



GIPSA News

A newsletter for the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

April 2001

A Mid-Year Review

*JoAnn Waterfield
Deputy Administrator, P&S*



JoAnn Waterfield

It has been six months since I joined GIPSA, taking over what seemed to be, at the outset, an overwhelmingly daunting job. Two distinct programs, FGIS and P&S, were continuing to work to meld values and goals to make one unified agency. And within that agency, P&S is addressing a complex and enormous range of issues. Into that challenging environment, I want to bring vision and leadership to help strengthen both GIPSA and P&S. What I found is a

workforce that wants to bring all of its vast experience and commitment to accomplishing that same goal.

There is a lot on P&S' plate right now. We are starting up six regulatory initiatives, including Livestock and Poultry Marketing Proposed Rules, the Swine Packer Contract Library Rule, and the Non-Reporting of Price Proposed Rules. We, like FGIS, are moving into the e-commerce and e-business arenas. We have two high profile cases in litigation. In the Excel case, we are seeking the highest civil penalty ever assessed under the P&S Act to protect the rights of producers. We are planning an investigation of the major beef slaughterers to determine if formula livestock sellers are being paid properly. And, in the upcoming months, our payment policy for cattle found to contain illegal drug residues will be a hot issue in the market.

Perhaps the clearest lesson I have learned in recent months is that we are strongest working as a team. Just look at our "to do" list - - there is no way any individual could get so much done. But, together, we are taking on these issues and making an impact in the market.

In GIPSA, in our daily interactions with the industries we serve, we can see firsthand the need for the role that we play -- for us to help level the playing field and protect the rights of all market participants. These past months have only strengthened my commitment to our mission. I see that same commitment on the grain side of the house; and, I am sharing that commitment with every member of the P&S team. Thanks to each of you. There is much to do, and I look forward to all that we can accomplish together.

Names in the News

Personnel

Farewell to **Shawn Beach**, marketing specialist, Denver, who accepted a position with American Century Investments.

Farewell to **Jerry Douglas**, auditor, Atlanta, accepted a position with the U. S. Treasury Department.

The Office of Policy and Litigation Support, Washington, DC, welcomes new staff member **Jens Knutson**. **Jens** comes from the American Meat Institute, where he was chief economist and vice president of regulatory and industry affairs. In his 21 years at AMI, he was in frequent contact with GIPSA staff on a variety of industry issues. He looks forward to continuing those relationships and to his work in OPLS' Competition Branch

Farewell to **Paul Manol** who left the Standards and Procedures Branch to become the Agricultural Marketing Service's Fruit and Vegetable Division's new International Standards Coordinator.

Jay Mitchell, formerly with the Economic and Statistical Support Staff, has become a member of the FGIS Market Analysis and Standards Branch. **Jay** will be providing economic support to the grain program.

Farewell to **Kay Seuferer**, marketing specialist, Des Moines, who is pursuing a business venture.

The Compliance Division's Review Branch thanks the following field-based people who assisted Branch team coordinators with conducting reviews of field offices and official agencies during the second quarter of fiscal year 2001. **Chuck Britton**, quality assurance specialist (QAS), California Federal Office, **Joe Hearn**, QAS, League City Field Office, and **Judy Johnston**, office support assistant, Wichita Field Office, helped evaluate the Stuttgart Field Office, and its Greenville, Mississippi, and Jonesboro, Arkansas, Suboffices. **Gary Zella**, QAS, Stuttgart Field Office, and **Denise Ruggles**, office support assistant, Cedar Rapids Field Office, helped evaluate the League City Field Office during a follow-up compliance review. **Mark Wooden**, agricultural commodity grader (ACG), Kansas City Field Office, helped evaluate Northeast Indiana Grain Inspection, Inc., and Schneider Inspection Service, Inc., located in the Toledo Field Office circuit. **Mitch Doak**, ACG, Kansas City Field Office, helped

evaluate Central Illinois Grain Inspection Service, Inc., Decatur Grain Inspection, Inc., and John R. McCrea Agency, Inc., located in the Cedar Rapids Field Office circuit. **Vicki Lacefield**, agricultural marketing specialist, Policies and Procedures Branch, Field Management Division, helped evaluate Fostoria Grain Inspection, Inc., during a follow-up compliance review. **Bill Ashley**, deputy director, Executive Resources Staff, helped evaluate the financial operations of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and the Stuttgart and League City Field Office circuits. Our thanks go to these folks for helping us succeed in the Review Branch's mission.

