

# VIP Club Newsletter

**VOLUME 27, NO. 12**    <http://www.vipclubmn.org>    **DECEMBER 2007**

The Number to call for information on Unisys Retirement Status and Benefits: 1-877-864-7972.

The Number to call for information on Lockheed Martin Retirement Status and Benefits: 1--866-562-2363.

Wednesday, December 05	Board Meeting, Roseville	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, December 13	Christmas Party NCO Club	5.45 p.m.

Wednesday, January 09	Board Meeting, Eagan	10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, January 09	No Program or social Time	

## DECEMBER CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our annual VIP Club Christmas Party is on a Thursday this year; December 13 is the date and the NCO Club is the place. Following a social hour AND dinner the Connie Villars Quartette will play music for listening and dancing. **REMEMBER TO CARRY PICTURE I.D.** For those who would like to attend but are unable to drive at night, please give one of your officers a call; we may be able to arrange a ride. (See directions to the NCO Club and reservation form on page 9).

## JANUARY PROGRAM: EAGAN

**NO PROGRAM SCHEDULED** for JANUARY 2008.

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

IF YOUR ADDRESS LABEL HAS 2007 AFTER YOUR NAME, YOU ARE NOT PAID FOR 2008. PLEASE USE THE DUES COUPON ON PAGE 8.

**LAST CHANCE  
TO SIGN UP  
FOR THE ANNUAL  
CHRISTMAS PARTY  
ON DECEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>. SEE PAGE  
9 FOR RESERVATION FORM.**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**From: Brian Berggren**

David Christenson from the St. Paul District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers gave us a graphic tour of the civilian side of the corps work in flood management, channel maintenance, environmental restoration, and many other tasks. Mr. Christenson had spent four months in Iraq supporting reconstruction and others from this district have also worked on projects such as New Orleans levee repair and improvement. His associate John Lyman prepared the tailored PowerPoint Presentation that included many photos of corps projects in Devil's Lake, Grand Forks, Granite Falls, Rushford, and many others – all sized and supported by senior eye-friendly fonts.

With our annual Dinner/Dance coming up soon (Thursday, December 13), I am encouraging any that have not yet sent a check to Warren and Dorothy to do so quickly. We always have good music, good food, and good company at the NCO Club. Also consider attending the Minnesota Senior Federation's Congressional Forum on Medicare on

December 1<sup>st</sup> at the Minnetonka Community Center (9 to noon).

The November meeting is our annual exercise of the democratic process, such as we conduct it. Tom Turba did the ritual "are there any nominations from the floor?" before asking confirmation of the same old faces plus Quint Heckert. Dick Mullins, our Mapper man and keeper of the membership list for many, many years, will turn over the list duties for Quint to manage in Excel. I thought the best reason for being re-elected was to keep Bernie available is the invaluable past-president.

Lastly, have a safe and happy holiday season with your family, friends, and co-workers, and remember that we will not have a January program and that your next newsletter will be a combined January/February issue.

Respectfully, Brian Berggren, VIP Club President

## From the Editors



**Brian Berggren** (651-451-9009) &  
**Joe Schwarz** (651-698-9698)

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## **DINING CLUBS & GROUPS**

### **Breakfast groups and get-togethers:**

**One breakfast group** meets monthly at 9:00 a.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Tri-City American Legion, Old Hwy 8, New Brighton. Phone: **763-416-3903**.

**Another breakfast group** meets monthly at 8:00 a.m. on the 1st Thursday of each month at Joseph's Grill, 140 South Wabasha, (Wabasha and Plato) St. Paul. Phone: **651-222-2435**.

### **Luncheon Groups & Dinner Clubs:**

**One Unisys Luncheon group** meets monthly on the 2nd Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Country Buffet, Holly Shopping Center, located at University Ave. and Mississippi St. just north of I-694. For information call 651-552-1465.

Another Luncheon group (engineering/drafting) meets monthly on the 1st Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. at the

Old Country Buffet at 2000 S. Robert, West St. Paul. For information call **651-456-0750**.

