

# Arzamas-16 opens its gates ... briefly

Two Lab employees commemorated the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II behind Russian fences. Under the constant vigilance of two security guards and a translator, Alice and Lawry Mann worked and exchanged information with a secret, closed city and celebrated Victory Day — the end of World War II in Russia. As part of the only nonscience delegation ever invited to Los Alamos' sister city, Arzamas-16, the Manns



**Lawry Mann (left) and Boris Nemtsov, the governor of Nyzhny Novgorod region, discuss principles of democracy and free enterprise.** Photos courtesy of the Manns

experienced Russia as few others ever have. And in exchange, they gathered eight days of memories and a small glimpse of what life probably was like in Los Alamos as a closed city.

In January of 1994 Director Sig Hecker and Vladimir Belugin, director of the All-Russian Scientific Research Institute of Experimental Physics at Arzamas-16, signed a joint research agreement. The Scientific Conversion Agreement involves weapons scientists and engineers from both institutions in a series of collaborative projects. The Manns' visit was the first time a visit was allowed for reasons other than science under the agreement.

As the jet lag wore off, the Manns took a train to the fence that keeps Arzamas-16 protected from the rest of the world. A city of about 83,000 people, "it is fenced in just like Los Alamos before 1954," said Lawry Mann who works in Plasma Physics (P-24). "We were invited to celebrate with the city

celebration. The city has kept the memories of wars alive. World War II is called the Great Patriotic War there. It is much different than our emphasis on teaching history to our children," said Lawry.

"They really had so much to share with us. The children had so many questions. It was funny. They wanted to know what 'gotta,' 'gonna' and 'shoulda' meant. They did not understand American slang," said Alice. But they did understand American popular culture. "The children entertained us by singing the Beatles song, 'Yesterday.'"

Helping the children of Arzamas-16 by raising money for medical supplies and educational tools, like computers, televisions and videocassette recorders, is where Alice hope to see more improvement. "The city is lacking in technology, education and medicine; they need help," said Alice. "They are most interested in exchanging ideas in these areas."

In October of this year, Arzamas-16 will send about 15 teachers, students and city officials to the Lab to experience the Los Alamos way of life and learn about business, medicine, education and art. In July as part of the International Science Partners Program, two teachers from Arzamas-16 also will come to the Lab.

"They really need to become an open city before we can make headway and help them," said Lawry. "We have so much, and they have so little — I almost feel guilty."

