

A HAFLA
Howdy!

Al~Ayyam Al~Jamilah

الأيام الجميلة





8-9 News Clips: Branton and Barnes

Beau Branton, left, a Dhahran Little Leaguer, Stanford Cardinals' standout and Seattle Mariners' draftee, and Gary Barnes, a New Hampshire resident who calls Dhahran "home," figured in recent U.S. press stories. "I was lucky to have good coaches growing up," said Branton. Barnes, who in 2009 presented an album of old photos to Prince Muhammad ibn Fahd, Eastern Province governor, discussed life as a "third-culture kid."

10 Donations Arrive

Frank Jungers, Carol Keyes Rader and Ellen Speers have given the company treasures they or family members collected in the kingdom. Rader, the daughter of late Aramco President R.L. Keyes, donated items of clothing received from members of the royal family, including a dress, shown being modeled by her mother, Sidney, who received the gown in the 1950s from a wife of then-Crown Prince Faysal ibn Abdulaziz.



12 Brat's 'Daily Hugz' Wins New Friends

How could you not fall in love with Hilu, Habiba and Husni? Lisa Jacobs (DG81) describes their home—Daily Hugz, a haven for animals established by Maad Abu-Ghazala (DH77) five years ago near the West Bank city of Nablus, his family's old hometown—and shows how it has become a resource for children, as well as a touchstone for Palestinian culture.



14 Kenya Scholarship Fund a Success

Alice Hasting-James and her late husband, Richard, shared a deep love for Kenya, Alice's birthplace. She founded the Kenya Scholarship Fund (KSF) International in 2008 to help needy students go to high school, and in 2014 KSF volunteers began a program providing three meals a day at a Nairobi orphanage.



Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah

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16-33 Reunions Blossom Everywhere!

Retirees seized the chance to talk about old times and catch up on each other's news at major reunions in the United States and Europe this summer. Venues ranged (l-r) from Voorschoten in the Netherlands, to a resort near Austin, Texas,

to Bristol on England's southwestern coast. More get-togethers took place in Toronto and Karachi. And more are planned: the Fourth KSA Saudi Aramco Annuitants Reunion in March and the 17th biennial Brats Reunion in May.



34 Books Take New Looks at Aramco

New books by former Aramcons offer insights into expatriate life, and death. Rick Snedeker, shown next to his dad's prize Fiat 1100 in the late '50s, writes about growing up at Aramco in *3,001 Arabian Days*. Another title, *Saudi Aramco Obituaries and Cemetery Records*, by members of the Dhahran Genealogical Society, has been published online.

36 'Remarkable' Hyena Capture Remembered

When they were kids in the mid-1940s, Miles Snyder (wearing a pith hat) and Billy Tracy watched Bedouin capture a hyena barehanded north of Abqaiq. Were it not for photos and notes in a scrapbook, the story would be so "remarkable" that few would believe it, says Tracy, seated below, right, with Snyder in 2015.



Cover: JoAnn Storm, who worked in Dhahran from 1964-72, whoops it up aboard "T-Bone," a surprise guest at the 31st Saudi Aramco Annuitants Reunion, held near Austin, Texas, in September. She was among more than 800 former Aramcons who reunited at get-togethers around the globe this summer. Photo by Arthur Clark.



MAIL CENTER



Just Retired

May 2, 2018

I am embarrassed to send you a zero-narrative picture like this. It is the best I could do from the prison from which I just retired.

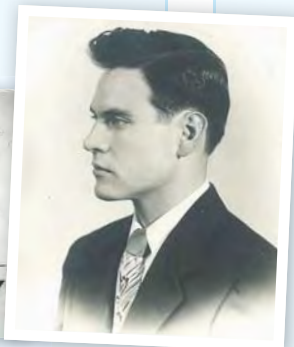
The inmates have CDCR—California Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation—on their trouser legs. The letters are also stenciled on the back of their shirts, along with the much-larger word PRISONER.

I am smiling in the prison picture because it was taken on my last day of employment in many years. Many years.

I was generally happy in many ways that day.

Frank Boylan
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NOTE: Boylan joined Aramco in 1963, the approximate date of the black-and-white photo, and departed in 1985 after working as a teacher and trainer in Ras Tanura, Abqaiq and Dhahran. He went on to teach English in the Los Angeles School District, before becoming a teacher at the Lancaster (Calif.) State Prison 12 years ago. During his Aramco years he sold several stories to Read-



er's Digest. His 1977 story "Stranded in the Merciless Sands," about getting lost in the desert with his six-month-old daughter, won the Digest's "First Person" award. In 1980 he won its "Drama in Real Life" prize for a story about a 16-year-old expatriate who broke his neck in a remote South American jungle. In retirement, he hopes to return to his true love—writing—he says.

'Greatest Compliment Ever Received'

NOTE: Chris Lund shared the message below, received from retired ASC Treasurer Vic Hopkins after he had read Lund's letter about his dad's days as a pilot for Aramco in the Spring 2018 issue. Lund's father, Christian, retired from the Aviation Dept. in 1978.

May 19, 2018

In 1977 we were transferred from Dhahran, where we knew your parents, to ASC in Houston. For a birthday present one year my wife, Shirley, gave me an introductory flight lesson and I was hooked. I got my pilot's license, added an instrument rating and bought a little Cessna.

Shortly after he retired your father came to Houston for a few days and I told him about the plane. He wanted

to see it so we arranged to take a short flight down to Galveston. We departed from Sugar Land, flew over downtown Houston and then turned south over the ship channel and Galveston Bay.

At first I was rather busy talking to air-traffic control and following their instructions, but as we moved away from Houston things got quiet

and I suddenly realized who was sitting beside me. I almost panicked because I knew he would notice any errors on my part including the slight deviations from assigned altitude and heading. It reminded me of test flights I took with FAA inspectors. Then I remembered that Chris was the FAA in Saudi Arabia and that only made me more nervous.

The rest of our trip was thankfully uneventful and when we landed back at Sugar Land Chris told me I handled the plane very well. I have always considered that the greatest compliment I have ever received.

Vic Hopkins
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Vic Hopkins's Cessna in the foreground is dwarfed by a Gulfstream aircraft at International Falls, Minn., in 1979. Hopkins and his wife, Shirley (standing left), flew from Houston to visit Aramcons Dale and Janet Garrison, right, who had a summer home on nearby Rainy Lake. Aramco CEO John Kelberer also had a home on the lake.



Johnnie is 'Inspirational'

May 21, 2018

... I loved the story of Johnnie Rusher [later Johnnie Merritt] who I knew "out there," and later in San Antonio we met again when she was 92 and living at The Towers. I have seen her several times since then but had not realized she was 103!!



Retiree Johnnie Merritt, now 104, looked like Queen Elizabeth in the story about her career (1948-72) in the Spring issue, one reader wrote.

Inspirational to people like me who sometimes think it's game over next year, month or even week. What a great age and presence—I thought I was looking at a photo of Queen Elizabeth before realizing it was Johnnie in her birthday hat. (She does look a bit like the queen.)

Mary Norton
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June 5, 2018

I just received my copies of *Aramco-World* and *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah*. It's a great way to reminisce, reconnect and mourn those who passed.

Can't get over your article about Johnnie Merritt. What an inspiration!

Jennifer Simpson
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June 10, 2018

Melanie and I really enjoyed the latest issue of *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah*. Especially the interesting article on Johnnie Merritt. Also it looked like everyone had a great time at the reception for Crown Prince Mohammed ibn Salman.

Mike Jurlando
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Recalling Ras Tanura

May 22, 2018

Due to a move I have missed one or more issues of *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah*, in particular the one which contained "Ras Tanura Memories." I worked for years in Ras Tanura as an engineer in the Gas Projects Dept.

My family and I arrived in late 1968 and I retired in 1984. I was originally at the Industrial Training Shops, teaching electronic instrumentation. At that time the company was beginning to move into computer control of processes

throughout all oil operations.

About the same time, the Gas Projects Dept. was formed and a little later, in 1972, an opening developed for a computer person and I was able to transfer into that department. My job involved the four monster gas plants: Berri, Ju'aymah, 'Uthmaniyah, and 'Udhailiyah.

The process-control computers, one at each plant, were the largest in the world. I was mainly concerned with shepherding them from Dhahran Airport to the job site, and then helping, in small ways, the Engineering teams install and commission them.

I am very proud of my work there: We put out all the flares!!! This was a major benefit to the company, to Saudi Arabia and to the world!

Many thanks for a great magazine!

Richard Herman
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Stamp Collecting In the Kingdom

May 23, 2018

My wife, Gray Lafrenz Kristofferson (whom I met in Dhahran in 1961 and married in 1968), and I enjoyed the Spring issue of *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah*.

The article on Saudi Aramco's Antiquities Homecoming Project was of

special interest as Gray's mother, Marcia Lafrenz, assembled a large collection (four large cartons) of Saudi and other Middle Eastern stamps during her time in Saudi Arabia with her husband, Mel, during the 1940's, '50's and '60's. If you know of any source who might be interested in acquiring this collection, please pass along my contact information.

Kraig Kristofferson
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Aramco a 'Great Experience'

May 24, 2018

We enjoy the magazine. My wife, Laura, came back home to Atlanta in August 1983 from Ras Tanura, had our daughter, and we settled in Raleigh, N.C., just before Christmas that year to now.

I'm from N. Carolina but went to school and worked in Georgia to October 1977, when I was hired for AOC. Came to Ras Tanura end April 1978 and stayed throughout. Great experience, super people and company. Took Arabic two years, and dynamic vacations, travel, camping and diving.

Abdulla al-Ghanim was chief engineer, I recall. Good guy.

Joe Teague
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Author Replies

May 25, 2018

I read the Spring issue with a great interest. Thank you so much for "Author Adds New Book," for the picture of Norman and me, and for showing the cover of my latest book [*Untold Stories of Polish Heroes from World War II*].

Aleksandra Ziolkowska-Boehm
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From Shaybah to SPE Scholarship

May 31, 2018

I must tell you about an Aramco connection that is such a coincidence. In 1976, at one time, I was the superintendent of the Abqaiq Producing Div.



Above: Stephan Benediktson stands left and his youngest son, David, center, at Shaybah in 1976. Benediktson was testing the Shaybah discovery well when he met Society of Petroleum Engineers President Edward Runyon, whom he met again four decades later when he established an SPE scholarship. Below: Benediktson and his wife, Adrianna, attended the 2009 Expatriates Reunion in Saudi Arabia.

and amongst other things responsible for testing the Shaybah discovery well. It happened that the president of the Society of Petroleum Engineers at that time, Edward Runyan, visited Aramco and I gave him a tour of the Rub' al-Khali and the test camp.

Fast forward to 2016 and I set up an SPE scholarship (I have been a member forever and appreciate the SPE) and in doing so was reintroduced to Edward Runyan. Can you imagine? We are both still here and well remember that trip.

Stephan V. Benediktson
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NOTE: The SPE's Canadian Educational Foundation received a gift of \$100,000 (Canadian) to establish the Stephan V. Benediktson Scholarship Fund. It provides \$3,000 a year to a Canadian third-year engineering student at a Canadian or U.S. university. Benediktson, an author as well as a philanthropist, published Stefan's Story: A Half Century in the International Oil Business in 2003. "We were met at the Dhahran Airport by...my first Aramco supervisor, a nice, cheerful, brush-cut American engineer named Phil Thorman," he writes about his family's arrival in 1974. "Aramco was a wonderful and unique experience, for which I am grateful. It is...a great, well-structured company with standards for every occasion." He also wrote Restless as a Viking (2016), about an Icelandic-Canadian who began his career in the Alberta oil patch and founded oil companies—mirroring his own career.



Tim Barger In Memoriam Appreciated

June 14, 2018

I particularly enjoyed your obituary of Tim Barger in the Spring issue. He was very kind and helpful to Alice when she was publishing *Culinary Biographies*, and in general they enjoyed each other's anecdotes, information, and so on when he visited Houston.

Rob Arndt
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Flashback: Aramco World Paved the Way

June 16, 2018

The article on *Brownbook* [Spring 2018], specifically in its reference to *AramcoWorld*, brought back memories of 1976, when I was being recruited by Aramco out of the University of Florida.

I was married, with two kids, and needed to find some info on where we might be going, should I take the job. I had lived overseas as a military "brat" and had knowledge of the Middle East, but my family was Florida-based and needed some facts.

Thankfully, the campus library had a fairly recent copy of the magazine. It was perfect.

It provided a fair and reasonable picture of conditions in Aramco camps, not just the working environment, but of how employees lived and played, what kind of education the kids could expect, and more.

Everyone breathed a bit easier about the fact we would not be falling off the ends of the world. In fact the kids were quite excited about the possibility they could have a hedgehog as a pet (never fulfilled).

Thanks for the flashback and, in fact, to another great issue in general.

Tim Ackert
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Hired from the United Kingdom in 1969 and married in 1974 to the late Carl Jackson, an American, Dianne Jackson seamlessly switched payrolls and employee status, with never a break in employment until retirement in 1982.

Starting ‘Latest Life Adventure’

June 19, 2018

NOTE: Diane Jackson was moving from Arizona to Colorado when she wrote about the Fourth KSA Saudi Aramco Reunion next March.

I have thought about attending the Saudi reunion when it was offered in the past. Reunion Chairman Ali Baluchi used to work for my late husband, Carl...but I want to remember Saudi Arabia the way it used to be. My husband’s service dates were 1956-82 and mine were 1969-82, so a long time ago.

I have fond memories of driving to Jubail with my husband when it was a sleepy little place with a broken, small concrete pier and dhows. They were definitely good times and Saudi Arabia and the Saudi people will always have a special place in my heart.

I was one of the very few people who worked every day, apart from vacations, when I was there. I was hired from the U.K. and worked several contracts, and then married Carl. I was Don Fate’s secretary when I married on Dec. 30, 1974, and he let

me finish out a contract as a U.K. employee, and then I had time to find a position in Personnel in March 1975.

I went from working for Don on a Wednesday to starting as a U.S. payroll casual on the Saturday with never a break in employment.

I am leaving Arizona in about 30 minutes and driving to Colorado Springs for the latest life adventure.

700 miles later...

I made it.... Happy to be here with my daughter and her husband, and their two dogs and two cats. (A human or two are in their future plans.)

Diane Jackson

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Impressed by Crown Prince Cover

July 3, 2018

I was impressed with the [Spring 2018] cover, which showed the Crown Prince’s stops on his OOK trip—culminating in Houston with the group of retirees. And those who were not on the cover were highlighted in a later photo....

Tonie Maheshwari

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July 11, 2018

Loved getting our copy of *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah* with our Houston retiree group on the front with Crown Prince Mohammed ibn Salman. Very special.

