

The RASCAL Register

April 2018

Issue 47

RASCAL Picnic

**Retzlaff Winery
1356 South Livermore Avenue
Livermore, CA**

June 19, 2018
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

The cost is \$28.00 per person. Please make checks payable to RASCALs and remit to:

RASCAL
P.O. Box 18
Livermore, CA 94551

Menu

Pulled Pork with rolls and coleslaw
BBQ Chicken with assorted sauces
Chili Beans
Spinach and Berry Salad
Garlic Bread
Lemon Bars - Brownies - Fresh Fruit Cups
Iced Tea - Sweet Tea - Lemonade - Water



A New Beginning

Rene Bierbaum, a long-time Sandian at the California site, retired in 2013 and served as a retiree consultant until early in 2017. However many years ago she had already begun a transition to a brand new career. In March of 2006, she and her husband Neal started new lives in the Philippines as U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers. They were assigned to a public high school in a small town, working with the principal and teachers there to expand the use of information technology (IT) in the school. Neal developed a low-cost computer infrastructure and with the help of donors, he and Rene led installation of 80 new computers at the school. After having the time of their lives in the Philippines, Rene and Neal came to the realization that this could in fact be a new beginning.

When their Peace Corps service ended in December of 2008, Neal continued working as a full-time volunteer doing IT-related projects for the Philippines. Rene returned to her Sandia career, but they made annual visits to the Philippines to carry on this work. In 2010, through a connection with another NGO, they expanded the low-cost computer infrastructure concept to Tanzania, Africa.

In April of 2012 they incorporated as “Reneal International Education Outreach” and in September of 2012 attained official tax exempt status as a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity. Most of Reneal’s current effort is focused on sharing the low-cost computer infrastructure with schools in the Philippines and Tanzania, although Reneal also provides scholarships to students and educational materials to schools. To date, Reneal has installed computer systems in 29 schools in the Philippines and 14 schools in Tanzania. About 1000 teachers have received Reneal system training, and over 700 computers have been donated to schools.



Reneal's logo continues to spread in the Philippines and Tanzania

The Reneal system is based upon Open Source Software, so it is free and legal. The system uses a client-server approach, and the client computers can be older machines – clients don’t even need a hard disk, since the operating system and all of the programs and files are stored on and shared by the server. Neal has integrated a huge amount of educational programs and content within the server, so even without internet the students and teachers have access to a rich array of materials: Khan Academy videos, textbooks, fiction and non-fiction books, an off-line Wikipedia, and many other resources. Neal has also written custom code to do automated server maintenance, to manage teacher and student files, and to create a user friendly interface. The Reneal server has evolved into a turn-key system for high schools in developing countries. Reneal also has a team of people in both the Philippines and Tanzania providing local support to the computer teachers.

The Bierbaums spent 6 weeks in Tanzania in late 2017 and returned to the Philippines in January of 2018 for 8 weeks. During their time in Tanzania, Neal and Rene worked with the Reneal team to do their magic at two new schools in the city of Arusha. Reneal Team Philippines installed three servers in the Philippines in early 2018, including their first university installation. In three days, an empty classroom with some tables and chairs can be turned into a fully functioning computer lab for the students and teachers.



Reneal receives pro bono technical support from the professionals at Habari Node, an Internet service provider in Tanzania

Students who had never seen a real computer, much less touched one, now have access to a huge variety of programs and resources. Teachers at schools with newly installed systems are invited to attend an orientation session to learn about the educational materials stored on the server.



January 2017: Teacher Orientation at Jugan National High School, Consolacion, Cebu, Philippines

During their recent trip to Tanzania, Neal and Rene also visited the other eight high schools in Arusha that already have the Reneal system. These computer labs were installed in 2013, 2014, and 2015. For the first half of the 2017 school year, these eight schools accumulated 12,000 hours of active student use. As more schools begin including computer classes in their weekly schedule, Reneal expects the usage to increase. Photos from the Tanzania trip can be found on the Reneal Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Reneal-International-Education-Outreach-387394438009324/>

In March of 2017, Reneal was thrilled to receive a \$2000 grant from the Danville Sycamore Valley Rotary Club to install video projectors at the three highest-performing schools in Arusha. The teachers have long begged for a projector to facilitate teaching, and they are so grateful for this new capability in their computer lab.



Student presentation with the new Rotary projector at Mwandet Secondary School, Arusha Tanzania

It is an amazing contrast to see the students' lunches being cooked over an open fire using water carried by donkeys from the nearest well, and then walk into the modern computer lab. Not surprisingly, the challenges of computerization in a developing country are daunting. However hearing about the excitement of the students as they learn how to use a computer buoys the Reneal team.



*Oldadai Secondary School, Arusha, Tanzania
L: School cafeteria R: School computer lab*

Since Rene's retirement, she and Neal have spent anywhere from 4-6 months each year overseas. While in the Philippines, they rent a small apartment in the town where they did their Peace Corps service. They borrow tables, chairs, and a mattress from the school and use cargo boxes for other furniture. Public transportation is generally crowded but readily available and cheap – it's about 20 cents to get to the closest big supermarket 30 minutes away. The tropical heat is a big adjustment each time they arrive, but they are the proud owners of two electric fans which keep them cool. After so much time in this community, it has truly become a second home.