Awards

Rose Alexander, secretary, and **Raymond Minks**, assistant to the director, Washington, DC, received spot awards for their high level sustained program support.

Joycelyn Ballard, ACT, New Orleans, received a time-off award for training several of the new employees while performing her duties.

Bill Bates, **Martin Begley**, **Robert Lijewski**, and **Byron School**, Washington, DC, received time-off awards for providing assistance during the recent Field Management Division relocations, which resulted in minimal disruptions.

Continued, see Names on page 3.

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Names, from page 2.

Dean Brown, John Carlson, and **Howard Suter**, all of League City, received spot awards for extra effort in helping train personnel on the automation project at Farmland Elevator.

Lee Cooper and **Alan Wadyko**, League City, received spot awards for providing exceptional and efficient service to external customers.

Kenneth Dempster, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for doing superior work in grading, preparation of commodities, sampling and automation.

Rose Fremin, secretary, New Orleans, received a spot award for doing an exceptionally competent job with the field office uniform program.

Florence Hamm, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for doing an outstanding job in grading, sampling and automation.

Cherone Harness, ACT, New Orleans, received a time-off award for training several of the new employees while working at ADM-Ama.

Craig Hoover, League City, received a spot award for outstanding effort in the successful completion of the Automated Project at Farmland Elevator.

Jefferson Johnson, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for coming out on short notice to accommodate the floating rig and provide service to the applicant.

Elsie Jones, ACT, New Orleans, received a time-off award for training two new employees at Bunge Elevator while performing her regular duties.

Stephen Michel, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for setting up examples for personnel to follow for Starlink testing and for documenting the monitoring process.

William Napoleon, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for taking action to recognize and avoid potential problems in grading at Cargill Westwego, and for great grading and documentation results.

Joann Perrilloux, ACT, New Orleans, received a time-off award for coming out on short notice to accommodate the floating rig and provide service to the applicant.

Carl Provenzano, ACT, New Orleans, received a time-off award for being attentive to details in identifying potential problems with weevils, lumps, and stones at Harvest State and Cargill Westwego.

Gerald Raymond, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for doing superior work in grading, preparation of commodities, sampling and automation.

Wilbert Rollins, ACG, New Orleans, received a time-off award for consistently exhibiting initiative and alertness in recognizing potential problems.

Clemmie Smith, League City, received a time off award for providing timely inspection results.

James Young, ACG, New Orleans, received a spot award for outstanding grading at Peavey. His alertness and attention to duty at Peavey avoided down time and prevented a discharge.

Condolences

Ed Coles, retired P&S employee, passed away on February 14, 2001.

Riley "Possum" Andrus passed away on March 13, 2001. **Possum** retired from the Lutchter, LA, office in July 1981. He was 74, residing in Baton Rouge, and working for Caleb Brett at the time of his death. **Possum** is survived by his wife **Yvonne**, two daughters, and two sons.

Length of Service Certificates

Again, MRP-BS Minneapolis Business Site is experiencing a delay in getting 10-, 20-, 30-, and 40-year length-of-service award certificates. Also, the 25-year length-of-service certificate has been on backorder for the last two quarters. As soon as these certificates are available, we will get them to everyone.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): New-and-Improved for 2001

Mack Manis, Washington, DC

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) recently went through its cyclical procurement for services. As a result, Federal Occupational Health (FOH) has awarded its new contract to Magellan Health Care.

