

Getting the ‘Scoop’ on Lab Happenings

Not everyone knows that BNL has an Envoy Program, with the primary purpose of sharing information about the Lab’s accomplishments and activities. Employees are recruited to be “ambassadors,” becoming well informed about Lab affairs so that they can talk to their family, friends, and neighbors about some of BNL’s main research goals and upcoming events. The successful program is now looking for new employees to join the Envoy team.

The Envoy Program started in 1998. At that time, Lab employee Jane Koropsak lived in Mastic Beach and decided to join the program.

“The Lab wanted employees who were interested in becoming envoys, that is, helping the local community to become more familiar with what goes on here,” she said. “A small group of us attended meetings at BNL to learn the latest news about anything that might interest or affect our neighbors so that we could answer simple questions or refer people to someone knowledgeable on site.

“As an active member of a local civic, the Mastic Beach Property Owners’ Association (MBPOA), it seemed I was a perfect candidate to become a Lab envoy,” Koropsak said. “It was a great way to gain a better understanding of BNL and support the Lab’s community outreach efforts, so I became one of the first employees to join the envoy team. I feel that the relationships I have developed with the community members are worthwhile, so I continue to attend the monthly meetings of the MBPOA, even though I no longer reside in Mastic Beach. “

She added, “You may think, ‘But I, myself, am not associated with a specific community group.’ Or, ‘I don’t want to talk in front of an audience.’ Being an envoy does not require you to give formal talks, nor do you need to belong to a specific group. Being an envoy gives you the opportunity to acquire information on Lab topics so you can talk with your friends and neighbors across a dinner table, on the sidelines at a Little League game, or at a local fundraiser.”

Koropsak admitted that she was somewhat nervous about speaking with friends and neighbors about Lab happenings. “But,” she said, “after attending just a few envoy meetings and listening to presentations on a variety of topics like nanotechnology, NSLS-II, and cultural resource management, I found that I could easily understand the general picture of what was going on. I realized that you don’t need to be an expert on the Lab’s history or current research. The presentations at envoy meetings always give me enough information to engage in conversation. As a bonus, I meet new colleagues and friends.”

The next envoy meeting is April 8, at 9 a.m. in the large conference room in Bldg. 490. This month, there will be a presentation on the Brookhaven Graphite Research Reactor and the High Flux Beam Reactor decommissioning projects. No obligation. Stop in, listen, share. Envoys always welcome new “ambassadors” to the table. For more information on the Lab’s Envoy Program contact Nora Detweiler, Ext. 4458, ndetweiler@bnl.gov.

Note: Employees should obtain supervisory permission to attend meetings.

PHOTO Caption:

Two Lab envoys, BNL’s Jane Koropsak and retiree Tom Muller, who have been part of the program since it started in 1998, look over Lab brochures. Brochures are helpful, but Koropsak and Muller agree that presentations given at envoy meetings on Lab topics are the most informative and useful ways to share Lab news with family, friends, and neighbors.