**And another Luncheon group** (Unisys and Burroughs) meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. at the Mall of America 3rd floor North Food Court. We sit at the tables between the elevator and Burger King. For information call **952-854-7855**.

**Dinner Club.** A Unisys Dinner Club meets monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. at Champs located at 35E and Larpenteur Avenue. For information call 763-786-1044.

## **MEETING & EVENT DATES 2007**

Date    Time    Location    Activity

**Dec. 13**    **5:45 p.m.**    **USAF**    **Christmas Party**

**Note:** Rsvl = Roseville, Eagan = Eagan Community Center, Park = Highland Park Pavilion, USAF = NCO Club at U.S. Air Force Base off Hwy 62

## **WELCOME NEW CLUB MEMBERS**

Bennett, Donald & Mary Anne    **L** Burnsville, MN.

Corbett, Patrick & Tove    **U** White Bear Lake, MN.

Harte, James & Alice    **U** Salt Lake City, UT.

**U** = Unisys    **B** = Burroughs    **L** = Lockheed Martin

**D** = Unisys Defense Systems

## **IN REMEMBRANCE**



**Lushine, Michael J.** - Age 64 of Roseville, MN. Passed away on November 10, 2007. Survived by loving wife of 41 years, Terrie. Mike was a dedicated Unisys employee for over 35 years..

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **FINANCE AND BUSINESS**

#### **MANAGEMENT HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE**

A Holiday Open House will be held on Thursday, December 13 from 5pm to 8pm at the Lost Spur Country Club on Sibley Memorial Highway in Eagan for the Finance and Business Management organization. All retirees from this organization are invited. Cost is \$7, hors D'oeuvres provided, cash bar. If you wish to attend, please RSVP to [carrie.a.foley@lmco.com](mailto:carrie.a.foley@lmco.com) or 651-456-3950 no later than December 3.

### **VIP CLUB ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The election of officers for the VIP Club for the year 2008 was held at the November 14<sup>th</sup> general meeting. The slate of candidates presented in the November Newsletter was modified at the November 7<sup>th</sup> Board meeting based on the decision

by Dick Mullins not to run for re-election as a Board Director and that by Warren Becker to not seek election to the Board as a Director. Consequently the Nominating Committee presented the following slate of candidates for 2008: (1) For Officers, the current Officers Brian Berggren, President; Tom Turba, Vice President; Lynn Lindholm, Secretary; Lowell Benson, Treasurer; and Bernie Jansen, Past President and (2) For Directors, Quintin Heckert (a recent Lockheed Martin retiree) plus the three current Directors Dale Phelps, Joseph Schwarz and Marion Scott. Since there were no further nominations from the floor, this slate of candidates was elected as the Officers and Directors of the VIP Club for 2008.

*Submitted by Bernie Jansen*

## NEW WEB SITE

The VIP Club Board announces a new web site to provide ongoing and Legacy information to our members. Enter <http://www.vipclubmn.org> into your browser's address line to look at what's done so far. Although still under construction, we welcome your feedback.

## OLD TIMERS GET TOGETHER

### ► NOTE CHANGE OF DAY & DATE ◀

Old timers gather the first Friday of December (December 7<sup>th</sup>) beginning at 11 a.m. at the Ft. Snelling Officers Club. The Club management has asked for a count estimate of how many people will be eating at their buffet. *If you plan to attend and/or eat*, please send an e-mail to [Treasurer@vipclubmn.org](mailto:Treasurer@vipclubmn.org) by November 30th.

## LEGACY EXPLAINED

**So what is all this LEGACY stuff about, anyway?** Submitted by Harvey Taipale.

Over the past year and a half, VIP Club newsletters have had articles about the early history of our various businesses, and reports from the legacy committee. Although this activity has been going on and is supported by the VIP Club leadership, many people are unaware of just what is happening, why it is happening, and of the opportunity for everyone to participate. This summary should provide some clarification.

