Reflections

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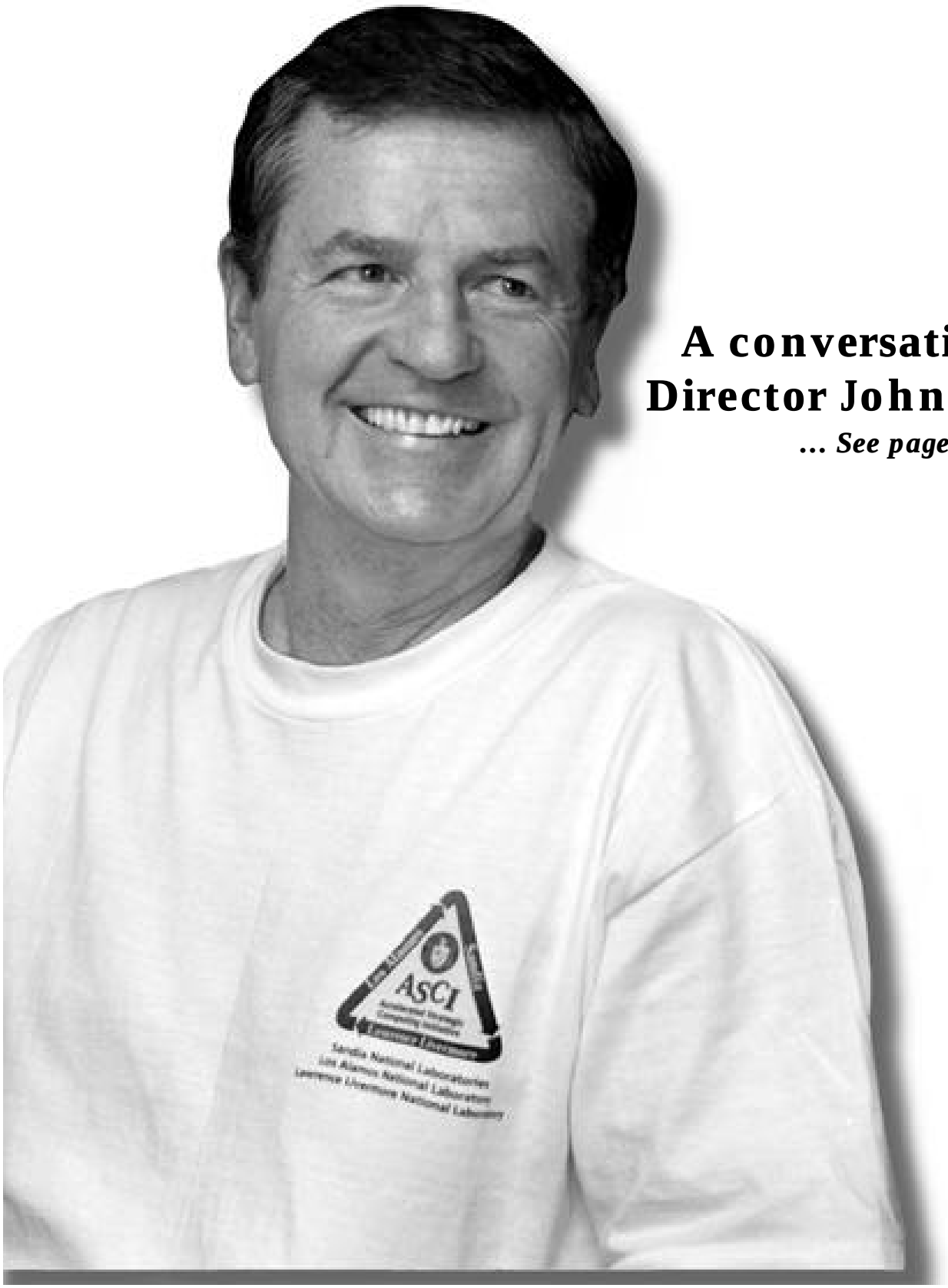

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Reflections

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editor's journal

Tis the season ...

I absolutely love this time of year. There's something magical about December, with the smell of snow in the air, the hustle and "stress" that mounts as the holidays approach and all the wonderful things that go with the holiday season — good food and good friends, gift-giving and good will.

So, it seems most fitting that in this December/January issue of Reflections, we offer our readers a special gift, "A Conversation with John Browne, Los Alamos Laboratory director." In our cover story, the new director talks about the job, challenges facing the Lab, employee concerns, his family and more (see pages 5 through 8).

The interview with John took place at his home on a Sunday morning shortly after he was named director. You could call it a breakfast meeting, because the interview began while John cooked breakfast and continued while he, his family, "Reflections" photographer Fred Rick and I consumed a meal of French toast, bacon (turkey), fresh fruit, coffee and juice.

I was struck by John's inviting us to conduct the interview in his home (to allow for adequate time) and the warmth and openness with which he responded to questions, both work related and personal. I learned, for example, why he feels so strongly about the Lab being a safe place for all its employees to work. He knows better than most the pain and tragedy on-the-job accidents bring to workers and their families. John's father, an electrician, died when John was 14 years old; his death resulted from being electrocuted on the job when he mistakenly was told that power had been cut off from equipment he was working on.

And while John spoke sadly of losing his father, his voice resounded with pride when he talked about his immigrant mother, the strength she showed following his father's death and her kindness toward all people. "There was never a stranger in our house," said John. "No one was ever not welcomed ... no matter who it was." After spending time in the Browne home, I can say the ways of the mother seem to live on in the son, and I believe the Lab and the Northern New Mexico community may benefit from this legacy.

In closing, I'd like to wish all of our readers a truly happy holiday and a new year filled with hope and peace.

