



# GIPSA News

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

December 2001

## FGIS to Establish Asian TDY Position

*John B. Pitchford, Director, Office of International Affairs*

GIPSA's Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) occasionally sends employees on temporary short-term overseas assignments to represent FGIS and conduct activities consistent with our Agency's mission. While each trip is unique, the more common purposes for these assignments include the following:

- Participating in educational seminars for importers and end users to explain the role and responsibilities of FGIS. These seminars are usually sponsored by USDA Cooperator organizations, such as U.S. Wheat Associates, U.S. Grains Council, and the American Soybean Association.
- Investigating a receiver's alleged discrepancies in quality or weight for grain shipments that were inspected and weighed by FGIS at the time of loading.
- Participating in Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)-directed Government-to-Government discussions or negotiations concerning import restrictions or conditions/specifications that restrict U.S. trade.

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) coordinates these assignments; further information can be found in the International Assignment pages of the Jobs and Opportunities Section of *inGIPSA*, our agency's internal web site.

To develop a more proactive approach in working with our overseas customers and/or their Governments, we plan to establish collateral duty grain marketing specialist positions at the GS 12-13 levels in the Office of International Affairs. The individual(s) selected for these positions and assigned overseas will represent the Agency while on a temporary duty assignment (TDY) in Asia for a period of up to 4 months. The implementation date, duration of the assignment, and frequency of travel are contingent upon factors such as funding, an assessment of the Agency's priorities, security considerations and assistance from FAS and USDA Cooperators.

We expect the duty assignments to involve responsibilities similar to those noted above. However, due to

the more lengthy duration of the assignment, the FGIS representative will also be able to address both immediate and more long-term issues in the region. Incumbents may also be temporarily assigned to assist OIA in Washington to support the activities of others concurrently working in an overseas TDY assignment. Those selected for the collateral duty TDY positions will receive training necessary for successful participation in the program, and they will also be scheduled for an FGIS-sponsored international travel-training course in calendar year 2002.

When assigned overseas, the TDY'er will be required to establish and maintain effective interpersonal relationships in diverse work settings. Applicants should be self-starters who possess strong oral and written communication skills, and can demonstrate the ability to initiate and prioritize multiple and diverse work assignments with minimal day-to-day supervision.

*Continued, see TDY  
on page 9.*

# Names in the News

## PERSONNEL

The Compliance Division's Review Branch would like to thank these field-based people who assisted Branch team coordinators in conducting official agency reviews during the first quarter of fiscal year 2002: **Gary Erskine**, quality assurance specialist, League City Field Office, with the South Carolina Department of Agriculture, located in the Baltimore Field Office circuit; **Danny Harpole**, agricultural commodity grader (ACG), Jonesboro Suboffice, with a private conflict-of-interest agency, Memphis Grain Inspection Service, located in the Stuttgart Field Office circuit; **Roy Shepherd**, shift supervisor, New Orleans Field Office, and **Tom Steele**, ACG, Portland Field Office, with the Washington Department of

Agriculture and Industries, monitored by the Washington Federal Office; **Mohsen Younes**, shift supervisor, Toledo Field Office, with two private agencies, Kankakee Grain Inspection, Inc., and Springfield Grain Inspection, Inc., located in the Cedar Rapids Field Office circuit; and **Bill Ashley**, deputy director, Executive Resources Staff, with Washington State's and the Memphis agency's financial operations. Our sincere thanks to these employees for helping us succeed in the review mission.

## CONDOLENCES

**Larry Nafzinger**, former manager of the Corpus Christi, Texas, Field Office passed away on November 6, 2001, of a heart attack.

## AWARDS

Members of GIPSA's Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking team received extra effort awards for establishing the Agency's first web-based rulemaking system, developing an unprecedented analytical database that allowed electronic categorization and analysis of all comments, and providing Agency and Departmental officials with policy options. The D.C.-based team included: **Marianne Plaus**, assistant to the deputy administrator (team leader); **Dana Stewart**, assistant to the deputy administrator for public affairs; **Gerald Bromley**, chief information officer; **Mark**

**Dickson**, computer specialist; **Joe Garrity**, computer specialist; **Richard Hardy**, visual information specialist; **Ray Hart**, grain marketing specialist; **Robert Kayne**, computer specialist; **William Kelly**, computer specialist; **Doug Lacefield**, computer specialist; **Bob Lijewski**, agricultural marketing specialist; **Jay Mitchell**, agricultural economist; **Joanne Peterson**, grain marketing specialist; **Diane Reeves**, computer specialist; **Sharon Vassiliades**, regulatory management specialist (retired); and **Jennifer Zuckman**, grain marketing specialist.

