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# GARA News

Volume 38, Issue 2

May 2024

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## From the President

Junaid Razvi



Dear Friends & Colleagues –

I trust you all got your 2024 year off to a good start, and are staying safe and in good health as summer and warmer weather rolls around.

Our 2024 GARA Board is settled in, fully familiarized with their volunteer duties and responsibilities, and look forward to serving the GARA member community during the course of the year. We will have to make some changes to some activities to stay solvent and the Board will consider some changes during the course of the year.

The Board continues to meet in-person quarterly to plan and conduct the business of the organization, and we are constantly in touch with each other also to ensure we keep you current with news via e-mails, our newsletters and the new website. We kicked off our 2024 luncheon speaker series with an enlightening presentation from Stephen R. Brown, Esq., recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award, talking about projects in Afghanistan over the last two-plus decades to improve the lives of ordinary Afghans after decades of continuous war. While a bit sparsely attended, we hope for greater member and guest participation as we continue our usual in-person speaker luncheons into 2024.

We plan to continue our routine of in-person luncheons with individuals invited to speak on current events, our city, the world and of course General Atomics happenings. Our next luncheon event has been scheduled for Wednesday June 19, on a topic not only of interest to the GA community, but really of global interest as the world seeks to find non-fossil, alternative energy sources; this newsletter

provides more details on the event and our speaker, and we will be also sending out an e-mail blast with reminders. Given the efforts of my fellow Board members to organize these events for you, we are hopeful that more of our colleagues will attend to

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### **GA Retirees Association, Inc.**

[www.generalatomicretirees.org](http://www.generalatomicretirees.org)

Email: [contact@GeneralAtomicsRetirees.org](mailto:contact@GeneralAtomicsRetirees.org)

### **GARA Board of Directors 2024**

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### *June 19, 2024 Luncheon*

*Please bring your friends and colleagues to hear about ITER and GA's Role*

Continued "From the President" article in page 1 meet and reacquaint themselves with former colleagues, and enjoy the speakers.

GARA is open to all retirees, past GA and current employees as well. Please encourage all retirees, past and current GA employees to join and attend the luncheons. Meanwhile, I encourage those that are not current with their dues, to do so. To try and keep GARA finances in a solvent state, we have increased our dues to \$30/year effective 1 April 2024. Even with the fee increase, it is a great deal to stay in touch with your GA colleagues, friends and spouses, and stay up to date on GA activities. The team also strives to find "venues and menus" to keep the cost for our quarterly events at past or lower levels, but inflationary pressures continue to make this a challenge. Thanks to Hedy Kleinsorge for her constant efforts here. To reduce our operating costs a bit further, we encourage you to receive your newsletter by e-mail (no doubt you have noticed postage costs skyrocketing) and to make your payments to GARA electronically via Zelle®.

### **March 20, 2024 Luncheon – Steve Brown on Rotary involvement in Afghanistan**

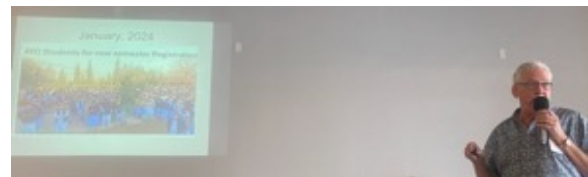
Steve Brown talked about programs he personally and thru his La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary have been running in Afghanistan following the events of 11 September 2001.

In 2002, Steve and Fary Moini, an Iranian American member of his Rotary Club traveled to Afghanistan to explore building a school for girls and boys in Jalalabad. They received a warm reception from the Afghan authorities that resulted in the building of a school for boys and girls and also ended in

including many more educational programs for the high school and university levels. The classes in computer connected classrooms are in most of the public high schools in Jalalabad and at Nangarhar University. More than 40,000 students (40% girls and 60% boys) have benefited from these programs. Over the past 22 years, Steve and Fary have been involved in many other programs in Afghanistan relating to providing medical equipment and training, public health workshops –particularly focusing on polio eradication, a disease that is still endemic in Afghanistan, and sports programs for girls and boys. They continue to have good relations with local Afghan authorities even today.