Marti Browne, right, enjoys a laugh over breakfast with husband John, left, and daughter Courtney, as her son, Ryan, shyly hides his face from the camera. *Photo by Fred Rick*

PC ... phone home

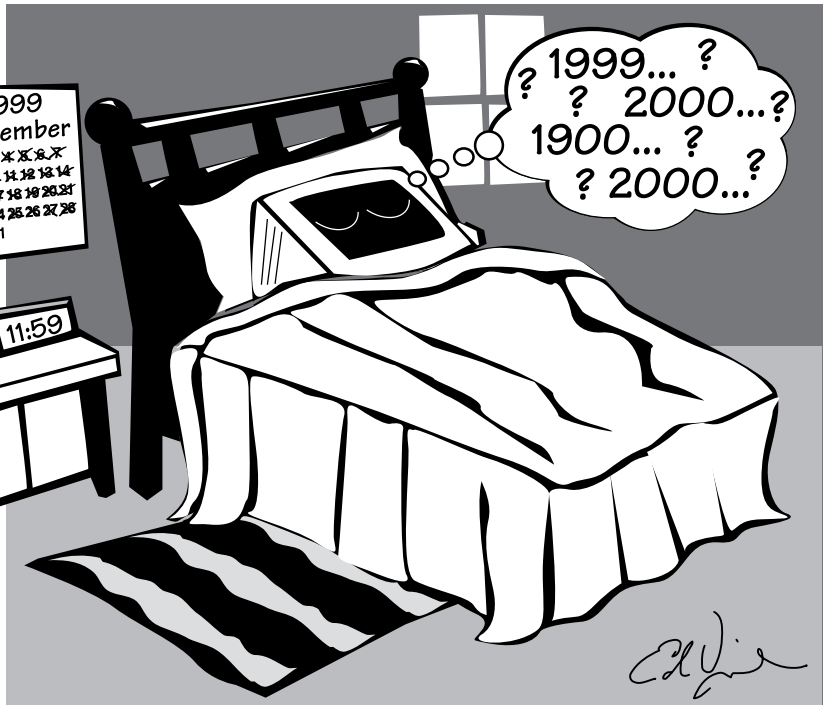
by John A. Webster

It's 12:01 a.m., Jan. 1, 2000. Does your computer know where it is?

It may not know its place in the space-time continuum it inhabits because the calendar just rolled over from 1999 to 2000. The change to a year ending in "00" may cause computational problems in computer programs that represent years by two digits. It also could affect sorting, data exchanging and inputting operations.

The potential problem, known as Y2K, caused by the arrival of the next millennium has spurred the growth of a mini-industry of companies that specialize in this area and the creation of hundreds of World Wide Web pages with information on communication and compliance issues.

At the Laboratory, the Y2K issue is being addressed by the Information Architecture Project in the Computing, Information and Communications (CIC) Division.



"There's actually two possible problems," said Project Leader Diane Weir. "One involves 'two-digit years' and the other involves the day of the week."

Normally, years ending in 00 are not leap years, even though they are divisible by four. Exceptions occur every 400 years, and they include the year 2000. So while 1900 was not a leap year, 2000 will be. If a computer does not know this, it could have problems in day-of-the-week processes and in counting by Julian dates, or the numerical days of the year.

Weir said the Laboratory, following guidelines established by the federal Office of Management and Budget, and the Department of Energy, has identified four systems as essential for the Lab to perform its mission — the Integrated Computing Network, the nuclear material accountability program, the classified records inventory and the security alarm system, which provides security, access control and fire protection for most Laboratory facilities.

The owners of those systems are actively addressing the issue, Weir said, and coordinating their activities with IA.

The major Labwide administrative computing systems, such as those that handle budget and payroll, appear to be in good shape.

"We're confident that the major systems will function properly, although there may be a few minor glitches," said Gary Rich, group leader of Business Information Systems (CIC-13). "Actually, we'll get some help three months earlier since many of our systems are geared to the change of the fiscal year, and that switch over may indicate some areas we'll need to focus on."

Weir said the mission-essential systems and the major administrative systems are obvious areas the team needs to address.

"What we're worried about are the surprises," she said.

To try to mitigate the impact of any surprises, the team is asking all organizations to look past the possible perception that they won't be affected and take a careful look at potential risks to systems they rely on.

"You need to look at what systems you need for day-to-day operations and focus on those," said John Zoltai of Advanced Database and Information Technology (CIC-15), who is providing support for the Lab's Y2K effort. "In today's budget environment, we have to take a kind of self-help approach, although CIC-15 is available for help and to provide referrals for things we can't help with."

Zoltai said organizations may want to pay special attention to spreadsheet and custom database programs, many of which rely on accurate dating to perform calculations.

He said a program that can check computers to determine if their internal dates will work properly is available through a WWW page; its address is http://www.right-time.com/. Another site with information for system checking and testing can be found at http://www.mitre.org/research/y2k/docs/TEST_EVAL.html.

The IA Project maintains a page with a range of information, including links to many other sites, at http://www.lanl.gov/projects/ia/year2000/. This page includes a way to share information about the Y2K issue by sending electronic mail to IA at *ia-year2000@lanl.gov*.

"This is a common problem, and we can all help each other," said Weir. "Please share what you learn, what you know and what you've found out so we can each benefit from one another's findings and experiences."

Ortiz to head ESA-WMM

Ricardo "Tino" Ortiz

Ricardo "Tino" Ortiz is the new group leader for Weapon Materials and Manufacturing (ESA-WMM). ESA-WMM performs high-explosive fabrication, weapon design consultation, external manufacturing coordination, explosives processing and weapons assembly, among many other duties. Ortiz's new assignment became effective Sept. 29.

The former deputy group leader of Weapon Engineering (ESA-WE) said his first priority is to evaluate the work currently being done by the group and to do a lot of listening to the approximately 130 employees he now supervises.

"I need to know what the employees in my group think are the major issues they face. It's important that they buy into whatever direction we as a group take in the future," said Ortiz.

The ESA-WMM staff already knows much about Ortiz, as it helped choose him for the position. "In addition to being interviewed by ESA Director Dick Burick and Deputy Director John Ruminer, the three finalists were interviewed individually by the entire ESA-WMM staff," explained Ortiz.