**Wes Blake**, Technical Services Division, received a spot award for implementing a software modification that streamlined HPLC data review and reporting in the Pesticide Data Program.

**Beverly Cook**, Kansas City, received a spot award for dedication and excellence in support of the Kansas City Field Office programs and for readily accepting the additional responsibility of analyzing samples of corn for Starlink™.

**Ken Critchfield**, Wichita, received a spot award for providing assistance to APHIS on determining the optimal method for cleaning out grain elevators contaminated with Karnal bunt-infected wheat on a very short turnaround.

*Continued, see Names  
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## Names, from page 2.

**James (Mitch) Doak**, Kansas City, MO, received a spot award for readily accepting the additional responsibility of reviewing pesticide records of certified private applicators in Missouri and functioning as the backup Quality Assurance Specialist

**Roger Friedrich**, Technical Services Division (TSD), received a Certificate of Merit for the development of high-quality, low-cost multi-media educational CD's.

**John Giler**, Washington, D.C., received a performance award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Field Management Division and GIPSA.

**Karen Guagliardo** received a performance bonus award for contributions to the mission of the Review Branch, Compliance Division.

**Jeannene Henehan**, Washington, D.C., received a performance award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Field Management Division and GIPSA.

**Joanne Nielsen**, TSD, received a Certificate of Appreciation for her efforts in coordinating the TSD Combined Federal Campaign which achieved 119% of its goal.

**James Rhodes**, TSD, received a spot award for timely action leading to the solution of a problem that was doubling the analysis time for heavy metals in the Export Cargo Sampling Program.

**Denise Ruggles**, Cedar Rapids, received a spot award for preparing excellent reports on Starlink™ testing activity in the Cedar Rapids circuit which provides valuable information for monitoring the pres-

ence of Starlink™ corn in the U.S. corn supply.

**Mary Vick**, Kansas City, received a spot award for her initiative, dedication, and excellence in support of the Starlink™ monitoring program.

### 35-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Warren Dicus, Washington, DC  
Eurvin Williams, Kansas City

### 30-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Wilmer Brandt, Kansas City  
Charles Britton, Sacramento  
Martin Davis, New Orleans  
Henry Farley, New Orleans  
Robert Fitzgerald, Washington, DC  
John Manis, Washington, DC  
Rex Moore, Kansas City  
Albert Nelson, New Orleans  
Joanne Peterson, Washington, DC  
Robert Petersen, Moscow  
Larry Shields, Portland  
Vincent Volpe, New Orleans  
Clarence West, Toledo

### 25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Nabil Azmy, Kansas City  
Mark Dickson, Washington, DC  
Janet Hart, Washington, DC  
James Lambert, Fallbrook  
Duane Putnam, Washington, DC

### 20-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Earl Bradford, New Orleans  
Lee Cooper, League City  
Joseph Williams, Jr., New Orleans

### 15-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Terrell Bailey, New Orleans  
Eddie Clark, Kansas City  
Luccile Clark, Kansas City  
Carolyn Cooper, Beaumont  
Rhondalyn Edwards, New Orleans  
Larry Engebretson, Kansas City  
Janine Goodson, Kansas City  
Milton Green, Jr., New Orleans  
Ferriel Gregory, Portland  
Charles Guidry II, New Orleans  
Mary Hill, Stuttgart  
Joel Jolly, New Orleans  
Flavin Keller, New Orleans  
Troy Kramer, New Orleans  
Kenneth Layne, Jonesboro  
Lane Lejeune, New Orleans  
Mark Reimer, New Orleans  
Janice Roehler, Minneapolis  
Robin Rother, Kansas City  
Lynn St. Pierre, New Orleans  
Hannelore Vollmar, Toledo  
Darrell Washington, New Orleans  
Edward Washington, New Orleans  
Arthur Williams, New Orleans

### 10-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Linda Alston, Washington, DC  
Charles Burden, Jr., Kansas City  
John Godfrey, Toledo  
Timothy Norden, Kansas City  
Lynn Polston, Kansas City  
Carl Provenzano, Jr., New Orleans  
Orval Schleiermacher II, League City  
Charlie Wilson, Jr., New Orleans

# 2001 Computer Security Survey

*Carol Remmers, Washington, DC*

Computer Security Institute and the Federal Bureau of Investigation recently released the results of their 2001 computer crime and security survey. Now in its sixth year, this joint effort consistently gives beneficial insight into the state of America's e-health and is widely reported in mainstream print and broadcast media.