Crown Prince Mohammed ibn Salman’s visits to London, Washington, D.C., and Houston in March and April figured on the cover of the Spring issue.



That wonderful evening was yet another example how much ex-Aramcons still matter in a country we hold dear to our hearts.

Janice and Eric Madsen

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July 16, 2018

[Regarding the story about Crown Prince Mohammed ibn Salman] the remarks by Khalid Al Falih, minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources—“We appreciate the dedication of American men and women who helped to build Aramco”—are superb. In addition, what the Saudi student volunteers did to help Houston homeowners hard hit by Hurricane Harvey in 2017, as told in the story, showed their service to humanity.

Shahid Husain

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Small World

July 10, 2018

A few days ago in Kathmandu [I met] Aniesa Bosch Brassil, the daughter of David and Leslie Bosch. David and Leslie were two of the best tennis players in Dhahran when I was there.

They departed Dhahran around 1995. I took Aniesa to Kenya on one of the school’s out-of-kingdom field trips in the early ‘90s.

She and her husband are with the State Dept. and living in Kathmandu. She found out I was leading a trip and sent me an e-mail out of the blue. We met for a few hours at a Nepalese wedding of two of the house managers at Nepal Orphans Home where I was volunteering.

Louis Spencer

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Peruvian Ambassador Likes Inca Road Story

August 16, 2018

I received the excellent magazines. I have copies of the article about the Inca Road event and the excellent work that Ken and Ruth Wright have always done!!!

Marita Landaveri

Ambassador of Peru

maritalandaveri@yahoo.com

OWEN FAMILY HONORED AT GOLD STAR CEREMONY

Rick Owen, Randa Owen-Williams and Tom Owen participated in an emotional Gold Star Family ceremony at the White House on June 4 honoring their elder brother, Bill, for his sacrifice for the nation.

They are the children of the late retiree William Owen and his wife, Peggy. Rick, Tom, Randa and their late brother, David, all worked for the company, and Rick and Tom are also retirees.

Bill Owen's widow, Cheryl, was overseas and unable to take part in the ceremony for 52 Gold Star families. President Donald Trump and his wife, Melania, Vice President Mike Pence, key military leaders and Cabinet members attended the evening event.

Owen, an Army second lieutenant, died in Vietnam on April 11, 1969, while braving enemy fire in a bid to rescue an injured soldier. He was posthumously awarded the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal and the Purple Heart.

Owen graduated from the Dhahran Schools in 1959.

The Owens said they were "tremendously touched" by the fact that, after so many years, their brother's sacrifice was publicly recognized at the White House.

Randa Owen-Williams said it was "very healing" to talk to other Gold Star families. "It was also very special to meet the President and First Lady," she said.

The previous day the siblings had visited Arlington National Cemetery where Bill Owen is buried.



Rick Owen (left), Randa Owen-Williams and Tom Owen flank President Donald Trump at the Gold Star Family ceremony honoring their brother, Bill, in Washington, D.C., in June.

ARAMCO AUTHORS PUBLISH NEW TITLES

Two slim new books, a self-help title by retiree Andrew "Andy" Guinosso and a selection of science and science-fiction poems by David Lunde, son of the late Aramcons John and Alice Lunde, take looks at two different slices of life.

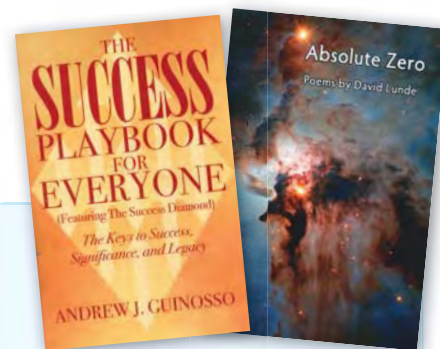
Guinosso's *The Success Playbook for Everyone: The Keys to Success, Significance, and Legacy* draws from his years at Aramco, from 1979-2003, but more largely from his overall "life experience," he says. That includes retirement months in Florence, Italy, and operating an Italian bistro called Un Caffé in Reno, Nev., where he lives.

Self-published this year by Outskirts Press, the book addresses 109 topics ranging from "Accountability" to "X-Factor, The Unknown." It costs \$19.95.

Guinosso retired as director of Management Development, and later worked in the top tier at the U.S. offices involved in the establishment of King Abdullah University of Science and Technology in Saudi Arabia.

Absolute Zero, published by Mayapple Press, is David Lunde's 10th book of poetry. It costs \$16.95.

Lunde says he was inspired to write



The Success Playbook for Everyone, by Andy Guinosso, and *Absolute Zero*, by David Lunde, hit the stands this year.

science-fiction poems when, as a student at the Iowa Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa in the 1960s, he worked for rocket scientist Dr. James Van Allen. But he adds that many sci-fi writers influenced him.

"When I worked for Van Allen, I was exposed to real science and real scientists," he says. "My job was inking charts and graphs of the info brought back by satellites and telescopes so they could be used in the papers written by Van and his students."

"I liked the idea that we were exploring our solar system and trying to understand it," he says, noting that "the night skies in Arabia may well have influenced" his latest book of poems.

The titles of the poems in the book run from "Absolute Zero," about the death of stars and the lives of people, to "Tycho," about the 16th-century astronomer Tycho Brahe, to "Spock Beams In."

STUEBER MARKS 90TH BIRTHDAY

Verne Stueber celebrated his 90th birthday July 2 with his children, Mark, Matthew, Michael and Kathy, and other family members.

Stueber, who lives in Tomball, Texas, near Houston, joined Aramco in Dhahran in 1952 with a chemical-engineering degree from the University of Wisconsin. He retired as manager of the Manufacturing and Oil Supply Dept. at Aramco Services Company in Houston in 1986. Stueber also worked in Ras Tanura, Abqaiq, 'Udhailiyah and New York.

Meeting his wife, Becky, a nurse at the Dhahran Health Center, at a party in 1953 is a favorite memory of Saudi Arabia, Stueber says. They married in 1955 and she died in 2006.

Stueber has kept up

his connections with former colleagues as a host of the Houston Area ASC/Aramco Retirees Luncheon Group.

When he began assisting Hank Baracano in that role in the late 1980s, the group had about 40 members. Today the group—which he cohosts with "young" retirees Bill Smart and Sally Johnson, he says—has more than 200 members.

Verne Stueber, center, got 90th-birthday greetings in July from his children, Kathy, Mark, Michael and Matthew, and other family members.



SAEEA GATHERING SETS RECORD

A record 211 former personnel and their family members attended the 19th gathering of the Saudi Aramco Ex-Employees Association (SAEEA), held July 8 at the Countryside Chalet Resort, about 20 miles north of Karachi. The SAEEA was founded in 2010.

“Attendees met with their old buddies and enjoyed the event,” said SAEEA Vice President Iqbal Khan, adding that the turnout was “very encouraging.” He said that the gathering occurred during a school break in Sindh province and that several members attended with their children and grandchildren.

Five new members joined the SAEEA: Zafar Ahmed, Wakeel Ahmed Khan, Qamar Khan, Tanzeem Akhtar Ghani and Ms. Rais Akhtar. Ahmed and Ghani joined guest Sabir Ali Khan in a musical program.

In addition to Iqbal Khan, SAEEA board members are Kamal Ahmed Farooqi, president, Ghulam Qutubuddin Khan, Shafiq A. Khan, Mohammad Abdul Matin, Arif Qamar and Muhammad Salim Hamid.



Dr. Kiran A. Rehman, left, and Erum Imran enjoyed the SAEEA outing north of Karachi in July. They are the daughters of Iqbal Ahmed Khan, SAEEA vice president, and his wife, Zohra Iqbal.



NEW AL-KHOBAR PARK NAMED AFTER RETIREE

The ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new al-Khobar park named after late retiree Abdulmajeed Alali took place July 31. Alali joined Aramco in 1950 and retired in 1974. The park is in North-Central al-Khobar. From left are Alali’s grandson, Saudi Aramco Abdulmajeed Alali (taking a photo); Sultan Al-Zayedi, head of al-Khobar Municipal Office; retiree Ali Baluchi; Essam AlMulla, deputy mayor of the Eastern Province; and Jamal Alali, who built and equipped the park named after his father.

WEDDING CELEBRATED IN KARACHI

Isra Arif, daughter of retiree Arif Qamar and his wife Sohaila Arif, married Saad Ahmed on Dec. 8, 2017, and nearly 25 current and retired Saudi Aramcons and family members celebrated with the newlyweds in Karachi. The chief justice of Pakistan, Saqib Nisar, also attended.

Qamar retired as senior planner, Southern Area Community Services, in 2010 after a 32-year career.

The bride graduated from Abqaiq Academy in 2004 and attended the Grier School in Tyrone, Penn. She holds bachelor’s degree from Southern Arkansas University and works as an academic coordinator at CREDO College in Karachi.



Standing next to bride Isra Arif are her father, retiree Arif Qamar, and mother, Sohaila Arif. To the groom’s right are the chief justice of Pakistan, Saqib Nisar, and family members.

WATTS WINS NEW ART AWARD

Former Aramcon Jo Watts, who pursued an art career in Dhahran and Ras Tanura from 1983-90, and brought her inspiration with her when she and her late husband, Tom, moved to Texas, won the “Best of Bastrop County Local Artist/Painter” award Sept. 19.

This year’s award is the latest in a series that she has received from the *Bastrop Advertiser* and *Smithville Times* since 2010 for her work in painting, silk-painting, sculpture, pottery and fiber art.

Watts lives in Smithville, near Bastrop, where she has a studio. She was named Smithville Artist of the Year in 2016.





Former Arabian American Little League player Beau Branton had a red-hot season with the Stanford Cardinals in the spring, before graduating and being drafted by the Seattle Mariners in the 28th round.

NOTE: This story, about Beau Branton's baseball years at Stanford University, is excerpted from an article published in the San Francisco Chronicle on May 3. Branton pitched or played catcher or shortstop for the Arabian American Little League teams that went to the Little League World Series in 2007 and 2008. Although the Stanford Cardinals didn't qualify for the College World Series his year, Branton may have accomplished something even better: He was drafted by the Seattle Mariners in the 28th round and finished the season playing for the Class A Advanced Modesto [Calif.] Nuts, the Mariners' farm club. "Playing baseball has always been fun, whether it's in the fields of Dhahran, or in the stadiums of college baseball. Of course...Division 1 baseball...is a whole different level," he says. His parents are Joe and Marlene Branton.

★ **A**s a freshman at Stanford, Beau Branton started 28 games at four different positions. The past two years, though, he mostly rode the bench.

At 5-foot-7, the shortest player on the team, he finally got a chance to play regularly because of an injury to second baseman Duke Kinamon.

To say that life is good for him now would be an understatement. He's hitting .347 with a .432 on-base percentage as the leadoff man for the No. 2 team in the country.

The Cardinals (34-6) have won 11 of their past 12 and are tied with No. 8 UCLA atop the Pac-12 standings with a 14-4 record going into a series at Utah.

What's more, Branton will graduate next month and already has a job lined up even if pro baseball doesn't work out. He's going to

be an industrial engineer for Disney, working at its theme parks.

Head coach David Esquer said that when Branton got his chance this year, "he started hitting and never stopped. He's been kind of a phenomenon around our team."

Branton employs a batting stance similar to that of former big-league infielder Julio Franco, who hit .298 over his 23-year career. Branton starts his stroke with the barrel of the bat not quite pointing at the pitcher, like Franco, but still pointing forward.

It worked spectacularly. Before tailing off in the past few games, he was hitting in the .380s.

"He plays with a quiet confidence and a peace about him that is kind of infectious to the team," Esquer said. "The guys like his attitude; he's not too stressed."

He has made just four errors. "He's been a stabilizing force for the whole team," Esquer said. "We are where we're at because of our pitching and defense."

Branton was a batting champion at Punahou High School in Honolulu. He was born and grew up in Dhahran where his father was a computer engineer and his mother taught. He was 13 when his parents retired and moved the family to Hawaii, where they had grown up.

"There are a ton of American expats" in Saudi Arabia, he said, "so baseball was pretty big. I was lucky to have a lot of good coaches growing up."

Having played for Saudi Arabia in the Little League World Series, he's trying for a rare double—playing in the College World Series, too.

BARNES SHARES 'THIRD-CULTURE KID' Memories

NOTE: This story is adapted from an article by published in The Keene Sentinel in New Hampshire on Aug. 4, 2018.

When he talks about his childhood, Gary Barnes is no longer a 63-year-old therapist. He is a gem collector, sharing his treasures.

His memories exude Americanness, so much so that it's hard to believe Barnes grew up elsewhere, in a region most would associate with strife and geopolitical unrest. But to him, the...Saudi Arabian town of Dhahran was home.

When Barnes, the longtime executive director of Maps Counseling Center, grew up in Dhahran in the '60s and '70s, it was an American enclave of about 3,000 people.... His father, Larry Barnes, worked for Aramco, as did most of the adults in town.

"It was kind of a fantasy land," Barnes said of his hometown.

But dig a bit deeper and you see that Dhahran...was a careful mix of Americana and something entirely different. The town's American inhabitants preserved their identity with an intensity reserved only for foreigners away from home, but other influences prevailed.

Their children trick-or-treated on Halloween—Barnes was always a pirate—but the candy they got was British. At school, they recited the pledge of allegiance in rooms with American and Saudi flags....

Barnes remembers waking up to the melodic sound of the muezzin, calling Muslims to prayer. At Christmastime, the compound was awash with tinsel and life-sized holiday displays....

Barnes embraced it all in the way children do—wholly and without question. It wasn't until much later that he realized that though he was an American citizen, he didn't exactly belong in the United States....

Barnes didn't know it then, but there's a name for these experiences. Children who spend a large part of their formative years in a culture that's different than their parents' are called "third-culture kids."

Barnes was 15 when he came to the Proctor Academy...in Andover. New Hampshire was a stark contrast to his desert town, not only because it lacked palm trees,

but because he couldn't quite find a place in the social fabric of his new school....

After what had been a lonely school year, Barnes went home. He convinced his parents to send him to the American School in Switzerland, where most of his Dhahran friends went.

When he graduated, he followed his older brother, Dean, to...Syracuse University in upstate New York, where again, he didn't fit in. He transferred to the University of California, Santa Barbara, to finish his degree because he'd heard many Aramco kids went there. For the first time in his adult life, he felt like he belonged somewhere in the United States.

He'd chosen to study psychology because he wanted to help people, following his mother Marion's advice.