"The staff got to ask any work-related question they wanted to during the one-and-a-half hour session. I had to convince both the ESA leadership and the ESA-WMM staff that I was the best candidate for the job."

Ortiz received his bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering from New Mexico State University in 1972. He has been at the Lab since 1974.

Seaborg Institute director named

David L. Clark is director of the Laboratory's new Seaborg Institute.

The Lab's institute is a branch of the Glenn T. Seaborg Institute of Transactinium Science at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California.

The Lab's Seaborg Institute, which will be housed out of the Nuclear Materials Technology (NMT) Division Office at Technical Area 55, will integrate research, education and training programs in actinide science. "Right now there's a lot of research in actinide science based in different divisions," Clark said. "There's not a whole lot of coordination of programs. This is an attempt to provide a focal point for coordination of actinide science throughout the Lab."

The actinide series are a group of radioactive chemical elements in the periodic table from element 89 (actinium) through element 103 (lawrencium).

David L. Clark

The Seaborg Institute is named after Nobel Laureate Glenn T. Seaborg, the distinguished scientist who, among other things, discovered plutonium. The recently discovered element Seaborgium was named in his honor. Seaborg still works at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, also in California.

Clark also will identify funding sources for the institute and work to increase Laboratory visibility and credibility in actinide programs.

Clark most recently was a team leader in Environmental Systems and Waste Characterization (CST-7), with a joint appointment in Waste Treatment and Minimization Science (CST-18).

He joined the Lab as a postdoctoral candidate in 1988 and was a J. Robert Oppenheimer Fellow. A year later, he became a staff member in the Lab's former Isotope and Nuclear Chemistry (INC) Division.

Clark has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from University of Washington and a doctorate in inorganic chemistry from Indiana University. He also was a postdoctoral fellow at Oxford University in England in 1987.

Yearwood named NMT-8 leader

Deidra Yearwood is the new group leader for TA-55 Facilities Management (NMT-8). The group is responsible for making sure all of the facilities at Technical Area 55 are safe and reliable, particularly the Plutonium Facility. Formerly the NMT-8 deputy group leader, Yearwood replaces Dave Post, who

Deidra Yearwood

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Local ACS chapter garners award

The Central New Mexico Chapter of the American Chemical Society recently received the Phoenix Award, the society's highest honor, for its science education outreach activities last year with underrepresented minorities in central and Northern New Mexico.

Several Lab employees are members of the chapter and helped lead the outreach efforts, including Cynthia Mahan of Inorganic Trace Analysis (CST-9), Ken Bower of Analytical Quality and Chemical Information Management (CST-3) and Betty Harris of Organic Analysis (CST-12). Science Education (HR-SEO) provided support.

Mahan and Bower accepted the award on behalf of the chapter during ACS' meeting Sept. 10 in Las Vegas, Nev. The plaque is on display in the Otowi Building lobby.

About 25 volunteers, many of them from the Lab, visited more than 40 elementary schools, science museums, Girl Scout clubs, pueblos and other places as far away as Dulce last November during National Chemistry Week, speaking to the children about chemistry in general and pursuing careers in this field. The volunteers also delivered more than 4,000 copies of Wonder Science Magazine.

This year's celebration of National Chemistry Week, now in its 10th year, began the week of Nov. 2. Volunteers, with continued SEO support, plan to visit children throughout Northern New Mexico and beyond. Bower said he hopes they speak to children in remote places, such as Shiprock and Farmington, and distribute more than 5,000 copies of Wonder Science.

A conversation with Laboratory Director John Browne

Laboratory Director John Browne talks about the Lab's future

by Jacqueline Paris-Chitanvis

On Nov. 3, John Browne started a new chapter in Los Alamos history, becoming the Lab's sixth director. As editor of "Reflections," I was eager to help introduce the new director to employees through a feature story. And despite an incredibly full schedule during his transition month, Browne was amenable to the idea, making time to talk at length with me about the directorship, employee concerns, challenges facing the Lab and his personal life. I even got a delicious breakfast in the bargain, as the interview was conducted at his home on a Sunday morning.

What follows is the result of two very pleasant hours spent with the new director and his family. Most of the conversation took place while Browne moved about the kitchen, preparing the meal for his family, photographer Fred Rick and yours truly.

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Reflections: What made you want to be director of Los Alamos National Laboratory?

Browne: A lot of soul-searching went into that [decision]. I never came to Los Alamos with the idea that I ever would be in high management. I came here because of the scientific opportunity that I saw for the Laboratory and myself personally back in 1979. … That's what really attracted me when I came here from Livermore. It just turned out that I've had lots of opportunities to lead various Lab organizations.

I think when Sig told me a year ago that he was planning to step down, I was shocked, literally. We were walking into the Materials Science Laboratory where he would tell the LLC [Laboratory Leadership Council] of this decision, and he told me on the way in. … He said, "I hope you apply." I didn't give it the foggiest thought … not for a long, long time.

I had decided that it might be a good idea for the Lab to have an external director, just because sometimes new blood brings in really new ideas. … And I thought if they could find some really outstanding person to lead the Laboratory, I'd be perfectly happy to work with that person.

As the search went on, a lot of people here at the Laboratory started encouraging me to consider applying to be director. I decided I wouldn't apply. What I would do was let the search process go on, and if the university and the search committee thought my qualifications were in the league with the other people that they wanted to consider for the job, then I would get serious and really think pretty hard about it. And that's what happened around the June time frame. That's when the soul-searching started.

Marti [Browne's wife] and I had some long talks about this. … Being director would change our lives dramatically because we're very family oriented and like to spend time with our kids and together. Her comment was "these things don't come along very often in your life, and you've been successful leading other parts of the Laboratory. Maybe what you should do is go in and tell them [the search committee] what you think you would do if you were director." So, that's what I did.

I went to the search committee basically telling them that I thought I understood pretty well how the Laboratory works, what our mission is, what the issues are internal to the Laboratory and what the community issues are since I've lived in the communities of Santa Fe and Los Alamos for 18 years. Although I'm no expert by any means, I thought I understood a lot of what people's deep-down feelings were about the Laboratory — maybe not all their specific individual problems, but generally what some of their feelings were.