**Background:** In late 2005, Lockheed Martin Corporate, motivated by the realization that their current company was created from over 20 predecessors, asked the various operating units to “capture their legacy” without a real concept of what was to follow. In Eagan, Ole (Dick) Olson was tasked to respond; he formed an ad hoc group of volunteers and contacted the VIP Club Board. The group quickly realized that

the history of Engineering Research Associates (ERA), continuing to the present, was a remarkable story of technological innovation and contribution to the computer industry in general and to Minnesota in particular. *This story, particularly the early years, has never really been completely told; e.g. ATHENA launching missiles.* To be sure, there are



accounts written from the business history perspective, from various customer and user perspectives, and partial documentation in many places. However, we are unaware of any account, which properly gives credit to the ingenuity, vision, and hard work of ERA and its successor company employees, and their contributions to Minnesota and the world.

The legacy committee feels that it would be a terrible loss not to capture the full history, thus inspiring our efforts to determine just what can be accomplished. There is a bit of urgency, as the memories and materials relating to the ERA beginnings are disappearing rapidly. Our pioneers are dying, successor corporations are shredding records, and memories are fading.

**Objectives:** The committee has defined three priority objectives. First, we need to **capture** whatever remaining material and information we can. To date, this had been in the form of career and program summaries contributed by long-time employees, oral histories from past company leaders and technologists, and reviewing and saving Lockheed Martin files before they are forwarded for destruction. There have also been donations of various documents and artifacts (hardware components, models, displays, photos, marketing brochures, and memorabilia) from various individuals.

The second objective is to **catalog and archive** all the material collected. Cataloging is necessary to make a record of the material to support

our third objective (keep reading), but for the long term we need to get all this material to a place that will provide safe, durable storage and future public and scholarly access. The archival strategy is evolving, but almost certainly will involve the U of M's Charles Babbage Institute and the Minnesota Historical Society.

The third objective is to **publish/publicize** our history and heritage in a way that interests others within our industry and our fellow Minnesotans. The committee is considering three forms/formats. We may be able to put up some sort of an 'innovations' **display at the Minnesota Sesquicentennial** exhibit on May 17 and 18, 2008. This would be a relatively broad (and hopefully high in "wow" factor) introduction to the ERA legacy, and would be an excellent way to gauge the general interest in the ERA story. Secondly, we envision a **book** that thoroughly documents the whole ERA story. Finally, from (or in parallel with) the book, we would like to see a PBS-style **documentary** that would popularize the story for a wider audience.

Some of the early findings are on the web – Check out the information on Lowell Benson's site:



<http://www.usfamily.net/web/labenson/Legacy.htm>, which will be moving to the VIP Club site <http://vipclubmn.org> over the next two months.

**Opportunities:** The activities to date have been the efforts of a relatively small group, but to really be successful, we will need much broader support. Every current and former employee of a company that traces its roots back to ERA (including companies which sprang from or supported ERA and its successors) has a potential contribution of material, information, or support. Discovering sources of material, collecting and archiving it, and organizing it in a form for public consumption will be a long term enterprise and will need virtually every type of skill and effort we all employed in our work lives. The VIP Club is the greatest repository in the world of these resources and we are inviting all of you to join in and help where you can.

Almost by accident, the initial activity occurred on the Lockheed Eagan side, but we all recognize that the Twin Cities Unisys folks have an equal stake in this story, and we need to make sure that their contributions and history are preserved and documented as well. There is a spot to use everyone's skills – just a few ideas of where folks can help:

**Contributions** – We would like everyone to provide a career summary, any historic material you may

wish to contribute, and to urge your fellow retirees to do the same.

**Collecting and cataloging** – We need to ferret out material in a bunch of creative ways, identify it and its significance, then prepare it for archiving and for our own publication and use. Every source we have looked at to date reinforces the realization that this involves a lot of work, and every source seems to point to a new pathway for discovering more information.

