

THE

# MODERATOR



B R E A C T O R M U S E U M A S S O C I A T I O N

January - March

<http://www.b-reactor.org>

Winter 2009

## From The Control Room

by Maynard Plahuta

HAPPY NEW YEAR from the control room! Before saying anything more, I want to personally thank past President Hank Kosmata for his dedicated service during the past two years culminating with the Landmark Designation of B Reactor.

Calendar year 2009 will be a very busy and pivotal year for BRMA. As noted elsewhere in this edition, the number of DOE Public Tours will increase by approximately 25%. Coupled with “open access days” there will be a lot of tours and visits to B Reactor this year. With this increased activity my hope is that we can continue Hank’s efforts to achieve BRMA objectives.

I envision having BRMA members being personally active and moving forward in a team approach on all our activities. My intent is to address these activities with membership input and participation. I hope we can address matters such as looking at long-range BRMA goals and objectives; reviewing and updating our by-laws if appropriate; making BRMA better known within the Tri-City community; and addressing whether and how we should utilize our current bank account. I would like to use small task groups of BRMA members to engage in these efforts. I also hope to have BRMA team with other Tri-City organizations to work

### BRMA Mailing List Being Updated

by Burt Pierard, Membership Chairman

BRMA is auditing and updating its mailing list. If you received this *Moderator* as a hard copy, check your Mailing Label for a “Dues Reminder” notation. This note indicates that our records show that we have not received your annual dues since before 2007 **and if we don't receive your 2009 Dues before April 1, 2009, you will be dropped from the Mailing List.** A Dues Renewal Form is available at the bottom of Page 2.

If you received this *Moderator* by electronic mail, your cover letter will include the notation, if applicable.

with one voice in interactions with DOE. An example of this is noted later in the tours section.

I look forward to carrying out my responsibilities as President to the best of my ability. I want all members to share their ideas and opinions freely with BRMA officers and Committee chairs.

### 2009 BRMA Officers Elected

by Burt Pierard

New BRMA Officers for the 2009 Calendar Year were elected at the December 2008 meeting of the membership.

Maynard Plahuta was elected President. The following Officers will continue on in their previous positions: C. J. Mitchell, Vice President; Steve Buckingham, Secretary; and Del Ballard, Treasurer. The Committee Chairs will be elected at the January 2009 meeting and thus were not available at press time.

### Financial Status For 2008

Del Ballard - Treasurer

Our organization experienced a very good year with respect to cash flow. Our tour guides not only provided a marvelous service for visitors to the reactor; but our tour service contract also contributed substantially to our financial bottom line. Other income resulted from member dues, donations, and the sale of our B Reactor caps.

For FY08 BRMA received \$18,245 income and had total expenses of \$4,543.32, including honorariums to the tour guides; for a positive cash flow of \$13,701.68. Our total of all BRMA accounts is now on the order of \$63,000.

For appropriate utilization of our significant account balances, our Board is expecting this year to investigate options and propose new initiatives or projects that will enhance the “museum” or provide other benefits for members or visitors to the historic B Reactor.

# B Reactor Tours

by Maynard Plahuta, Tour Coordinator

Calendar year 2008 was a very busy year for our B Reactor tour guides, all of whom did an outstanding job. There were more than 3,500 persons who toured the reactor during the year. The number would likely have been greater if the reactor had been open during the three summer months it was closed for roof repair. Interest in our unique "B Reactor Adventure" has increased significantly. It appears the Landmark Designation event last fall will create an even larger audience.

Plans for the open visits to B Reactor starting in March, 2009, are being developed by DOE, but details appear to be lagging and in need of more immediate action. At this point DOE is planning on increasing the number of public site tours (which include B Reactor) from 48 last year to 60 in 2009. In addition, initial current plans are to have the reactor open to the public on Saturdays and 1 or 2 other days during the week.

BRMA is working with CREHST, TRIDEC, City of Richland, Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau, and Hanford Reach Interpretive Center to collaborate with DOE, and to provide dialog and input to help DOE develop and formulate its strategies and implementing actions for open access to B Reactor. DOE is very receptive to this and is pleased to partake. BRMA has taken action to initiate the first meeting of this group which will be held in mid-January. Even though a number of details remain open, we are hopeful and confident that the initial arrangements necessary for open tours can be accomplished for these tours starting this spring.

With the increased tour activity we will need more trained tour guides. I appreciate the favorable response to recent requests for volunteers, but we would welcome more. At this time anyone interested in becoming a tour guide should contact me at 946-1162 or via e-mail at myplahuta@clearwire.net

## Membership Report

by Burt Pierard, Membership Chairman

The BRMA 2008 Year-end Total was 120 Individual Memberships (including one new member received late in December who was rolled over into 2009) and 2 Group Memberships (25 or more people). In addition, Steve Buckingham (who always wants to be First) paid his 2009 Renewal. John Nesbitt accidentally paid his 2008 dues twice so he was

credited with a 2009 Renewal.

Just a reminder – your 2009 Dues are due on a Calendar Year basis. A handy Renewal Form is available at the bottom of this page to clip and return. If you receive the Electronic Copy of the Moderator, just print, clip and return.

## 2009 Renewal and New Member Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (w): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ MSIN address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(current Hanford employees)

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual (\$20) or  Senior (age 65+) or Student (\$10) and  New or  Renewal  
 Group (\$25 up to 100 members; please add \$10 for each additional 100 members)

For Group Membership, Official Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional tax deductible contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Tax ID # 94-3142387) (Please make check out to BRMA)

Thank you; please mail this application with payment to:

**B Reactor Museum Association**  
**PO Box 1531**  
**Richland, WA 99352**

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# BRMA Guide Crosses Paths With Old Family Friends

by Burt Pierard

During the Summer 2008 B Reactor Public Tours, old stalwart BRMA Guide, Larry Denton, had the opportunity to cross paths with some of his oldest family friends from the Project.

When Larry learned that several members of the John Comstock Family had signed up for a Summer 2008 Tour of B Reactor, he pulled strings with Maynard Plahuta, BRMA Tour Coordinator, to ensure his assignment as their Guide. Larry has been friends with the Comstocks continuously since 1945. John's son John, daughter Kathryn and Kathryn's husband, Sonny Flores, made the Tour.

John Comstock (the elder) and his wife, Evelyn, had a 20-acre tract and home on the south side of Van Giesen Street, towards the Yakima River, at the time

of the government takeover in 1943. John was offered the opportunity to stay in his home if he went to work for the Project, which he did. They had four children - Mary, Wanda, John and Kathryn - who all attended Richland Public Schools. Mary graduated from Col-Hi and the others from Prosser High where they moved sometime after the War.

In 1945, John (the elder) was working as a truck driver in Richland Maintenance and (here comes the connection) Larry was assigned to that crew. Larry and John (and their families) quickly formed a close friendship which exists until the present. As a point of reference for the picture, John (the younger) and Kathryn were 7 and 4 years old, respectively, when they all first met.



Long-time friends (from left) Kathryn (Comstock) Flores, Sonny Flores, John Comstock Jr., and Larry Denton have a reunion while touring B Reactor last summer.

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