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Reflections: What in your past do you think best prepared you for your new position?

Browne: They're sort of connected, but they have nothing to do with any leadership jobs I've had. My father died when I was 14 and that was pretty hard. I was the youngest of five kids and my mother didn't work. She must have been about 55 or 56 when my father died, and she had to find work for the first time in her life. We were a lower middle class family, and so we didn't have a lot of money. I worked to help out as much as I could. … The connection I'm making is that I lost a little bit of confidence in myself during that period.

I played high school basketball [in Pennsylvania]. … My coach on the basketball team was the one who made me believe that I had leadership skills. We had some difficult times with issues on the team — two kids got arrested, for example — at a time when we were playing extremely well. He convinced me that I personally could make a difference. And I stepped up. The last half of my senior year, I led the team into the eastern playoffs.

What [the coach] told me was really important. He said this is a lesson you'll have through your whole life. "If you believe in yourself, you can actually get

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A conversation ...

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others to believe in what you want to see happen, and then you actually can create things you probably never saw yourself." ... That was the time when I really began to see my leadership potential. I had never thought about it until that coach made me think about what a leader actually is.

I've lived my whole life that way ever since — taking on challenges in whatever job I have with that perspective.

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Reflections: What do you see as the biggest challenge facing the Laboratory in the next five years?

Browne: The biggest programmatic challenge to me is demonstrating that we actually can do science-based stockpile stewardship. To me that's not straightforward. How the heck can you really understand all the aging effects and changes in nuclear weapons and be able to certify to the president that in fact these weapons are safe and reliable without nuclear testing. And that to me is a major challenge. We have ideas of how we want to do it, but to me it is going to be very difficult, and intellectually you're going to have to do things differently. The problem is that some people think they can continue to do things exactly the same way as they always have, but we know it won't be that way. We will have to find new ways to bring new ideas in to challenge each other.

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Reflections: Do you think the challenge will be in finding these new ways or will it be convincing people to accept the new ways?

Browne: I think it's going to be finding new ways ... finding ways of challenging the computer models, because the computer models are the fundamental integrator now. The integrator in the past used to be a combination of the models and the nuclear test because the test was ground truth. You knew, if it didn't work, your model probably wasn't correct. Now, everybody will tend to say the model's probably right, unless you can challenge the model with new information and experimental data. And it can't just be the same data, it's got to be new ways to see if you can prod and really push on the people who are doing the modeling. It's a give and take. So programmatically, that's a big challenge. I would say that during the next five years, that's really the biggest challenge.

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Reflections: And what about the biggest personal challenge over the next five years?

Browne: The biggest personal challenge I see is this whole question of trying to bring people together [in] the Laboratory and the communities, so that people feel good about Los Alamos National Laboratory. Not only so people feel good about working here, but the people in the local communities feel like Los Alamos is a good neighbor. They should think, "Sure they've got problems, but they're good people, they're trying to fix their problems. They're trying to work with us. They're really trying to understand the community, help the community." I would like to look back at the end of five years and say the communities are proud of what Los Alamos does.

The new director knows his way around the kitchen.

We'll always have disagreements. There's going to be people in Santa Fe and other communities who don't like the fact that we deal with nuclear weapons. I understand that. But they still can respect the fact that we're responsible stewards of the stockpile in this country. Because if you think of the consequences if we're not responsible stewards, they're pretty dramatic. If a nuclear weapon were to blow up in storage somewhere or if one were stolen, it would be a catastrophe for this country.

I would think that even though someone says, "I disagree with the fact that there are still so many nuclear weapons," they could say "Los Alamos is doing its job responsibly and taking care of the environment while doing it. [The Lab] is reducing its waste, dealing with the communities; it is open and telling us what's going on."

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Reflections: What do you see as the most pressing issue with regard to the Northern New Mexico community and the Lab building a better relationship?

Browne: I think it's a lack of *really* talking to each other, *really* listening, and *really* hearing each other and what the problems really are. I think the Laboratory has been talking a lot to people, telling them a lot about why we're so good and why we're helping them. But I think we haven't done enough listening to people and asking "What is your real fundamental problem? What aren't we doing to really make you feel like this is one community in Northern New Mexico?"

I think it is a long-standing issue; it's not something that came in the last three years. I think it's been there all along. To me the challenge is to say, "OK, maybe this is a good time when we actually can start to get to the bottom of some of these issues."

Los Alamos can't solve all the problems for all of the communities in Northern New Mexico, but we certainly can be good neighbors to people and help where we can. And we do help in a lot of places. That's something that many times is lost when you're not communicating well. People don't see the good things that you're doing. At least that's my general feeling, that sometimes we overlook all the good we do for a few things that perhaps are confrontational.

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Reflections: You began meeting with employees and employee groups shortly after being named director designate. You've also received written input. What are some of the concerns or issues employees want you to address?

Browne: If you look at general employee concerns, there is a feeling in some areas that the quality of work life has been reduced. Some employees feel that they are not valued as before; that the work atmosphere is not as positive as it should be. That's a fundamental issue that people have.

Some people are concerned about the integrated safety management program being driven more by bureaucracy than by real safety. The employees are still worried that it's a paper exercise, rather than reality. And I think that is something I am going to have to deal with because it's more than that. But it is not understood well yet.

Program and line issues are another major concern. There's a big argument that still goes on about what the role of the group leader and the division director is in the management of our laboratory. And so I hear a lot of concerns about that.

Other issues I'm hearing are that there are multicultures at the Laboratory, such as the "technical side" and the "support side." Not only am I hearing that, but within the support side there are the deployed people, the central core people. It's more splintered than you would like to see. And so one of the things we're going to have to talk about is how do you get people all feeling like we're part of the same team.

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Reflections: Is there anything that you need from employees to help you do your job in the best way that you can?