Barnes returned to Dhahran in 2009, as part of an Aramco-sponsored reunion, for the first time since 1977. What had been a town of about 3,000 people had grown into a metropolis, absorbing nearby al-Khobar, where Barnes's [earlier] shopping excursions had been. The house he grew up in was gone, and the fence that once surrounded the tiny enclave had been replaced with a wall....

At first, this new city seemed foreign to him. But over the course of the two weeks he spent there, Barnes began noticing that though Dhahran had changed, it was still the same in many ways.

"Gradually, the culture came back to me, the lifestyle came back, the feeling of being there came back, and by the time I left I felt like I'm home," he said. "This is still my home."

Gary Barnes, left, and his brother, Dean, took a breather in the Community Heritage Gallery when they returned "home" to Dhahran at the 2009 Expatriates Reunion. Gary brought along an album of photos of the Eastern Province shot by his dad, Larry, and showed them to Prince Muhammad ibn Fahd, the governor of the Eastern Province, at a *majlis* in his office in Dammam.

ARTHUR CLARK





JUNGERS GIFTS

Rare Al Sa'ud Family Tree

By ARTHUR CLARK

Former President and CEO Frank Jungers has donated a rare, second-edition copy of the Al Sa'ud family tree done by Mohammad Amin al-Tamimi, to the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture in Dhahran.

The center, which was named by *Time* magazine in August as one of the world's top "100 destinations to experience" this year, was inaugurated by King Salman in late 2016. "Designed by the Norwegian firm Snohetta, the center houses an auditorium, exhibition halls and a library of some 200,000 books," *Time* said.

Dating to 1968, the Al Sa'ud family tree is an improved version of the original family tree made by al-Tamimi in Cairo in the mid-1940s.

Al-Tamimi immigrated to Saudi Arabia from Palestine in 1927 when he was 20, and worked in the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jiddah. He moved to Cairo to work in Egypt's National Archives in 1931.

Jungers received the approximately seven-by-four-foot tree from King Faysal ibn Abdulaziz in the early 1970s.

Jungers kept the family tree rolled up in his office in Dhahran until he retired in the late '70s. After moving to Oregon he framed it and displayed it in his home.

He gave it to Saudi Aramco President and CEO Amin Nasser when the two met in Houston in March during Crown Prince Mohammed ibn Salman's visit.

"I thought it belonged in the country, rather than with me," Jungers said.

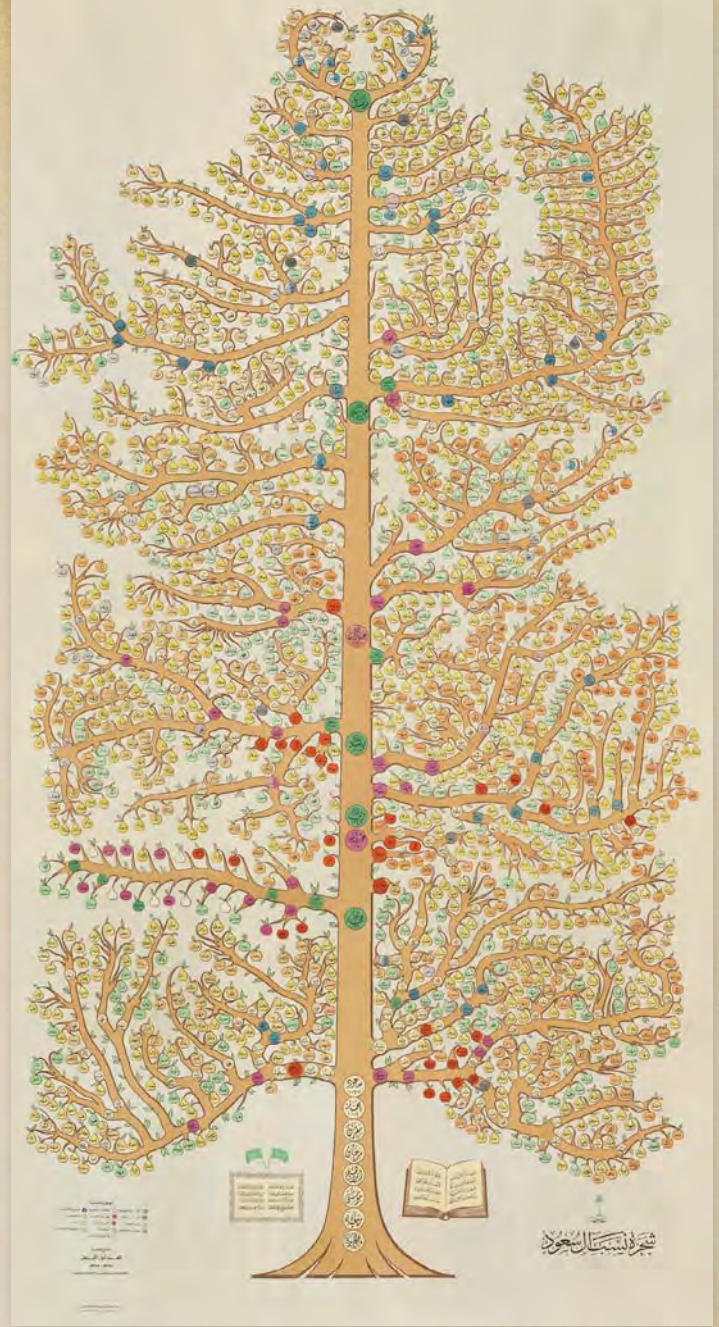
King Faysal gave the family tree to Jungers after a meeting in Riyadh. "He showed it to me and asked what I thought of it," Jungers recalled. "I told him I thought it was very nice."

When the king said he thought his ancestors, rather than himself, should be at the top of the tree, Jungers quipped that he could always "turn it upside down."

Although King Faysal said he had spotted "a couple of things in error" on the tree, he agreed that al-Tamimi had done a "heck of a job" portraying the Al Sa'ud family, Jungers said.

Thirty-one branches fan out from the trunk of the tree. Male family members are depicted as apples, females as pears.

The fruits of the tree are color-coded in the 1968 version. Blue stands for college-educated, brown for battlefield casualties, mauve for heroic warriors, gray for religious ascetics and



This Al Sa'ud family tree, donated by former President and CEO Frank Jungers, details the royal family on 31 branches on a trunk with King Faysal ibn Abdulaziz at the top. Jungers received the family tree, done by Mohammed al-Tamimi in 1968, from King Faysal in the early 1970s.

green for rulers, for example.

At the base of the trunk, eight Al Sa'ud ancestors are shown in white roundels. Above them, Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, who established the first Saudi state at Dir'iyah in 1744, and his descendants as rulers are shown in colored circles: Abdulaziz ibn Muhammad, purple; Sa'ud ibn Muhammad, green; Faysal ibn Turki, green; Abdulrahman ibn Faysal, pink; King Abdulaziz ibn Abdulrahman, green; King Sa'ud ibn Abdulaziz, green (to the immediate right of the trunk, at the start of the ibn Sa'ud branch); and King Faysal, green.

Al-Tamimi completed the original family tree in 1363H (1943/44) and the Egyptian Survey Dept. printed it in 1945. He returned to Saudi Arabia in 1960 to serve as director of the Libraries Dept., and in 1968 he issued a new version.

While carrying out this revision al-Tamimi discovered some errors in the printed version of the tree. He corrected them in a separate study that was not published due to his death in the mid-1970s.

All the papers related to his study and the revision are at the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Historical Research in Riyadh, which acquired the documents from al-Tamimi's family in 1976.

Go Coatless, IF YOU EVER MEET A King

“If you ever go to meet a king at his hunting site, go coatless.” That’s what a Santa Barbara, Calif., columnist wrote in 1970 about the time Aramco President R. L. Keyes visited King Sa’ud ibn Abdulaziz high up in ‘Asir in southwestern Saudi Arabia in the mid-1950s. King Sa’ud took pity on the shivering executive and gave him a *farwah* (a heavy woolen cloak) from his own wardrobe.

Keyes’s daughter, Carol Keyes Rader, recently donated the *farwah* to the company. She also donated an ornate gown given to her mother, Sidney, by a wife of then-Crown Prince Faysal.

Rader was a senior at Cornell University when her father became company president in 1952, and she spent a year in Dhahran after she graduated. She said her father received the *farwah* from King Sa’ud when he stopped in ‘Asir to pay his respects upon his return from New York. “He had on a suit and it was freezing,” she said.

The couple brought the *farwah* and gown with them when Keyes retired in 1957. A column in the June 14, 1970, *Santa Barbara News Press* noted a gathering where they exhibited them, among other “assorted treasures” from the kingdom.

“The real excitement of the morning came when Mrs. Keyes brought out the coat the late king had given her husband and a gown that was given to her by a wife of the present King Faysal,” the columnist wrote.

“The massive coat of black broadcloth was completely lined

in black-and-white curly sheepskin.” On the exterior were “involved designs...of one-inch-wide gold braid with sections of the designs filled in with burgundy velvet.

“Tiny Mrs. Keyes tried on the coat, which was meant to fit her six-foot husband...and you could just see a bit of her head.”

Sidney Keyes told the columnist that King Sa’ud had noticed that her husband looked chilled when he arrived at his hunting party’s campsite 4,000 feet up in the mountains, and gave him one of his own *farwahs* as a gift.

“It’s a good thing to file away for future reference gals,” wrote the columnist. “If you ever go to meet a king at his hunting site, go coatless.”

Mrs. Keyes also modeled the dress she’d received from the royal family. “The most interesting part of the costume is the train of the coat [worn over the gown], which goes off the back about eight feet, in a circular direction...,” said the columnist.

“The royalty of Saudi Arabia really do go in for elaborate overcoats, it seems,” she wrote. “None of our old canvas trench coats for them.”



Carol Keyes Rader recruited a neighbor to model the *farwah*, or heavy woolen cloak, that King Sa’ud ibn Abdulaziz gave her father, Aramco President R.L. Keyes, when he visited him in chilly ‘Asir in the mid-1950s.

WATERCOLOR OF Dammam GOING BACK TO Dhahran

Ellen Speers, whose late husband, Pete, was a longtime Government Relations employee, has donated a watercolor of late-1950s Dammam by Amy Davies to the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture in Dhahran. Speers also donated a rare aerial photo of Dhahran dating to June 1940.

Speers lives in Austin, Texas, where she and her husband retired in 1981 after a company career that began in 1949. The painting she donated has two close ties to company history.

First, the artist’s husband, Fred Davies, served as president from 1940-47 and CEO from 1952-59. He was the Standard Oil of California (Socal) geologist who in the early 1930s spied the Dammam Dome from Bahrain, where Socal had already discovered oil, and

expressed the wish to explore for what he thought could be much greater reserves on the mainland.

Second, Government Relations was based in Dammam at the time Davies painted the picture. Speers said it appealed to her because “it was just so representative of what Dammam was like at that point.”

Davies supported relief efforts for Palestinians and “would sell her paintings to raise money for a charity in Palestine,” Speers noted, recalling that she paid \$25 for the artwork. That relief effort continued when Davies “opened her home, House 17, once a week to make blankets and sheets for a hospital in Palestine,” Speers said.

She said that the painting of Dammam had hung on the wall in the Speers’ home in Dhahran “for many years,” but had been in a cupboard in Austin.

Ellen Speers donated this watercolor of late-1950s Dammam by Amy Davies, the wife of Aramco CEO Fred Davies, to the Center for World Culture.



BRAT'S 'Daily Hugz' WORKS WONDERS



By LISA M. JACOBS



Left: Maad Abu-Ghazalah (DH77) leads donkeys on a stroll at Daily Hugz, a home for rescued animals and a haven for children that he established near his home of Nablus. Above: Megan McAlister Rudholm (DH73) and her husband, Dave, met children at Askar Refugee Camp on the edge of Nablus during the Holy Land Olive Harvest trip in 2017.

What's the link between an olive grove in a West Bank village and a project helping needy local residents, and how are Aramco Brats and family members connected to both? The answer is Daily Hugz.

Daily Hugz is a haven for animals and kids established by Maad Abu-Ghazalah (DH77) in the hills above the West Bank city of Nablus, where he was born and where he spent his summers. Maad is the son of the late Hafiz Abu-Ghazalah and his wife, Hala. Hafiz joined Aramco as a translator in 1950, and he and his wife moved to Amman, Jordan, after he retired in 1985; Hala lives there today.

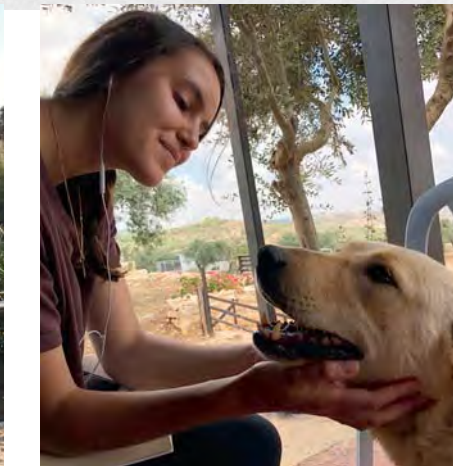
Maad earned a math degree from Notre Dame, a master's degree in computer science from the University of Virginia and a law degree from Santa Clara University in California, going on to a successful IT career. But he never forgot his roots, and when the opportunity arose he decided to invest in Palestine.

In 2014 he bought an olive grove in Asirah al-Shamaliyah, a village north of Nablus, and set about building Daily Hugz. Today it holds barns for rescued animals, a small house, a playground, a vegetable garden and a swimming pool, plus a 150-seat Roman-style amphitheater for cultural events. A veterinarian visits frequently, working in a converted shipping container donated by a Hugz supporter.

The first rescue resident, Houdini the donkey, arrived in 2015. Beaten and blind, he spent the rest of his days, until 2017, in peace and carrying no more burdens. A German shepherd named Olive joined him. She became Hugz's first "ambassador" to visiting children, Maad says, noting that her friendliness taught them to overcome a fear of dogs instilled by adults.

Soon, local residents began to report animals needing help. Some, like Boss, a dog of unknown heritage, arrived on their own.

As word of Hugz spread, it became a magnet for students from area kindergartens, schools for children with special needs and youngsters from nearby refugee camps. They thrived in the safe, peaceful place.



Above, left: Maad Abu-Ghazalah, author Lisa Jacobs (DH81) and Dave Rudholm pose before the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem near the end of the 2017 trip organized by Daily Hugz. Right: Jacobs's daughter, Lila, makes friends with Amira, one of the happy residents of Daily Hugz.

“Our mission [is] to create and promote an environment in which all life matters by serving the most underprivileged members of society and allowing them to interact with nature and rescued animals,” says the Daily Hugz website (www.dailyhugz.org/). “Our strength is measured by our willingness to share with those weaker than ourselves....”