**Publication and Publicizing** – We need information organizers, people who can help write up the source material (we intend to get professional help for the final product), and ultimately we will probably need to raise (not collect) some money to finance the effort. If we are to participate in the Sesquicentennial, ***we need your help starting NOW!*** If you are interested in joining in this engaging effort, please contact one of the following:

Lowell Benson\* VIP CLUB 651 483-3709  
[labenson@usfamily.net](mailto:labenson@usfamily.net)

Ole (Dick) Olson\* LMCO 651 456-3158  
[r.d.olson@lmco.com](mailto:r.d.olson@lmco.com)

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\* Legacy Committee co-chairs \*\* Principal author of this 'paper'

## LEGACY NEWS UPDATE

Submitted by Dick Lundgren, [rflundgr@aol.com](mailto:rflundgr@aol.com).

### Follow-up on Involvement in 2008 Minnesota Sesquicentennial

VIP Club members met with the executive director of the Minnesota Statehood Sesquicentennial Commission, Jane Leonard, and her staff on October 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss our potential participation in the 2008 sesquicentennial activities. Jane welcomed us and appreciated our enthusiasm to be involved and explained where and how we might best fit in. She reviewed the five major themes of the sesquicentennial, and identified the **Innovation** theme as clearly where we belong. The details are far from worked out, but a likely venue will be exhibit space within a large pavilion tent set up on the Capitol Mall for the Statehood Festival and Expo during the weekend of May 17/18. Ideas for our

exhibit are in the formative stage, but it will clearly be a joint effort of the VIP Club, Unisys and Lockheed Martin along with support from the Charles Babbage Institute at the U of MN. The focus will be on our origins in Minnesota, our 60+ year legacy of technical advancements/high tech production, our economic impact on the state, and also especially on our business areas to which the general public can relate. Our company history is a story that has mostly escaped the attention of the Minnesota (and national) media, and so this is our chance to bring it to the forefront. Some early ideas for our exhibit include graphics of historical timelines (including spin-off companies), running of selected videos, PowerPoint presentations, significant hardware artifacts and historical documents, Internet feeds (e.g. relevant YouTube clips), and other flat paper eye-catchers (posters, charts, etc.) for background. A strong suggestion also came from Jane Leonard to offer some public talks/panel discussions/press conference style events for public interest and interaction. Needless to say, there will be many volunteer opportunities to celebrate the legacy of our company and our state. Personnel involved in the initial meeting were **Ron Q. Smith, Tom Turba, Ed Michaud, Quint Heckert, Lowell Benson, and Dick Lundgren**. The second meeting is scheduled for November 29, again at the Sesquicentennial Commission offices in the James J. Hill house on Summit Avenue.

### **Recent Contributors to Legacy Website** (<http://www.usfamily.net/web/labenson/Legacy.htm>)

A couple of recent contributors to our website have made serendipitous connections to our company's legacy. **Ralph Hileman**, an ERA badge holder (which officially classifies him as an endangered species), was at a recent Lockheed Martin Small Business conference in San Diego where he met company people **John Samuelson, Craig Meyer, and Joe Bulger**. Reminiscing ensued and he learned of our Legacy website. Check out his career history input at our legacy website including items of significance such as co-authoring the patent for the first digital computer (NTDS) and his IEEE involvement. **Jim Donaldson** was a recent discoverer of our website, and he too provided a personal history input. Jim had worked in the Navy as a DS (Data Systems technician) at Mare Island, CA (1960-64) and then was hired by **Dave Kolling** to become a programmer for NTDS development. He worked in Plants 2, 5, and 8 (sound familiar?), and adds "Thank you for your efforts to recall that fascinating time."

