



GIPSA News

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

June 2004

10th Annual Agency Meeting

Bill Strickland, Jonesboro

The 10th Annual Grain Inspection Agency meeting was held in Indianapolis, IN, April 13-14, 2004. The meeting was hosted by the Stuttgart field office and co-hosted this year by the Toledo, Wichita, and New Orleans field offices. GIPSA Deputy Administrator **Dave Shipman** was the featured guest speaker. Last year we thought the meeting was as good as it could get, but when you have agency participation like we had this year, it just keeps getting better.

Twenty-seven grain inspection agencies were represented at this year's meeting. A tremendous amount of grain inspection experience came together to receive training and to discuss topics that have a major impact on their businesses. The agencies appreciated the opportunity to express and discuss their concerns with **Dave Shipman** and the field office managers (FOM).

Stuttgart FOM **Clyde Steves** and Michigan Grain Inspection Service manager **Jeff Keller** were great

Masters of Ceremonies. Indianapolis Grain Inspection Agency manager **Ronald Andrews** welcomed the group. Thanks to Toledo FOM **Dave Mundwiler** and QAS **Phil Tate** for



GIPSA field office managers John Shropshire, Clyde Steves, and Dave Mundwiler.

doing a great job setting up the meeting. Additionally, thanks to FOM Mundwiler for his much appreciated participation and support in making these meetings worthwhile.

Wichita FOM **Ken Critchfield** was a very effective moderator for a panel discussion on official vs. unofficial inspections—a session that may have been the hottest topic on the agenda this year. Panel members were **Dave Shipman**, **Dave**

Mundwiler, **Jeff Keller**, Washington State manager **Bob Gore**, Mid-South Grain Inspection Agency manager **Tim Adams**, and, last but not least, Kansas Grain Inspection Agency manager and AAGIWA president **Tom Meyer**. The panelists did a great job addressing the topic and audience questions and concerns.

One of the most dynamic speakers at the meeting was **Bob Smigelski**, the Andersons Group. **Mr. Smigelski** is also chair of the GIPSA Grain Inspection Advisory Committee. He gave a very motivational presentation on how to add value to official inspections. He emphasized that agency managers' integrity was their greatest asset and that it should not be compromised to compete with unofficial inspection businesses.

Continued, see Agency Meeting on page 6.

Names in the News

PERSONNEL

Congratulations to **Carol Remmers** and her husband **Paul DesRivières** on the arrival of their new daughter **Michelle DesRivières**, who was born on May 20, 2004, at 11:48 a.m. She weighed 8 pounds, 8 ounces, and was 19 ¾ inches long.

RETIREMENT

The California Federal/State office is losing a true "old timer" to retirement. **Bill Davis**, quality assurance specialist, retired on June 1 after spend-

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ing 44 years (all of his working life) in the official grain inspection system. He began his career in 1960 with the Wichita Falls Grain Inspection Company. He moved to California in 1966 to become an inspector with the Los Angeles Grain Exchange. He began his inspector career with the State of California in 1972. **Bill** achieved every grading license possible under the USGSA and AMA. During his career with the State, he was instrumental in writing standards for safflower and wild rice under separate California standards that are still in effect. His next call in life will most likely be in the field of Cowboy Poetry under the name of "Billy James". To check out some of his latest work, check the www.cowboypoetry.com website. He will be missed and we wish him well.

CONDOLENCES

Sidney Allen, senior compliance officer, Regulatory Branch, Compliance Division, Washington, DC, passed away on May 11.

Cindy Butz, Grand Forks, passed away on May 9, 2004. **Cindy** had worked in the field office since July 1995 in various positions, most recently as dispatcher and certification expert. She was a vivacious, joyful, and passionate employee who will be deeply missed. **Cindy** is survived by her husband **Dennis** and two children, **Christopher** and **Elizabeth**.

AWARDS

Quality assurance specialist **George Banks** and assistant quality assurance specialists **Myron Hall** and **Wade Berteau**, New Orleans, received time-off awards for demonstrating a high degree of dedication to the QA/QC Program.

Shift supervisors **Horace Robinson** and **Amanda Roussel**, and program clerk **Angela Roper**, New Orleans, received time-off awards for participating as members of the New Orleans field office compliance team.

Anna Trujillo, **James Woodman**, and **Amy Newman**, League City, received extra effort awards for timely service to customers and office employees during high volume export and rice operations.

35-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Ronald Hanson, Minneapolis

30-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Carla Cambre, New Orleans
 Willie Epherson, New Orleans
 Robert Evans, New Orleans
 Lezo Foley, New Orleans
 Merle Russelburg, New Orleans
 Jackie Stevens, Jonesboro
 Thomas Wane, Corpus Christi

*Continued, see Names
 on page 3.*

Giler Named FMD Deputy Director

25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

David Ballard, Portland
Dawn Cowan, Washington, DC
Richard Hardy, Washington, DC
Judy Hawkins, Portland
Terri Henry, Washington, DC
Mark Leppert, Kansas City
Robert Simpson, Portland
David Skallerud, Cedar Rapids

20-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Lee Ainsworth, Atlanta, GA
Diane Blunt, Washington, DC
Carey Cook, Kansas City, MO
Sharon Lathrop, Kansas City, MO
Amy Newman, League City, TX
Al Rupert, Chicago, IL
Byron School, Washington, DC

15-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Susan Fall, Minneapolis
Donna Hillard, Toledo
Adel Ibrahim, League City
Richard Pierce, Kansas City

10-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Oree King, Jr., New Orleans

John Giler is the new deputy director of Field Management Division (FMD). As deputy director, he will share with the director the responsibility for providing executive management, leadership, direction, and coordination of all division programs, including headquarters and field activities. He will serve an important role in maintaining effective working relationships with producers, grain handlers, and field inspection personnel.