For Hugz to succeed, Maad had to build support beyond the people in the local community who appreciated its mission. “Fellow Brats” was his first thought, he says.

Assisted by Leslie Homolka Craigmyle (DH80), he began to offer oil from the olives harvested at Daily Hugz as gifts to donors in 2017. He also began taking online orders for the oil, and set up a table to sell it at the Brats Reunion that May.

In addition, he arranged for a group of Brats and family members to make a trip to the first Olive Harvest Festival organized by Daily Hugz in October 2017. Dubbed the Holy Land Olive Harvest Adventure, it aimed to raise funds for Hugz, as well as to be an educational and cultural experience that would be widely shared.

I signed up, along with my classmate Bridget Mulligan (DH81); Julie Sawaya (DH79) and her daughter, Janna Ruedisale; Megan McAlister Rudholm (DH73) and her husband, Dave; and Raidah Ziadeh Hudson (DH77), who brought her friend, Adria Scharf, head of the Richmond Peace Education Center in Virginia.

Our trip began in Amman and took us to Petra, the Dead Sea and other sites in Jordan. Then we visited Daily Hugz, where we got a real taste of local life and culture, surrounded by ancient stone walls and terraced olive groves. Along with feeding watermelon rind to donkeys and petting dogs at Hugz, our itinerary included a long trapeze through the Roman-era *suqs* of nearby Nablus, ending with the world's best dessert: *kunafah* at al-Aqsa Sweets.

We also visited the Askar Refugee Camp on the edge of Nablus, one of 19 such camps in the West Bank. Opened in 1950 for Palestinian refugees from 36 villages in the Lydd, Haifa and Jaffa areas, it is now home to more than 18,000 people, including some 600 families considered hardship cases. Residents are crammed into a 0.3-square-mile site with more than triple the population density of Manila, the world's most crowded city.

Back in the village of Asirah, we set to work harvesting olives. The October harvest is traditionally a festive time in the West Bank when families gather to pick the crop from their small groves to meet yearly needs.

The mayor opened the Harvest Festival with a speech in the amphitheater, followed by *dabke* dancing and demonstrations of soap-making, olive-pressing and a cooking competition that we got to judge! The dish was a vegan version of *maqluba* (“upside down”), a casserole that usually includes rice, vegetables and meat.

We completed our trip with a visit to Jerusalem. Passing through caged entry lanes and undergoing questioning by soldiers at the Qalandiya checkpoint, we experienced a little of what Palestinians who work in the city endure every day. Hearing the call to prayer from al-Aqsa mosque at breakfast on the terrace of a Catholic pilgrim guesthouse in the old city the next day allowed us to soak up the living history of the city in a more positive way.

I was so moved by my visit that I recreated much of the trip with my daughter, Lila, in June and July this year. She was eager to practice the Arabic she'd been studying a freshman at college, as well as seeing another part of the Middle East than Egypt. We spent an amazing few days in Jordan with Randa Abu Rayyan (DH79) and her family before and after crossing the bridge over the Jordan River to the West Bank.

There I rented a car to drive us around Nablus, Jericho, Jerusalem and Nazareth and the ancient Crusader port of Akka.

Once again, Hugz was the best part of the trip. Maad wasn't present. He'd been there in May, at a Palestinian animal-rights conference whose theme was “Liberating the People, Land and Animals,” and I deliberately chose a later date to maximize the hours we could devote to the animals.

For rescued animals to flourish, they need time with people who treat them kindly and play with them. That is the happiest volunteering activity possible, making Hugz feel like a bubble of peace and hope.

Daily Hugz, Asirah and Palestine left a deep impression on me, fellow Brats and family members and friends. We forged unforgettable bonds with the institution, local residents and with each other last fall, ties reinforced by taking my daughter there this summer.

Daily Hugz is now an established resource for the underprivileged, as well as a cultural touchstone and showplace for traditional Palestinian hospitality and kindness. Its work is supported by people around the world whose donations provide food and care for its animals and for a growing number of programs for children.

More Brat participants and friends are expected at the 2018 Olive Harvest Festival. No doubt, they will have their own stories to tell about the impact that Daily Hugz has had on their lives.

The author, her daughter, Lila, and Hala Abu-Ghazalah, Daily Hugz founder Maad Abu-Ghazalah's mother, look over the desert course of *iftar* (breakfast) at her home in Amman during Ramadan this year.



KENYA SCHOLARSHIP FUND VOLUNTEERS

FOLLOW

ARAMCON'S LEAD

BY DOROTHY HASTINGS-JAMES

“It was a great pleasure sharing my passion with these excellent volunteers. The volunteers were extremely flexible, yet willing to get their hands dirty.... I appreciated their love for Kenya.”

— ALICE HASTINGS-JAMES

In July I traveled to Kenya with my mother, Alice Hastings-James, and six other volunteers from the United States and Canada to further the mission of the Kenya Scholarship Fund (KSF) International.

My mom founded KSF, a nonprofit organization, in 2008 to provide scholarships for needy high-school students. We visited three high schools and two orphanages in Nairobi to meet scholarship

recipients and work on outreach projects—and I returned home both inspired and enriched by the experience.

My mom, KSF's executive director, was born in Nairobi. She established the organization to give something meaningful back to her home country.

She lives in Houston, where she and my late father, Richard, moved after he retired from Saudi Aramco in 2005. He was a senior geophysical consultant in

the Exploration and Petroleum Engineering Center in Dhahran, and my mom was a casual employee there. I finished the eighth grade in Dhahran and graduated from University of Houston with an MBA in May.

Primary school is free in Kenya, but secondary school costs around \$360 a year, making it difficult for poor students to graduate. Those who start high school are commonly sent home if they cannot pay their fees.

To apply for KSF scholarships, students write essays explaining why they need assistance and what they hope to do after they graduate.

Since its inception, KSF has helped 80 students receive their diplomas, and 39 students are attending seven schools with KSF scholarships this year.

This summer we visited scholarship students at Akiba School, State House Girls High School and Kahuho Uhuru Boys School. We also visited the Garden of Hope Center and Hekima Place orphanages, which have scholarship students but don't have secondary schools on their premises. In addition, we spoke to seven KSF alumnae at the Hub, a local mall.

Below left: KSF volunteers met scholarship alumnae and their children in Nairobi. KSF Director Alice Hastings-James is fourth from left (in green cap) with KSF volunteers in the back row, including author Dorothy Hastings-James, third from right. To her right is her aunt, Margaret Hastings-James, who visited Kenya with her daughter “to pay homage to their brother and uncle [retiree Richard Hastings-James] in the country he loved,” said Dorothy. Alice, Dorothy and Margaret also visited Kahuho Uhuru High School (below), where KSF sponsors 12 boys.





At Akiba School in the Kangemi slum, where the crowded dirt roads are challenging to navigate, we met KSF scholarship student Brian Okualo. “I would like to study law, and my vision or dream in life is to join politics and become president of this country so that I can help poor people like the way you are helping us,” said the confident senior.

A fellow scholarship recipient, Edward Murathe, choked up when he met us. “My mom is blind and she struggles with her medications, so maybe I could not have gotten this opportunity to come for high school. But because of you, I have it now,” he said. “I want to thank you.”

KSF maintains a close partnership with the Garden of Hope Center, assisting the orphanage with projects by bringing in volunteers who identify and meet a particular need. John Muthama, who grew up in the center, has launched a catering career thanks to KSF’s support.

KSF volunteers Rosa Williams and Cynthia Hastings-James, my half-sister, implemented a program to provide meals for children at the center in 2014. It costs \$7,000 a year to serve three meals a day to 230 children.

“The program has improved the performance and the health of our children,” said Pauline Waweru, Garden of Hope director.

This year KSF volunteers renovated, painted and put special lights in one of the center’s rooms, and then provided textbooks, to establish a library.

Eighteen-year-old volunteer Jaylan Wright set up the library through a \$4,000 donation from Greater Love Church in Houston. She bought shelves and books, and decorated the room with the children’s handprints.

“What a joy to lay eyes on the kids,” said Williams. “They ran up to us and gave us tight hugs and said, ‘Welcome.’ That brought tears to my eyes.

“The children were so excited to receive the books, and they smiled as we took time to stamp each book with the Garden of Hope signature.”

KSF volunteers James Landry and his wife Brigitte undertook a clothing drive among Conoco Phillips employees in Houston, where James works, to help meet the needs of Garden of Hope children.

In addition, KSF volunteers provided medical kits for the children through Project C.U.R.E. (the Commission on Urgent Relief and Equipment).

“Your visit...gave [us] hope and encouragement and made a great impact on the children’s lives,” Waweru told the KSF team. “You have brought about 25 volunteers [to date] who spend their time tirelessly feeding the children, encouraging them and teaching them.”

KSF alumnae were eager to meet us. Tabitha Njambi, a 2010 graduate of Uthuru Girls High School, had to transfer three times on her bus trip to visit us with her four-month-old baby.

The extraordinary story of 2010 State House Girls High School alumna Beatrice Mutethia is told in *Beatrice’s Dream: A Story of Kibera Slum*. She overcame homelessness and sexual abuse before graduating, and then did a course in hotel management, married and started a family.

“I really appreciate the opportunity that KSF gave me to be able to complete high school. I think usually that is the greatest challenge in Kenya,” she told us.

“At least when you’re able to complete [senior year] you get a job as a ca-

KSF volunteers display books in the new library at the Garden of Hope Center orphanage, where some scholarship students live. Jaylan Wright, standing second from left, established the library with a \$4,000 donation from a church in Houston, Texas, and decorated it with hand (and foot) prints of children at the orphanage.

sual laborer, and you can start from there to be able to support yourself to be able to complete the other courses.”

She bought a small piece of land in Syokimau, just south of Nairobi, and built a small house and rooms to rent to local workers.

“At the time I was sponsored by KSF, I lived in a children’s home. Now I have my own house!” she said.

The challenges that homeless and poor children in Nairobi face can seem overwhelming. Each school and orphanage we visited showed how KSF has helped create opportunities where they were scarce.

My mother guides volunteers to take on projects one by one to solve specific problems, rather than attempting to tackle them all at once. This approach undoubtedly contributes to the longevity and success of KSF.

“It was a great pleasure sharing my passion with these excellent volunteers,” she said. “Getting around in Kenya is challenging and time consuming. The volunteers were extremely flexible, yet willing to get their hands dirty, contributing 200 hours during the library project, serving lunches and clothing-drive distribution. I appreciated their love for Kenya.”

To learn more about KSF and its work, check out the website: www.kenyascholarshipfund.org.

THE 31ST
ANNUITANTS
REUNION
HAS
★ 'HEART-OF-TEXAS' ★
FLAVOR

BY ARTHUR CLARK

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ARTHUR CLARK AND BERT SEAL



A Saudi Aramco Annuitants Reunion with a distinct “heart-of-Texas” flavor unrolled just east of Austin this fall, featuring activities like trap-shooting and longhorn-steer riding, plus a trio of banquets—including one hosted by Aramco Services Company (ASC) as a “thank you” for combined centuries of work at the enterprise, and another dubbed a Chuckwagon Buffet.

The Sept. 15-19 reunion, the 31st biennial get-together in a series dating back to 1958, drew 416 retirees and family members, the highest turnout in a decade. Reunion cohosts David and Vicki Jessich, and Bill and Judy Walker, promised an “exciting and fun-filled *hafla*,” offering “time to visit with old friends, make new ones, eat some good food, dance a tad, discover our corner of Texas and have a little fun.”

Above: Cohosts (l-r) Bill and Judy Walker, and Vicki and David Jessich, welcomed guests to the 31st biennial Annuitants Reunion on Sept. 16. Below: Attendees enjoyed Texas-themed table settings, shared their books and enjoyed each other’s company. From right: 104-year-old Johnnie Merritt arrives with friends Judy and Bill Herman; Bill Hayes (left) listens to Shaikh Amin as Rick Snedeker looks on; and Ted and Anne Seymour pose with their latest book, *Traveling in Saudi Arabia—1973*.



Clockwise from top left: Lucinda Davis and Tom Southworth do the Texas two-step to a lively band; a team led by Carol Hudson prepared table favors, including Lady Bird Johnson-inspired coffeepot cookies; Wanda Stults, center, and her partner, Amira Baluchi, blow their duck whistles during an Austin sea-and-shore tour.



Lady Bird Johnson's Cookie Recipe
 Blend together ½ c. softened butter and 1 c. sugar. Add 1 egg and 1 T. cream. Grate rind of lemon and add with ½ t. salt and 1 T. baking powder. Chill overnight. Roll very thin and cut with cookie cutter. Bake 375° 8-10 min.

By all accounts they, and the many volunteers assisting them, succeeded beyond all measure.

“Hafla is Arabic for a family party—the ideal description for a gathering of Saudi Aramco annuitants, their loved ones and friends,” said Basil Abul-Hamayel, ASC president and CEO. “There’s no better word than ‘family’ to describe the ties among Aramcons.”

“In today’s world, where things tend to be more about differences than similarities, it is uplifting to address a group whose friendships have endured the test of time and have brought two cultures together in a special bond,” he said in his speech at the Gala Banquet on Sept. 17.

“You set a strong foundation for Saudi Aramco to grow, prosper and flourish... into one of the world’s leading energy and chemicals companies. You represent the best of what can happen when people work together toward a common goal with mutual respect and integrity.”



“We have launched programs to ensure that Aramco remains relevant, a leader and contributor to the world at large with sustainable energy forms,” he continued, adding that the company is “also setting standards in corporate social responsibility.”

Images of flood damage wrought by Hurricane Harvey screened during that part of his address drew gasps from attendees, and an accompanying video showed how ASC had stepped

up to the plate through major donations and volunteer efforts to help Houston recover after the disaster.

The storm impacted ASC’s Southwest Houston headquarters and the wholly owned Motiva Refinery in Port Arthur, Texas, said Abul-Hamayel, explaining that ASC has since moved to downtown Houston, which “takes us back to the heart of the city where we began operations in 1974.”

He also made note of Saudi Aramco’s efforts to anticipate global needs, including the acquisition of a “strategic interest” in the Saudi Basic Industries Corp. to boost the company’s chemicals portfolio, and the launch of a “massive investment program” to increase chemicals-production capabilities at the Port Arthur refinery.

Basil Abul-Hamayel, ASC president and CEO, closed his address to retirees with a big “Thank You” from Saudi Aramco for their cumulative centuries of service.



Left: Mac Huval enjoyed the fresh air of Lake Austin on the Duck Tour during Amira Baluchi's spin at the wheel. Above: Guests sang to each other as they whirled around the dance floor, wearing garb from "home."