While the survey suffers from some self-admitted methodological limitations, it is the most interesting and worthwhile data available on real world computer and network security. And the results are unnerving.

The survey is too lengthy to reprint in its entirety, but a few statistics (don't yawn) will demonstrate the seriousness of computer crime in this country. Based upon reports from 532 responding organizations (government, manufacturing, medical, insurance, banking, etc.), the survey showed:

- 91% detected a security breach during the past year.
- 64% had financial losses from a security breach. Of those who were able (or willing) to quantify the losses, they averaged over \$2 million per organization.
- 40% (up from 25% in the 2000 survey) detected penetration of their system or network from the outside.
- 94% (up from 85%) detected computer viruses.
- 36% (up from 27%) detected denial-of-service attacks.
- 91% (up from 79%) detected employee abuse of Internet access privileges (for example, accessing/downloading pornography or pirated software, or inappropriate use of e-mail).
- 13% (up from 8%) reported theft of transaction information. 70% of incidents involved Internet access.

Clearly there is a lot of crime and abuse going on. Perhaps the scariest statistic is that only 15% of those surveyed (which itself was a limited number) actually responded to the survey. Extrapolating the figures shows that monetary losses from computer crime may run into the billions of dollars each year in the United States alone.

How well did security measures help prevent damage from various threats? Consider this:

- 98% of the respondents used antivirus software, but 94% still reported virus problems.
- 95% had firewall systems and 90% had some kind of access control (such as user ID and passwords), yet 40% still detected outside penetration.

Those figures don't mean that security efforts are a waste. Instead, the clear message is that simply deploying security technology won't solve the problem. Information security issues are much more complex than simply buying gadgets. Only a well-rounded security program will be effective.

The survey results illustrate just how pervasive and expensive computer breaches and misuse have become, and refutes the idea that security measures are "overhead" costs and don't offer a good return on investment. A proper security program can help prevent great losses and significant damage to organizational reputation.

Complete survey results are available at Computer Security Institute's website: [www.gocsi.com](http://www.gocsi.com).

**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



# Designation Renewals

*Jan Hart, Washington, DC*

GIPSA is granting full 3-year designations to three official agencies to provide domestic official inspection services under the U.S. Grain Standards Act (USGSA). Here are the agencies and the official inspections they provided during fiscal year 2001: Columbus Grain Inspection, Inc. (47,575); Farwell Grain Inspection, Inc. (30,380); and Northeast Indiana Grain Inspection, Inc. (9,816).

Designated agencies provide domestic grain inspection services on an official basis to the grain trade on behalf of GIPSA. Here's some information about these partner agencies and their key players.

**COLUMBUS.** A chamber of commerce probably inspected grain in the Columbus area in the early 1900s. **Raymond D. Anderson** purchased Columbus Grain Inspection in 1946. Son **Ralph E. Anderson** took over the operation in 1974, expanded into the Marion, Ohio, area, and incorporated January 1975. Columbus was first designated under the USGSA in September 1978. Columbus purchased the former Erie Grain Inspection, Bellevue, OH, in August 1994, and was designated for northwest Ohio this month. **Ray R. Anderson** and his wife **Jacalyn** bought the corporation from Ray's parents **Ralph** and **Sally** in 2000. **Ralph** passed away in February 2001. **Ray** is the president, official agency manager, and quality assurance specialist; sister **Vicky Martin** is Columbus' treasurer and office Manager. **Ray** started working as a

full-time licensed inspector in 1979, and has managed Columbus for many years.

Columbus is headquartered in Circleville, OH, and operates a full-time lab in Bucyrus. Also, Columbus has 18 applicant-specific laboratories and 4 mobile labs in Ohio and Michigan, with more planned for the added territory in northwest Ohio.

