

Friends of ORNL

2017 Annual Report

Friends of Oak Ridge National Laboratory

April 2018

The officers and board of the Friends of Oak Ridge National Laboratory are pleased to report on the activities of FORNL for the calendar year 2017.

The mission of FORNL is to provide

- A mechanism for members to keep in touch with co-workers, retirees, and current ORNL activities,
- For ORNL, an organization whose members can serve as knowledgeable volunteers for ORNL related activities, and
- Community-wide presentations and events for the public, centered on outstanding developments, awards, and special topics of national interest.

We are scientists and engineers, as well as individuals from varied backgrounds, who believe we can increase the nation's technological awareness by providing information to teachers, students, and the general public.

In 2017 FORNL sponsored and participated in multiple activities in fulfilling these aims.

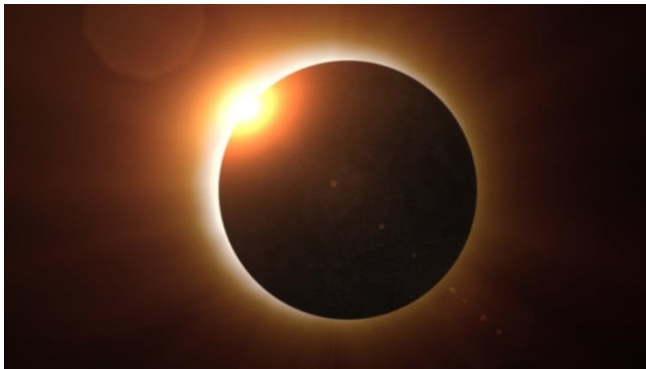
The Friends of ORNL sponsor the Dick Smyser Community Lecture Series, a series of free lectures on a wide range of topics of interest to the local community. Dick Smyser, now deceased, was founding editor of *The Oak Ridger* newspaper, president of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association from 1973 to 74, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors from 1984 to 1985 and a community leader for many years.

The lecture series is supported by contributions from UT-Battelle, with in-kind support from *The Oak Ridger*, AMSE and The Soup Kitchen. Starting in 2016, the FORNL teamed with the National

Park Service to cosponsor relevant community lectures to demonstrate FORNL's support for the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

In 2017, FORNL joined with the National Park Service to focus on a once-in-a-lifetime event, the August 21, 2017 total solar eclipse whose pathway of totality crossed the East Tennessee area. This event stimulated an outpouring of interest in astronomy, space exploration and science in general.

On May 18, 2017, FORNL with The Oak Ridge Isochronous Observation Network (ORION) and the National Park Service cohosted the Dick Smyser Community Lecture presented by Mr. Chap Percival titled "Go See the Eclipse." Mr. Percival was masterful in his appeal to an audience of students, astronomers, and community members. He showed with earth and lunar models how



the eclipse is formed and the rarity of a total eclipse of the sun at any point on earth. He presented valuable advice on how to safely view the eclipse and stimulated many in the audience to prepare for and enjoy the eclipse on August 21, 2017.

This year was the 20th Year for the Dick Smyser Community Lectures and it was fitting that the audience for this lecture was one of its largest.



FORNL also hosts a series of monthly meetings for lunch, socializing, and learning about topics of interest to our members underway at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and other science and technology ventures. The meetings are held starting at 11:30 am on the second Tuesday of each month at the UT Center in Oak Ridge. The meetings are open to the public. As shown in the following table, in 2017 seven speakers from ORNL and one from UTK were featured in our eleven luncheon lectures.

The 2017 Luncheon Lectures - Speakers and Topics

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|------------------|--|
| January | Emily Wescott Hunicutt, The Building of the Atomic City: As Seen Through the Photographs of Ed Wescott |
| February | Melissa Allen, ORNL, Impacts of Climate Change on Energy Demand |
| March | Stacy Prowell, ORNL, Vehicle Security: Where the Rubber Meets the Code |
| April | Jim Campbell, East Tennessee Economic Council, Economic Development in East Tennessee |
| May | Adam Rondinone, ORNL, Converting Carbon Dioxide to Ethanol: Waste to Fuel Technology |
| June | Douglas Kothe, ORNL, The Exascale Computing Project |
| July | Bronson Messer, ORNL, Computational Astrophysics at ORNL: Modeling Stellar Death and Rebirth |
| August | Lee Riedinger, UTK, Data Science and Engineering Doctoral Program |
| September | Ryan McManamay, ORNL, Cities Can Choose Their Future Water Sustainability |
| October | David Holcomb, ORNL, Molten Salt Reactors |
| November | Cathy Toth, Oak Ridge Public Schools Education Foundation, ORPSEF's "Making a Critical Difference Campaign" |



David Holcomb, ORNL, is introduced by Jim Rushton for a lecture on Molten Salt Reactors

FORNL members also act as tour guides for the "DOE Facilities Public Bus Tours" and other ad hoc tours that may be scheduled during the year. They speak to tour participants from all over the country about past and present day activities at the three DOE sites, while also sharing information on their personal experiences. Thanks to ORNL the tours have been expanded and additional guides have been recruited. In 2017, 129 tours were conducted for 3929 visitors. Average attendance was 30.5 with a maximum capacity of 32 per tour.