John has over 13 years as a supervisor/manager responsible for establishing program goals and providing the means to achieve them, which includes measuring their value to the Agency. **John** began his career in grain inspection as an agricultural commodity grader in the Philadelphia, PA, field office in 1978, and then transferred to the Mobile, AL, field office in 1978. In 1984, **John** was named officer-in-charge of the Savannah, GA, suboffice. In 1985, he transferred to the FMD's Standards and Procedures Branch as an agricultural marketing specialist. In 1992, **John** became chief of the Policies and Procedures Branch (formerly the Standards and Procedures Branch). From April 1999 to May 2000, John was acting manager, Safety and Health Staff, until a permanent manager could be selected.

"**John's** skills will play a key role as we move to strengthen the financial position of FGIS, introduce new testing technology, and improve the skills and knowledge of field inspectors," said FMD director **Dave Orr**. "He has encountered many challenges that have enhanced his skills in all areas, including team building, innovative thinking, and diplomacy that will serve him well as deputy director of FMD."

Tanner Receives 2003 Presidential Rank Award

Steve Tanner, director, Technical Services Division, received a 2003 Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executives. This is the nation's highest civil service award, recognizing a small group of career Senior Executives for exceptional long-term accomplishments. **Steve** was one of 363 awardees out of the approximately 7,600 career members of the SES and Senior Level and Scientific and Professional corps to receive the award.

Award winners are chosen through a rigorous selection process that includes evaluation by boards of private citizens, and approval by the President of the United States. They are strong leaders, professionals, and scientists who achieve results and consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry, and a relentless commitment to excellence in public service.

"**Steve** has a long history of exemplary service," said GIPSA administrator **Donna Reifschneider**. "I am pleased that his achievements have been recognized."

Flag Day, June 14

The idea of an annual day to celebrate the flag originated in 1885, with B.J. Cigrand, a schoolteacher who arranged for the pupils in Fredonia, WI, public schools to observe June 14 — the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes — as ‘Flag Birthday.’ On June 14, 1889, George Balch, a kindergarten teacher in New York City, observed Flag Day with his students, and his idea was later adopted by the New York State Board of Education. On June 14, 1891, the Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia celebrated Flag Day, and the following year, the New York Society of the Sons of the Revolution followed suit. In 1893, the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames of America asked the mayor of Philadelphia and other government officials, and private citizens to display the flag on June 14. Edward Brooks, superintendent of Philadelphia's public schools, directed that Flag Day exercises be held on June 14, 1893, in Independence Square. School children carried small flags and sang patriotic songs. In 1894, the governor of New York directed that on June 14 the flag be displayed on all public buildings. On June 14, 1894, the first general public school celebration of Flag Day in Chicago was held in Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Lincoln, and Washington Parks, with more than 300,000 children participating. Inspired by three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day – the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 – was officially established by proclamation by President Woodrow Wilson on May 30, 1916. While Flag Day was celebrated in various communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3, 1949, that President Truman signed an Act of Congress designating June 14th of each year as National Flag Day.

Source: <http://www.usflag.org/flag.day.html>

GIPSA Donates Computers to USDA's Adopted School

Jan Hart, Washington, DC

GIPSA recently donated nine computers (eight towers and one notebook) to Van Ness Elementary School. Van Ness Elementary School, located in Southwest Washington, DC, became the first school to be adopted by USDA in 1984. Van Ness students attend pre-school through 6th grade. The school population is predominately minority, most students are African-American.

Last fall, GIPSA purchased and rolled out new computers with XP operating systems. Some of GIPSA's older computers were not “XP capable” so we could no longer use them. We saw this as an excellent opportunity to “recycle” the computers that GIPSA could no longer use.

Gilbert Sanchez worked on and formatted each of the surplus computers, **Joe McNeil** contacted Principal **Rosa Anderson** to arrange for the donation, **Joe** and **Doug Lacefield** carried the computers into the school (which has no air conditioning and no elevators!), and **Doug** set up one computer in each classroom. We later went to the school for Compliance Division director **Neil Porter** to visit with **Ms. Anderson** and to present her with her new notebook computer. **Gilbert** spent a while setting it up for her.

Thanks to **Gilbert, Joe, and Doug** for helping this project become a reality. We know the students and teachers at Van Ness certainly appreciate it also!



Van Ness Elementary School Goes Online thanks to GIPSA: (l to r) Gilbert Sanchez, Rosa Anderson, Doug Lacefield, Neil Porter, and Joe McNeil.