### **Legacy of International Programs – Focus on Australia**

Last month's newsletter featured our business legacy in Africa, a piece of which was overlooked and is added below. This month we stay below the equator and feature our legacy in Australia. Our first Australian customer was the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) which began the acquisition of their first NTDS-equipped ships in 1972. **Bruce Grewenow** was assigned as program manager for what became known as the RAN NCDS (Naval Combat Data System) for the three DDGs, HMAS (Her Majesty's Australian Service) Perth, Hobart, and Brisbane. The NCDS was developed from the Junior Participating Tactical Data System (JPTDS) used in the USN DDGs at the time. The core team of Univac engineering personnel included **Morley Moe, Denny Drake, Tom Grendzinski, Jim Heidbrink, and Jerry McGee**, and the interface to the USN side was PM **Faith Rawdon-Smith**. The RAN NCDS project involved the design and construction of a Combat Data Systems Centre (CDSC) in Canberra, extensive mods to existing software, and completed system installation on the three RAN DDGs in 1977. The original NCDS was based on the UYK-7 computer which eventually came to be replaced by UYK-43 computers in the 80s, at which time the mission and simulation systems were also brought up to the modernized USN DDG standard. An often overlooked aspect of international sales is Offset. What does the host country get other than the systems they buy? In the case of the Australians, Univac later established a joint venture company (C3I) with EMI Australia (EMI worked closely with us in the CDSC) and we transferred mil-spec circuit board technology to Morris Productions in Sydney. The UYK-20 computer also found its way down under with a small sale to Singer-Librascope for use in a RAN Submarine program. In the early 80s, the RAN began adding six FFG ships with NTDS capabilities. They are currently operational as decommissioning for the first three DDGs began in the late 90s.

In 1977-78, a study was undertaken to extend NCDS capability to smaller RAN ships. Members of the original NCDS core team participated as did other employees from what was the Sperry Univac International Systems Division at that time. The Small Ships Combat Data System (SSCDS) study effort included ISD employees **Max Tiede, Ernie Lantto, Steve (Wyatt) Howe, Pat Gartner, Chuck Burk**, and others. The potential business looked extremely good until Australian voters at the time opted for a change in government, and the wind went out of the RAN's sails for the SSCDS.

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) has also been a customer for our P-3C maritime surveillance

systems. The RAAF's experience with the P-3 goes back to 1968 when they took delivery of their first Lockheed P-3Bs, and in 1977 they got their first P-3Cs with the Univac CP-901 computer. In 1995 computer upgrades (and many others) were in order. Work began in Greenville, TX in 1997 with LM-Eagan under contract to E-Systems to provide the CP-2044 computer as well as other hardware and software enhancements.

Australia's neighbor New Zealand has also had Lockheed P-3Bs going back to 1966. However, their upgrades/life extension programs have taken a different path involving other contractors.

It was mentioned earlier that there was an oversight in last month's focus on African business. Specifically, the Egyptian AN/TPS-59 air defense radar system was omitted. This program, originally from the mid-80s, involved the UYK-7 computer (including the fanout tester) and the S-2049 data terminal set (USQ-69 displays) from Sperry-Eagan. It was an FMS case via the USN to the Arab Republic of Egypt under program manager **Carl Rumsey**. Depot-level hardware training took place in 1987 at the Eagandale facility, and was performed by **Bob Vogel** and **Owen Hefner** from the Customer Training Department for two Egyptian military officers. It was interesting to note that the two officers were chauffeured daily to and from the Eagandale building (a cultural norm for them/a cultural oddity for us). In 2001 Lockheed Martin's Naval Electronics & Surveillance Systems (NE&SS)-Radar Systems unit in Syracuse was awarded a contract for the refurbishment of the eight Egyptian TPS-59 systems, following an earlier similar refurbishment in 1995.

### Further inputs?

Additions or corrections to any of the preceding stories are always welcome. Please contact the author ([rflundgr@aol.com](mailto:rflundgr@aol.com)).

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

September 10, 2007

Mr. Joe Schwarz, Editor  
VIP Club Newsletter  
Roseville, MN 55113-0020

To The Editor:

Over the past four years (beginning in August 2003), we have read, and "shook our heads" about the monthly screed written by Brian Berggren on the wonders of socialized medicine, and, in his words, how "we must tolerate our (health care) system while other nations love theirs". His articles always include rants on the greedy and big, bad insurance companies, doctors, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and an inept federal government. Brian's articles masquerade as an effort to

inform the readers of the VIP Club Newsletter, but in reality, they are filled with partisan vitriol.

My wife Nina and I contribute articles, edit and prepare camera-ready copies of a 20-page bi-monthly newsletter for our community of over 5,000 residents. Our Board of Directors, Community Manager, and residents would not tolerate our using the newsletter to express, as Brian does, our personal feelings on the issues of the day.

