

That's that

As you read this, Sandia is marking a significant birthday, one that in human terms is a real milestone: On Nov. 1, Sandia officially turns 65. That was the day in 1949 that AT&T took over management of an independent Sandia Laboratory, which had begun its life as a division of Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory.

The backstory of AT&T's involvement with Sandia makes for compelling reading for history buffs. As described in Necah Furman's indispensable 1990 history of the Labs' early days, *Sandia National Laboratories: The Postwar Decade*, it had become increasingly clear by the late 1940s at the highest levels of government that Sandia should be split off from Los Alamos and managed as a separate laboratory. In the new order of things, Los Alamos would focus primarily on the science challenges of nuclear weapons, while Sandia would tackle the engineering issues. There would be crossover and synergy, but the need for a separate engineering laboratory was evident. The question was, who would manage it?

The Atomic Energy Commission, the civilian agency that oversaw the weapons enterprise, determined that for a number of compelling reasons – experience in running perhaps the best R&D laboratory in industry (Bell Labs) and a track record of success in manufacturing and innovation – AT&T was the logical choice. The hitch was that while AEC wanted the phone giant to manage Sandia, the US Justice Department was in the process of pursuing an antitrust case against the company. After a lot of backchannel discussion and negotiation, AT&T agreed to take on the Sandia job for \$1 a year. (As an aside, according to Furman's book, the Justice Department didn't drop its antitrust case, suggesting that there was no quid pro quo, no "We'll manage the laboratory, if you drop the lawsuit.")

In the middle of this negotiation, President Truman became personally involved. After hearing AEC Chairman David Lilienthal make the case for AT&T, Truman sent a letter to AT&T President Leroy Wilson soliciting the company's support. He wrote, "This operation, which is a vital segment of the atomic weapons program, is of extreme importance and urgency in the national defense and should have the best possible technical direction. I hope that after you have heard more in detail from the Atomic Energy Commission, your organization will find it possible to undertake this task."

Now, if you are the head of one of the nation's great companies and your president makes this request of you, what can you say? And if maybe you were still hedging a bit, the president's next sentence must have been the clincher: "In my opinion," Truman added, "you have here an opportunity to render an exceptional service in the national interest."

Wilson agreed and thus began, on Nov. 1, 1949, an association between AT&T and Sandia that lasted 44 years. I think all parties agree that it was a happy and fruitful one.

In doing some background reading for this column, I came across some comments from a former Sandian who dismissed the "exceptional service" phrase as just so much PR fluff intended to flatter AT&T.

Surely, the language was meant to inspire Wilson and convince him of the merits of the cause and its importance to the nation. Does that make it fluff? You'd have to be a lot more cynical than me to think so.

I prefer to see it the way former Labs Director C. Paul Robinson does. In an *Albuquerque Journal* article five years ago marking the Labs' 60th birthday, science reporter John Fleck quoted Paul as saying of the "exceptional service" phrase that it was "one of the most meaningful things of my career."

And in that same story Fleck also recounted how Martin Marietta embraced the phrase when it assumed management of the Labs in 1993. Fleck writes that when Martin Marietta chief Norm Augustine met with Paul in 1995, he said: "That phrase – 'exceptional service in the national interest' – that truly is you guys."

Not long after that 1995 meeting, two aerospace giants, Lockheed Corp. and Martin Marietta, merged to become Lockheed Martin, under whose leadership the "exceptional service" still holds pride of place, front and center of the Labs' 2014-2018 Strategic Plan. Sixty-five years on, we still embrace it as defining our core purpose.

And though we're now 65 and collectively qualify for senior discounts, I don't think we'll ever grow old. With our steady infusion of new talent, with an ever changing suite of challenges and solutions, we'll be, in the words of the Rod Stewart song, Forever Young.

See you next time.

– Bill Murphy (MS 1468, 505-845-0845, wtmurph@sandia.gov)

Sandia Open Enrollment begins soon

Nov. 3-20 for MTC, OPEIU, and non-represented employees

Open enrollment, your annual opportunity to review and update your Sandia benefit elections, runs Nov. 3-20 for MTC, OPEIU, and non-represented employees. All benefits elections made during open enrollment take effect Jan. 1, 2015. In addition to making changes to your medical, dental, and vision coverage, this year you can:

- Increase your Long Term Disability (LTD) Plus insurance to 60 percent or 70 percent without evidence of insurability;
- Enroll in a healthcare or daycare Flexible Spending Account (FSA);
- Enroll in a commuter transportation FSA (California employees only);
- Enroll in the vacation buy plan;
- Review your 401(k) investment asset allocation and consider enrolling in the auto-increase option.

HBE says 'Thank you!'

It is because of your participation in programs like Virgin Pulse that we are able to effectively manage healthcare costs. National healthcare costs have increased 30-35 percent in the past 5 years while Sandia has maintained a controlled increase of 6.5 percent in this same time-frame. This year premiums are going up only 1.7 percent compared to the 5 percent national average.

For more detailed information, look for HBE's comprehensive Open Enrollment newsletter in your email (which was distributed Oct. 27) or on hbe.sandia.gov. The newsletter includes a summary of highlighted changes, 2015 premiums, how to enroll, and more.

Sandia is committed to providing you with benefits that promote your health and well-being as part of your total rewards package. To learn more about preventive health or open enrollment go to hbe.sandia.gov.



Note for retirees

PreMedicare and Medicare retirees should have received their 2015 Benefit Choices Open Enrollment guides in the mail. PreMedicare open enrollment began Oct. 15 and runs through Nov. 21. Medicare open enrollment began Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 6. For more information on open enrollment or benefit fairs, go to hbe.sandia.gov.

Sandia LabNews



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Bobby Baca makes his mark at ParaLong Drive competition



Bobby Baca (2557) took 3rd place in the 2014 ParaLong Drive World Golf Championship in Mesquite, Nev., Oct. 15-17. Bobby's drive was 265 yards, with the winning drive of 275 yards.

Bobby was born without a left hand just below the wrist. "My family did not consider it a disability, and neither do I," says Bobby. Always competitive and always interested in sports, Bobby found his true passion in golf. He goes into every tournament determined to do his best, and sometimes even wins. Of the ParaLong Drive World Championship, he says, "I expected it to be competitive; but I didn't expect that other people would hit it further than me."

The 2014 ParaLong Drive Worlds featured disabled golfers from 10 countries competing at the world-famous Long Drive "Grid" at the Mesquite Sports & Event Complex. Mesquite has been home to the World Long Drive Championships since 1995 and seen by millions on ESPN and the Golf Channel.

ParaLong Drive is for amputees, paralyzed, and blind golfers and is fast becoming a movement for reaching Paralympic status. Some of the athletes are wounded warriors, athletes dealing with the aftermath of a traumatic accident, or are those who have learned to adapt to a disability from birth.