Chez Bierbaum in the Philippines

In Tanzania, Rene and Neal stay in a guest room at the main Lutheran Church office building in downtown Arusha. It's "cozy" but the staff are friendly and it's a great location. Arusha is the gateway to the magnificent national parks in Tanzania, and Neal and Rene have taken time off from work commitments in past years to visit the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater among other places.

Donations of used computers are the lifeblood of Reneal's work. Reneal is very grateful to Polycom Corporation, Free Geek, the National Cristina Foundation, World Computer Exchange, and many individuals for generous donations of computer equipment that made the 2017 work possible. Monetary

donations support purchase of the server computers and other key equipment, as well as a long-standing scholarship program for 14 students in the Philippines and a new scholarship program for 6 students in Tanzania that started in 2018.

In particular Reneal is now seeking corporate donations of used laptops for this year's work in Tanzania. If you have a possible lead, please e-mail them at contact.reneal@gmail.com and they can send you a copy of the specifications of the needed equipment. Reneal's website is found at www.reneal.org.



Reneal Team Philippines: Former student and now high school computer teacher Jade Reyes, Reneal technicians Lloyd Tuñacao and Rhog Sampan, and Neal and Rene



Reneal Super Users: the computer teachers in Arusha (Neal is on the far right, with Reneal School Liaison David Nyangaka behind him)

Vineyard Prey

By Carole Price

VINEYARD PREY, the third book in my Shakespeare in the Vineyard mystery series, was released October 21, 2017. Most publishers don't want to take on a book in the middle of a series, thus why it took so long to finally publish this book. Here's a hint of what this book is about:

"Cait Pepper, owner of the Bening Estate vineyard and Shakespearean theaters, and Royal Tanner, a navy SEAL, return to help friends after agents from the Drug Enforcement Agency knock on their door with a warrant to search their property. Can Cait's cop skills help save their friends from drug dealers and the DEA while avoiding another tragedy that could put her Shakespeare festival in peril?"

SLFCU Transfers to RASCAL

By Roger Everett

As I'm sure you all know, the Credit Union has implemented a new online banking system. In the past many of you took advantage of the ease of transferring dues and social event payments to RASCAL using the Transfer to another SLFCU account function. It was necessary to supply our RASCAL account number and the last name on the account for each separate transfer. Fortunately that option is still available and even easier once you set up and identify our account.

To set up transfers to RASCAL (a little different since we don't have a first and last name), go to Transfers, then on the top line select "Classic", then select "Add Account" at SLFCU, leave the first name blank, then enter in the last name box: **Ret Assoc of Sandia California**, choose Savings/Checking, enter our account number **1069440** and **9001**, choose save and pick a nickname **RASCAL**. Once that is done and accepted you should get an SLFCU confirmation. From then on when you do a transfer and after selecting your account to transfer from, one of the accounts you can transfer to will show up as **RASCAL**. This is basically the same procedure you will need to follow if in the past you have transferred funds to your kids, grandkids or friends. Send our treasurer, Roger Everett an email (roger.everett@sbcglobal.net) if you have any questions.

One Year in Kenya

Many of you will remember Dr. Stephanie Ball, retired physician at Sandia CA Medical. She has been volunteering in Kenya as a medical director in a busy clinic. She will complete her one-year assignment very soon. She has invited all of us to visit her blog at <https://oneyearinkenya.blog/>. The stories are very interesting, and there are some great photos there, too.

New Shingles Vaccine

There is a new, more effective Shingles vaccine. The CDC recommends that healthy adults 50 and older get two doses of the shingles vaccine called Shingrix, separated by 2 to 6 months, to prevent shingles and the complications from the disease.

Two doses of Shingrix is more than 85% effective at preventing shingles and postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) for the first four years after vaccination. Shingrix is the preferred vaccine, over Zostavax, a shingles vaccine in use since 2006.

This information was adapted from the website:

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/shingles/public/shingrix/index.html

Retirees Association of Sandia

If you know of a Sandia retiree who is not a RASCAL, please encourage them to join. They should send their name, email address, and \$5.00 yearly dues or \$50.00 lifetime dues to Retirees Association of Sandia/CAL, (RASCAL), P. O. Box 18, Livermore, CA 94551.

For Information and to Contact Sandia Health, Benefits, and Employee Services (HBE):

HBE Customer Service Phone:
(800) 417-2634, ext. 844-4237 or 505-844-HBES(4237)

HBE Customer Service Web Site:
<http://hbe.sandia.gov>

OneExchange:
1-888-598-7809
<https://medicare.oneexchange.com/sandia>



Recent Deaths:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>
William Jamieson	09-19-17
William Purcell	01-10-18
Stanford Gayle Cain	01-19-18
William Rego	02-04-18
Frank Murar	02-17-18
Regina Kamp	03-13-18
Nicholas Wittmayer	03-18-18
Wilbur "Bill" McGuire	03-26-18
Gary Drummond	04-06-18
Theodore Sneddon	04-12-18
Clyde Seibel	04-12-18

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