Browne: One thing I need from the employees — and I feel very strongly about this — is for them to understand that this is a tough job, and that [the Lab] should not revolve around one person. The director should clearly set the strategic directions and the goals and be the champion and motivator for the people in making sure we have the right atmosphere for the Laboratory. But what you need the employees to really do is to rally around wherever it is we're headed to make it happen.

That doesn't mean they just line up like robots. But basically, they're the ones who are going to have to make the Lab succeed in whatever it does. I'm not going to be able to do the research, do the organizing and make projects go. [Employees] really need to help built this kind of feeling at their level ... that they understand where we are going. They should be supporters of the Laboratory. They should be *vocal* supporters of the Laboratory.

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Reflections: What research accomplishments before you got into management are you most proud of?

Browne: I was really proud of the work I did in graduate school. It was some pretty fundamental research in nuclear physics that explored some fundamental properties.

Cooking is one way John Browne relaxes.

I studied something called isobaric analog states. It's a fairly simple concept that asks the question, what happens if you change a neutron into a proton. ... We were able to actually understand some of the nuclear forces that were involved in how this analog state resided within the sea of other nuclear states that were there at a very refined level. And the thing that we did that no one else could do was to obtain the resolution to see the details of this state. Other people had seen this effect, but we had such high-precision experiments that we saw all the fine structure of this interaction and that fine structure allowed us to challenge the theorists as they'd never been challenged in this area before. ... This [research] had a profound impact back in the 1965 to 1970 time period ... It led to a lot of other pretty exciting research in nuclear structure. So, I was very proud of that.

The other research of which I am most proud I did while at Livermore. I worked in nuclear physics studies at Livermore with neutrons — that's why it seemed natural for me to go to LANSCE. I used neutrons to study nucleosynthesis, the whole process of how the stars evolved to produce the elements that we have on earth. ... A lot of times nuclear reactions occur that take you down different paths along the table of the elements. When you see the table of elements there are lots of isotopes, and you ask yourself how did we get all those. The nucleosynthesis that I studied examined some of those pathways of how you would create these isotopes in a star ... in a stellar environment.

One of them in particular turned out to be really exciting ... It was that you could use one of these nucleosynthesis reactions to get a new measure of the age of the universe.

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Reflections: Did former Director Sig Hecker offer you any advice to help you on the job?

Browne: Yes, he offered me some advice, and it's really interesting. It's more personal advice about not letting everything get to you and making sure you have time for your family, making sure you find time to exercise, ... [understanding] that you can't do everything and you can't be all things to all people. He said there will be great demands but for me to try to remember that I just can't do everything and to say "no" to some things. That was very useful.

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Reflections: Let's talk a little about John Browne the man, as opposed to John Browne, new Lab director. You have four children?

Browne: Yes, we have a yours, mine and ours family. Courtney, our 11-year-old daughter, has three older brothers.

I have two sons from my first marriage. Chris, the oldest, is almost 21. He's a senior at UC Davis majoring in economics. The next one, Adam, lives in Texas in the Dallas area. He's hoping to go to college this year, but he's undecided what he wants to do. He's thinking about going to school in Austin. None of my kids, by the way, wants to be a scientist.

And then Ryan is Marti's son and my stepson. Ryan is a senior in high school here in Los Alamos, and he's hoping to go to college in restaurant/hotel management.

Courtney goes to Piñon School, and she's in sixth grade. ... We also have two dogs, a guinea pig, a gerbil, two rats and a rabbit. We have a mini zoo in our house.

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Reflections: Are you involved with any of your children's activities, such as coaching, or are you just a screaming, yelling spectator parent?

Browne: Just the latter. Marti gets more involved than I do. Courtney, who plays soccer, also is a ski racer, and Marti is the treasurer of the ski racing club. So that means Marti gets to do a lot of the nitty gritty stuff. ...We were at the ski swap the other day, and I worked at the swap all day.

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Reflections: You mentioned that Courtney is a ski racer. Do you ski?

Browne: Marti and I both ski, but we can't keep up with her [Courtney] any more. And we certainly don't ski as well as Sig.

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Eating healthful foods and exercising are high on the director's to-do list.

A conversation ...

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Reflections: You mean he hasn't dragged you on a helicopter skiing trip?

Browne: No! No way would I do that.

Reflections: Do you have any favorite sports?

Browne: Marti and I like running a lot ... and skiing. I also like tennis. I used to play a lot of tennis, but I don't get a chance to play much anymore. That's actually one thing I'd like to take up again. It's a sport that I could play very well, and you can play it for a long time.

Reflections: How do you deal with stress? That is, what do you do to relax and unwind?

Browne: Marti and I like to run about three days a week, at least we try to. We have some Nordic Track-like equipment that we have out in our sun room. That helps a lot.

At work what I like to do a lot of times is to get out of my office and just go walking. Walking around the Lab or even walking back and forth to the cafeteria, you run into people, you talk to people. Every once in a while, we [he and Marti] are lucky enough to have lunch together, which is also a nice way to relax because we can talk about family or home things or other things that we have to get done. That takes your mind off some of the stress of work. I really enjoy going to Courtney's soccer games, because it relieves stress for me.

Reflections: While you probably will have less leisure time as director, do you have any hobbies that you intend to continue doing?

Browne: Cooking. At least I'm going to try to continue. I should have noted this [cooking] when I was talking about what I do to relieve stress. I find cooking relaxing because you have to focus on it and it's creative.

I also like doing projects around the house. I'll probably continue doing that. ... And something that Marti has as a hobby and which I enjoy too is outdoors work. We like to change things outdoors, like making patios and planting trees. We did a lot of the work around here ... the pond in the backyard with fish and a waterfall.

Reflections: What was the last book you read?

Browne: I'm reading a really interesting book now by a woman named Andrea Barrett called "Ship Fever." It's a series of short stories — she won the National Book Club award for best new writer about a year ago.

It's set at various points in history and talks about how people approached science in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and how their views today would look so crazy. But at the time, [the views] were major areas of dispute between great names arguing about some things as simple as where do the birds go in the fall. It's a really interesting book. She's a good writer.