**FARWELL. Wilborn (Bill) Prince** saw a need for and developed a grain inspection business in the Farwell area in 1957. Farwell was designated under the USGSA in 1978, and incorporated in 1989. **Bill** and son, **Danny**, looking for ways to increase business, applied for and were designated the Casa Grande and Yuma areas of Arizona in 1995. They provide official commercial inspections for the "Desert Durum" wheat grown in Arizona. Part of the former Amarillo territory west of Lubbock, TX, which Amarillo Grain Exchange, Inc., had voluntarily relinquished, was added to Farwell's geographic area in September 1996.

**Bill** started as a licensed sampler in Amarillo in the 1940s, and moved to Lubbock, where he became a licensed inspector about 1949. After working in Lubbock and Mexia, TX, **Bill** and wife **Glenna** moved to Farwell to start Farwell Grain Inspection.

**Danny** joined Farwell in 1962, as a helper for sedimentation and protein testing. He earned his grain inspection licenses in 1975. He also spent 4 years working for FGIS in the Wichita and Kansas City field offices. He

eventually moved back to Texas, working again with the family business, and later spearheading the operations in Arizona.

Farwell, headquartered in Farwell, TX, has another full-time laboratory in Casa Grande, and two applicant specific laboratories.

**NORTHEAST INDIANA.** Northeast Indiana is owned and managed by **Steve** and **Penny Walker**. The agency was originally part of East Indiana Grain Inspection, Inc., until East Indiana manager **Dan Gross** reached an agreement with **Steve** to split the geographic area. The **Walkers** applied for designation, and Northeast Indiana was designated in January 1998, as a partnership, incorporating a year later.

In 1976, **Penny** graduated from the University of Vermont and started working for FGIS' Minneapolis Field Office. That same year, **Steve** graduated from Ohio State University and joined the FGIS Toledo Field Office. The two met while on detail in Houston, and married in 1978, the same year that **Steve** joined the Compliance Division in Washington, DC. **Penny** resigned that year and **Steve** in 1983 so they could move back to Indiana and manage the area of the former W. F. Christen Grain Inspection, which had been recently acquired by **Dan Gross** as part of East Indiana.

Northeast Indiana is headquartered in Hoagland, with four other applicant specific laboratories in Indiana.



## GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps, Washington, DC*

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

*Suggestor*

*Suggestion*

Jeani Plautz, Des Moines

Suggestions on Improving the SW2 Scales  
Past Due for Test in the Scale Program

Ted Sakis, Atlanta

Place a Tribute to Heroes, Past and Present,  
for Veterans Day in the Newsletter

Scott Cooley, Olympia

Allow GIPSA Employees to Download  
Patriotic Screensavers and Wallpaper

Charles Williams, New Orleans

Make It A Policy to Have A GIPSA  
Representative to Attend Funerals for  
Employees and Family

November's tee-shirt winner: **Jeani Plautz!**

### **GIPSA Hotline Ideas Accepted and Approved for Implementation During November 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.

 Include a tribute to heroes, past and present, for Veterans Day in *GIPSA News*.

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline via e-mail: [gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.usda.gov](mailto: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.**

## Travel Bits & Pieces

*Peggy Smith, Washington, DC*

**May I Use a Taxi to Obtain Meals While I'm on TDY?** According to the Federal Travel Regulations, Chapter 301-10.420, the cost of a taxi is reimbursable to obtain meals at the nearest available place where the nature and location of the work at a TDY station are such that meals **cannot** be obtained there.

## November Issuances

*Charlie Turner,  
Washington, DC*

- Program Notice 01-16, Protein Instrument Approval, dated 11/14/01.
- Directive 9180.71, Fumonisin Testing Service, dated 11/26/01.
- DON Handbook, dated 11/26/01.

Wishing you  
and yours  
happy  
holidays!

# American Indian/Alaskan Native Heritage Month

*Debbie Shipman, Washington, DC*

During November, USDA celebrated American Indian/Alaskan Native Heritage Month. This year's theme was "Uniting All Nations Together As One". An opening ceremony on October 31, 2001, featured Pamyua (Bum-yo-ah), an African American/Native Alaskan Greenlander musical group from Anchorage, AK, and Dovie Thomason-Sickles, a Native American storyteller.