The transition from the previous service providers to Magellan is nearly complete. For the most part, the transition has been seamless. GIPSA employees will be able to call the same telephone number —**1-800-222-0364**—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for service. Most of the “old” on-site counselors are now working for Magellan. And, rather than having to deal with multiple contractors, as in the past, one contractor (Magellan) will provide service to all GIPSA offices, including headquarters.

FOH has also added several new and exciting features to our EAP package, including Legal and Financial Consultation and Web-Based services.

■ **Legal and Financial Consultation.** Under the new EAP agreement, licensed attorneys will be available to provide general legal services such as follow-up letters to third parties, review of documents, advice on wills and powers of attorneys. Additionally, qualified financial advisors will provide telephonic consultation on general tax issues, financial planning, investment strategies, and family budgeting and debt reduction.

Accessing either the legal or financial services is easy. Simply call the EAP toll-free telephone number (**1-800-222-0364**) and asked to be connected with a lawyer or financial expert.

■ **Web-Based Services.** Currently, FOH has a web site under construction and upon its completion, we will have access to a variety of EAP materials including health and wellness training, supervisor training, union briefings, and employee orientation. In addition, there will be EAP promotional material available for you to access via the web.

Disability Civil Rights Laws

*Debbie Shipman,
Washington, DC*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination on basis of disabilities in employment, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications.

To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability. ADA defines an individual with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and a person who has a history or record of such impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered.

Title I requires employers with 15 or more employees to provide qualified individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from the full range of employment-related opportunities available to others.

Continued, see Laws on page 5.

Who, What, When, Where, Why

What do you know about this photo?
Please contact Ray Hart, 202-720-1583, rhart@gipsadc.usda.gov, if you know who, what, when, where, and/or why...





GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

Norma Phelps, Washington, DC



Here are the ideas received on the GIPSA Idea Hotline during March 2001. If you have questions about any ideas or the Hotline, please call me at 202-720-1017.

Suggestor

Suggestion

Judy Johnston, Wichita, KS	Create An Editor Position to Proof-Read Directives and Publications
Gail Thuner, Des Moines, IA	GIPSA Should Provide An Employee Manual to All GIPSA Employees
Robert Petersen, Moscow, ID	Provide Ability for Apply for 15,000 Metric Ton Exemption Online on GIPSA Website
Ray Hart, Washington, DC	Request APHIS Send An All Employee E-Mail When Changes are Made in the Human Resources Desk Guide
Ahmad B. Gorabi, Des Moines, IA	Tie Employees' Objectives Into The Goals of the Agency

March's tee-shirt winner: **Gail Thuner!**

GIPSA Hotline Ideas Accepted and Approved for Implementation During March 2001

This list does not necessarily indicate that the idea was implemented as suggested or that it is currently in place (it could be in the development/implementation stage). To avoid the chance of misinterpretation, please call the Hotline if you have any concerns or questions regarding the following list of ideas.

-  GIPSA Should Provide An Employee Manual to All GIPSA Employees
-  Tie Employees' Objectives Into The Goals of the Agency

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline via e-mail: gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.usda.gov; FAX to 202-720-1015; or telephone 800-455-3447 or 202-720-1013. **We encourage you to send ideas via fax or e-mail to reduce the possibility of transcription errors; however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method you choose to use.**

Are EEO/CR issues or concerns affecting your employment with GIPSA?

Do you have questions?

Need help?

Then let your voice be heard.

Call the EEO Advisory Committee at...

1-800-639-5167

Civil Rights Hotline



For example, it prohibits discrimination in recruitment, hiring, promotions, training, pay, social activities, and other privileges of employment. It restricts questions that can be asked about an applicant's disability before a job offer is made, and it requires employers to make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities, unless it results in undue hardship. For more information regarding ADA job accommodations, please contact the GIPSA Civil Rights Staff.

The Air Carrier Access Act prohibits discrimination in air transportation against qualified individuals with physical or mental impairments. It provides this service only to carriers of regular scheduled flights for hire to the public. Requirements address a wide range of issues including boarding assistance and certain accessibility features in newly built aircraft and new or altered airport facilities. Individuals may enforce their rights under the Air Carrier Access Act by filing a complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation.