Regulatory Info

Tess Butler, Washington, DC

Federal Register Publications

- Fees for Official Inspection and Official Weighing Services, published May 13, 2004
- Notice of Request for Extension and Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection, published May 19, 2004

Issuance Report for May, 2004

Fred Kelley, Washington, D.C.

New Issuances

- FGIS Weighing Handbook, Chapter 3, "Specifications, Tolerances and Other Technical Requirements for Testing and Certifying Official Grain Weighing Devices," dated April 30, 2004 (Distribution: A, C, E, G, N).
- FGIS PN-04-12, "Sample Collection Responsibilities for Verifying the Accuracy of Moisture Meter Calibrations Crop Year 2004," dated May 1, 2004 (Distribution: A).
- FGIS PN-04-13, "Moisture Meter Approval," dated May 1, 2004 (Distribution: A, C, E).

Cancellations

- FGIS PN 99-6, "Procedure for Warming Grain for Moisture Tests," dated 2-24-99.
- FGIS PN 99-9, "Revised Fees for Official Stowage Examination Services Performed under the USGSA," dated 3-26-99.
- FGIS PN 01-03, "Certifying Wheat Protein on Moisture Basis Other Than 12.0 Percent," dated 5-01-01.
- FGIS PN 01-07, "Alkali Test to Detect Hard White/Red Wheat Kernels," dated 7-18-01.
- FGIS PN 01-10, "Near-Infrared Transmittance (NIRT) Corn Oil and Protein Calibration Adjustments," dated 9-2-01.
- FGIS PN 01-11, "Near-Infrared Transmittance (NIRT) Soybean Oil and Protein Calibration Adjustments," dated 9-03-01.
- FGIS PN 01-13, "Revised Quality Assurance/Quality Control Tolerances," dated 9-19-01.
- FGIS PN 01-14, "Suspension of Moisture Testing Method and Calibrations for Western Production Medium Grain Rice," dated 10-16-01.
- FGIS PN 01-15, "Hard Milled Rice Certification," dated 10-16-01.
- FGIS PN 01-17, "Milling Degree Interpretative Line Samples," dated 11-30-01.
- FGIS PN 01-18, "Clothing and Identity Apparel Program," dated 12-26-01.
- FGIS PN 02-03, "Soft White Wheat Protein Calibration Adjustment," dated 4-08-02.
- FGIS PN 02-04, "Hard Red Winter Wheat Protein Calibration Adjustment," dated 4-08-02.
- FGIS PN 02-07, "Sampling River Barges – Non-Continuous Loading," dated 8-12-02.
- FGIS PN 02-08, "Odor Determination," dated 9-03-02.
- FGIS PN 02-09, "Railcar Fall Protection," dated 10-01-02.
- FGIS PN 02-11, "Stinkbug Damage Determination," dated 12-02-02.
- FGIS PN 02-12, "Estimating Mycotoxin Test Results," dated 12-09-02.
- FGIS PN 03-01, "Sample Collection Responsibilities for Verifying the Accuracy of Moisture Meter Calibrations Crop Year 2003," dated 5-01-03.

Please call me at 202-720-0259, Fax to 202-690-2755 or e-mail to Fred.H.Kelley@usda.gov if you have any concerns or suggestions.

**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

New Inspection and Weighing Fee Schedule

FGIS is changing the fee schedule for official inspection and weighing services performed under the authority of the U.S. Grain Standards Act, as amended. The USGSA authorizes GIPSA to charge and collect reasonable fees to cover the cost of performing official services and costs associated with administrative and supervisory activities related to official services.

Specifically, GIPSA is eliminating 3-month and 6-month contracts because they are not widely used; increasing the 1-year contract hourly rate by approximately 20 percent and the non-contract hourly rate by 47 percent; increasing hourly rates for services not performed at an applicant's facility by approximately 11.5 percent; increasing unit fees for additional tests provided by GIPSA; replacing the 6-level administrative tonnage fee with regional administrative tonnage fees; replacing the unit fee charged to delegated States for export ships with a tonnage fee; increasing hourly fees for special weighing services by approximately 30 percent above the non-contract hourly rate; and establishing a \$500 usage fee per facility when the GIPSA test car is used to test track scales.

"The changes are needed to cover the cost of providing services, replenish the retained earnings accounts, and to maintain a 3-month operating reserve," said GIPSA administrator **Donna Reifschneider**. "Maintaining GIPSA's financial stability will ensure continued provision of the inspection and weighing services that the grain industry relies upon to facilitate the sound and orderly marketing of grain in domestic and export markets."

The fee schedule change becomes effective June 14, 2004.

Designation Activities

FGIS is seeking applicants to provide official services in the Columbus, OH; Farwell, TX; and Hoagland, IN, areas. GIPSA is asking for applications and comments about the current service providers by July 1, 2004.