Reflections: What do you think will be the biggest change in your personal life now that you will be Laboratory director?

Browne: Probably the public aspects of the job. Even though we were recognized before because I was in management, I already can sense that the expectations of interacting when you go out are much different. As director, you don't have a private life as easily as you did before. You're more of a public figure, whether you like it or not. You might say, "I have this private life," and you try to keep it as private as you can. But I think that [the fishbowl aspect] is going to be the biggest change for us.

Reflections: You won't have a "normal" work schedule anymore as director, or will you?

Browne: I think I'll work pretty much the same schedule I've always worked. I usually leave home about ten to seven in the morning, or somewhere in that range. I get home around 6:30 or 7 p.m., depending on what the day is like.

... Frankly, I would rather do the job more like a CEO [chief executive officer] does in a company, which is focus on the strategy, the people, how we are utilizing our assets, what our community relations are like, and do we have a game plan in place so that if programs change, we know how we are going to move from one area to another. I like surrounding myself with excellent people who will implement our strategy. So if you can define your job, stick to that and let other people know their responsibilities, [being director] shouldn't have to be a 24-hour-a-day job. We'll see!

Reflections: If you had one wish for the Laboratory, what would it be?

Browne: That the Lab could achieve even greater scientific and programmatic accomplishments serving our country in the next 50 years than it did in its first 50. And that it would do so with an outstanding and diverse workforce, cost-effective and professional operations, with minimal impact on the safety and the health of the workers and the community and on the environment, and with a positive impact on the educational and economic system in our Northern New Mexico communities. That would be a tremendous legacy!

Volunteers built, now maintain local ski area

Two younger members of the work party put a lot of effort into removing this log.

File photo

by John A. Webster

Forty years ago, volunteers carved a ski area from trees and meadows on the north slope of Pajarito Mountain. The volunteer tradition continued with an all-day work party at the Pajarito Ski Area in October.

Kay Fletcher, president of the Los Alamos Ski Club, said about 70 people participated in the Oct. 4 cleanup, focusing mainly on clearing limbs and debris from wind storms earlier in the year.

"The weather was absolutely perfect, and we had a great turnout," said Fletcher of Computing, Information and Communications (CIC-DO). "The amount of work was more than 400 total hours, which saves the Ski Club a lot of money."

Skiing, with volunteer help, has been part of the Los Alamos winter scene for a long time, according to a forthcoming history of the ski club by Deanna Morgan Kirby titled "Just Crazy to Ski."

An informal ski club was organized in November 1943, the first winter that the Laboratory was up and running.

The primary area for skiing at the time was Sawyer's Hill, located about four miles west of the back gate.

By the late 1950s, however, the skiers realized that the skiing could be extended into late spring if they could find an area with a north-facing slope and a higher altitude.

According to Kirby's book, two jeeploads of explorers checking out the north side of Pajarito Mountain in 1957 found what they were looking for — four feet of snow in the middle of March.

In order to get ready in time for the next ski season, work parties were held every weekend. Teams of three to four people felled trees, while other teams of 10 to 20 people hauled them off. By Christmas, the volunteer workers had cleared two slopes, installed two rope tows and set up a temporary lodge.

"It was primitive by any standards, but we could start skiing," the late Bob Thorn, Ski Club president at the time, is quoted in the book as saying. "We didn't quit skiing until the first of April."

Today, the ski area, which is owned by the Ski Club, spreads across 730 acres of mountain terrain. It has five chair lifts, a ski school, a day lodge and a cafe.

"Pajarito Mountain has relied on the hard work and dedication of volunteers throughout its history," said Fletcher. "You can find summer work crews on the mountain almost any day of the week, taking care of everything from removing rocks and aspen shoots to repairing the lodge and ski patrol building. We couldn't do it without them."

About 70 volunteers cleared the slopes at Pajarito Ski Area Oct. 4 to get ready for this ski season. Left to right, Ann Dingus of Customer Service (CIC-6), Mike Fletcher of High Explosives Science and Technology (DX-2) and Kay Fletcher of Computing, Information and Communications (CIC-DO) collect debris, while Butch Wood climbs up the slope to join them.

After the work was over, the volunteers gathered on the deck of the ski lodge for a meal of barbecue, baked potatoes, beans and salad. *Work party photos by Bruce Gavett, general manager of the Los Alamos Ski Club*

November service anniversaries

35 years
Terry Langham, P-22
Ernesto Martinez, CST-7
Bonnie Young, HR-5

30 years
Kent Croasdell, P-22
James McDow, NIS-5
Sharon Ross, DDT-DO

25 years
John Bdzil, DX-1
Ralph Brewer, FSS-9
Johnny Herrera, LANSCE-7
David Honaberger, DX-8
Rosemary Martinez, MST-6
Anthony Montoya, FSS-6
Brian Newnam, LANSCE-3
John Nyhan, EES-15
Ronald Oliver, EES-7
Dean Peterson, MST-STC
Martin Piltch, MST-6
William Porch, EES-8
Bruce Wienke, X-TM

20 years
Peter Anders, NMT-4
Frederick De Vries, BUS-5
G.D. Dransfield, NIS-6
John Fitzpatrick, CST-7
Victor Gavron, NIS-5
Raymond Jermance, NIS-DO
Thomas Kozlowski, P-25
Carlos Martinez, DX-4
Susie Medina, ESH-DO
Tim Merrigan, CIC-5
Marlene Montoya, HR-5
Michael Oothoudt, LANSCE-6
Robin Robinson, NIS-3
Lawrence Stretz, ESA-WMM
Stella Taylor, LANSCE-9
Richard Warren, EES-1

15 years
Carla Brewer, P-22
Bonita Busse, NWT-AGEXI
Mary Cernicek, ESH-14
Amy Jaramillo, NMT-4
Scott Larkin, BUS-7
Jungjo Pyun, X-CI
Michael Trujillo, ESH-5
Cynthia Wallace, CIC-1