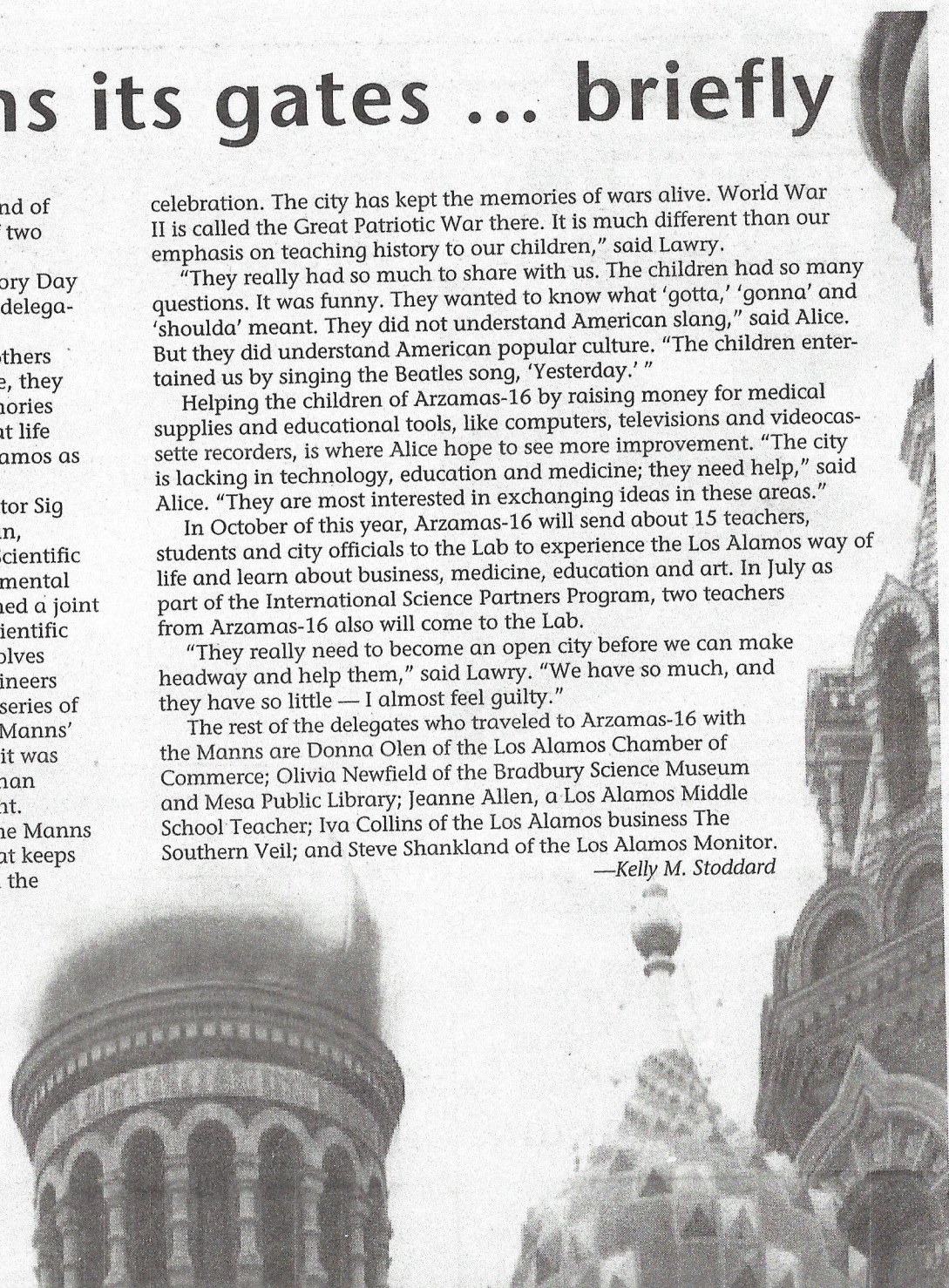
The rest of the delegates who traveled to Arzamas-16 with the Manns are Donna Olen of the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce; Olivia Newfield of the Bradbury Science Museum and Mesa Public Library; Jeanne Allen, a Los Alamos Middle School Teacher; Iva Collins of the Los Alamos business The Southern Veil; and Steve Shankland of the Los Alamos Monitor.

—Kelly M. Stoddard

government the end of World War II in Russia. This was a trip I never will forget."

"They kept us on a tight schedule. It was so interesting," said Alice Mann of Office Administrative Services (HR-Staff). "They think all Americans are like the two American television shows they watch, 'Santa Barbara' (a soap opera) and '911 Emergency.' I think the children were surprised we were not like that."

"Everyone had to have a purpose to enter Arzamas-16. I spoke





never will forget."

"They kept us on a tight schedule. It was so interesting," said Alice Mann of Office Administrative Services (HR-Staff). "They think all Americans are like the two American television shows they watch, 'Santa Barbara' (a soap opera) and '911 Emergency.' I think the children were surprised we were not like that."

"Everyone had to have a purpose to enter Arzamas-16. I spoke and met with the governor of the Nizhny Novgorod region, Boris Nemtsov, and Alice taught the children flower arranging and other crafts," explained Lawry. "I provided information on how our government works and how to be a democratic society. Also, I spoke at the celebration of Victory Day. What an honor!"

Lawry's speech focused on America's appreciation of the sacrifice the Russians made to stop Hitler. "We want a closer relationship with them. We are attempting to regain that trust," said Lawry, whose speech was interrupted by a communist who said America only joined the war after they saw who would win. After a municipal official apologized, Lawry closed his speech with, "It is a measure of a free nation that people can talk like that."

The Manns' experience involved interaction with the children attending school in Arzamas-16, who they noted have a strong appreciation of history. "They are so patriotic. All the children participated in the Victory Day



*After helping elementary-age children from Arzamas-16 create Japanese flower arrangements, Alice Mann tours the residential areas of Los Alamos' sister city. The image at right taken by Alice is of a Russian Orthodox church in nearby Moscow.*