Call for 2020 Reunion Hosts

The cohosts of the 2018 Annuitants Reunion have not yet found hosts or cohosts for the 2020 Hafla. Anyone who might be interested in hosting the event, or would like more information about what is entailed, should contact them at austinhafla2018@gmail.com so that the 62-year-old tradition will continue.

He said Saudi Aramco is also continuing to expand its renewable-energy portfolio.

Furthermore, he said, the company is expanding its role in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Energy Initiative and Low Carbon Centers, and is working with the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., enabling its researchers to make visits to the kingdom "that will help threatened or endangered species."

He also paid tribute to the company's three U.S.-based research centers, in Houston, Detroit and Boston. In one breakthrough, researchers working with engine manufacturers have developed new designs without sparkplugs to achieve "up to 37 miles per gallon in a Ford F-150 truck," he said.

"Please know that your contributions live on and that you have the company's sincere gratitude and respect," he said, telling attendees that "bright young professionals" are following in their footsteps "with a vision, working toward big things."

in class that she had to exile him from the room—until he complained to his mother about "missing story time" and won his return.

"Although you could see he was still restless, he did listen to the stories from then on," said Wernsdorfer, who remembered him fondly. "It's wonderful to see how far all that extra energy has taken him in life! It's always wonderful to see the young'uns grow up and prosper."

Similar serendipitous meetings took place across the expansive grounds of the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort and Spa. Ali Baluchi, an al-Khobar native who attended the Jabal School for young Saudis in the late 1940s and retired as general manager of Community Services in 1990, greeted Shaikh Amin, a Pakistani who joined Aramco in 1948 and retired as chief photographer in 1985.

Ken Swanson shares a laugh with Lyndon Baines Johnson at the LBJ Library.

Abul-Hamayel experienced his own "extended-family" moment at the reunion when he unexpectedly met his preschool teacher, Eileen Wernsdorfer.

"I remember you," he said she told him, "You could never sit still during story time."

In fact, he was so fidgety

Gretchen Justusson, who attended with her husband, Will, lived on the same street as Bill and Mary Smart in Dhahran. She surprised Bill with a big hug at the Gala Banquet.

And Bill Hayes, who worked as a buyer beginning in 1947, travelling around the globe, shook hands with Rick Snedeker, who retired from the Public Relations Dept. in 2011. Hayes, who retired in 1976, recalled that he had carpooled with Snedeker's dad, Al, in the early '50s when they both worked in Aramco headquarters in New York.

Other attendees talked about their surprise meetings with fellow Aramcons over the years. Jo Watts, an artist who lived in Dhahran and Ras Tanura with her husband, Tom, from 1983-90, talked about meeting the late Stella Sturges at church in Stockton, Calif., in the early 1990s. "She was holding an *Aramco World* magazine," Watts said, and that sparked a friendship.





Trap-shooters (l-r) David Jessich, Howard Brown, Eric Madsen, Tom Southworth and Mac Huval get set to blast a clay target. Elaine Trousdell and Walt Owen won the first-ever trap-shooting tournament at a reunion. The foursome of Bill Smart, Rick Sutton, Tom Tirrell and Don Reilly finished first in golf, while Cleo Hutchins won the closest-to-the-hole prize and Dave Sherwood scored the longest drive. In bridge, the winners, in order, were: Stephanie Richter and John Palmer; Pat Vanderford and Sarah Garretson; and Lee and Jeanette Galleguillos.

It turned out that Sturges and her husband, Bob, had moved to Ras Tanura in the late '40s, just after they'd married, and lived in a seven-unit across the street from where Watts and her husband lived years later.

"It's a small world, isn't it?" Watts said.

Johnnie Merritt was the oldest retiree at the reunion. The 104-year-old, who joined the company in 1948 and retired in 1972, came with friends Judy and Bill Herman. She attended a screening of her oral-history interview, conducted last year in San Antonio, and—though seated in a wheelchair—she danced to her heart's content two nights in a row.

The last Annuitants Reunion she'd attended, with her late husband, Jim, was in 1972 in Coronado, Calif.

Merritt and Bert Seal, who photographed for the company from 1955-60, were both named by Abul-Hamayel in his gala speech—Merritt for her seniority and Seal for his continued volunteer service shooting pictures at reunions.

The oral-history interviews with Merritt and Seal were among about a dozen shown. Mostly filmed at the Annuitants Reunion in Monterey in 2016, they brought tears to the eyes of some viewers.

Attendees also got a preview of the

up by Sept. 17, Baluchi said.

"Things have changed dramatically," he said, in part because of the work of annuitants. "You helped Saudis go to the best schools in the world," he noted. "You helped them do the best for their country, the company and themselves."

Other special events at the reunion included:

- a short film about the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture, or Ithra, in Dhahran;
- the screening of *Joud*, a striking wheel-of-life film about the kingdom, produced for Ithra by Todd Nims, an Aramco Brat, and Abdullah Al Eyaf;
- a program on Scuba diving at Aramco by Jennifer Simpson, who lived in Dhahran from 1978-86, becoming the first certified female Scuba instructor in the Arab world;
- a bird-watching walk along the Colorado River, guided by Tom and Patsy Inglet;

- a tour of the Texas Capitol and LBJ Library, and a land-and-water "duck" tour of Austin during which Ali Baluchi's wife, Amira, took the wheel on Lake Austin.

Marge Johannson and her daughter Julie Johannson-Doody may have expressed the spirit of the reunion best. Marge, her late husband, Folke, and their three daughters lived in Dhahran from 1964-82.

"I don't play golf or bridge or computer games. I come to reunions to talk—four days of nonstop talking," said Marge, 84.

"You don't have to know everybody—we're the same family because we all had to go through the same things together: no lettuce, no hotdogs, no marshmallows [at the Commissary]!" she said. Then she went on to describe the community and company support her family received when she and a nurse flew with her daughter, Julie, on a medical emergency to the United States when Julie was 10, in 1969.

After several missed flights because of bad winter weather, they finally made it to Boston Children's Hospital, where Julie recovered and returned to Dhahran with her mom—after more missed flights—and were welcomed by friends who'd provided support, food and prayers while they were gone.

"We're a family," said Julie.

Décor/Bags/Prizes team members pose with some of 400-plus gift bags they prepared. From left are: Jane Archer, Marcia Barham, Mary Dill, Tonie Maheshwari, Judy Walker (team head), Vicki Jessich and Sarah Garretson. Other team heads were: Bill Walker (finances/contracts); Scott Musset (graphics); Carol Hudson and Jeff Squires (tours); Jane Archer and Tonie Maheshwari (registration table); Michael and Melanie Jurlando, and Gary and Fran Patton (banquet seating); Richard Maastricht and Carolina Diaz (photography), Hutch and Barbara Hutchison (bridge); Hal and Marcia Barham (golf); and David Jessich (trap-shooting).





Norma Ackert, Nancy Ackerman, Patsy Inglet



PORTRAIT — Gallery —



Front: Phyllis Stuckey, Linda Shearon, Connie Muncy, Paulette Misanko, Leigh March. Back: Schuyler Stuckey, Jim Shearon, Wayne Muncy, Mel Misanko, John March.



Front: Femmy Zirculis, Christy Maxwell, Adri Bormans. Back: Allan Zirculis, Bob Maxwell, Joe Bormans.



John and Mary Bratt



Bob and Jocie Kaufeler



Khan and Yaz Akmal



Front: David Morris, Tom Ollerhead, Mike Waneka, Rich Maastricht. Back: Patsi Holcombe, Gay Morris, Cleo Hutchins, Al Hutchins, Kay Waneka, Jasmin El-Gohary, Carolina Diaz.



Mary and Bob Dill



Alma Kombargi and Seth Sharr



Vonda Clerke



Mac and Maxine McCurry



Bob and Bethann Brown



Dean and Mary Barber



Front: Janey Depew, Karen Bird, Phyllis Tacquard.
Back: Barry Bird, Rose Anne Scott, Mark Nance.



Marvin and Ruth Stark



Richard and Ann Barr



Front: Iro Smith, Helen Streaker. Back: Ron Smith, Dave Sherwood, Rose Anne Scott.



Stan and Peggy McGinley



Jim and Supaporn Wilkins



Front: Kathleen Stripling, Lisa Squires. Back: Keith Stripling, Jeff Squires.



Jim and Janet Anthony



Lawrence and Penny Olsen



Kathy and Bill Klingman



Johnny and Brenda Javier, John Yee



Front: Patsi Holcombe, Jane Ollerhead. Back: Mohammed Al-Natour, Tom Ollerhead.



Tom and Patsy Inglet



Bob Neff and Jennifer Simpson



Ken and Elaine Trousdel



Melanie and Tom Dreiman



Karen and Terry Smith



Hank and Van Ziegler



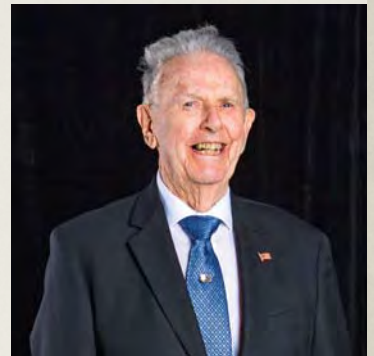
Frank and Judi Cortis



Richard and Shirley Savage



Victoria Fernando and Ed Dymicki



Bill Hayes



Front: Kay Taylor, Karen Eaton-Hinz.
Back: Byron Taylor, Dave Hinz.



Hal and Marcia Barham



Jeanette and Lee Galleguilos



Art Clark and Bert Seal



Front: Cindy Grosch, Margaret Griffith,
Gayle Baldwin. Back: Jon Grosch, Al Griffith,
Chuck Baldwin.



Carolina Diaz and Richard Maastricht



Kristin and Charlie Hudson



Marta Ramos and Jim Milliken



John Dolan



Noel Cave



Tim and Norma Ackert



Stephanie and Eric Richter



Kathy and Les Barnes



Gary and Fran Patton



John and Cyndi Spice



Isaac and Cathy Lewis



Judi Green



Dulce and Walter Smith



Armineh Bezdikian and Melanie Dreiman



Byron and Sarah Garretson



Dan and Lynda Walters



Richard and Linda Safranek



Connie Sutton and Rick Sutton, Terri Roberts



Schuyler and Phyllis Stuckey



Mel and Paulette Misanko



Connie and Wayne Muncy



Grace and Norbert Csaszar



Pat Franklin, Susan Mayernik



John Palmer and Doreen Cumberland



Front: Iro Smith, Kathy Owen. Back Ron Smith, Rick and Tom Owen, Mohammed Al Khalfan.



Fred and Martha Goff



Front: Julie Johannson-Doody, Mary Ellen Kersavage. Back: Tom Doody, Paul Kersavage.



Richard and Peggy Heil



Juana Johnson, Mina Abbasi



Front: Karen Shepard, Trish Jenkins.
Back: Gary Ingraham, Dale Offield, Glyn Jenkins.



Bill and Karen Irwin



Susan and Alfred Hanner



Richard and Nancy Gardner



Glenn and Dee Ann Raz, Lee and Hans Stockenberger



George and Martha Grover



Jane Ray, Anne and Ted Seymour



Steve and Marion Vidal



Dale Brock



Helen and Curtis King



Front: Todd Steinke, Cliff Meyer, Dennis Stanford, Bob Klimpke.
Back: Nancy Steinke, Jackie Feuerbach-Meyer, Deanna Sanford, Norma Klimpke.



Front: Angela Fleming, Linda Gerhardt. Back: Jim Fleming, Jim Gerhardt.



Front: Gladys Turissini, Van Ziegler, Linda Williams, Barbara Hutchison, Judi Cortis. Back: Hank Ziegler, Rich Turissini, Frank Cortis, Jack and Ellen Meyer, Wiley and Judy McMinn, Hutch Hutchison.



Dulce Smith, Cathy Lewis, Jasmin El-Gohary, Geraldine Gossard, Cleo Hutchins, Dana Richards



Karen Morrow, Harlene Morrow, Lisa Hunter



Adele Tavares, Pam Bergman, Vic Crane, Vicci Turner



Sun Down and Lisa Hunter



Front: Karen and John Lemcke, Pam Bums, Barbara Loeb. Back: Brenda and Bob Scott, Judy and Wiley McMinn, Helene and Charlie Rowlette, Charlie Burns.



Bonnie Cook, Adele Tavares, Dee McClellan



Roger and Catherine Peters



Karen and Albert Fallon



Front: Abdulrahman Bayounis, Khalid Al-Mulhim, Basil Abul-Hamayel, Art Clark. Back: Alma Kombargi, Arin Morris, Melissa Altman, Judy Sultan.



Bill and Mary Smart, Christine and Michael Gillett

Family 'Thread' Runs Through



BY MUAZZIN MEHRBAN



More than 100 retirees and their partners from across Britain gathered for the seventh edition of the bi-annual UKaramcons reunion, held in Bristol in southwestern England on Sept. 21-22.

They relished the opportunity to spend time among retirees with whom they had shared garden fences and schools for their children, and with whom, of course, they had worked alongside.

Attendees braved ever-changing weather for a long weekend that included traditional activities such as a golf tournament and a tour of historical sites, topped off by a reception and dinner Sept. 22.

The evening of Sept. 21 featured fish and chips, and a quiz with 27 questions about Saudi Arabia and Saudi Aramco and three about Bristol.

Aramco Overseas President Talal Al-

Marri addressed the group at the dinner. Khalid Al-Mulhim, general manager of Government Affairs at Saudi Aramco, also attended.

"It's been a pleasure to mingle with you all, even bumping into people I know from my early years in Dhahran, which revived some fond memories," Al-Marri said.

"For me, this is the key to the reunions, remembering the good times we have shared together, and I'm proud that Aramco is the reason why we are all gathered here tonight."

The reunion organizers, Veronica and Jim Anderson, and Mike and Sue Higgins, reprised their roles from the 2016 gathering at Stratford-upon-Avon. They followed in the footsteps of the late Tom Henderson, who organized the first five reunions.

Indeed, the golf competition is named after him, and Martin Wingrove won this year's

Tom Henderson Memorial Golf Tournament.

Sue Higgins said the organizers selected the waterfront Bristol Hotel as the reunion venue because it is "fantastically placed—people could walk to places of interest, including the shops."

Although attendees had a wide choice of activities, the most popular pursuit was catching up with friends, and remembering old times together.

The organizers, who knew each other in Saudi Arabia, said their "friendship got stronger" during the months they worked together preparing for the reunion. That mirrored what the attendees experienced at the event itself.

Fond hellos were punctuated by lots of laughter. One question in the Sept. 21 quiz, for example, was, "What is the most frequently called number in Aramco?" The answer: Community Maintenance.