Steve Brown - Speaker





Beverly Lloyd



Steve Brown, Venky and Meera Venkatesh.



Junaid Razvi



Virgil Barbat



Pat Simmons and Junaid Razvi



Roger Schlicht



Al and Sue Zimmer



Jim and Susan Zgliczynski



Hedy Kleinsorge and Carol Riley



Carmelo Rodriguez and Tom Tasker



Mark and Charmagne Tabor



Dan Jensen, Katherine Partain, Vlad Nicolayeff



Vasanthi and Arkal Shenoy

**Next GARA Luncheon June 19, 20, 2024 at The Hamburger Factory in Poway**

The speaker will be John Smith, Sr. Director of Engineering and Projects, Energy Division, General Atomics. John will discuss the status of ITER, its impact on Fusion as an energy source and GA’s role. John currently oversees teams responsible for delivering components and systems for ITER including the manufacturing of the Central Solenoid modules. When completed, the Central Solenoid will be the world’s most powerful pulsed superconducting magnet ever built. John was instrumental in preparing the design concept for the unique set of tools and the 60,000-square foot facility required to fabricate the seven magnet modules each weighing 250,000 lbs. In his current role, John also participates in large upgrade projects for DIII-D tokamak at General Atomics. John has devoted more than 30 years to furthering the fusion energy mission at GA.

**Retiree Benefits News from GA Human Resources**

There is no update from GA-HR to report this quarter on retiree benefits. For any issue or concerns with your benefits, please continue to contact:

**Chris Ashton, APR, CRPS®**

Retirement Administrator

General Atomics Human Resources

Mail Stop: G01-115D

(858) 455-2212 – Office

(619) 743-5752 – Mobile

[christopher.ashton@ga.com](mailto:christopher.ashton@ga.com)

## GA HAPPENINGS

The following are synopses of recent GA press releases. The complete releases can be found at [Press Releases | General Atomics](#) or by clicking on the individual titles below.

### [General Atomics Brings Inertial Fusion Energy Expertise to Two National Research Hubs](#)

General Atomics (GA) has been selected as a team member for two science and technology hubs funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)'s Inertial Fusion Energy Science & Technology Accelerated Research ([IFE-STAR](#)) program to advance IFE, science and technologies. GA will join the STARFIRE Hub, led by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), and the RISE Hub, led by Colorado State University (CSU).

DOE [announced the awards](#) on December 7, 2023, as part of three projects totaling \$42 million.

The STARFIRE and RISE Hubs will each receive \$16 million each over the next four years.

"We're excited to bring our decades of experience and advanced capabilities to the RISE and STARFIRE Hubs in support of these Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF) programs, with the long-term goal of commercializing fusion energy for the nation," **said Mike Farrell, Vice President of Inertial Fusion Technologies at GA.**

"The Department of Energy has taken a critical step in creating these teams to help solve enabling fundamental technology in support of inertial fusion energy," **said Neil Alexander, Director of Inertial Fusion Energy at GA,** who will be the main contributor on behalf of GA.

"We take great pride in being part of the STARFIRE and RISE teams in support of this technology."

Fusion is the process that powers the stars, and holds the promise of providing nearly limitless clean, safe, and always-available energy. Fueled primarily by isotopes of hydrogen found in seawater and capable of generating its own fuel during operation, a fusion energy facility would provide around-the-clock sustainable energy without any harmful emissions or long-lived waste.

In IFE, fusion is achieved by shooting targets filled with hydrogen fuel with powerful lasers or electric discharges. IFE is currently the only fusion approach to have achieved net energy gain in a laboratory, after achieving a

1.5x energy gain at LLNL's National Ignition Facility (NIF) in December 2022. The experiment was repeated this past July with a larger, 1.9x energy gain.

GA has fabricated components and provided support services for the DOE's ICF program for over 30 years, and now supplies more than 12,000 target components to national laboratories annually. Among many other contributions to the ICF program, GA fabricated the target assemblies used in each experiment to achieve fusion ignition, and provided the targets, as well as the proofing and metrology services, that helped facilitate these historic breakthrough.