As a counter-point to Brian's anti-free enterprise beliefs, let us offer the following questions/comments, which Brian will hopefully address in future issues.

- How do you explain that most socialist nations you wish we would emulate are, despite confiscatory taxes, approaching bankruptcy because of their overly generous welfare and health care systems?
- . The biggest lie on health care hype is that there are a reported 40 to 42 million Americans that lack health insurance, and are, therefore, denied medical care. Is it not true that a large percentage (over 50%) of those who lack health insurance choose not to pay for ~~ medical coverage because they believe they don't need it or prefer to spend their money on other things?
- . The second biggest lie is that health care and medical care are the same thing. Doctors and hospitals cannot stop someone from ruining their health in a hundred different ways: e.g., drug and alcohol abuse, obesity, failure to seek treatment for diabetes and high blood pressure, smoking, AIDS and STD prevention, teenage pregnancy and failure to get pre-natal care, reckless driving, failure to get free life-saving inoculations, etc. Every night, and particularly on weekends, three or four young black or Hispanic males/females are shot to death or wounded on the streets of many of the major cities in the U.S. Government run health care would do little to solve these problems.
- Is it not true that no one in America, including legal and illegal aliens, are denied health care? Our hospital emergency rooms provide FREE expert health care to anyone who shows up at their doors. Unfortunately, many hospitals have been forced to close their emergency rooms in recent years because so few people pay for emergency room care.
- Brian can gloss over the problems in socialized medicine because few people show the slightest interest in what actually happens when someone needs access to government-run medical care. Can Brian answer why:
  - Most people spend weeks or months on a waiting list to see a doctor, and once seen, wait countless months before they actually receive required medical care; examinations, consultations and treatment that most Americans can receive within days of making a phone call?
  - It is likely that there are more CT -Scans, PET-Scans, and MRIs in the state of Minnesota than there are in all of Canada. Is it not of concern that critically ill patients in nations with

socialized medical care cannot be tested through the use of one of these advanced imaging machines for months or years, if at all?

- Why do so many people from Canada, and other socialist nations, come to the U.S. for medical treatments that they could receive at home (but only if they are patient enough to delay their diagnosis and treatment for months or years)?
- Why are Canadian women being routinely sent to U.S. hospitals for complicated births as there are not sufficient neonatal care units available in Canada?
- Why is there a brain-drain in socialist countries where U.S. and European trained doctors are immigrating to the U.S. to practice medicine? These doctors are being replaced by medical personnel trained in Third World countries.
- Is he aware that the vaunted health care systems in the Scandinavian countries often refuse to offer extraordinary care (e.g., transplants, heart by-pass, joint replacement, etc.) to those over 65? Finally
- Why is it that countries that have tried to control the prices of medications have to depend on the U.S. pharmaceutical companies to create new life-saving drugs; this after those countries have destroyed the incentives for their own companies to invest in new drug research?

Sincerely

{Original signed by Jerry and Nina Raveling}

Jerry and Nina Raveling -,  
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

PS - On October 29, 2006, we wrote a letter to Bernie Jansen suggesting that the Board of Directors rein-in Brian as his columns were overly biased and reflected poorly on the VIP Club and its sponsoring companies. In a January 12, 2007 (attached) letter, Bernie said our best recourse was to write a Letter to the Editor outlining our concerns. Since you have provided Brian a "soap box" to express his personal opinions on health care issues for over four years, hopefully you will find space in a future newsletter to include our questions and comments. Thank you.

## **TRAVEL**

### **HOLIDAY TRAVEL HAPPENINGS**

Plan ahead! Sign up now to do something *fun*tastic to ring in the season -a bus tour!

Wednesday, Dec. 19 at the St. Paul Hotel. An elegant 4-course Tea and a live radio play of "It's A WonderfulLife". It's 1946 and we are the audience for this broadcast. The 2-hour show begins at 3 PM. We'll arrive by 2:30 to enjoy carolers and admire the holiday decor. Included is the bus, show, tea, tax, gratuity and coat check. \$64 (See flyer on VIP Clubs Website).