FGIS also is requesting comments on the applicants to provide official services in the Amarillo, TX, and Baton Rouge, LA, geographic areas. Amarillo Grain Exchange, Inc., applied for their currently assigned area, except for Beckham, Ellis, Harper, and Roger Mills Counties in Oklahoma. Enid Grain Inspection Company, Inc., a currently designated official agency, applied for Beckham, Ellis, Harper, and Roger Mills Counties in Oklahoma. Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry applied for their currently assigned area. BSI Inspectorate Services, Inc., an unofficial agency with offices in Galena Park, TX, and Convent, LA, applied for designation in the area currently assigned to Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. Comments are due by July 1, 2004.

Agency Meeting *from page 1.*

TSD director **Steve Tanner** and **Roger Friedrich** gave a very interesting and well-received live demonstration of remote grading with members of the Board of Appeals and Review.



Clyde Steves receives a certificate of appreciation from Cairo Grain Inspection's Bob Fronabarger.

This year's awards program had a little different twist. **Clyde Steves** has worked hard the last several years to ensure that grain inspection agency meetings are tailored to meet the needs of the agencies. Additionally, he always makes sure that the official system's outstanding grain inspectors are recognized. This year Cairo Grain Inspection manager **Bob Fronabarger** presented a plaque on behalf of all the agencies to **Clyde** that read: "*In appreciation of his continuing efforts in promoting and helping his agencies to perform their duties, and for 10 years of tireless effort in hosting these valuable and constructive Agency Meetings.*"

10th Annual Agency Meeting Awards

Tim Adams	Midsouth Grain Inspection Service	Outstanding -- Wheat, Outstanding -- Corn
Terrell Castille	Louisiana Department of Agriculture	Outstanding -- Wheat
Gerald Estes	Midsouth Grain Inspection Service	Outstanding -- Soybeans
Robert Fronabarger	Cairo Grain Inspection	Outstanding -- Soybeans
Scott Nichols	Frankfort Grain Inspection	Outstanding -- Soybeans
Aaron Roberson	Missouri Department of Agriculture	Outstanding -- Sorghum, Overall
Moses Teel	Columbus Grain Inspection	Outstanding -- Corn
Harry Yonan	Schneider Grain Inspection	Outstanding -- Overall
Tim Adams	Midsouth Grain Inspection Service	Honorable Mention -- Overall
Jim Barton	J.W. Barton Grain Inspection	Honorable Mention -- Corn
Terry Fuller	Michigan Grain Inspection	Honorable Mention -- Grader
Ricky Hickman	Midsouth Grain Inspection Service	Honorable Mention -- Soybeans
Jeffery Keller	Michigan Grain Inspection	Honorable Mention -- Wheat
Roy Marchetti	Detroit Grain Inspection	Honorable Mention -- Soybeans
Jimmie Nessleroad	Midsouth Grain Inspection Service	Honorable Mention -- Wheat
Neil Reynolds	Northeast Indiana Grain Inspection	Honorable Mention -- Overall
Kelly Flanagan	Amarillo Grain Exchange	Agency QAS of the Year, Wichita Circuit
Linda Meny	Ohio Valley Grain Inspection	Outstanding Sampler Management
Tom Meyer	Kansas Grain Inspection	Manager of the Year Wichita Circuit
Dan Prince	Farwell Grain Inspection	Wheat Inspector of the Year, Wichita Circuit
Mike Adams	North Dakota Grain Inspection	Outstanding Support of the Agency Meeting
David Ayers	Champaign-Danville Grain Inspection	Outstanding Support of the Agency Meeting
Tom Dahl	Sioux City Grain Inspection & Weighing	Outstanding Support of the Agency Meeting
Dallas Stubblefield	North Dakota Grain Inspection	Outstanding Support of the Agency Meeting
Ron Andrews	Indianapolis Grain Inspection & Weighing	Outstanding Support of QAS/AQAS Program
Dan Gross	East Indiana Grain Inspection	Outstanding Support of QAS/AQAS Program
Ben Honeycutt	North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture	Outstanding Support of QAS/AQAS Program
Damon Sampson	Tri-State Grain Inspection Service	Outstanding Support of QAS/AQAS Program
Thomas Thompson	Virginia Department of Agriculture	Outstanding Support of QAS/AQAS Program
Darwin Titus	Titus Grain Inspection Service	Outstanding Support of QAS/AQAS Program

TSD Reorganization

Steve Tanner, Technical Center

As budgets become tighter and demands become greater on GIPSA, we must continuously assess our efficiency and productivity. Changing our organization to best meet the agency's mission and goals will always be a part of our culture. Effective April 19, 2004, the Technical Services Division (TSD) made several organizational changes to improve our efficiency.

First, TSD has merged the Biotechnology Branch into the Analytical, Reference, and Testing Services (ARTS) Branch. The ARTS Branch now has a Biotechnology Program under its umbrella, and the Biotechnology Branch no longer exists. This consolidation facilitates cross-utilization for conducting test kit evaluations and methods research common to both areas. TSD's biotechnology

activities remain highly visible to our customers. As a result of the merger of the two branches, Biotechnology Branch chief, **Don Kendall**, was reassigned to the Office of the Director as an assistant to the director.

Next, the Safety and Health program and the related Environmental Management programs were transferred to the ARTS branch. Physical scientist **Ron Bicsak** was reassigned to the ARTS branch and will continue to manage these programs.