7th UKaramcons *Reunion*



① More than 100 former Aramcons and their partners took time out from reminiscing to pose for a “family” photo at the Seventh UKaramcons Reunion, held in Bristol Sept. 21-22. ② “The key to the reunions is remembering the good times we have shared...and I’m proud that Aramco is the reason why we are all gathered here tonight,” Aramco Overseas President Talal Al-Marri told the group at the AOC-sponsored banquet Sept 22. ③ From left: Carol Summer, Lydia and Peter Large, and Alex and Esther Chivers enjoyed the evening.

That brought a quip from Jim Anderson, who said, “Just last week my dishwasher went on the blink and I took it apart to try and repair it. Veronica was laughing at me as I struggled...and I kept thinking to myself, ‘My goodness I was repairing gas turbines, and now I can’t fix the dishwasher!’”

Anderson and Mike Higgins both recalled the friendliness and informality that prevailed at Aramco, where managers and even the

CEO knew employees by their first names.

“I don’t think the culture will ever change. That’s what makes it unique,” said Higgins, adding that he missed not being able to see “my Saudi friends” made over the years at Aramco.

“They were solid friendships—friendships you can’t replace,” he said.

“We were all away from our origins, so the friendships we made were a lot deeper, because you go through a lot to-

gether, good times and bad times,” said Veronica Anderson.

Jim Anderson compared Aramco to Britain’s civil service, in terms of size and scope. “But Aramco looks after its employees best,” he said.

And employees look after each other.

“That’s the thread that goes through every [reunion],” said Sue Higgins. You feel part of the Aramco family.”



1 Mike and Sue Higgins and 2 Veronica and Jim Anderson, friends in Saudi Arabia, said their friendship grew stronger during the months they spent planning the seventh biennial reunion—the second they have cohosted. 3 Graham Visor, left, poses with Anne and Martin Wingrove—winner of the Tom Henderson Memorial Golf Tournament. 4 Eileen Henderson (left), who hosted five UKaramcons reunions with her late husband, Tom, received flowers from Sue Higgins. 5 Julia and Christine Newman and 6 Dr. Ami Louli and Aileen and Duke Walters were among friends and family members who turned out for the long-weekend event.



Top: Aramco Overseas retirees met the company's president, Talal Al-Marri (right foreground), at their reunion in Voorschoten, just north of The Hague. *Above:* Frits Hoekstra, who attended with his wife, Georgette Hoekstra-Kappelhoff, said he had enjoyed the "team spirit" among engineers in the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia in the 1980s.

ARAMCO Overseas Retirees

CELEBRATE

BY HENRY BAKKER

More than 100 former Aramco Overseas employees and family members continued a tradition June 21 when they celebrated the bonds of friendship and shared memories built on years of service to the enterprise at the annual Aramco Retirees Reunion in Voorschoten, just north of company headquarters in The Hague.

Most of the attendees hailed from the Netherlands, and the majority had served at Aramco's European headquarters. Many had also spent time working in Saudi Arabia, and an even greater number had visited the kingdom on assignments.

"I am impressed by the real sense of community of Aramcons, and we are delighted to see that this reunion offers a real opportunity for friends and ex-colleagues to get together," said Aramco Overseas President Talal Al-Marri in his welcoming address.

"I believe it's important to touch base with you, our retirees, letting you know

about Aramco's progress," he added, saluting their contributions to the company's success.

Al-Marri updated guests on the growth of the enterprise, locally and internationally, and discussed continuing developments in the kingdom.

Attendee Frits Hoekstra joined the company in 1983 after the Mobil refinery where he worked in Amsterdam closed. A process engineer who had focused on energy conservation, he was assigned to a group working in that field in Saudi Arabia.

"My location remained The Hague and Leiden, and I visited various local installations to estimate energy savings that could

be implemented at Saudi plants," he said. "Working in the refinery environment was a familiar area for me and I was able to quickly get involved."

"The team spirit between Aramco engineers was very enjoyable," he said, noting that he also got along well with a Saudi trainee with whom he worked in The Hague. His fond memories dovetailed with those of fellow attendees.

He said he'd like to visit Saudi Arabia again, this time with his wife, Georgette, to meet his old trainee. "As an engineer, you have little time to get to know the country of Saudi Arabia itself," he said, and a return trip would help remedy that.

SUNNY SKIES GREET **Toronto Reunion**

The fifth annual Aramco reunion in Toronto, held under sunny skies at Woodbine Beach Park on Sept. 15, drew 39 former employees and eight guests. Guests included retiree Rafiq Syed and his wife Nasreen, from Hyderabad, India, who attended with

their son, daughter-in-law and three grandchildren.

Reminiscing about the years spent at Aramco, and catching up with friends' activities, were the orders of the day.

Attendees played a game that took them "home" to Abqaiq, Dhahran, Ras Tanura and 'Udhailiyah. They walked to the towns and "parked" themselves in one of them when the gong sounded. When one of the communities was drawn from a pack of cards, those visiting that city had to "retire."

Along with the Syed family and guests Anil, Savita and Arpita Madan,

attendees included Farhat Begum and Anwar Baig, Cathy and Fraser Brown, Marina Burn, Jasmine and Wilfred Carvalho, Delia and Tom Chih, Tamara and Asim Iqbal, Nelofer and Razi Khan, Anwar Khan, Khalida and Salman Khan, Khalda and Musroor Khan, Yasmin and Farouk Khory, Nikita and Raveena Kokal, Wing Kwan, Kiran and Jay Lal, Nabila and Shahid Naeem, Parin and AlNoor Ratansi, Yousef and Fareeda Syed, Farzana and Yousef Sheikh, Ghonee and Donald Thew, and Nahed and Zia Ziauddin.

Organizers Yasmin Khory and Jasmine Carvalho said they plan to hold the reunion again next year, hoping that "more and more" former Aramcons will attend.

Toronto celebrants included, front (l-r): Arpita Madan, and Raveena and Nikita Kokal. Back: Yasmin and Farouk Khory, Kiran Lal, Jasmine Carvalho, Savita and Anil Madan, and Shahid and Nabila Naeem.



'Friendly City' FRIENDS REUNITE

BY CORNELL SEYMOUR

Many years ago Abqaiq gained the title "The Friendly City." Although the origin of this name is disputed, one thing is certain: The people who lived in Abqaiq were very friendly toward each other.

Families and friends with ties to Abqaiq reunited in Houston in August 2017, just before Hurricane Harvey struck, and in Toronto this spring.

Marjorie and Therman Jones hosted the Houston reunion, with their son, Marcus. They moved to Abqaiq from 'Udhailiyah in the early '80s.

Marjorie, considered by many residents back in the day as the "best cook in town," made most of the dishes in our scrumptious meal that afternoon.

Diann and Milton Wood, the first African American family to arrive in Abqaiq, in September 1977, attended with their son, Uhl. Sonja Hall came, too. She lived in Abqaiq in the early '90s with her husband, Bun, and their children, Calvin and Olivia.

My wife Shirley and I moved to

Abqaiq in 1980 and stayed more than 32 years, raising our children, Jamila Oni, Zakiya Ayo, Ayisha Uri and Christopher, there.

Back in 1980, many new-hire bachelors lived in the Aramco Construction Camp (ACC), just outside Abqaiq's Main Camp. Housing more than 40 ethnic groups, the ACC seemed like a "little United Nations."

Seven men in the community formed a bond based on genuine friendship. As we continued our Aramco careers, we stayed in close contact, sharing good news about births, adoptions, promotions, collaborating on various projects at work and even seeking the counseling of one another concerning deeply personal issues.

In mid-May most of our "gang" gathered in Toronto to celebrate the marriage of Anand Koshy to Lisa Koverko. Anand grew up in Abqaiq with his parents, Dilip and Melly, and his sister, Asha.

Along with Dilip and me, the other members of the group who attended,



Old Abqaiq ACC Gang members, who became fast friends in the '80s, are (seated l-r): David Karbach, Simon Peter and Wilfred Carvalho. Standing: Dilip Koshy, Gabriel Fernandez, Bhanu Jain and Cornell Seymour.

with their wives, were Gabriel Fernandez, Simon Peter, David Karbach, Bhanu Jain and Wilfred Carvalho. Only Chacko Abraham, who lives in Bangalore, India, was missing.

We learned that there are several second-generation engineers, along with Ph.D.- and MBA-holders, scientists and others working to improve society—no so surprising for those kids who grew up in "The Friendly City."

KSA REUNION COMMITTEE

Offers Update



Brats Head Back to CAMELBACK for 2019 Reunion

“We’re making tracks back to Camelback! We don’t know if it’s the *jabals*, the night air or the desert feel, but Arizona consistently remains our most popular reunion location. So, we’re heading to the Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort in Phoenix on Memorial Day weekend, May 23-27, 2019, for the 17th biennial Aramco Brat reunion.”

That’s the word from Aramco Brats, Inc. (ABI) Reunion Committee members Bridget Halpin, Jennifer Woycheese Doolittle, Sandra Kerr Louchard (all DH84), Liz Germani, (RT84), Marie Littlejohn Dunn (DH77), Caroline Homolka Masters (RT84), Amber Perkins-Neal (DH86) and Leslie Homolka Craigmyle (DH80). Halpin and Doolittle are chairing the event.

Nestled between the Sonoran

Desert and the Phoenix North Mountain Preserves, Squaw Peak offers newly renovated suites and *casitas*, three restaurants, a 130-foot waterslide, a half-mile lazy-river, an 18-hole miniature putting course, and a spa, salon and fitness center, and well as the Coyote Club, which welcomes kids ages four to 12.

Perks include waiver of the daily resort fee, which offers free wi-fi, complimentary parking, fitness-center use, a round of 18-hole mini-golf, an hour on the tennis courts for two, and admittance to the waterpark.

Reservations should be made through ABI’s group booking page: <http://aramco-brats.com/2019reunion/hotel>.

“We are hoping for a record turnout,” says Doolittle. “Register, hop on your camel, and show up! 2019 is going to be epic!”

“We know Saudi Arabia already has a special place in your hearts. We are working hard to ensure your return only serves to deepen your attachment!”

So say the committee members planning the Fourth KSA Reunion, set to unfold March 11-21.

There have been more than 300 registrations for individuals and family members who have not attended a previous reunion. They come from 15 countries and have retirement dates ranging from 1965 to 2018.

In August, the planning team announced that registration for retirees (and their children) who have previously attended a KSA Reunion would open Sept. 1 rather than Oct. 1, with the possibility of non-retirees being able to apply after Nov. 1 if places are still available.

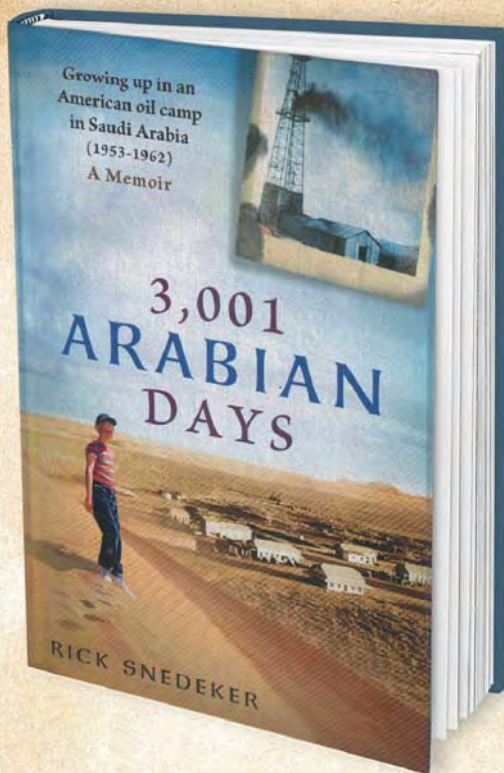
Up-to-date reunion information is available at www.ksa-Reunion.com.

The committee has secured special hotel rates, including wi-fi and breakfast, at the Aloft Marriott and the Doubletree and Garden Inn Hilton hotels near the Mall of Dhahran. They will be served by special buses running daily to Dhahran.

“We are very happy and pleased with the room rates and overall services, housekeeping and readiness of management to do their best to satisfy our dear annuitants and their families,” said Reunion Chairman Ali Baluchi.

Airline discounts have been negotiated with Emirates, Etihad, Gulf Air, British Airways and Delta/KLM. Reunion participants will be able to enter Saudi Arabia from Bahrain via the causeway at their own expense if they hold a passport from one of the 42 countries whose citizens may use it.





Writer Captures Flavor of 'Aramco Camp'

BY ROBERT W. LEBLING

Retiree Rick Snedeker's memoir, *3,001 Arabian Days: Growing up in an American oil camp in Saudi Arabia (1953-1962)*, captures the authentic flavor of an American boy in the 1950s and early 1960s, with the added twist that it happened in a unique place—the community in the desert of eastern Saudi Arabia known as “Aramco camp.”

Snedeker, a journalist, editor and communications specialist who now lives in South Dakota, has assembled an impressive cavalcade of memories and impressions from his nine years as an American kid in Dhahran, where his dad worked in the Traffic Dept.

The paperback, self-published this year, is priced at \$19.95. Conversational in tone and an entertaining read, it is rich with humor and irony.

Significantly, Snedeker returned to Saudi Arabia as an adult for two extended career assignments, with the *Saudi Gazette* from 1982-85 and with Saudi Aramco from 2000-2011. So this memoir benefits from “then-and-now” comparisons between the Aramco experiences of the 1950s and those of more recent times.

Baby Boomers will recognize many elements of Snedeker's childhood, as he tells stories about playing baseball, joining the Boy Scouts and generally connecting with American pop culture. The baseball diamond on King's Road in Dhahran was Snedeker's “field of dreams.”

He also paints colorful portraits of the members of his family, and relates his experiences in Aramco's school for the children of senior-staff members,

as well as Tom Sawyer-like adventures with pals on the streets of the Dhahran.

And yet, this book's main appeal is that Snedeker spent his boyhood in a one-of-a-kind community, built to help meet world demand for crude oil. How many American kids get to encounter Bedouins in the desert or accumulate lore about camels? He fondly recalls camping in the desert and exploring the “mean streets” of old al-Khobar, learning about a culture dating back thousands of years.

Snedeker traveled to Saudi Arabia just 25 years after Aramco's predecessor, the California Arabian Standard Oil Company (a subsidiary of Standard Oil of California) had struck commercial oil deposits near what became Dhahran. He was lucky enough to be there at a pivotal time in Saudi Arabia, as the country was being introduced to the commerce and culture of the outside world, and at the birth of the Saudi workforces and infrastructure that are now integral to the world economy and to the kingdom's vision of the future.