For more information, contact the GIPSA Civil Rights Staff or:

Aviation Consumer Protection
Division
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Room 4107, C-75
Washington, D.C. 20590
www.dot.gov/airconsumer
(202) 366-2220 (voice)
(202) 755-7687 (TTY)

Information: Quality or Quantity?

Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC

Today's workplace has a variety of information sources. It is critical to learn which tool to use and how to use it and to conscientiously create less but better information. Consider the receiver, the message, and the medium for delivery. Email and voicemail are tools — efficient ways of communicating small bits of information without making contact.

Voicemail. The purpose of voicemail is to deliver a piece of information when the receiver is unavailable; it is not to engage in a conversation or deliver information that has to be retained. Its three key features are that it is always available, it can be personalized, and it supports brief messages. Be clear and do not repeat—the receiver can replay the message if necessary.

Email. Email has many benefits: it is always available, it has no time constraints, it is fast and cost-effective, it allows exchanges of the same information to multiple persons simultaneously, and it allows for record-keeping. Email waste is increasing, so proper use of this tool is becoming more critical. Here are some pointers.

The email subject line should be a concise message identifying what the message concerns. The receiver should not have to open the message to identify that important fact. Use the addressing options correctly. Use TO: for people who must act on your message; CC: for people who need to know but don't need to take any action; and, BCC: for people who don't need to be identified but need to be aware of the exchange. The correct use of these enables the receiver to know what is expected of them.

Email cannot make a message clear or congenial—as the writer, you must do that! Take time to say exactly what you mean. Choose each word carefully. Hastily written emails can result in many problems. And remember that email isn't the recommended tool for exchanges that are interpersonal, confrontational, or controversial.

Too many emails and too many resulting hard copies are causing problems—excess information. Less can be more! Reevaluate your communication patterns. Are you part of the “too many communications, too much information” problem? Are you printing everything? Is all of your email meaningful and necessary?

As someone who produces information, we each need to assess our role and be a good steward. Are you contributing to the information excess? Continually consider whether your voicemails and emails add value or just increase the volume of information exchanged.

(Based on an article by Jeanne L. Allert, Training and Development Magazine, February 2001.)

Help for you.

For confidential assistance,
call your Employee
Assistance Program

Washington, DC personnel, call...
301-570-3900
or 1-800-222-0364

Field personnel, call...
1-800-222-0364

Black History Month Celebrations

Washington, DC

Dennis Murray

On February 14, 2001, GIPSA DC headquarters added to USDA celebrations of Black History Month by hosting one of its own. **Sharon Williams**, Black Emphasis Program Co-manager, hosted an inspirational program that included **Anthony Browder**, Cultural Historian and Director, The Institute of Karmic Guidance, and **Al Hall**, Forest Service employee, lecturer, poet, and author of two books: [There's Nothing Going Wrong With Your Head](#) and [It's Trimmed in White If Color Makes Any Difference To You](#).

Black History Month means many different things to African Americans across our nation. Some think of the struggles for equal rights of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or Malcolm X. Others struggle with unpleasant memories that include the harsh times of slavery. But, if we travel back 1,000 years, we can find a history of great achievements by our ancestors and their many contributions to society. Egypt, West Africa, and South Africa have provided this country with experts in science, architecture, agriculture, and mathematics. Africans built the great pyramids, developed the first crop irrigation systems, and developed the modern calendar. African Americans have turned historical challenges into education, true knowledge of history, religion, and the celebration of our culture and heritage.

Sharon opened our program by saying "we are here to celebrate our heritage." Our first guest, **Al Hall**, created a backdrop for his poetry by speaking about Black history. His poem "Status Quo" brought the audience to its feet. All of his poems were clear and concise with themes of yesterday's and today's Black culture.