Last, TSD reassigned two employees from ARTS to the Inspection Systems Engineering (ISE) Branch, NIRT Program. The NIRT program was understaffed due to a combination of retirement, resignation, and promotion of employees. Effective cross-utilization obtained by moving the Biotechnology Branch to ARTS

allowed physical science technician **Sandra Lockridge** to be reassigned to ISE. The continuing decrease in the Commodity Testing Program workload allowed physical science aid **John Bass** to be reassigned to ISE.

The organizational change was not taken lightly and was planned with the input of several employees. Part of the evaluation process was to minimize the impact on employees when possible. TSD's reorganization best meets the agency's mission and goals in a cost-effective manner and TSD employees continue to demonstrate dedication and commitment to maintaining a credible and scientifically sound operation that serves both internal and external customers with pride.

FGIS Launches Web-Based Wheat Quality Discussion Forum

FGIS launched a Web site to help develop rapid tests of wheat end-use quality. GIPSA, the industry, and academia will use this Web site as the discussion forum to foster development of these tests.

"International and domestic customers of U.S. wheat want tests that predict end-use quality characteristics," said GIPSA administrator **Donna Reifschneider**. "This forum will make wheat end-use functionality testing a reality by drawing upon the ideas and expertise from a diverse group of scientists."

This site includes information about the wheat research initiatives and programs of GIPSA, academia and the industry. The Wheat Gallery is accessible via the GIPSA Web site at http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/wheat_gallery/index.htm.

For information about the Wheat Gallery, contact **Pat McCluskey**, Field Management Division, at (202) 720-4684.

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

EPP Experiences

Ed Durgin, Washington, DC

On April 2, 2004, **Tim Hansen**, P&SP, and I graduated from the Executive Potential Program (EPP). We had completed the requirements of the EPP, a year-long competency-based leadership program administered by USDA's Graduate School that teaches leadership skills through practical experiences and classroom instruction.

Program participants engage in classroom discussions, group exercises, team projects, and independent reading and studies during their year in the program. Each completes a Leadership Effectiveness Inventory (LEI), which is a 360-degree assessment developed by the Office of Personnel Management. The LEI evaluates input from supervisors, peers, and staff to highlight job strengths and developmental needs. Participants use feedback from this instrument and others like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to develop a Learning Development Plan (LDP) that guides developmental activities identified by the assessment tools.

EPP's curriculum, based on experiential learning and supported by classroom instruction, includes: residential sessions, Senior Executive interviews, shadowing assignments, an Experiential Learning Team project, and developmental assignments. Participants normally spend 6 months away from their assigned positions as they complete the program's requirements.

Four 1-week residential sessions outside the Washington, D.C., area provide opportunities for classroom instruction on a variety of leadership topics augmented by team building

and group activities. This past year, our residential sessions were held in Norfolk and Charlottesville, Virginia, Atlanta, Georgia and Hunt Valley, Maryland.

Each participant is required to interview a minimum of five Senior Executives (or individuals holding comparable positions in the non-federal sector), and a three-day "shadow" assignment provides further opportunities to learn about and explore various leadership qualities.

Participants are also assigned to Experiential Learning Teams which must collectively work to define and execute a team project. Since team members are likely to be geographically dispersed throughout the country, communication activities and coordination of project requirements must be addressed as the team works to complete its assignment. I worked on a team whose members were located in D.C., Denver, Norfolk, Philadelphia and Cincinnati. We partnered with Kids2College DC, a local early awareness program that introduces low-income sixth graders to higher education and careers.

Two sixty-day developmental assignments also provide opportunities to develop leadership skills in new settings. I selected the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) for one of these assignments. During my tenure with AMS, I assisted staff in the Livestock and Seed Program as they worked to draft country of origin labeling (COOL) regulations for a mandatory COOL program.

Early on, I decided to work outside USDA during one of these developmental assignments in order to expe-

rience a non-USDA "work culture." For this reason, I selected the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for my second assignment. I worked with staff in the USAID's Office of Iraq Reconstruction as they worked to implement reconstruction and humanitarian relief projects in post-war Iraq. (Yes, I was asked if I wanted to travel to Iraq, but I graciously declined when queries were made!) This was a most interesting assignment with varied and interesting activities. I made luncheon arrangements for the Iraqi Minister of the Environment during his visit to USAID, had the pleasure of attending lunch with him, and accompanied him to a post-luncheon meeting with the USAID Administrator. I was asked (as the resident "ag guy") to provide an immediate briefing to a Deputy Secretary of State regarding Iraqi agriculture reconstruction activities. (Talk about empowerment!) I prepared a PowerPoint presentation on agricultural reconstruction activities for presentation to the National Security Council, and developed a report on grain production, handling, and processing in Iraq.

Tim's first detail was in the General Accounting Office. He was an assistant to Thomas McCool, managing director, Financial Markets and Community Investments (FMCI) division. He attended Congressional hearings; shadowed Mr. McCool to high level meetings with the comptroller

Continued, see EPP on page 13.