### [General Atomics Awarded Space Development Agency Contract to Demonstrate Optical Communication Terminals](#)



GA-EMS Optical Communication Terminal, compliant with SDA v3.1 OCT Standard

General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) has been awarded a contract from the Space Development Agency (SDA) to demonstrate the capabilities of the company's Optical Communication Terminals (OCTs) hosted on GA-EMS' GA-75 (75-kilogram class) spacecraft while in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

"We're excited to continue working with SDA and look forward to demonstrating our OCT capability developed, built, and tested by GA-EMS, and integrated on GA-EMS-designed and built spacecraft," said Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. "This contract supports the deployment of next generation optical communication technologies that will provide faster, more secure, higher fidelity transmissions, and greater resiliency to ensure 24/7 connectivity from the earth to space."

GA-EMS is designing and building two OCTs to provide robust space-to-space communication in a degraded environment and establish and maintain

links to meet SDA standards and requirements. The OCTs can support a vast network of satellites, data and information sharing, and collective on-orbit computing resources to support customer and mission requirements. The OCTs will be integrated on two GA-EMS GA-75 spacecraft.

The GA-75 is a resilient, modular, and configurable half-ESPA bus design with capabilities to support a variety of communications and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) payloads and missions.

The GA-75 is a commercially available platform that utilizes standard payload interfaces to enable seamless integration and mission-ready delivery times. It is also compatible with multiple launch vehicles and can package two spacecraft per ESPA port or fill a single ESPA port depending on mission payload size.

### [GA-ASI Delivers First MQ-9A Extended Range to USMC's VMUT-2](#)



General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) and the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) celebrated the delivery of the first MQ-9A Extended Range (ER) Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Training Squadron 2 (VMUT-2). The delivery of the MQ-9A ER on March 18, 2024, is part of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Unmanned Expeditionary (MUX) Program, which ordered eight MQ-9A ER UAS as part of the ARES Indefinite-Delivery/Indefinite-Quantity (ID/IQ) contract.

“It’s exciting to make this first delivery to VMUT-2, which continues to build the relationship between GA-ASI, the USMC, and NAVAIR (Naval Air Systems Command),” said GA-ASI vice president of DoD Strategic

Development Patrick Shortsleeve. “GA-ASI has been a contracted warfighting partner of the USMC for several years and VMUT-2’s ability to produce aircrews for the USMC is a tremendous advancement in the USMC’s organic capability.”

VMUT-2 is a UAS training squadron for the USMC based at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in Havelock, North Carolina.

The MQ-9A ER is designed with field-retrofittable capabilities such as wing-borne fuel pods and reinforced landing gear that extend the aircraft’s endurance to more than 30 hours while further increasing its operational flexibility.

The aircraft provides long-endurance, persistent surveillance capabilities with Full-Motion Video and Synthetic Aperture Radar/Moving Target Indicator/Maritime Mode Radar. An extremely reliable aircraft, MQ-9A ER is equipped with a fault-tolerant flight control system and a triple-redundant avionics system architecture. It is engineered to meet and exceed manned aircraft reliability standards.

## GARA Luncheon June 19, 2024

Join us Wednesday June 19, 2024 at Hamburger Factory in Poway. The cost will be \$20 for members and their spouse or guest. Non-members and additional guests are \$25.

**Guest Speaker:** John Smith, General Atomics, ITER Program

**Title of Presentation:** Status of ITER, its impact on Fusion as an energy source and GA's Role

June 19, 2024, 11:30 Meet and Greet, 12:00 Lunch, followed by speaker.

### Hamburger Factory



14122 Midland Rd, Poway  
CA 92064

Please send in the following reservation form by June 7th.

Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Burger \_\_\_\_\_ Veggie Burger \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest: \_\_\_\_\_ Burger \_\_\_\_\_ Veggie Burger \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your luncheon selection to Hedy Kleinsorge (address below)

Payment can be made as follows:

1. Payment via Zelle® bank-to-bank transfer using the following e-mail:  
[Treasurer@GeneralAtomicsRetirees.org](mailto:Treasurer@GeneralAtomicsRetirees.org)

OR

2. Check Payable to: GA Retirees Association and mail to:  
Hedy Kleinsorge, Social Chair, 8237 Via Mallorca, La Jolla, Ca 92037

**RESERVATION DEADLINE June 7, 2024**