The change under way then is reflected now in the Aramco camp: What was once a largely American residential enclave is now a diverse international community with a rich infusion of Saudi families.

In a sense, to its residents, the old

“Aramco camp” was something of a “utopia” where virtually all one's daily needs were met. At the same time, the human condition is never easy, and Snedeker is not shy about discussing the problems of life in old Aramco.

He talks about death, human frailty and unacceptable behavior. This book is not a whitewash about the early American experience in Saudi Arabia; it is a frank look at what really happened.

When young Snedeker left Saudi Arabia for the first time, he was happy to return to the United States. He was getting “bored,” he says, with his life in Dhahran. But once back in America and settled into a routine, he began thinking about his 3,001 Arabian days, and how much that experience had meant to him.

Dhahran followed him “like an advertising jingle you can't get out of your head.” And as often happens with “Aramco brats,” this led to his return.

Now firmly settled in U.S. heartland, Snedeker laments that few Americans seem interested in what is going on outside their country—unlike the Saudis he grew up with who were fascinated by the looming world and its challenges. All the more reason for Americans to read this book, to understand how each person on the globe is connected to everyone else.

Saudi Aramco Obituaries & Cemetery Records Published Online

BY ROBERT W. LEBLING

Most Aramcons have heard stories about a small, non-Muslim burial ground in Dhahran known as the “Aramco Cemetery.” But few people know exactly where it is or have actually visited it.

A determined group of Aramco genealogy enthusiasts, known formally as the Dhahran International Genealogical Society (DIGS), has put together a book containing a fascinating collection of records on individuals buried in the Aramco Cemetery—plus much, much more. *Saudi Aramco Obituaries & Cemetery Records, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia: Biographic Details and Obituaries Listed in the Aramco Employees’ Bulletin and Historical Notes*, has been published online by DIGS member Margaret Powis, at https://issuu.com/aramco_obits/docs/copy_of_cemetery_011298.docx, for the benefit of fellow genealogists, historians, and interested families and individuals.

The cemetery, which is no longer used, is a serene, grassy plot surrounded by a low stone wall and graceful oleander trees, tucked up against a limestone bluff west of the company community. Buried in neat, regular rows are concrete vaults containing the remains of the deceased, with modest markers on the surface. According to records, 189 persons are buried in the cemetery—the most recent being natal deaths from the 1980s.

Powis, Jim Mandaville and Myron Scoggins launched the cemetery-research project around 1990, and many other Aramcons and supporters were involved.

Completed in April 2000, the book includes cemetery records and mortician’s data, as well as obituary notices and related material from *The Dust*

Rag (1945), *The Sun and Flare* (1946-72) and *The Arabian Sun* (1945 and 1973-80).

It also features a history of the Bahrain Cemetery, where some Aramcons were interred,

and details from the Bahrain Catholic Burial Register pertaining to Dhahran. There is a chapter on the Rome Airport terrorist attack in December 1973, in which Aramco employees and family members lost their lives. The book also features a detailed index, which is a boon to researchers.

“One of the surprises for most of us was discovering the large Italian community which resided here in the early years,” Powis writes in the introduction. “It was even more surprising to find that they came not from Italy but from Eritrea, many from Asmara.”

After World War II, many Italians based in Eritrea who had been interned by the British military were unable to return to their devastated homeland, and when Aramco offered some of them jobs at the refinery project in Ras Tanura they came to work there.

Some died in the kingdom and were buried in the Aramco Cemetery. One of the earliest burials, in the cemetery’s first year, was Carlo Picco, who died in October 1946.

The first person laid to rest in the cemetery was Walter Leonard Mason, an employee who died June 12, 1946, and

was buried that day, with more than 300 people in attendance.

The book also provides interesting details on pre-burial arrangements, organized by family and friends and facilitated by the company. One such program was held April 2, 1948, for Elmo Fullmer at the Dhahran Clubhouse on King’s Road.

Floral decorations were provided by the Women’s Club. The music for the ceremony included “piano solos by Mrs. C. Homewood and vocal selections by the Choral Group.” Mourners then proceeded to the Aramco Cemetery for the interment.

This volume provides an excellent foundation for future genealogical work on generations of Aramco expatriate staff and families—not only from the United States, but also from Canada, Europe, Asia and beyond. It is a priceless record.

In the introduction, Powis thanks Robin Taylor, Dini Burton, Marcus Walsh, Judith Haeussler, Charlotte Dunlap, Robert Jarman, Diane Hancock, Patty Tharp, Ann Berry, Grace Serna, Phyllis Hamilton, Karl and Cindy Tschanz, Michael Buckley, Don Ingeles, Chris Hamilton, Elba Scofield, Karen Kusmez, Cecelia Haren, Mike Gray, Nelson Dalisay, John and Cyndi Spice, Emily Bushman and Randa Owen-Williams for their help.

This photo of the “Aramco Cemetery,” looking toward its north-eastern corner where the palm tree stands, was taken in 1992.



'BOYS' RECALL REMARKABLE HYENA CAPTURE

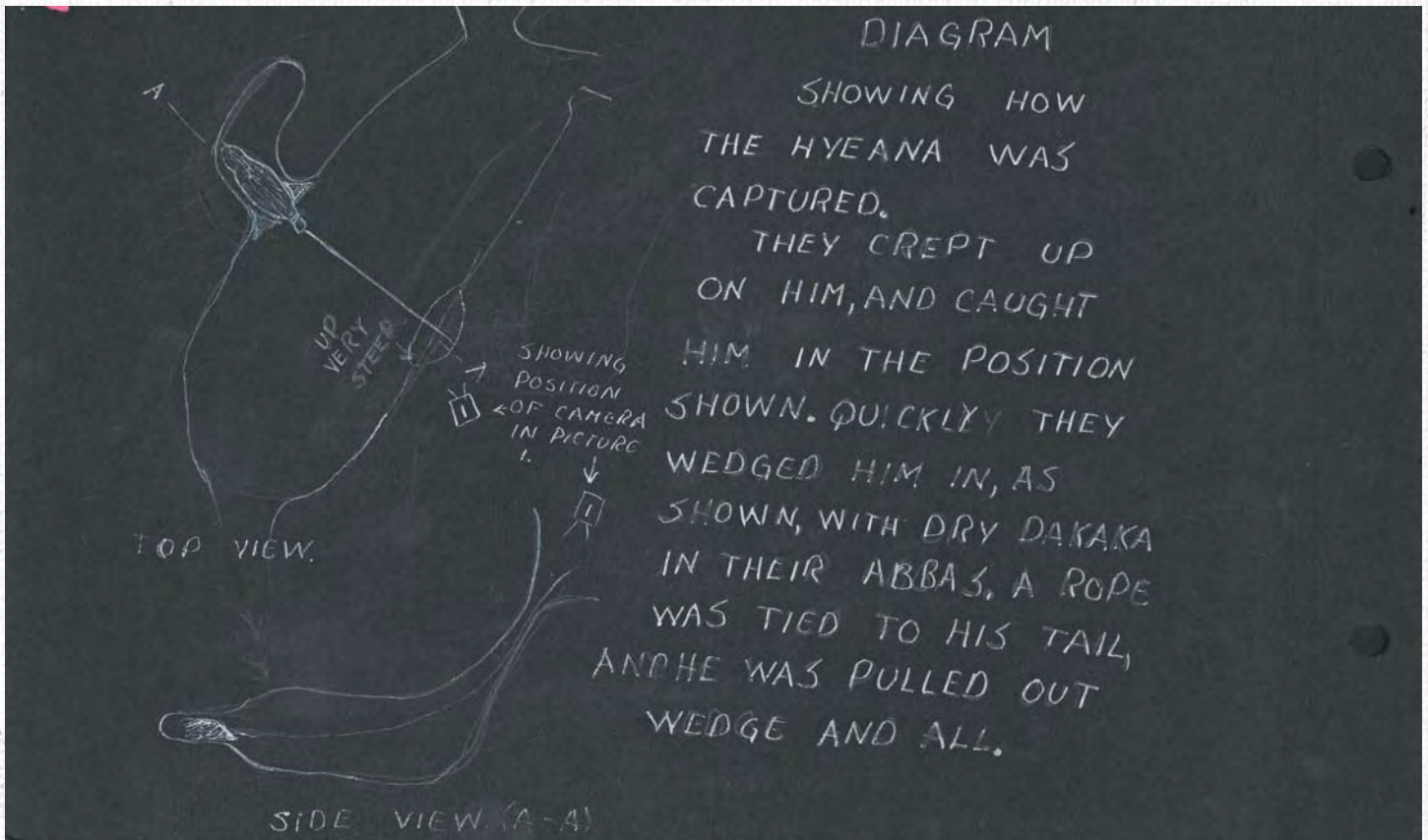
Written by Arthur Clark



WHAT DID TWO DHAHRAN LADS DO FOR FUN ON A FREE AFTERNOON IN THE MID-1940S? HYENA-HUNTING WAS ON THE CARDS FOR 13-YEAR-OLD MILES SNYDER, SON OF LES AND DOROTHY SNYDER, AND BILLY TRACY, 12, SON OF FRANK AND MARGARET TRACY, ONE DAY IN 1946.



Top: Miles Snyder (wearing a pith helmet) and Billy Tracy hold the ropes binding a just-captured hyena at Jabal al-Lidam, north of Abqaiq in 1946. They are flanked by the Bedouin who caught the animal and John Gasperetti, left. Gasperetti's friend, Dorothy Lovette, stands center and Louise Snyder, Miles's sister, is at the right. Above: Snyder, right, and Tracy met in Washington, D.C., in 2015 on the occasion of King Salman ibn Abdulaziz's visit to the capital—where talk quickly turned to their adventure 69 years before.



Snyder, a retired attorney who lives in Sacramento, Calif., calls the adventure “my most remarkable experience with the Bedouin.” And he has an annotated photo album to prove it.

In fact, he titled the outing the “Snyder-Gasperetti Expedition.” John Gasperetti, an Aramco employee until around 1948, was also on the outing, along with Snyder’s mother and his sister, Louise.

It began as a daylong expedition to collect desert plants for his mother, “a fine amateur botanist,” Snyder recalls, but when one of the Bedouin guides spotted hyena tracks in the sand the trip was quickly diverted to trail the hyena to its den.

“The lair proved to be an underground cave,” says Snyder. “Silently, one of the Bedouin guides dropped into the cave, and

found the animal sound asleep with its head tucked into a deep, narrow depression in the cave wall.

“Returning to the surface, the Bedouin wrapped brush in their *thobes*, stealthily returned to the cave and used the *thobe*-wrapped brush to wedge the animal so it could not turn around. Then they muzzled the hyena so it would not bite, tied it securely, and brought it to the surface.

Diagrams and notes in Miles Snyder’s photo album help explain what’s shown in the pictures of Bedouins’ barehanded capture of a hyena in its underground lair north of Abqaiq. Before the sound-asleep animal knew it, it had been caught and then extracted and tied up, to be sent to a zoo.



THIS HYENA MAY NOW BE SEEN IN THE
SAN DIEGO ZOO.



NOTICE A ROPE WAS PUT
IN HIS MOUTH TO PREVENT
HIM FROM DOING MORE DAMAGE.



Above: The captors roped the hyena to make sure it didn't harm itself—or them. Below, right: Billy Tracy watches (center) as Bedouin and Aramcon Jon Gasperetti, right, finish the job. Tracy later said the story of the capture was “so remarkable” it would seem like fiction without photos to prove it, while Snyder recalled being “deeply impressed by [the Bedouin’s] gracious hospitality, rugged way of life and extraordinary tracking skills.”

Shortly thereafter, it was shipped to the San Diego Zoo in California.”

Tracy remembers that the site was Jabal al-Lidam, an outcrop north of Abqaiq and Ain Dar. There, Gasperetti “hoped with the assistance of half-a-dozen Bedouin helpers to capture a hyena they’d spotted and told him about,” says Tracy, a retired Aramco writer and editor who lives in Spokane, Wash.

Gasperetti developed a lifelong interest in Arabian wildlife while working for Aramco, and later worked for the Ministry

of Petroleum and Mineral Resources and the Meteorological and Environmental Protection Administration in the kingdom, says Tracy.

Tracy concurs that the aim was to catch the animal and send it to a zoo, but he thinks it was the London Zoo. However, he and Snyder agree that the bravery of the Bedouin who caught the hyena left them both rubbing their eyes.

“Can you imagine the courage and skill required to perform that capture of such a dangerous animal?” asks Snyder. “My

friend Bill Tracy...and I were delighted. My mother, who returned to Dhahran without a single plant for her study, was furious.”

Tracy remains awestruck about what he witnessed. “How the Bedouin succeeded in trapping and roping the hyena in a tiny nook of an underground cave, then lifting it to the surface before the wondering eyes of the young American visitors, is a story so remarkable that today only the memories of two boys, and some blurred and poorly exposed black-and-white photographs, can vouch for the capture having actually taken place,” he says.



VINCENZO “ENZO” AMENDOLA
August 16, 2018

He went to work in Ras Tanura in 1944 as part of the first group of Italians who signed on as contractors after being interned by the British military in Eritrea during World War II. He joined Community Services in Ras Tanura in 1947, transferred to Engineering in 1948 and became senior project engineer, Southern Area Projects Dept., in 1985. Survived by his children, Gemma and Leonardo.

MARY ELLEN ARCENEUX
April 6, 2018

Survived by her husband, Jess, and children, Howard and Laura. Correspondence may be sent to Jess at 8680 Jefferson Highway, #208, Baton Rouge, LA 70809.

CISSY BOONE
January 13, 2018

She met her husband, Dan, in The Hague, where he worked for Aramco Overseas Company, moving to Abqaiq in 1960. They lived in Abqaiq and Dhahran, relocating to Aramco Services Company in Houston in 1974. Survived by her husband and children, Daniel, Sabrina, Anita, Teresa and Jacqui. Correspondence may be sent to Dan at 2212 El Molino Ave., Apt. M206, Altadena, CA 91001.

BEVERLY “BEV” CLEAVER
July 14, 2018

Predeceased by her husband, Harlan, whom she joined in the kingdom in 1945. She served as president of the Ras Tanura Womens club, as well as a den mother for Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts. Survived by her children, Harlan, Brent and Joy. Correspondence may be sent to the family c/o Eastern Star Masonic Retirement Community, 2445 S Quebec St., Denver, CO 80231.

LUELLA CROW
August 18, 2018

She taught math, science and physical education in Dhahran beginning in 1954 and retired in 1984. A story about her career may be found at <https://education.uoregon.edu/news/crow-52-used-uo-education-degree-unlock-world>. Survived by her sister, Evangeline, and brother, Ray. Correspondence

may be sent to Ray at 503 W. Harrison, Roseburg, OR 97471.