Keynote speaker **Anthony Browder** talked about the history of African Americans and their contributions. He focussed on symbolism, economics, culture, education, and other critical elements of African history. He pointed out several ancient Egyptian symbols are depicted on buildings and elsewhere in modern culture. The Egyptian falcon, with its oversized wings, for example, is depicted as an eagle on the back of some U.S. currency. He spoke of cultural diversity and the misunderstandings and misconceptions many have about African-Americans.

This year's USDA-sponsored Black History Month programs truly provided insight into the culture, history, and the many issues facing African Americans today.

Technical Center

Luccile Clark, Kansas City, MO

Lewis Diuguid, vice president, Community Resources, The Kansas City Star, was the Black History Month featured speaker at the Technical Center on February 22, 2001. His presentation "Creating a New Black History for the 21st Century" was about understanding that being Black is more than just the color of one's skin. It is the rich history and heritage that helped step from slavery to freedom and then leap toward equality in the closing years of the last century. He stressed that we must take that same promise into this new century by learning our history and sharing it with others so that we will know our past and have a direction for ourselves and our children today and in the future.

As feature writer for the Opinion Section of the Kansas City Star, Mr. Diuguid received many letters that shared the same clear message – everyone must see people of color as the truly valued contributors to this society that they really are. Everyone has to accept us and go beyond tolerance, and not dismiss our history, our heritage, and our contributions to America. He suggested that change will only occur and the demonization of people of color will only disappear if all of our history, our literature and our stories are included in the books, teachings, and media of America.

People of different cultures, races and heritages help move American corporations from a historical mono-Eurocentric culture to one that recognizes that one size does not fit all and that diversity is our strength. It is his hope that schools, universities, churches, civic and social groups and other American institutions will get with this new multicultural program. Each of us in our own way must assume responsibility for the knowledge we have and the information we possess. Knowledge is power but knowledge and information also brings with it a tremendous burden, so we must get more people to understand diversity of Black history.

Mr. Diuguid's talk was very well received by all the staff at the Tech Center and the luncheon was the best one ever!

E-mail Netiquette

Carol Remmers, Washington, DC

The Internet has developed rapidly and with its own culture, ethics, and etiquette, particularly when it comes to e-mail. Here are some general ideas and GIPSA-specific information to help you use your e-mail more efficiently, securely, and in keeping with e-mail "netiquette":

GIPSA e-mail and Internet access are there to enhance business capabilities. A reasonable amount of personal use, within certain limits, is authorized. Here are some basic guidelines to remember:

- Personal use of IT systems must not interfere with official business, and must take place on an employee's own time. Use common sense and good judgment when using government resources.
- You must not use government resources to earn outside income or for private gain.
- You must not use government resources for activities that are inappropriate or offensive to coworkers or the public, such as the use of sexually explicit materials or remarks that ridicule others on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, handicap, national origin, or sexual orientation. (Remember, these restrictions are ALWAYS in place, even during personal use!)
- Use an effective e-mail password, preferably one different from your network or other password, and change your e-mail password often (every 90 days is recommended). Good password security is fundamental to protecting your e-mail account and other access.
- Don't share e-mail accounts or passwords--you may be held respon-

sible for what someone else does. If mission requirements dictate that you give others access to your e-mail, use mail forwarding or set your user preferences to use other mechanisms that don't require password sharing.

- Close down your e-mail when away from your desk to prevent snooping in your absence.
- Your GIPSA e-mail messages or Internet use is not private. These are government-owned systems and may be monitored for a variety of reasons.
- You may access, or try to access, only the e-mail account and messages for which you are authorized. Snooping, monitoring, or accessing others' e-mail without their expressed consent is prohibited, except for authorized personnel under specific circumstances.
- Always use the subject line on e-mail messages and try to keep to one topic per message.
- If you get a lot of e-mail, establish a "triage" system to sort important items from chaff. Scan subject lines and delete messages you don't need to know or act on.
- Keep messages short. If you are creating long e-mail messages, it may be better to meet or telephone. Personal conversations include voice, speech, and body language clues that may lead to greater understanding of your message — clues that written communications can't easily convey.
- Don't send unduly large files or attachments such as video files. They can cause network congestion and delays.
- Don't send e-mail when you're angry or tired. Chill out. DON'T FLAME—i.e., send a hostile or abu-

sive message or one typed in all capital letters (the electronic equivalent of shouting).