Members of FORNL also work in the history room at ORNL to help identify and categorize historical documents and photographs and to provide the 'Treasures from the Archives' section of the *ORNL Reporter*.

In 2017, FORNL provided crucial startup funding and technical support to an exciting new Weinberg initiative. Many of Alvin Weinberg's personal papers were donated by his family to the Children's Museum of Oak Ridge (CMOR). Rhonda Bogard, the daughter of the CMOR founder, Selma Shapiro, has undertaken the task to ensure that the Weinberg papers are preserved for future generations. The papers are currently stored in 14 filing cabinets and 33 storage boxes.

FORNL contributed \$2000 towards the \$5000 needed to start the project in late 2017. A team of professionals is being assembled by the CMOR to scan and preserve the documents. The software and digitization service is being donated by Y-12. FORNL members are encouraged to volunteer and will be assisting the archivist in understanding the context and significance of the documents.



Rhonda Bogard stands among the Weinberg files and papers at the Children’s Museum of OR

With the formation of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, FORNL is participating in planning events, encouraging volunteers, and adding support of the Park to our list of activities. Last year FORNL contributed to the Foundation Document for the Park. The Foundation Document established “Scientific and Technological Advances” as one of the ten focus areas for interpretation by the Manhattan Project National Historical Park.

“Scientific and technological advances made during the Manhattan Project in the pursuit of nuclear weapons contributed to progress in many areas, such as materials science, biology, nuclear medicine, nuclear energy, the nuclear Navy, supercomputing, precision machining, astronomy, and the Department of Energy’s National Laboratory System.”

FORNL provides financial support and volunteers to the Tennessee Science Bowl, which DOE sponsors at the national level. FORNL also encouraged its members to support the Oak Ridge

Public Schools Foundation which supplements public funds to support **Science, TEchnology, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM)** teachers with special project grants.



Bob Olson and Dick Raridon volunteered at the DOE's National Science Bowl

In 2017, FORNL paid membership was 114, including 37 life members. FORNL membership is open not just to retirees from ORNL, but also to others (there are over 200 on our email distribution list). Former and present employees of ORNL, and any other person, organization and company who have an interest in the Laboratory, its welfare, and its programs are welcome members. Community members may attend the luncheon lecture series.

One of the services that FORNL provides its members is arrangements for an Annual Visitor's Badge to the ORNL site. This enables our members to attend seminars and Distinguished Lectures at ORNL without needing to arrange access for each visit. Typically 40 to 50 of our members avail themselves of this service each year.

FORNL is supported by Financial Contributions from UT-Battelle, gifts, members' dues, and in kind contributions from *The Oak Ridger*, AMSE and The Soup Kitchen which caters the events. FORNL members greatly appreciate the continued support by UT-Battelle. We acknowledge UT-Battelle as the sponsor of the Community Lecture Series in programs and announcements.

FORNL maintains an informative website (www.fornl.info) to keep members apprised of upcoming events and to share scientific and technical news from ORNL. FORNL has an enthusiastic Webmaster, Shafik Iskander, who keeps the site up-to-date on at least a weekly basis.

FORNL maintains an active calendar of meetings and sponsored events throughout the year. Unfortunately only a portion of the ORNL retirees and other community members take advantage of these opportunities. FORNL activities are generally located at ORNL or in the Oak Ridge community. Gaining members from the entire region, particularly Knoxville, is an ongoing and growing challenge. There is discussion of having some meetings in the Knoxville area. Locating retired members is also a continuing challenge. For reasons of privacy ORNL does not share contact lists for retired employees.

FORNL participates in the ORNL Benefits Fair each year and distributes information about FORNL. ORNL includes a FORNL brochure in the retirement package for each employee. And periodically in the *ORNL Reporter*, ORNL includes an information article on FORNL.

Finally, FORNL recognizes the East Tennessee Economic Council (ETEC) and the University of Tennessee Center in Oak Ridge for their willingness to provide a meeting location for both the monthly luncheon lectures and the FORNL Board Meetings. We are particularly appreciative of the outstanding support provided by Tracy Boatner and Nicole Allen of ETEC



The FORNL Board meets monthly at the UT Center in Oak Ridge

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