GARY DARBY
July 14, 2018

He joined the company in 1980 and worked in EXPEC as a computer analyst, retiring in 1991. Survived by his wife, Violet, and children, Lynne, Amy and Steve. Correspondence may be sent to Violet at 411 Winery Rd., Floyd, VA 24091.

MARIE DEGNAN
June 13, 2018

Survived by her husband, Michael, and children, Michelle, Mark and James. She worked in the Photo Unit and read the AP News on Channel 3. Correspondence may be sent to the family c/o St. Anne's Church, 1600 Rossmoor Pkwy, Walnut Creek, CA 94595.

DR. ARMAND PHILIPPE
“PHIL” GELPI

January 6, 2017

He joined Aramco in 1959, serving as chief of Medical Services at the Dhahran Health Center, and left in 1967. He returned several times to continue his medical research, and edited a two-volume book with 13 contributors about health care at Aramco. His story about his career, “Doctoring in Saudi Arabia,” appeared in the Fall 2014 issue of *Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah*. Survived by his children, Sam, Peter, Nicole and Carrie.

MERRILEE ANN GOMOLL
July 13, 2018

Survived by her husband, Larry, and sons, Scott and Corey. Correspondence may be sent to the family at 3320 11th Ave. S, Apt. 2, Great Falls, MT 59405.

DR. CLAUDE BARTON
HAGGARD, JR.
April 15, 2018

He worked as an orthodontist in Dhahran, retiring in 1987. Survived by his daughters, Robyn, Teri and Wendi.

DAVID C. HESTER
August 28, 2017

He joined Aramco in 1982, working as personnel advisor/supervisor in Abqaiq and 'Udhailiyah, and transferred to Dhahran in 1990 to serve as a person-

nel staff analyst and Employee Assistance Program supervisor, retiring in 1997. Survived by his wife, Beverly, and daughters, Kristen and Courtney. Correspondence may be sent to Beverly at bhester01@comcast.net.

CLARA ELIZABETH “BETTY” HILL
January 30, 2018

Predeceased by her husband, Ellis, Jr., and survived by children, Eric, Jeffrey, Tim, Tom and Nancy, a former Aramcon. She worked as a secretary in the Computer Dept. Correspondence may be sent to Nancy Hill at 600 De Leon, El Paso, TX 79912, or nhill821@yahoo.com.

RITA MAXINE JONES
January 11, 2018

Predeceased by her husband, Kenneth, and survived by children, Dennis and Kenneth. She worked as a secretary for Drilling in Abqaiq and briefly at Aramco Services Company in Houston after the family left the kingdom in 1970.

HARRY P. LAMB
December 23, 2017

He joined Aramco in 1970 and departed in 1982 as superintendent of Northern Area Maintenance. He was a Little League coach. Survived by his wife, Daren, and sons, Gar, Jon and Harry, Jr. Correspondence may be sent to Daren at 2328 Oak Dr., Fort Pierce (Hutchinson Island), FL 34949, or darenlamb@gmail.com.

JOHN STUART “STU” LILLY
September 7, 2018

He joined the Law Dept. in Dhahran in 2000 and retired as associate general counsel in 2017. Survived by his wife, Pamela, to whom correspondence may be sent at 8200 N. Bellancia, Austin, TX 78738.

CLAYTON LIPPERT
February 25, 2018

He joined Aramco in 1965 as an electrical engineer in the Power Distribution Dept. in Dhahran, transferring to Aramco Overseas Company in 1974 and Aramco Services Company in 1976, returning to Dhahran in 1982. He retired in 1986. Survived by his wife, Venita, and children, Kirk and Kay. Cor-

IN MEMORIAM

respondence may be sent to Venita at 2815 Teague Rd., Apt. 1563, Houston, TX 77080.

VIOLA VIRGINIA LUNDY

July 10, 2018

Predeceased by her husband, Bill, and survived by children, Darrell, Cindy and Jeffrey. The family may be contacted c/o Tucson Medical Center Auxiliary, 5301 E Grant Rd., Tucson, AZ 85712.

KATHERINE Y. MCFARLAND

December 5, 2017

Predeceased by her former husband, retiree Maurice Kearney, and survived by children, James and Stephen. Correspondence may be sent to James at 2214 Bywater Dr., Houston, TX 77077-1781.

JAMES E. NEER

May 4, 2018

He retired in 1985 as senior supervisor,

Medical Laboratory, after a 26-year career. Survived by a niece, Vicki Brown, and a nephew, William Smith. Correspondence may be sent to the family c/o Vernon Family Funeral Home, 257 West Main St., Mechanicsburg, OH 43044.

NINA ROPPEL

June 9, 2018

Survived by her husband, Guenther, and children, Guenther, Jr., Monica, Karl and Andrew. She worked at the Dhahran Health Center and later in the Personnel Dept. and Materials Supply. Correspondence may be sent to the family at roppel@hotmail.com.

DORCAS SMITH

May 27, 2018

Predeceased by her husband, Dr. Cecil P. Smith, and survived by daughters, Suzanne and Sarah. She worked as an x-ray technician at the Dhahran Dental

Clinic. Correspondence may be sent to Sarah Smith at 4180 Kincaid St., Victoria, B.C. V8X 4N8, Canada, or sarahsmith@shaw.ca; or Suzanne at garry.n.suzanne@gmail.com.

MARGARET JEPSON WILLIAMS

December 7, 2017

She joined the Steno Pool and then worked for Industrial Services, retiring in 1997. She was instrumental in recruiting secretarial and clerical staff from Britain and India. Correspondence may be sent to her brother, Graham Jepson, at g.jepson267@btinternet.com.

SHIRLEY WORKMAN

August 9, 2018

Survived by her husband, Philip, and daughter, Lori Workman-Hayes. The family may be contacted c/o Smith Funeral Home, 301 W. Oklahoma Ave., Anadarko, OK 73005.

BRUCE IRELAND: FROM DESERT TENTS TO EXECUTIVE SUITES

Bruce Ireland, whose work in the Middle East stretched from service as a royal engineer with the Arab Legion in Jordan in the 1950s to stints in Saudi Arabia as a purchasing specialist for Aramco Overseas Company from 1971-96, died May 23, 2017. His career in the Middle East "went from tents in the desert to executive suites," said his son, Andrew,

who also worked for Aramco Overseas.

Patricia Cromberge, a fellow retiree, praised Ireland for his contributions to "rebuilding" Aramco Overseas after the oil-industry downturn in the mid-1980s.

He was "straight to the point and very knowledgeable—a 'get-things-done' gentleman," said Anne Fraser, whom he helped hire as a buyer. "At the same time, he was happy to share his knowledge and provide encouragement to the younger, less-experienced buyers."

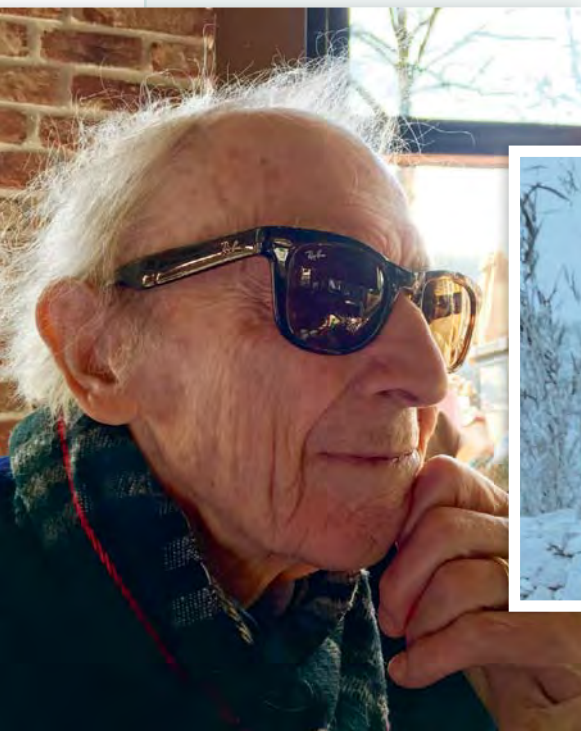
Ireland was on the road "almost continuously during his entire Aramco career," said his son, noting that he was involved "in all engineering, procurement and construction contracting in Europe and played a key role in the Master Gas Program."

Ireland joined the petroleum industry in Iran in the 1950s. His work at Aramco Overseas took him to Houston, London and Tokyo, as well as Dhahran.

He kept in touch with fellow retirees around globe, said his son, adding that colleagues remembered his "adventurous side...as reflected in his early years doing work in the desert without modern communication during a very tricky and dangerous time."

He was predeceased by his wife, Marjorie, and is survived by Andrew and another son, Alistair. Correspondence may be sent to Andrew at andrew.ireland@planet.nl.

Bruce Ireland earned his stripes in the Middle East in the early 1950s as a royal engineer with Arab Legion in Jordan, going on to work as a purchasing specialist at Aramco Overseas, with many trips to Saudi Arabia. He retired in 1996.



MIKE AMEEN

'Generous with Time and Resources'

By Arthur Clark

Mike Ameen, who joined Aramco in 1953, met King Abdulaziz, knew King Sa'ud and King Faysal, and hosted H. St. John B. Philby at his house in Riyadh, died June 25, 2018, leaving a legacy of friendships in the energy industry.

At a party at his home in Kingwood, Texas, honoring him on his 80th birthday in 2004, he proudly remembered the softball team he founded for young Saudis the year he came to Dhahran. One of his top players was second baseman Ali Al Naimi, who went on to become company president and CEO, and minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources. In a message to Ameen on his birthday, Al Naimi wrote that "having played on a team that you coached" was among his most "enduring memories."

Ambassador to the U.S. Prince Bandar ibn Sultan also sent his birthday greetings, along with those of King Fahd, Crown Prince Abdullah and Prince Sultan. "Over your many years of service at Aramco...you have made valued and historic contributions to the health of our oil industry and to the strength of relations between...Saudi Arabia and the United States," he said.

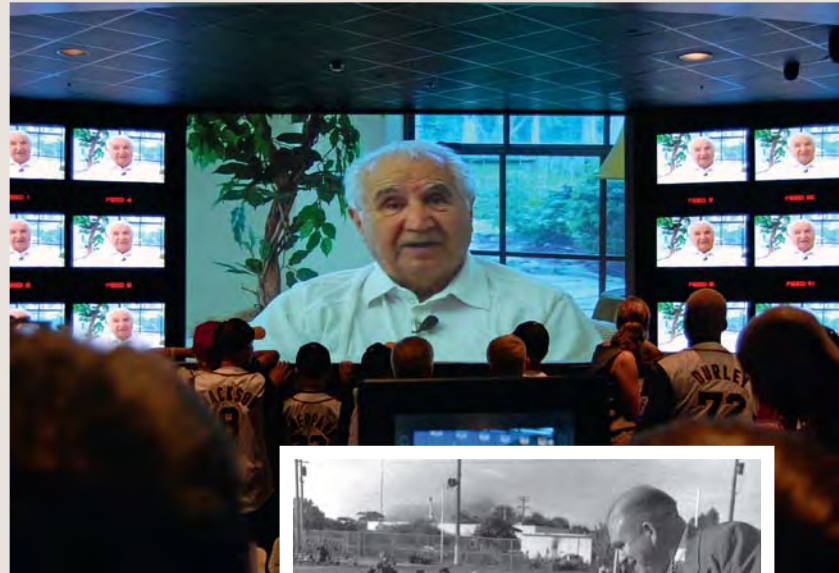
Ameen joined Aramco almost by chance. Wounded as a Marine in World War II, he joined the FBI in the early 1950s—and met the Saudi ambassador on an assignment in Washington, D.C. He asked Ameen, the son of Lebanese immigrants and fluent in Arabic, if he'd considered joining Aramco. Then he gave him a note of introduction to James Terry Duce, who represented Aramco in Washington and New York.

Soon after that, on an FBI assignment trailing communists in New York, Ameen happened to walk past Aramco headquarters at 505 Park Ave. "You know, surveillance is the lousiest duty you can get," he later told an interviewer, so he cleaned up, went in with his letter of introduction, and two weeks later had been offered a job in Dhahran.

He initially worked as head of Intermediate and General Recreation in Dhahran. In November 1953 he moved to Government Relations, meeting King Abdulaziz in Tayif not long before he died that year.

After working in Ras Tanura, he was "exiled" to Qaisumah and Rafha as Trans-Arabian Pipeline (Tapline) representative, he liked to joke. Back from Tapline, he worked for Government Relations in Dammam, moving to the company's Washington, D.C., office for a short time in 1960. He was then assigned to the Riyadh office, where he served for 13 years—most of the time as the company's chief representative in the capital.

Early on he struck up a friendship with Philby, who had been a confidante of King Abdulaziz. That relationship enabled



Mike Ameen (No.30) went from Aramco's sports fields in the early '50s to key Government Relations offices in the '60s and '70s. By video in 2008, he wished the Arabian American Little League team good luck in World Series play.



him to purchase a portion of Philby's remarkable library for the company upon his death.

From 1972-75, Ameen was vice president of Government Relations and director of the Washington office. In 1976, he transferred to Mobil Corp., serving as president of Middle Eastern operations. He retired in 1988, but continued to work as a consultant on Middle Eastern and OPEC affairs.

"He was generous with his time and resources," said Guy Caruso, a U.S. Government energy analyst who met Ameen in Washington, D.C., in the early '70s. "There are hundreds, maybe even thousands, of oil-industry employees who owe a debt of gratitude to Mike Ameen."

"His advice has guided me and remains with me still," Caruso said. "He always said, 'Treat everyone with the same respect, from CEOs to the person who serves you tea.'"

He was preceded in death by his wife, Pat, and is survived by his children, Patrice Demers, Joey Franks, Jack Clay and Jane Michaels. Correspondence may be sent to Jack at jclay239@aol.com.

PLEASANT DAYS FALL 2018

Al~Ayyam Al~Jamilah الأيام الجميلة

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STROLLING IN THE DESERT WITH 'GREAT EXPECTATIONS'

Bob Ackerman, who turned 93 in September, never lacked a walking partner when he and his family lived in Ras Tanura in the 1960s. If neither of his daughters, Julia or Janet, nor his wife, Margaret, was available, then the family's beagle, Pip, went along. "The Ackermans were a first family to bring in a canine pet to Ras Tanura, about 1962," says Margaret. "Our beagle was flown in from Winchester, U.K. He was named Pip as at the time I was listening to a radio broadcast of Dickens's *Great Expectations*. Pip being the protagonist in the story, the name seemed appropriate. He became a great companion for our daughters and adapted well to the Arabian climate."