Pamyua is one of the influential artists in Alaskan history, and was nominated the "Best World Music Album" this year at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Native American Music Awards. They combine traditional Yup'ik and Inuit songs with jazz, rhythm and blues, world music, gospel, and doo-wop grooves. Listen to a sample of Pamyua's music at [www.nammys.com](http://www.nammys.com), under the World Music category.

Dovie is a uniquely talented storyteller. She has received many awards and took part in the National Storytelling Festival. She has toured the country to share many of her childhood tales about Indian culture, rich stories with deeply traditional values, and characters such as tricksters, spirit beings, monsters, and animals who face choices and learn from their decisions.

Dovie captivated her audience during the Department's observance with a beautiful, adventurous tale about a young woman who lived among wolves. She was heavily burdened and mistreated by her husband. Every day, the woman was told not to leave the corner, and to prepare meat and make moccasins. One day, an elderly woman appeared at the door and saw the young woman was greatly troubled. Periodically, the elderly woman visited, encouraged her to leave before she died in sorrow, and instructed her to prepare for a long journey across the mountains to her relatives. Finally the young woman left to search for her family. She encountered many frightening experiences in the wilderness, and almost gave up. Then appeared a light before her. It was a spirit creature who made the young woman invisible. She walked past her husband and vicious creatures during the journey. The woman finally came to a cave in the mountains to rest, and discovered she was pregnant by her husband. A mother wolf and a pack of wolves surrounded her and the baby. They were kind and gentle and treated them as members of the pack. Mother wolf shared raw meat with her. They howled at the moon and played under the stars. After many days and nights, the young woman saw a group of people coming toward her. They greeted her and introduced themselves as relatives. The young woman and child left the wolves and lived with her relatives for a while. She became lonely and said, "I do not belong here among humans; but I belong with my family of wolves". The young woman left her child with the family, and climbed high in the mountains. She remained with the wolves until she died an old woman. To this day, mother wolf and her pack howls because of the loss of the woman, their loved one.

Both entertainers showed remarkable styles in music and story telling. They conveyed to their audience traditional values of a proud and ingenious people from various nations.

# Rail Gauge History

*Martin Begley,  
Washington, DC*

The U.S. standard railroad gauge (distance between rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number. Why was that gauge used?

Because that's the way they built them in England, and the first U.S. railroads were built by English expatriates. Why did the English people build them like that? Because the first rail lines in Europe were designed and built by the same people who built the pre-railroad tramways, and that's the gauge they used. Why did "they" use that gauge then? Because the people who designed and built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they used for building wagons, which used that same wheel spacing. Okay, why did the wagons use that odd wheel spacing? Well, when they tried to use any other spacing, the wagons were prone to breaking down on some of the old, long distance roads, because that's the spacing of the old wheel ruts. So who built these old rutted roads?

The first long distance roads in Europe were built by Imperial Rome for the benefit of their legions. The roads have been used ever since. And the ruts?

The initial ruts, which everyone else had to match for fear of destroying their wagons, were first made by Roman war chariots. Since the chariots were all made to certain specifications for or by Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing.

*Continued, see **Rails**  
on page 9.*

# For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

TDY, from page 1.

Here are a few tips to keep the holiday season free from accidents and injuries:

## Christmas Trees

- Purchase green, moist Christmas trees. Never buy old or brittle ones.
- Check the needles. Try to find a tree with needles that bend instead of break.
- After purchasing a live tree, be sure to cut the bottom of the tree to expose new wood that will be able to soak up water.
- Always keep live trees watered.
- Keep trees (and any other combustibles) away from ignition sources such as fireplaces, space heaters, candles, overhead lights, and radiators.
- Ensure that artificial trees are fire resistant and UL (Underwriters Laboratory) or FM (Factory Mutual) listed. This will ensure the tree has been manufactured and tested to meet specific safety standards.
- Make sure the base is steady so the tree won't tip over easily.

## Christmas Lights and Extension Cords

- Only use UL or FM approved extension cords.
- Be sure the extension cord is large enough to carry the intended load. The thicker the cord, the greater load it should be able to carry without overheating.
- Inspect the cord for damaged insulation, splices, or loose plugs before using. Never use an extension cord that has any of these conditions.
- Do not overload outlets! Use surge protectors if multiple outlets are needed.
- Immediately replace any broken bulbs that have exposed filaments.
- Never use electric lights on old metal artificial trees.
- Don't run cords through doorways or under rug. The insulation on the cords can become damaged if the door closes on the cord. Or, if people step on the cord under the rug, it can cause a potential fire and/or shock hazard.
- Match plugs with outlets. Don't force a 3-pronged plug into a 2-pronged outlet or extension cord.

