiday giving projects,” says Terry. “When the agencies pick up all their goodies, the gratitude they express is just never ending.”

Gift trees

Stockpile Resource Center 2900 is holding its 44th annual Christmas Gift & Food Drive through Dec. 18. Different schools are contacted and their counselors select the most needy families from their school. “We sponsor 15 to 16 families (40 to 50 children),” says drive chairwoman Paula Sanchez (2944). “A Gift Tree is set up in Bldg. 892 that contains two gift tags for each child, one for a toy and one for clothing. Grocery gift certificates in the amount of $130 to $160 are provided for the families.”

In the end a wrapping party is held. Volunteers select gifts, sort, wrap, and package them for the families; then they are picked up and delivered.

“Many volunteers are needed to plan, organize, and support this event to make it successful,” says Paula, “and the employees at Sandia are truly the most generous.” Gift (unwrapped) deadline, Dec. 18; wrapping party, Dec. 19, 1:30 p.m., Bldg. 825 (TTC), with volunteer deliverers’ pickup at 3 p.m. Tim Wisely (2992) is the drive co-chair.

Fostering happy holidays

Julia Archibeque-Guerra, Airworthiness Assurance Dept. 6252, responded to a Christmas giving opportunity from Sandia’s Volunteer Program Manager Darlene Leonard (12650) for the Children, Youth, and Families agency. Julia’s collections from department members will provide gifts for two foster children.

“The department members who participated agreed that we all spend so much money giving ‘stuff’ to one another for Christmas,” says Julia. “In lieu of exchanging gifts with co-workers, I asked that we consider buying gifts for these foster children instead. It is heartwarming to know that we can hopefully make Christmas a little brighter for these children.” Eleven-year-old Devon asked for books with photos of animals or baseball players and gift certificates for clothing at Wal-Mart or Target. Four-year-old Mary wanted a Barbie doll with clothes and accessories.

Julia and her coworkers don’t confuse the giving spirit to the workplace. “Several of my co-workers, including myself, also participate in other Christmas giving projects through our churches and other organizations,” she says.

THEY FIT! — An Albuquerque elementary school student laces up for a test run in her new shoes, courtesy of Sandia’s Shoes for Kids program. (Photo by Randy Montoya)

Darlene Leonard provided names and gift wishes of foster children needing help. Sandra Pino in Engineering Services Center 9100 took names and her department bought gifts for 22 foster children; Christine Frazer in Technical Services Program Dept. 10820 took 37 names; Larissa Velasquez took 12 names for Weapons Integration Dept. 2102; Carolyn Lange and Teri Kinloch took 11 names for their coworkers in Executive Staff Director’s Office 12100; and Public Relations and Communications Center 12600 employees made donations for seven children. Other organizations also contributing gifts for foster children include Business Systems Support Dept. 9521, Nuclear Safety Assessment Dept. 12332, CSU Operations and Development Dept. 9623, Protective Force Dept. 3114, and Business Systems Dept. 10852.

“In total, 105 foster children were provided with gifts,” says Darlene.

From the heart

Employees in the Technical Library, Deps. 9515 and 9516, have chosen to sponsor families supported by From the Heart Foundation, a non-profit business to educational program that helps low-income people, homeless people, and welfare recipients get jobs. It also provides computer and literacy training, job placement, mental special assistance, and counseling. Coordinators Connie Adams and Sharon Lawson are having donations sent directly to the foundation. Connie and Sharon will announce the grand total on Dec. 18 at a holiday social.

Shiny new shoes

Employees in Media Relations and Employee Communications Dept. 12640 have for the past few years donated several hundred dollars annually to the Shoes for Kids drive. The Shoes for Kids project began years ago as a holiday gift exchange alternative between two scientists at Sandia who decided they would rather spend the money to provide shiny new shoes for needy children. Dept. 12640 along with many other Sandia individuals and groups keep the tradition alive and growing.

Over the years, word spread and the Christmas program escalated to the department level (about 25), then the center level (about 150), and by 1995 a division of 800 employees donated nearly $5,000 for new shoes. In 1995, Lockhead Martin/Sandia National Laboratories adopted the Shoes for Kids Program as a corporate-sponsored project. Last year employees and retirees donated $13,073.

Fishing for toys

This is the seventh year that Software Product Realization (SPR) Business Area employees in Deps. 6521, 6522, 6523, 6524 and 6525 have participated in an annual holiday toy drive. This year’s drive collected toys for a couple of needy families at a local elementary school and the Santa Day program at Carrie Tingley Hospital, the only hospital in the state specifically devoted to comprehensive care for children and adolescents with complex musculo- skeletal and orthopedic conditions, rehabilitation needs, developmental problems, and chronic physical disabilities.

Employees went “fishing” for toy lists off the Fishing Penguin poster in Bldgs. 890 and 855. Each list listed a toy wished for by a child from a local elementary school or from Carrie Tingley’s Wish List. Drive coordinator Cindi Reyes collected the unwrapped gifts.

Neutron Generator Production Center 14400 coordinators, Peggy Rhodes, Stana Kopczak, Paige Briggs, and Elena Holland, select names of children from the Salvation Army Giving Tree in Coronado Center and bring them in for employees to select from and purchase gifts for needy children. Gifts are then returned to Coronado Center.

Look for coordinators in your organizations, conduct your own drive (see Holiday volunteer guidelines), or contact the groups listed here to get involved.

Holiday volunteer guidelines

If you are interested in collecting items from your group for a community agency during the upcoming holidays, here are guidelines established by Community Involvement in conjunction with Security:

1. If you don’t have a specific holiday-giving project in mind and wish to identify an agency or group to help, contact Darlene Leonard, 844-8024, to indicate your interest and to be connected with suitable agencies based on your desired focus.

2. Having a drive for money is prohibited.

3. Gifts can be brought into the Tech Area as long as they are not on the prohibited list, i.e., recorders, liquor, etc.

4. Gifts can be wrapped and brought into the Tech Area but would be subject to search until the explosives security check was in place. Wrapping in gift bags eliminates that problem.

5. It would be appreciated if drive coordinators would keep track of the total collected and contact Darlene with the results of your giving.

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