

The logo for Friends of ORNL is a dark blue rectangle containing the text "Friends of ORNL" in white. "Friends of" is in a serif font, and "ORNL" is in a larger, bold, sans-serif font.

Friends of ORNL

Annual Business Meeting

Dear Friends of ORNL,

This message is your official notification, as required by Friends of ORNL (FORNL) by-laws, that FORNL will hold its annual business meeting on February 10, 2026, starting at 11:50 a.m., immediately before the monthly lunch lecture meeting that starts at noon. The in-person meeting location will be the ETEC Room at the UT Resource Center at 1201 Oak Ridge Turnpike in Oak Ridge (between Dairy Queen and Applebee's Grill). A Zoom option will also be available.

The one item of business for this meeting will be the election of 5 members to serve 2-year terms on the FORNL Board beginning in March 2025. The election process will consist of presenting the slate of candidates selected by the Nominating Committee, asking for any additional nominations from meeting attendees, then voting on the nominees.

The Board consists of 10 members who are elected to 2-year terms. Thus, at least 5 members are elected (or re-elected) each year. The by-laws provide that a board member is eligible to succeed to office twice for a total of 3 consecutive terms (6 years). After three consecutive terms, a board member must step off the board as a voting member for at least a year.

This year the FORNL Nominating Committee is presenting a slate of 5 candidates for election or re-election to the board: Phil Britt, Kathy Gant, Alan Lowe, Lee Riedinger, and Ray Smith. Kathy Gant and Alan Lowe are concluding their first two-year term, and Phil Britt, Lee Riedinger, and Ray Smith will be joining the board for their first term if elected. The five elected board members will serve with Syd Ball, Gloria Caton, Carolyn Krause, Roger Macklin, and Steve Overbury.

**Ellen Smith,
President and Board Member, Friends of ORNL**

Nominee Information



Phillip Britt



Kathy Savage Gant



Alan Lowe



Lee Riedinger



Ray Smith

Phillip Britt

Phil, who retired from ORNL in 2022 after 34 years of service, was the lab's former acting associate laboratory director for the Physical Sciences Directorate and director of the Chemical Sciences Division. He received his B.S. degree in chemistry from James Madison University in 1982 and his Ph.D. in organic chemistry from the University of Texas at Austin in 1988. He joined the Chemistry Division at ORNL in 1988. His research primarily focused on gaining mechanistic insights into the thermal decomposition of oxygen-rich energy resources, such as low-rank coal and biomass. He is a fellow of the American Chemical Society (ACS) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He received the 2016 Henry H. Storch Award in Fuel Science from the Energy and Fuels Division of the ACS and the 2015 (Department of Energy) Secretary of Energy's Achievement Award for his work on the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Technical Assessment Team. Throughout his career, he has been professionally active in the ACS. He was secretary and chair of the East Tennessee Section of the ACS, as well as treasurer, chair, and director-at-large for the ACS Division of Fuel Chemistry and alternate councilor for the ACS Energy and Fuels Division. For his service, he received the Distinguished Service Award from the ACS Division of Fuel Chemistry. He also provided support to DOE where he was chair of the DOE Basic Energy Sciences (BES) Roundtable on Chemical Upcycling of Polymers; panel chair of the DOE BES Basic Research Needs Workshop on Future Nuclear Energy; co-chair of the DOE Nuclear Energy Workshop on Molten Salt Chemistry, and co-chair of the Nuclear Fuel Resources Workshop on Technical and Applied R&D Needs.

Kathy Savage Gant

Kathy graduated from Austin Peay State University with a B.A. degree in physics and mathematics. She received an M.S. degree and Ph.D. in physics, with an emphasis in radiation and health physics, from the University of Tennessee. She retired from ORNL after 36

years of employment and a few more years as a graduate student. She began her employment in civil defense research and moved into emergency planning and management. She developed plans and exercises for DOE and other federal agencies and helped develop the interagency response plans after the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant accident. She traveled to Egypt, Mexico, and Austria for the International Atomic Energy Agency. She is now a district coordinator for AARP Foundation Tax-Aide, helps with the DOE facility tours, sings with the O'Connor Singing Seniors, and enjoys needlework and being a grandmother. She has previously served six years on the FORNL board. If re-elected, Kathy will begin her second two-year term on the FORNL Board.

