

The following article is from the Community News section of the Times-Picayune, published May 6, 2012 and is reprinted here with their permission. Greg Kaminski lives in Slidell, LA and in addition to his activities with the Michoud Retirees and Alumni association described in the article, Greg is a MARS member and has in the past been a regular contributor to the STAR with "News From Michoud" articles. Greg has contributed to LM retirees and to his community for 28 years. Way to go, Greg!!!

Lockheed group honors dedicated servant



The Lockheed Martin (Michoud) Retirees and Alumni recently presented a plaque recognizing Greg Kaminski for his many years of service to the group. Kaminski is a founding member with more than 25 years of service to the organization.

Kaminski retired from the former Martin Marietta (now Lockheed Martin) Michoud Operations in 1984 and formed the Martin Marietta Retirees association. The first meeting was held in a Shoney's restaurant with four people in attendance. In the following months, the group grew as more retirees were recruited. With a substantial increase in numbers at the third meeting, the group moved its standing monthly meeting to Pinewood Country Club in Slidell.

Kaminski's responsibilities were to get the group involved in community activities and, later, to arrange for guest speakers for each month's meeting. A wide variety of speakers were lured to Pinewood to speak at the promise of a free lunch.

Betty Rogers, the wife of a retiree in the group, invited the retirees to judge a science fair at her school. Kaminski arranged for 10 retirees to lend a hand. The aim was to help the children with their projects and later to judge them. As word spread of the esteemed judges, the retirees' judging team eventually was put to work at 10 science fairs each year on the north shore. The project lasted 12 years, until Hurricane Katrina adversely impacted the membership.

Kaminski and the retirees also sponsored a local competition between various classes at different schools on the north shore. The students were charged with the task of designing a space station. The event proved to be a popular success.

Kaminski and several representatives from the group also were called upon to share with students their experiences during World War II, giving firsthand accounts of the country's involvement. Kaminski was a gunner on a B-29 bomber during WWII.

Kaminski believed his proudest achievement, regarding getting the retirees involved in the community, was their role in the development of the city of Slidell's Christmas Under the Stars celebration, originally held at Griffith Park in Olde Towne Slidell. The members were key players in the development of the Parade of Trees and the popular train display that grew from one singular train to five trains running concurrently around a huge man-made mountain erected in the now-demolished Slidell Recreation Center.

Though the picturesque mountain set was destroyed in 2005 by Katrina, the retirees last year resumed their support of the Christmas Under the Stars train and village, now displayed at the Slidell City Hall.

Kaminski continues his involvement with the Lockheed Martin (Michoud) Retirees and Alumni as an advisor to ensure that the younger leadership continues its involvement in community activities.

For details on the organization, or to request its members' assistance with school or community activities, call 985.847.1568 or e-mail grahamrashleigh@gmail.com