10 years
Alanna Burke, CIC-1
David Delaney Jr., BUS-5
Patricia Maestas, ESA-MT
Phyllis Martell, CIC-1
Linda Nonno, EM-ER
Steven Rae, ESH-18
David Romero, NMT-8
Bill Zwick, NMT-FSQIM

5 years
Patrick Beaulieu, AA-2
Michael Clevenger, ESH-14
Kathryn Creek, ESH-5
Mark Dunham, NIS-1
Hans Frauenfelder, T-CNLS
Gilbert Gonzales, ESH-20
Stephanie Hale, NMT-5
Cory Higgins, FSS-9
Cyril Jakubowski, ESH-3
Larry Runge, FSS-DO
Neomi Salazar, ESH-5
Michael Smith, ESA-WE
Philip Tubesing, MST-6
Bernice Williams, LANSCE-12

Yearwood ...

continued from Page 4

recently became deputy director for the Nuclear Materials and Technology (NMT) Division.

Yearwood is a 17-year Lab employee; 15 of those years have been at TA-55, where she has performed both production and facility management duties. She has been involved in facility management the past 10 years.

Yearwood said one of her biggest priorities will be to make sure TA-55 continues to set the standard for excellence in the Department of Energy complex. Another potential issue is having the Nuclear Regulatory Commission become the new overseer for its nuclear facilities, a scenario Yearwood described as very likely.

Still another possible issue that she may have to face one day is the ability to handle the ever-increasing number of programs, she added, noting that a multitude of programs already are housed in the facilities.

Yearwood received her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering and master's degree in nuclear engineering from the University of New Mexico.

In Memoriam

James J. Hayden

Laboratory retiree James J. Hayden of Los Alamos died Oct. 15 in Mexico. He was 59 years old. Hayden graduated from Los Alamos High School in 1956 and earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from University of New Mexico in 1962. He first worked for the Lab as a summer student in 1956, as a detail draftsman in the former Facilities Engineering (ENG) Division. He joined the Lab as a staff member in 1960 as an engineering technician. During his Lab career, he worked at the Los Alamos Meson Physics Facility, Gas Discharge Laser (L-1), the Physics Division, Weapons Engineering (WX-1), Mechanical Engineering (WX-4), and Weapons Engineering (ESA-WE).

John Marshall Jr.

Laboratory Fellow and retiree John Marshall Jr. died Oct. 21 at the Sombrillo Nursing Facility. He was 80. Marshall worked with Leo Szilard and Enrico Fermi to build the first controlled nuclear chain reactor at the University of Chicago. He came to the Lab in 1957, conducting research into harnessing thermonuclear reactions in a plasma-containing fusion reactor under the Magnetic Fusion Energy Program. In 1959, he developed and patented the "Marshall Gun," a co-axial plasma gun device that still is used today for magnetic fusion energy research worldwide. He worked in Plasma Research (CTR-5) and the Controlled Thermonuclear Research. He retired in 1982, but continued as a Lab associate in Plasma Physics (P-24) for several years afterward.

Morton C. Smith

Lab retiree and associate Morton C. Smith, co-inventor of the hot dry rock geothermal energy concept, died Oct. 10 after a brief illness. He was 80. Smith came to the Lab in 1954, working in Physical Chemistry and Metallurgy (CMR-13). In 1971, Smith became alternate group leader for Physical Metallurgy (CMB-13). He became group leader for Geothermal Energy (Q-22) in 1973. He later became deputy program director for the Federal Hot Dry Rock Program in the Basic and Applied Geosciences (G) Division. He also worked in the Earth and Space Sciences (ESS-DO) Division for a short period. He retired in 1985, but returned a few years later as a Lab associate in Geoengineering (EES-4) and remained active as an associate until his death.

Thomas Whaley

Lab employee Thomas Whaley of Genomics (LS-3) died Oct. 2 at St. Vincent's Hospital in Santa Fe. He was 55. The Albuquerque native received his bachelor's and master's degrees and doctorate in chemistry and organic chemistry from the University of New Mexico. He came to the Lab in 1971, working on the synthesis of stable isotope-labeled organic compounds. He also worked in Organic and Biochemical Synthesis (LS-5), the Toxicology, Biochemistry/Biophysics and Genomics and Structural Biology groups, the Biological and Environmental Research program and Science and Technology Base (STB) Program Office. He had been an adjunct professor in the chemistry department at UNM since 1973.

This month in history

December

1831 — Charles Darwin sets sail aboard the HMS Beagle

1938 — Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann first demonstrate proof of uranium fission

1941 — Japanese planes attack Pearl Harbor

1961 — The nation's first detonation of a nuclear device for peaceful purposes occurs near Carlsbad, N.M., as Project Gnome

1971 — "D.B. Cooper" parachutes from an airliner with $200,000, passing out of history and into legend

1982 — Construction is completed on the retaining wall on the southwest corner of Diamond Drive and Jemez Road

January

1847 — The Taos Rebellion against the U.S. occupation of New Mexico results in the slaying of Gov. Charles Bent

1947 — The Atomic Energy Commission officially takes over from the Army the responsibility for the nation's atomic program

1948 — The first bank opens in Los Alamos

1982 — The Otowi Building at TA-3 opens and nearly 600 people from five divisions move in

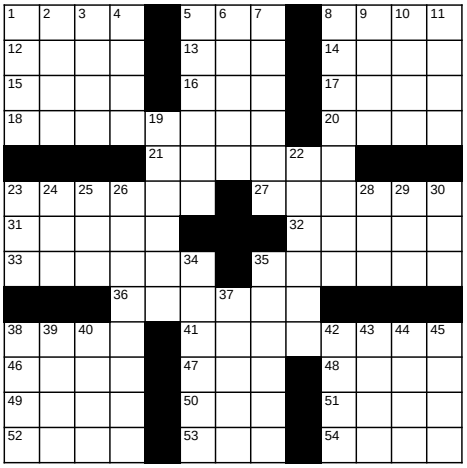
1994 — President Clinton creates a national advisory committee to study human radiation experiments and releases of radiation