- Don't say anything in an e-mail that could be embarrassing. You may delete it, but others can save it. E-mail messages have even been used in court cases.
- Address your e-mail to the proper recipient(s). Many people have similar names; and membership in e-mail groups often changes, leading to errors. Be careful when posting or responding to messages on a discussion list; are you sending to one person or to everyone on the list?
- Never, never forward chain e-mail. It wastes time and resources, creates an unprofessional image, and violates GIPSA standards.
- Check files attached to e-mail messages for viruses before opening them. Be especially suspicious of attached files that have unusual extensions (.shs or .vbs, for example, instead of the usual .lwp, .txt, and .doc). E-mail-borne malicious code has become a plague in recent months.
- Delete it! Don't let e-mail unduly accumulate. It wastes system storage resources.
- Treat others as you wish to be treated. Think twice before you click on "send."

Remember, your e-mail messages represent you and GIPSA. Sending an e-mail from an agency/unit mailbox or address is like sending a letter on official letterhead and may be interpreted as GIPSA endorsement or policy. There is a new GIPSA directive about e-mail privacy and security. Take time to read it for further information.

Travel Bits & Pieces

Peggy Smith, Washington, DC

Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE). The incidental expenses allowance is always \$2 per day no matter what the M&IE rate is when travel is performed within the continental United States. An employee's obligation, under the prudent person rule while traveling on official business, is to exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business. All expenses may not be necessarily incurred, and the intent is that at \$2.00 per day (i.e., 5 days of travel @ \$2 = \$10), the traveler is adequately reimbursed. Incidental expenses covered by per diem include fees and tips to porters, baggage carriers, bellhops, hotel maids, stewards or stewardesses and others on vessels, and hotel servants in foreign countries.

Meals Furnished at Nominal or No Cost by the Government. Your M&IE rate must be adjusted for a meal or meals furnished to you by the Government or included in a registration fee, whether or not the meal is consumed. If you have special dietary requirements, most vendors will accommodate you if you make a request in advance. The amount that must be deducted from your M&IE will be determined by the appropriate M&IE rate.

Energy Surcharge. Lodging facilities in the State of California, as well as other various States (including, but not limited to Washington, New Mexico, Colorado, etc.) have or are adding an energy surcharge to their daily lodging rates. The energy surcharge is fully reimbursable as a miscellaneous expense.

GIPSA Headquarters Celebrates Women's History Month

Linda Alston, Washington, DC

GIPSA HQ observed Women's History Month with **Kate Campbell Stevenson**. **Kate** is a costumed performer, who portrays many women from history. Her program is called, "*Women: Back to the Future*", she created and wrote the program.



Kate as Sacagawea

With on-stage costume and make-up changes, **Kate** transforms herself into Sacagawea, a 17-year-old Shoshone Native American, who traveled as an interpreter with the 1805 Lewis and Clark expedition. She proved to be essential because of her knowledge of the territory and which plants and roots could be used as medicine or were edible. The presence of Sacagawea and her son (she carried him on her back during the expedition) promoted a sign of peace.

Kate takes us all by surprise as she changes from a 17-year-old Native American to **Lucy**

Stone, a 65-year-old White woman, who in the middle 1800s, advocated for the abolition of slavery and lectured around the country on women's equality rights. Lucy's speech at the first national women's rights convention in 1850 converted **Susan B. Anthony** to the women's rights cause.

Again, with make-up and costume changes, **Kate** takes us to the early 1900s as a boisterous and vibrant African-American, **Bessie Coleman**, the first female aviator. Because no aviation school in American would teach her to fly, **Bessie** received her aviator's license in France and advanced training in Germany, Holland and France. She returned to the United States, appearing in air shows around the country as a stunt pilot.