Quality Assurance Done Right

Jim Whalen, Kansas City

The Kansas City field office wishes to recognize the employees of Illinois Official Grain Inspection (IOGI) for their outstanding work in crafting, implementing, and maintaining an exemplary local quality assurance (QA) program. Quality team members **Dallas Stubblefield**, operational manager, and agency quality assurance specialists **Cindy Boone**, **Dixie Coy**, and **Janet Nadler** have consistently demonstrated that a well-designed, proactive approach to quality is essential to the official grain inspection system's mission of "facilitating the orderly marketing of grain."

Being located in one of the most diverse and challenging domestic grain markets in the system, IOGI's innovative approach to QA tools and applications has allowed them to elevate their quality assurance program from a traditional oversight and accountability posture to a marketing tool for official inspection products. Capitalizing on the notion that quality doesn't cost, but rather pays, has earned IOGI an "A" in QA.

Travel Bits & Pieces

Peggy Smith, Washington, DC

Actual Subsistence. This is just a reminder that a request for actual subsistence must be made and approved in advance of the travel.

Activation of Your Travel Card. If you haven't traveled in a 6-month period, the chances are good that Bank of America has deactivated your travel card. It is the cardholder's responsibility to ensure that the card is active PRIOR to travel. If you are unsure if your card is active or you need to have your card activated, please contact my office. The Bank will routinely deactivate all cards not used within a 6-month period.

Gay & Lesbian Pride Month

June 2004

USDA maintains a Gay and Lesbian Employee Advisory Council (GLEAC) that is charged with advising the Secretary of Agriculture on implementation of the Department's nondiscrimination policy regarding sexual orientation and the creation of an accepting work environment. GLEAC is one of 7 councils that comprise the Secretary's Diversity Advisory Council and is part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

Linda Alston, Washington, DC

GIPSA participated in USDA's "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day" on April 22, 2004. This yearly national event is recommended for students between 8-12 years of age and allows parents, guardians, and mentors to share their work lives and introduce issues related to integrating work and family to our nation's daughters and sons.

USDA's program in Washington, DC, was a great success. More than 200 students participated, including a busload of students from New Jersey! GIPSA had 10 students participating. The program included a tour of various USDA agencies' exhibits. Big hits were booths on how USDA graders look inside eggs; who inspects and eats "Meals, Ready-to-Eat (MRE)"; a "Gotmilk?" photo opportunity; how bacteria, fungi viruses, parasites and predators help protect food before we eat it; a touch-and-learn booth about local harmless insects that live in our own backyards; information on the 4-H Program and how they can get involved. "Fight BAC" and "Thermy," the two Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) mascots were also on hand. "Fight BAC" shared how bacteria (BAC) can make people sick and how to "Fight BAC" and keep food safe from harmful bacteria.

*Continued, see "Kids to Work"
on page 14.*

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

Cancer: Would You Know the Signs? Although cancer is still a leading cause of death, survival rates for most cancers continue to rise. Doctors credit improved and earlier detection as two reasons why more people are able to live with cancer.

The most common warning signs of cancer are a thickening or lump in the breast or any other part of the body; an obvious change in a wart or mole; a sore that does not heal; a nagging cough or hoarseness; changes in bowel or bladder habits; indigestion or difficulty swallowing; unexplained changes in weight; and unusual bleeding or discharge

Important: These symptoms can also be caused by infections, benign tumors, or other problems. But just to be sure, see your doctor about any of these symptoms or about other physical changes. Don't wait for pain because early cancer does not usually cause pain. The earlier cancer is detected, the more treatable it is, and the greater your chances for a longer life.

What Does Your Liver Do?

The liver is the largest and one of the most complex organs. It is your body's chemical factory that: produces important proteins including some that play roles in your immune system and blood coagulation; regulates levels of amino acids, the building blocks of protein; controls your level of glucose, which your body converts to energy and heat; manufactures cholesterol and special proteins that help carry fats around your body; cleanses your blood (together with the kidney) of drugs and poisonous substances; and produces bile which removes waste products and helps process fat in the small intestine.

Although one of the liver's functions is to break down drugs and poisons, one drug, alcohol, is toxic to the liver. Too much alcohol can lead to cirrhosis of the liver or hepatitis (inflammation of the liver). Either condition can lead to liver failure and possibly death.

Designation Renewals

Jan Hart, Washington, DC

GIPSA is granting designations to **East Indiana** Grain Inspection, Inc.; **Fremont** Grain Inspection Department, Inc.; and **Titus** Grain Inspection, Inc., to provide official grain inspection services at domestic locations. Each designation renewal is being granted for a full 3-year period under the authority of the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

In fiscal year 2003, East Indiana provided 8,912 inspections, Fremont 23,360, and Titus 10,383.

EAST INDIANA. Winchester Grain Inspection, the precursor agency for East Indiana, was first designated in 1978. In 1983, Winchester added territory by purchasing the W.F. Christen Agency in Decatur, IN. In 1985, East Indiana was founded on these two agencies. In 1998, they relinquished part of their northern Indiana geographic area to another official agency.

East Indiana is currently headquartered in Muncie, IN, and serves the mid-eastern section of the State of Indiana and one county in Ohio. East Indiana provides official services at one full-time and eight applicant-based grain inspection laboratories.