Monday, Dec. 10 "Lights Before Christmas" Roast beef lunch, shopping in Chippewa Falls, tour of decorated Rutledge Mansion. Drive thru Christmas Village lights. \$52.00

Wednesday, Dec. 12 -Visit 6 homes at Murphy's Landing, lunch and tour at OK Corral, wagon ride (weather permitting). \$54.00

Saturday, Dec. 15-Celebration Theatre in Lakeville. Branson-style show. Lunch at Gulden's, Maplewood. \$59.00

Sat/Mon/Tue/Dec. 15, 17 & 18<sup>th</sup> Holiday Lights after dinner at the Cherokee Room, W. St. Paul. Cider, cookies & a gift on the coach. \$41.95  
Booking now. Please contact Yvonne Cecchini at 651-437-9278 or ycecchini@earthlink.net

## **CURRENT ISSUES**

Submitted by Brian Berggren.

### **Health Issues**

The latest in stent news (see 27 October Pioneer Press) is that drug-coated stents may not put patients at a greater risk of blood clots than bare-metal stents. The annual Transcatheter Cardiovascular Therapeutics conference reported that some studies found the coated stents may "suggest a mortality advantage." What wasn't said was that neither bare stents at \$800 or the coated stents at \$3000 improved outcomes for patients with symptoms of heart disease and have elective procedures. Only the patient actually having a heart attack is likely to benefit from the \$10,000 to \$50,000 procedure.

### **Climate Change Reporting**

There is news from scientific researchers and organizations, and there is opinion from editorialists, commentators, and pundits. Three articles in the local press in late October told of atmospheric carbon dioxide increasing much faster than expected (10/23), of a U.N. report by 390 scientists that "human activity has reached an unsustainable level and is outstripping available resources"(10/26). And of polar melting that is occurring far faster than expected (10/28).

Rather than being an urgent call to action, these reports by scientists seem to invite commentary in the popular press by climate change deniers. S. Fred Sing (10/30) tells us "the problem is political... that new energy policies could damage national economies." Singer considers "climate change concerns little more than a new environmentalist fad, like the Alar apple scare." Bjorn Lomborg, the Danish statistician, got over a half page in the 10/9 Pioneer Press to tell us even if we are causing global warming we cannot afford to do much about it by reducing CO2 emissions, and anyway we will have fewer cold spells and longer growing seasons. The Wall Street Journal on 10/17 gave Daniel B. Botkin a half

page to say that the “evidence that global warming will have serious effects on life is thin. Most evidence points to the contrary.” Newsweek’s George Will and Robert Samuelson are also in this company, as is Nation writer Alexander Cockburn. What are missing are articles from the scientific community.

**FUN AND FREE**

Submitted by Dick Lundgren.

This feature will occasionally provide suggestions for grandparents (that’s most of us) to have entertaining “bonding” experiences with grandchildren or other youngsters. The criteria are that the experience is generally fun and free (or almost free) and takes place in the greater Twin Cities area where about 85% of the VIP Club members live. All members are invited to submit suggestions, hopefully based on their fun and free personal experiences.

This month’s idea is to explore the tunnel system under the Capitol Mall in St. Paul, a marvelous plan for rainy, snowy or too cold days. This tunnel system connects the major buildings on the Capitol Mall, so there are many opportunities to “pop up” for daylight, fresh air, cafeterias, restrooms, and above ground side trips. Kids love exploring and they love tunnels, and tunnels are just vacuums begging to be filled. Watch them take off running, especially if you are on the downhill slope. A great place to start (and therefore end) is the State Capitol building itself. Just go to the info desk on your right as you enter the front doors, and they’ll direct you where to start. My personal route headed first from the Capitol basement to the State Office building where my grandson (age 6 and enjoying it just as much as when he was 4) immediately said, “Wow, look at those marble walls!” A great discovery! Then we continued, following posted maps or signs or asking for directions as necessary, and popped into the