Alan Lowe

Alan, executive director of the American Museum of Science and Energy and the Atomic History Campus at K-25, obtained his B.A. and M.A. degrees in history from the University of Kentucky. He began his career at the Ronald Reagan Presidential library as an archivist. He has worked for the Office of Presidential Libraries at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. He was acting director of the FDR Presidential Library and Museum. He served as the executive director of the Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy at the University of Tennessee from 2003 to 2009. From 2009 to 2016, Alan served as founding director of the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum. In 2016, Alan was appointed director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, a position he held until 2019. Then he returned to Tennessee where he directs AMSE and the Atomic History Campus at K-25, and, as part of that work, hosts the podcast AMSEcast and the weekly AMSE Science Report on WUOT radio. Alan also is host and producer of the American POTUS and American FLOTUS podcasts. If re-elected, Alan will begin his second two-year term on the FORNL Board.

Lee Riedinger

Lee is an emeritus professor of physics at the University of Tennessee, where he was on the faculty from 1971 until 2019 when he retired. He received a Ph.D. degree from Vanderbilt University in 1968. His field of research was experimental nuclear physics, studying properties of high-spin states in deformed nuclei with accelerators in Oak Ridge and other laboratories. He is a fellow of the American Physical Society (APS) and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He served as the elected chair of the Division of Nuclear Physics of the APS in 1996 and the chair of the Southeastern Section of the APS in 2004. In 1983-84, he was the science advisor to Tennessee Senator Howard Baker, who was then the majority leader of the U.S. Senate. He has held leadership positions at the university and at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, including director of the Science Alliance (a program devoted to building joint research between UT and ORNL), vice chancellor for research, and head of the Physics Department. In 1999 he was one of the leaders of the successful UT-Battelle effort to bid on the ORNL management contract. He served as the ORNL Deputy Director for Science and Technology (2000 to 2004) and Associate Lab Director for University Partnerships (2004 to 2006). He returned to UT in 2006. In 2010 he was appointed the first director of the UT-ORNL Bredesen Center and led new joint doctoral programs in energy science and data science. In retirement he took the lead on writing the book *Critical Connections: The University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge from the Dawn of the Atomic Age to the Present* with co-authors Al Ekkebus, Ray Smith, and Bill Bugg. He serves on the advisory boards of the UT Clarence Brown

Theatre and the American Museum of Science and Energy in Oak Ridge. He received the Muddy Boot Award from the East Tennessee Economic Council in 2019. He has not served on the FORNL board but loves the presentations.

Ray Smith

Ray, who has lived and worked in Oak Ridge for more than 55 years, is the official historian for the city of Oak Ridge and the former official Y-12 historian. While working for 47 years at the Oak Ridge Y-12 National Security Complex and spending time in its wartime buildings, Ray developed an extensive understanding and appreciation of Oak Ridge's history, especially the Manhattan Project era and the technological advances that followed.

He is a commissioner on the Tennessee Historical Commission and a member of the board of directors of the Atomic Heritage Foundation and of the American Museum of Science and Energy Foundation. He is a past board member of the East Tennessee Historical Society and the Tennessee Children's Home. Ray has co-produced the award-winning and highly acclaimed *Secret City: The War Years* and *Secret City: 1945–2006* documentary films that have become the definitive history of Oak Ridge. He has also produced a four-episode television series of 30-minute programs on the history of the Y-12 National Security Complex, *A Nuclear Family*, and the 2018 documentary film, *Ed Westcott–Photographer*. Ray is the author of 18 books of *Historically Speaking* newspaper columns published over the past 18 years, and he has published 10 books of local nature photographs. He routinely leads history tours of Oak Ridge and presents Oak Ridge history an average of 40 times per year at conferences, schools, senior living centers, technical societies, historical groups, book clubs, and festivals. He has taught Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning classes for several years on Oak Ridge history and the Manhattan Project National Historical Park. Ray is the recipient of the Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration's Administrator's Distinguished Service Gold Award, as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award from the East Tennessee Historical Society, the Eugene L. Joyce Lifetime Achievement Award from the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce, the Muddy Boot Award from the East Tennessee Economic Council, the Historical Preservation Medal from the Daughters of the American Revolution, and numerous Awards of Merit, including the Hammer Award.

Appreciation to Departing Board Members

Three current elected board members will leave the board after the February meeting. We thank Ray Garrett, David Mullins, and Ellen Smith for their service. Ray served two consecutive two-year terms, and David and Ellen served three consecutive 2-year terms. David has been FORNL Treasurer for the past six years, and he will continue in this capacity as an adjunct board member. Ellen has served as president of the FORNL Board for the last two years.