FREMONT. The Fremont Chamber of Commerce operated the grain inspection business in Fremont for many years. The Chamber stopped inspecting grain in 1967, and the inspectors incorporated the Fremont Grain Exchange. Fremont operated as a conflict-of-interest agency until 1976, when the ties to the grain trade were severed. The company name was changed to Fremont Grain Inspection Department, Inc., when it was first designated in 1978. In 1980, Fremont competitively applied and was selected for a four-county area centered around Hartley, Iowa.

Fremont provides official services through mideastern Nebraska and in two separate areas in midwestern and northern Iowa at two full-time grain inspection laboratories.

TITUS. Titus operated as a sole proprietorship until incorporation in 1978, as Titus Grain Inspection, Inc., when that agency was designated for the first time. Titus provides official services in the northwestern part of the State of Indiana at one full-time and one applicant-based grain inspection laboratory.

If you drink heavily, know that quitting alcohol altogether can improve your liver function and either prevent or delay the onset of alcohol-related liver disease. It is one way to live longer and be there for those you love.

Courtesy TopHealth 2004, the Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter.

GIPSA's Master Scale and Railroad Track Scale Testing Programs

Byron School, Washington, DC

GIPSA agreed to take over the responsibilities of the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) master scale program in 1979. The primary function of the program, then and now, is to maintain the traceability of the primary test weight standards to NBS, which is now the National Institute of Standards and Technology; perform annual tests on the master scales located across the nation that are used to calibrate railroad test cars, and calibrate railroad test cars at the master scale in Chicago. GIPSA's taking over the program was in line with the agency's mission related to the accurate weighing of grain. Track scale testing brings accuracy to the many facilities that rely on railcar weights to certify domestic and export grain shipments.

Since the program was transferred to GIPSA, we have routinely conducted the primary function of the program, calibrating master scales, and added services to better serve the grain and railroad industries. GIPSA tests many official and unofficial grain railroad track scales as well as commercial track scales that are not used to weigh grain. We provide test weight calibration services at the Master Scale Depot in Chicago under an agreement with the State of Illinois Weights and Measures Department for companies within the State. GIPSA also has been testing industry track scales under an agreement with a major railroad company using two GIPSA-owned specially designed test cars and railroad-owned test cars since 1996. All these extra services respond to requests for testing and calibration of scales and test weights.

All five of our test car units are recalibrated annually at the Master Scale Depot. Our units are unique in that the actual test weights and test carts are transported inside a box car that is green with yellow lettering marking the unit with the U.S. Department of Agriculture logo and GIPSA's name. The test cars are numbered FGWX 100000 through 500000 accordingly. The test cars are moved around the country free of charge by all railroads participating under the Association of American Railroads (AAR). The AAR also provides annual funding to cover the cost of testing the master scales and maintaining the master scale and primary test weight standards at the Master Scale Depot in Chicago.

GIPSA also participates in biannual American Railway Engineering and Maintenance-of-Way Association meetings which are railroad company forums for the uniform development and updating of railroad track scale specifications, test procedures, and tolerances in the AAR Scale Handbook.

As a principle participant in AAR, GIPSA maintains the weight standards for the railroad industry and tests their master scales to provide them weight traceability to the national standards. We have carried on this program for the last 24 years for the National Institute of Standards and Technology to promote accurate weights for grain and railroad industry scales.

Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps,
Washington, DC*

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

Suggestor -- Suggestion

Marsha Morehouse, Portland, OR
-- FGIS and P&SP Field Employees
Should Be Issued Professional
Looking ID Cards

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 tran-
scription errors; however,
ideas will be accepted re-
gardless of the method you
choose to use.**

Women Employees Advisory Council Forum

Linda Alston, Washington, DC

The USDA Women Employees Advisory Council held an education and training forum on “Improving Access, Equity, and Opportunity: Women, Men, and Work” in Washington, DC.

It was truly an honor to listen to guest speaker Dr. Dorothy Height. Dr. Height summarized her accomplishments with the Civil Rights Movement, her opportunities to interact with people like Eleanor Roosevelt, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Dr. Martin Luther King. In recognition of her work with virtually all major civil and human rights issues and events, Dr. Height has received awards from several Presidents and more than 24 honorary degrees from institutions such as Spelman College, Lincoln University, Central State University, and Princeton. At age 92, Dr. Height now serves as the Chair and President Emerita of the National Council for Negro Women.

Dr. Phyllis Mindell spoke about how to communicate with confidence and power using the language of success. What made her presentation slightly unusual was that she cited Charlotte the spider, of E.B. White’s classic tale *Charlotte’s Web*, as an example of a strong female using powerful language to make the world better. She taught that language is power and too often women in leadership positions fail to harness that power successfully. Dr. Mindell’s book *How to Say It for Women* guides women to communicate powerfully, not like a man, but like a strong woman. She holds a doctorate from the University of Rochester, a master’s degree from the City University of New York, and a bachelor’s degree from Brooklyn College.