Transportation building with a neat interactive MN transportation display in the lobby (buttons to push and lights to light). As you move through the tunnels, you are likely to see government people in pursuit of their duties or on their noon health walks, and be aware that the walker density can be much higher when the legislature is in session (January to May). You may also see occasional maintenance people, and even some leaky ceilings! We then passed under the Veterans Service building and surfaced in the Centennial building. We exited the building for some fresh air and noticed the zillion granite squares on the side of the building. Then we took a short one block side trip to the Stassen building (MN Internal Revenue) on N. Robert St. and explored the “Numbers” (how appropriate) park outside the entrance. My grandson had fun finding all the numbers, and then standing in the 5, walking through the 3, and laughing at the kissing 2s. He especially liked the big goose egg zero where he could climb through the “hole in the universe” as well as take a rest. We returned to the Centennial building, gophered ourselves back into the tunnel system, and headed (now uphill and tiring after having completed a half mile) for the Judicial building. We both missed a sign and ended up in the not so exciting Judicial library. Recognizing the dead end, we retraced and recovered (great lessons in sign reading and interpretation for young readers) our way to the State Capitol. We rewarded ourselves with ice cream in the Ratskeller in the Capitol basement. Don’t promise that to your young friend unless you have checked to be certain the Ratskeller cafeteria is open. If you both have any energy left, you can also take the free tour of the Capitol, the one aimed at young minds, and you’ll both enjoy.

**VIP CLUB APPLICATION AND RENEWAL FORM**

Retiree Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if your address or phone number has changed

New Member(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Renewing Member(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Company: Lockheed Martin & Predecessors: \_\_\_\_\_; Unisys: Univac & Predecessors: \_\_\_\_\_; Unisys: Burroughs: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to the VIP CLUB and mail to address shown at right:**

**VIP CLUB  
 P.O. Box 131748  
 Roseville MN 55113-0020**

**Dues: \$12 for 3 years  
 Single year rate \$5. Note to new members: Your newsletters start after dues are received.**

Check here if you do not wish to have your name listed in the VIP Members directory. (Directory distributed to members only)

## ***ABOUT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY***

**5:45 pm – 7:15 pm**      **Initial social time with hors d'oeuvres**  
**7:15 pm - 8:00 pm+**    **Enjoy an elegant sit down dinner with your choice of**  
                                  **Top Sirloin, Italian Chicken or Walleye**  
**8:00 pm - 11:00 pm**    **Dancing to the music you like by**  
                                  **The Connie Villars Quartette.**

### **VIP CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY, Dinner-Dance Reservation Form**

Please reserve, at \$25.00 each, \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) for the Annual VIP Club Christmas Party, Dinner & Dance being held Thursday, December 13, 2007 at the NCO Club at the Air Force Base off Hwy 62. The social time begins at 5:45 pm with hors d'oeuvres. Dinner will be served at 7:15 and at 8:00 pm The Connie Villars Quartette will play music for your listening and dancing enjoyment. Please send in your reservations now, since seating is limited. **Your reservation must be received by Dec. 3rd.** If your reservation is for more than 2 persons, please attach a list of added names and you will be all seated together at a reserved table.

**Picture ID required for entry to Air Force Base.**

Check here (    ) if you have attached \_\_\_\_\_ additional names.

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Entree selection(s) & qty.: Top Sirloin \_\_\_\_\_; Italian Chicken \_\_\_\_\_; Walleye \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check or checks payable to: **VIP CLUB**

Mail to:                      Dorothy Becker  
                                    8630 Queen Avenue South                      Phone: 952-881-3516  
                                    Bloomington, MN 55431

### **DIRECTIONS TO NCO CLUB**

1) When approaching from the East, going West on Hwy 62, take the 34th Avenue exit and make a right turn heading East on the North Frontage Road to 34th Avenue. Then make a right turn onto 34th Avenue (heading South) and cross over the Hwy 62 overpass and proceed until it ends (about one block), then make a sharp left turn and stop at the base Security gate for check in.

2). When approaching from the West, going East on Hwy 62, take the 34th Avenue exit and make a right turn onto the South Frontage Road and continue to the 34th Avenue stop sign. Then make a left turn onto 34th Avenue and proceed until it ends (about one block), then make a sharp left turn and stop at the base Security gate for check in.