1994 — Pajarito Site (TA-18) is designated as a national nuclear landmark

Syndicated Materials

Removed at the request of the syndicate

Happy holidays



ACROSS

1 "_____ grew overnight on the roofs of the houses like a pure and grandfather moss." —A Child's Christmas in Wales
5 Take unlawfully
8 Part of traditional New Year's Eve song
12 Wife and sister of Zeus
13 Prefix meaning on, upon, over, beside, among
14 Appeal
15 What Sam Weller would call a blind Greek poet
16 Common slang in government
17 Son of Judah
18 Delay
20 Part of traditional New Year's Eve song
21 Easy come, _____ _____
23 Mariner
27 Holiday drink
31 Mistake
32 Garlicky mayonnaise
33 Referring to the universe
35 Frequent holiday activity
36 African tree
38 City in India
41 New Mexico holiday decoration
46 Twosome
47 Main ingredient of dish requested by carolers
48 Character in "East of Eden"
49 "I'll _____ send it to Bob Cratchit's,' whispered Scrooge …"
50 "But I heard him exclaim, _____ he drove out of sight…"
51 Common post-holiday vow
52 City in Nevada
53 Tolkien life-form
54 Roman date

DOWN

1 Source for gifts
2 Verne's captain
3 Minerals
4 Arthur's childhood name
5 Leonine double take
6 What a child does with presents
7 Early sci-fi novel by Max Ehrlich that foreshadows a current concern (after "The")
8 Justification of personal actions
9 Bone in forearm
10 Noted film-maker
11 Very mild expletive
19 Where "it" plays
22 Actress (initial, surname)
23 Dry, generally referring to wine
24 Army Research Office (abbrev.)
25 Unloved agency
26 New Year's Eve band leader
28 Abbreviation of 11th month
29 Bravo
30 Male nickname
34 Morning brew
35 Bullseye
37 Child (Scot.)
38 Part of a church
39 Scottish highlander
40 Winter sports locale in Los Alamos Canyon
42 _____ - _____ -da
43 In the same place (L.)
44 "And NOW!" grinned the Grinch, "I will stuff up the _____."
45 Breakfast grain

spotlight

Holiday giving brings joy to the hearts of many

by Steve Sandoval

As the Christmas holiday approached last year, Karen Quintana of Open Hands Inc. in Santa Fe received a telephone call from a family in Española. The family needed food; the mother also couldn't afford to buy Christmas gifts for her children, Quintana recalled.

"I called the Laboratory," Quintana said, not sure of why she called or how she was referred to Los Alamos. "The response was quick; they brought a couple boxes of food, a variety of food items ... and a giant box of clothes and a couple of boxes of toys and games," she said.

The items had been collected as part of the Laboratory's annual Holiday Drive, which continues this year through Dec. 19.

"I put it all in my trunk and I took it; my kids helped me deliver it. They [the recipients] were very thankful," said Quintana.

Janet Murray, Open Hands' community outreach services coordinator, said clients in the organization's adult care program were particularly thankful for some of the toiletry items the Lab gave to Open Hands, a not-for-profit social services organization.

"They get a tremendous boost from just having a present to open and feeling that someone in the community still remembers them and cares about them," said Murray. "Just to be remembered and cared about is going to give them a physical and emotional boost."

Joyce Kilgore of the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Peñasco said in small, close-knit communities where everybody generally knows everybody, people sometimes find it difficult to ask for things when in need. "Mostly what we do is call families and ask them what they need ... it's a small community, and they feel comfortable if they're invited," said Kilgore.

The 1997 Holiday Drive began Nov. 17. Collection points have been established at sites throughout the Lab and its subcontractor offices.

Collection points are at the following locations:

- Otowi Building, Second Floor Lobby, Technical Area 3
- S-Site Cafeteria, TA-16
- Los Alamos Neutron Science Center (LANSCE), TA-53
- TA-55 Visitor Center
- Canyon Complex, 1100 4th St., TA-0 (next to Room 165)
- Civilian and Industrial Technology Office, 2237 Trinity Drive, TA-0, first floor foyer
- Los Alamos Outreach Center, 1350 Central Ave., Suite 101, and Johnson Controls World Services Inc., second floor of Otowi Station
- Johnson Controls World Services Inc., TA-3, SM-38 (next to candy machines).

Former Laboratory contract employee Lori Lujan sorts through toys at the SM-30 Warehouse as she prepares boxes of gifts to distribute to social service agencies that worked with the less fortunate during the 1996 holiday season. The Lab's Community Involvement and Outreach (CIO) Office is again coordinating the Holiday Drive, which continues through Dec. 19. *Photo by Mike Kolb, CIO*

Last year, children in the church's confirmation class took donated food items from the Lab and made food boxes and delivered them to needy families in Peñasco. "They have service projects, and this was one of them," Kilgore said.

"For the clothing items we had several young mothers who came in and found toys and clothes that they were able to use for their children. So that was a big help," Kilgore said, adding that the society this year is particularly in need of children's clothes, shoes and toys in good condition.

Tina Gallegos, Española Fire Chief Felix Gallegos' wife, also was appreciative of items the Lab donated to the Fire Department's annual toy and candy drive. "It was very helpful; everything went," said Gallegos. "Anything that is brought in is very appreciated.

"People around here need just about anything," she said. "I'm not particular."

The Laboratory's Community Involvement and Outreach (CIO) Office is again leading the drive to collect food, winter clothing, blankets and toys for distribution to the less fortunate throughout Northern New Mexico.

Sandy Roybal of CIO said food donations should be in the form of nonperishable staples or canned goods. Toys should be new and in good working order, and winter clothing and blankets also should be clean and in good condition, she said.

"Every can of food, every piece of clothing and every single toy will bring joy to the hearts of many," said Roybal.

For more information, contact Roybal at 5-4803 or write to *sandy@lanl.gov* by electronic mail.

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