With her refreshing and energetic speaking technique, **Professor Deborah Mathias** reminded us all that we have to take care of ourselves. Sometimes we are so busy taking care of everything and everyone else around us that we often neglect ourselves. Taking care of yourself is not a luxury nor is it selfish. Ms. Mathias also emphasized that women should “watch each other’s back” instead of backstabbing, talking behind another’s back, or trying to bring each other down. Ms. Mathias is the national correspondent for Gannett News Service. As a veteran political reporter, she reports on all national news stories dealing with the White House and the Administration.

A panel session including a diverse group of USDA leaders shared accounts of their careers and how to improve communication skill, market yourself, mentor, and advance your career.

The WEAC forum was a free event open to all that gave participants a wealth of invaluable information.

EPP, from page 9.

general, and other GAO senior managers. He also participated in FMCI Design Summit, Message Agreement, and staff meetings which provided insights into how the GAO plans engagement work.

His next detail was in the Budget Review and Concepts Branch of the Office of Management and Budget. There, he contributed to the President’s Fiscal Year 2005 Budget, and analyzed Treasury Department data helping prepare two chapters of the Analytical Perspectives section of the Budget. Tim’s name is listed in the back of the Budget volume of the 2005 Presidential Budget as an OMB Contributor.

Discussions about the three “R’s” may be encountered in discussions about education and educational programs. The three “R’s” most relevant to my EPP experiences are **review**, **reflection**, and **rejuvenation**. Assessment tools administered early in the program provided opportunities to review one’s leadership strengths and developmental needs. The individual readings, classroom activities, group work and team projects provided ample sources for reflection, and the whole experience was rejuvenating. I returned to my current position in GIPSA’s Office of International Affairs with an increased appreciation for the challenges today’s leaders face.

I also completed the program with a feeling of gratitude for having been given the opportunity to participate in this fine program.

Kids to Work, from page 10.

“Thermy” the thermometer taught about the importance of fully cooking meat and poultry. The Food and Nutrition Service’s mascot “Power Panther” handed out stickers, tattoos, and educational material about good nutrition and proper dietary guidelines for kids. The Forest Service’s popular “Smokejumper Demonstration” taught students about the challenges smokejumpers face when they parachute into a burning forest.

The Secretary’s Diversity Council talked to kids about the more than 300 career options at USDA. Kids were able to get their faces painted if they asked one question about how the Department of Agriculture helps America.

One of the most popular demonstrations was the “Beagle Brigade.” Students watched the dogs inspecting suitcases and other cargo to detect if international passengers are trying to bring plants, fruits, or narcotics illegally on commercial airplanes into the USA.

After the exhibits, parents took the students back to their offices to share their work lives and learn about the challenges adults face integrating work and family, and hopefully, encouraging students to think now about how their dreams – for their work and family life – can be achieved.

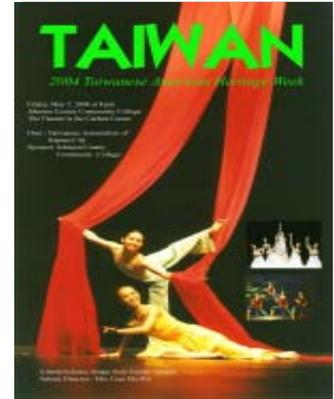
Asian Pacific Heritage Month Celebration

Dr. Chuan Kao, TSD, Kansas City, MO

As president of the Taiwanese Association of Kansas City (TAKC) and TSD’s Asian Pacific American (APA) program manager, I coordinated a dance performance to celebrate APA Month. Ten dancers trained in modern ballet and Taiwanese ethnic dances were invited from Taiwan’s Liao Mo-Hsi Dance Troupe. Total attendance was approximately 350, nearly 20 were from TSD. The performance was conducted at a local community college.

Five unique dance pieces were presented.

The first was ‘Goddess of Mercy with Thousand Hands.’ Dancers used “three-way bending” body language and the hand posture “orchid fingers” to show the delicate style and magic change of the thousand hands of the Buddhist goddess Kuanyin looking down from the heaven to earth to salvage all human beings. “Magnolia Pumila” is a flower that blooms only partially during daytime but fully at night, emitting a charming fragrance especially under soft moon light. In this second dance, Hakha (a Taiwanese ethnic group) women work hard in the field during the day, wrapping themselves with thick clothes and covering their heads with big straw hats. They reveal their beauty after night fall when they share shiny smiles and romantic gestures with their husbands under the shelter of their home. The third piece, “If Only You Have Taiwan in Your Heart” depicted that whoever you are, Taiwan will embrace you as long as you love Taiwan. “Pondering of April Rain” was based on four songs — Four Season Red, Moon Night Blue, Longing for Spring Breeze, and Flowers Pondered by Night Storm —written by a famous Taiwanese composer. The dancers combined the poetry and lyrical adages of music with colorful costumes, bright staging, and elegant dance steps to reflect the sentiment of being playful and serious, loved and betrayed, and being happy and being sad in Taiwanese life. The last piece was “Amei Tribal Dance” in which a tribal



medicine lady applied her magic power to pray for rain. She was followed by a group of young girls dressed in bright colored tribal costume, singing and dancing cheerfully in unison to symbolize their cherishment of tradition and the love of their land.

This was a delightful celebration of Taiwanese culture and of APA Month.

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 June 25, 2004!

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