From courageous and outspoken, **Kate** becomes **Rachel Carson**, a soft-spoken, monotone woman who tried to prove that DDT and other agricultural chemicals were harming both nature and humans. Through **Kate's** songs, we learn the thoughts and emotions of **Carson** as she fought cancer and testified in front of the Senate about the negative effects of pesticides on nature.

From soft-spoken and ill-health **Rachel Carson**, **Kate** becomes herself again. She states that the women she portrays overcame barriers to achieve the goals they had set for themselves. **Kate** reminds us that we should write down our goals and not let anyone tell us that we cannot achieve them. We should also write down our stories because years from now those stories may be the inspiration for someone else.

You can visit Kate Campbell Stevenson's website at <http://www.katecampbellstevenson.com>.

Good Advice: Learning to Love Your Job

Leah Akbar, Washington, DC

The following excerpted article by **Kathy Simmons** appeared on MSN.com's Career web site. I thought it offered some really good advice...

Readers from the South are, no doubt, familiar with kudzu—a prolific vine that wraps itself around other vegetation, strangling the life out of it. Does this sound like what your job is doing to you? Rather than helping you to blossom, is your job running you over like a lawnmower? Stop the madness! You spend too much time at work to be miserable. Cut through “career kudzu” by putting the following advice into action.

Be Honest With Your Boss.

Your boss may be talented and inspirational, but probably not a mindreader. If you are frustrated at work, speak up. Your boss has a right to know if you are feeling undervalued, burned out, or desperately in need of a more flexible schedule. There are, of course, ways to conduct this talk so that you don't sound whiny or hopelessly confused. You may be more appreciated and have more options than you thought. A good boss can give you strategies to pull your attitude out of a funk. Give it a chance, and be honest in your discussion.

Let the Job Bring Out Your Best. If you have a job that matches your skills poorly, you'll end up hating it. For example, sales jobs are not for everyone. An introverted, quiet person is likely to feel uncomfortable chasing down some sales quota. Your job should fit like a glove, not force you to be something you are not. Ill-fitting jobs cause stress, according to psychologist Bill Crawford. Stress is a signal that something needs to change. “Suffering is when we don't make the change,” Crawford explains,

“Often we don't listen to the signal of stress in our lives until it becomes a severe problem.” If your job is not fulfilling, get creative. Drastic changes are not always necessary. Arlene S. Hirsch, author of *Love Your Work and Success Will Follow*, tells the story of a banker with strong financial analysis skills who was experiencing great job dissatisfaction. He recaptured his love for music by accepting a job as CFO for a symphony orchestra. Smart move!

Acknowledge Your Anger. If you really hate your job, it's likely that you are fired up about something. Pinpointing the source of your anger is a crucial first step. According to Dr. Hendrie Weisinger, author of *The Anger Workout Book*, there are 5 main anger-provoking work situations:

→ *Being left out.* Not being accepted by your peers severely limits how effective you can be on the job, and shakes your fundamental need for acceptance.

→ *Critical bosses.* Nitpicking bosses are infuriating. To add insult to injury, the anger and frustration you feel toward these nitpickers cannot really be expressed.

→ *Not getting promoted.* You bust your butt and it's never acknowledged: Who wouldn't feel cheated? Most people handle this perceived injustice poorly by turning into negative, angry martyrs.

→ *Being maligned by co-workers.* As Dr. Weisinger points out, “being victimized by false rumors is a consistent anger arouser. It is abusive and unjust.”

→ *Incompetent bosses.* Employees want to admire their leaders and follow them cheerfully. An incompetent boss can stifle your enthusiasm and torpedo your chances for job satisfaction.

