



GIPSA *NEWS*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES

MAY 2015

FGIS Matters...!: Reauthorization Impact

Randall Jones, Washington, DC

INSIDE THIS

ISSUE:

- ◆ *FGIS Matters...!*
- ◆ *Names in the News*
- ◆ *Shout-Out!*
- ◆ *National Grain Center Report*
- ◆ *Mandatory Training*
- ◆ *Writing Resources*

Reauthorization. I feel certain that over the past few months that almost every single FGIS Team Member has heard or read something related to “reauthorization.” Certainly, many of us in Washington D.C. have spent and continue to spend a tremendous amount of time on this issue so I want to devote this column to clarify and explain reauthorization and provide some history regarding reauthorization.

Reauthorization 101. The United States Grain Standards Act (USGSA) was established in 1916 with amendments throughout the years and specifically substantial changes in 1976 created the Federal Grain Inspection Service.

There have been some amendments to the USGSA since 1976 and in 1981 for the first time there was specific language added that authorized appropriations for a specified period of time (through 1984). By including this “sunset provision” this created the first reauthorization in 1984. Subsequent reauthorizations of the USGSA have extended this authority for varying periods of time. Occasionally, at the time of reauthorization, FGIS has asked Congress for changes or adjustments to the USGSA. Stakeholders also use this as an opportunity to request changes to the USGSA. In 2000, there were some in the grain industry that preferred FGIS serve more of an oversight function rather than a service provider. Sometimes the changes may have had a financial focus and sometimes the changes have had a policy change suggested by the grain industry. In the 1980s, for example, the law was changed to clarify that only grain for export had to be officially weighed thus excluding grain in domestic commerce from the official weighing requirement. The 2000 reauthorization changed and reduced our ability to spend on administrative and supervisory costs from 40 percent to 30 percent.

In 2005, some in the industry sought changes that would have allowed for the privatization of inspection and weighing service at export locations. In response, FGIS conducted an extensive pilot project in Toledo, Ohio, that studied the potential impact of such a change.



Randall Jones

Continued, see FGIS on page 2.

FGIS from cover page

So what happens on October 1, 2015, if the provisions of the USGSA are not reauthorized? Let's start by identifying the five provisions that will expire September 30.

1. Authorization to collect administrative and supervisory costs related to inspection;
2. Authorization to collect administrative and supervisory costs related to weighing;
3. Limitations on administrative and supervisory costs;
4. Authorization of appropriations; and
5. Authorization of the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee.

I want to first say that if these provisions are allowed to expire that the requirement that all grain exported from the U.S. be inspected and weighed will remain and that FGIS **will not shut down**.

The first two provisions cited above give us the authority to charge fees to cover administrative and supervisory costs which we refer to as tonnage fees. If this provision is not renewed we will have to reduce our user fees by the amount that is currently charged to cover these costs. The administrative and supervisory costs would still exist and we would have to find other ways to cover the costs. Congress could decide to provide additional appropriated funding to cover the costs or we could possibly use funds from the retained earnings to cover these costs for a period of time.

You may have heard the retained earnings referred to as trust funds and sometime we use the terms interchangeably. The retained earnings is the amount of funds that are left over after all obligations have been paid for the fiscal year. The retained earnings do not expire and do not have to be used in a particular fiscal year.

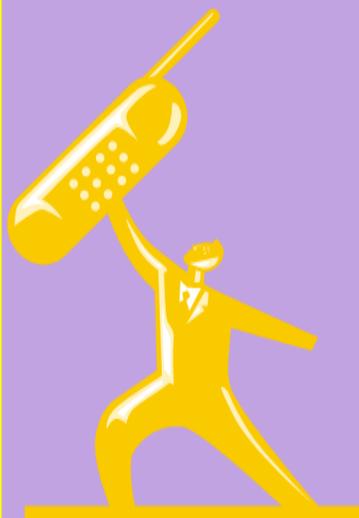
The third provision states that we can only spend up to 30 percent of our total costs on administrative and supervisory costs. If this provision expires we will no longer be limited to the keeping the administrative and supervisory costs below 30 percent of our total costs.

The fourth provision authorizes the use of appropriations for standardization and compliance activities, monitoring in foreign parts, and other expenses necessary to carry out the USGSA. In the absence of this provision, Congress would not necessarily be precluded from funding these activities and could still choose to authorize and appropriate funds for this work.

The fifth provision listed grants the authority to establish the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee. This provision expiring would not necessarily prohibit the Secretary from establishing a Grain Inspection Advisory Committee as there are other statutory authority to which the Secretary could rely upon.