## Toys and Ornaments

- Purchase appropriate toys for the appropriate age. Some toys designed for older children might be dangerous for younger children.
- Electric toys should be UL/FM approved.
- Toys with sharp points, sharp edges, strings, cords, or parts small enough to be swallowed should not be given to small children.
- Place older ornaments and decorations that might be painted with lead paint out of the reach of small children and pets.

## Parties

- Never drink and drive.
- Provide non-alcoholic drinks for designated drivers and other guests.

Courtesy: *Environmental Health & Safety Magazine*

The TDY position may also require frequent and extensive travel on short notice, irregular work schedules, and work in settings that vary from office situations to work aboard vessels, warehouses, elevators, and processing facilities. Prior to submitting an application, interested applicants are encouraged to consider any health conditions that would influence their ability to perform these duties.

This will be a collateral duty position. Those selected will continue to work in their current positions when not assigned to a TDY position overseas or to an OIA support role at Headquarters. Incumbents may be eligible for a temporary promotion when assigned overseas. The OIA Director will supervise the position.

Look for the forthcoming vacancy announcement in the inGIPSA website for additional information about the position and the criteria which will be used in the selection process. In the meantime, please contact OIA staff at 202-720-0226 for additional information regarding the TDY position.

### Help is within reach.

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

# Summer Intern Program

*Dawn Cowan, Washington, DC*

Our goal for the 2002 Summer Intern Program (SIP), as in the past, is twofold: 1) to increase the numbers and diversity of interns hired within GIPSA and, 2) to encourage our supervisors and managers to convert promising participants from summer intern status to the Student Career Experience Program (formerly the Cooperative Education Program).

The SIP provides college and university students paid job opportunities during the summer and information about the various programs and career opportunities within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**If you participate, to what are you committing?** This information will give you an idea of the estimated costs for participating in the SIP.

· **Salary and Benefits.** Positions are non-clerical and students can receive a salary ranging from GS-3 through GS-9, depending upon the position and the student's academic or work experience. Internships generally last 10-12 weeks depending on the student's school schedule, with a usual NTE date of September 30. In most instances, this allows students to earn annual and sick leave. Summer interns do not receive retirement benefits, health or life insurance, or an opportunity to participate in TSP. However, they are subject to Social Security. The following is an estimate of salary costs for a summer intern (excluding locality pay):

## Salary Estimate Per Intern \*

GS-3	\$4,026
GS-4	\$4,509
GS-5	\$5,031
GS-7	\$6,208
GS-9	\$7,572

## Hourly Rate Estimate Per Intern

GS-3	\$9.23
GS-4	\$10.36
GS-5	\$11.59
GS-7	\$14.36
GS-9	\$17.57

· **Housing and Travel Expenses** are provided for students who live outside the local commuting area by the program that hires the intern. Student housing costs are minimized by accommodation-sharing arrangements with other agency interns. Depending upon location, housing generally ranges from \$450-\$600 per month per intern. (Housing for students in the Washington-Metro area are usually coordinated by Civil Rights Enforcement and Compliance or Human Resources, APHIS, and the cost is charged to the hiring program's accounting code. Housing for interns at field locations are usually arranged by the field office).

· **Mentoring.** Summer intern positions are intended to provide students with hands-on experience, knowledge, and exposure to career opportunities and future employment prospects at USDA. Each supervisor is encouraged to make efforts to match interns with senior staff members who have similar educational backgrounds and/or interests to help foster good working relationships.

**Rails**, from page 7.

Thus, we have the answer to the original questions. The United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches derives from the original specification (military, as it were) for an Imperial Roman army war chariot. But one "nagging" question still remains.

Why did the design of the Roman army war chariots incorporate that specific wheelbase? Answer: Because the chariots were designed to be just wide enough to accommodate the back ends of two war horses. So, the next time you are handed some odd ball specification and you assume that some horse's ass was responsible for coming up with it, you may be exactly right!

At least, that's how the story goes!

**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:

**Dana Stewart**  
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Phone (202) 720-5091  
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**by December 26, 2001!**

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR  
USDA, GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS  
AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION  
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