• **Get Rid of Grudges.** When people work together, hurt feelings, misunderstandings, and cross words are inevitable. If you are mistreated at work, you'll be tempted to get even. Be careful: Making enemies can lead straight to job misery. Even if you have been treated unfairly, you can take the high road. While practicing forgiveness may be the last thing you want to do, it is often the wisest move. Offenders may not deserve your kindness, but you do. By forgiving abusive jerks, you are actually giving yourself a break. Sure, you can quit your job in a huff and seek greener pastures elsewhere. Find a place where people treat you with the love and respect that you deserve. Right? Wrong! You'll find “challenging” co-workers wherever you go. They just look different and have different names. You'd be better off finding ways to live in peace with people with various value systems.

Above all else, try to keep your perspective. We all hate our jobs occasionally—the trick is to keep those times few and far between. Putting these tips into practice will help you gain greater satisfaction at work. And when you consider that happy employees are more likely to get ahead, isn't that a goal worth smiling about?

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

Weapons Against Diabetes. Exciting new advances will improve the health and lifestyle for many of the 16 million Americans who suffer from diabetes. Here are some of the new developments: GlucoWatch Biographer, a wrist-watch-like device that tracks blood sugar levels using low electrical currents measured through the skin; inhaled insulin through an inhaler that delivers a dose of insulin in powder form through the mouth to the lungs where it easily enters the bloodstream; islet cell transplantation, which transplants insulin-producing cells from the pancreas of a human donor and into the liver of a diabetic person which can then begin to produce insulin; and diabetes Electronic Management System (DEMS), a computerized record system that automatically alerts physicians when testing is due for patients. For more information, contact the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International at 1-800-533 CURE (1-800-533-2873) or the American Diabetes Association at 1-800 DIABETES (1-800-342-2383).

Early Clues to Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's disease can be treated early if you know can spot the signs. A new study by Dr. Cynthia Holzer, University of Cincinnati, offers clues that family members can easily notice and bring up to a physician. After evaluating the medical records of 1,000 sufferers, Holtzer offers the following guide to identify the onset of the debilitating condition.

- **Short-term memory loss.** Being unable to repeat three words within a minute or two after hearing them.
- **Problems with simple arithmetic.** People have difficulty with calculations, managing their finances and balancing their checkbooks.
- **Repetition.** Having the tendency to repeat stories quite often and not remembering that they had just asked that question or had just told the same story minutes ago.
- **Difficulty driving.** People tend to get lost on very familiar route.
- **Poor judgment.** This include wearing soiled clothing, forgetting to bathe, leaving the stove on, need directions on completing simple tasks such as cooking, grocery shopping or remembering to take their medications.
- Forgetting the names of relatives and neighbors

Alzheimer's disease is usually seen in those around 70 years old, but a genetic form of the disease can strike around age 50.

GIPSA News is the employee newsletter of the USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. Send your news, ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, or thoughts for the next issue to:

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by April 25, 2001!

Designation Activities

The following activity on designations to officially inspect and weigh grain in specified areas in Texas, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, Louisiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Oklahoma, and Nebraska took place.

GIPSA is asking for applicants to provide official services in the Amarillo, Texas; Cairo, Illinois; Fostoria, Ohio; Belmond, Iowa; Louisiana; and Wisconsin areas. GIPSA is asking for applications by March 31, 2001.

Detroit Grain Inspection Service, Inc., is designated to inspect grain effective May 1, 2001 through March 31, 2004.

Keokuk Grain Inspection Service is designated to inspect grain effective May 1, 2001 through March 31, 2004.

Michigan Grain Inspection Services, Inc., is designated to inspect grain effective May 1, 2001 through March 31, 2004. Champaign-Danville Grain Inspection Departments, Inc., is designated to inspect and weigh grain effective June 1, 2001 through March 31, 2004. Eastern Iowa Grain Inspection and Weighing Service, Inc., is designated to inspect grain effective June 1, 2001 through March 31, 2004. Enid Grain Inspection Company, Inc., is designated to inspect and weigh grain effective June 1, 2001 through March 31, 2004.

GIPSA is asking for comments on the applicants for the Fremont, Nebraska area. Fremont Grain Inspection Department, Inc., applied for the area currently assigned to them. Sioux City Inspection and Weighing Service Company applied for all or part of the Fremont geographic area.

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