Continued, see FGIS on page 3

GIPSA Idea Hotline



GIPSA Idea Hotline is open for business.
Please send your suggestions or ideas to
GIPSA-Ideas@usda.gov; fax them to 202-690-2173; or
telephone them to 1-800-455-3447 or 202-720-7045.

It is best to send them via fax or email to reduce the possibility of transcription errors; however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method of transmission.

FGIS from page 2

To summarize and attempt to bring some clarity to what can be a confusing set of possibilities, we have created the following table. The “post sunset” column refers to October 1, 2015, in the event that reauthorization does not occur.

Reauthorization of Expiring Provisions of the United States Grain Standards Act				
Activity		Current	Post Sunset	Implications
Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS)	Conduct Export Inspections	Yes	Yes	FGIS would have to issue regulations to establish fees to cover the costs for official inspection of grain excluding administrative and supervisory costs.
	Conduct Export Weighing	Yes	Yes	FGIS would have to issue regulations to establish fees to cover the costs of official weighing or supervision of weighing, excluding administrative and supervisory costs.
	FGIS charges fees for FGIS Supervisory and Administrative (S&A) Expenses	Yes	No	To cover S&A expenses for FGIS inspection and weighing activities, requires FGIS to (1) use existing export inspection trust funds or (2) identify appropriated funds that could be used.
Delegated States	Conduct Export Inspections	Yes	Yes	Delegated States could continue to conduct official export inspections, but FGIS would have to find funds to supervise the work.
	Conduct Export Weighing	Yes	Yes	Delegated States could continue to officially weigh export grain, but FGIS would have to find funds to supervise the work.
	Pay fees to FGIS to cover S&A Expenses	Yes	No	To cover S&A expenses for FGIS oversight of Delegated states’ inspection and weighing activities, requires FGIS to (1) use existing export inspection trust funds or (2) identify appropriated funds that could be used.
Designated Agencies	Conduct Official Domestic Inspections	Yes	Yes	Designated Agencies could continue to perform official inspections, if FGIS can find funds to supervise the work.
	Conduct Official Domestic Weighing	Yes	Yes	Designated Agencies could continue to officially weigh grain, if FGIS can find funds to supervise the work.
	Pay fees to FGIS to cover S&A Expenses	Yes	No	To cover S&A expenses for FGIS oversight of Designated Agencies’ inspection and weighing activities requires FGIS to (1) use existing trust funds or (2) identify appropriated funds that could be used.

I want to provide a little bit of insight into the process that may unfold in the next weeks and months based on the manner in which prior reauthorizations have unfolded. It is very likely that there will be hearings held by Congress – the House or the Senate or maybe both bodies – that will allow industry stakeholders to provide input as to the changes they would seek to make in the law. In some of the previous reauthorizations, USDA has been allowed to testify at the Congressional hearings. USDA’s current position on this reauthorization is that the provisions that are time limited should be extended for a period 10 years. This sometimes is referred to as a “clean reauthorization.” USDA is not seeking any other changes to the USGSA.

Continued, see FGIS on page 4

FGIS from page 3

At this point in time you may be asking yourself what all this means to me. I would like to say that I know the manner in which this will unfold but this is not possible. I am able to say that we are not aware of any movement to repeal the USGSA and therefore terminate the requirement to have grain exported from the U.S. officially weighed and inspected.

On April 30, 2015, the House Committee on Agriculture passed, by voice vote, H.R.2088 - To amend the United States Grain Standards Act to improve inspection services performed at export elevators at export port locations, to reauthorize certain authorities of the Secretary of Agriculture under such Act, and for other purposes – and recommended its adoption by the Full House. This legislation will reauthorize the five expiring provisions of the U.S. Grain Standards Act for five years (to Sept. 30, 2020). Currently, the Senate Committee on Agriculture is reviewing the USGSA, and anticipates action will be taken in June.

Each and every day FGIS provides critical services that promote the marketing of grain of high quality to both domestic and foreign buyers. We have many supporters in the U.S. and abroad and the value of our services are cherished by many. As the reauthorization process moves forward, I can assure you that your team in Washington D.C. will do everything within our power to promote FGIS and the work that you do to support U.S. agriculture. I remain confident that the value of our work will carry the day and that we will continue beyond September 30 supporting U.S. agriculture through the official inspection and weighing system.

Until next time, keep up the good work and stay safe!

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 Civil Rights Staff at 202-690-3640



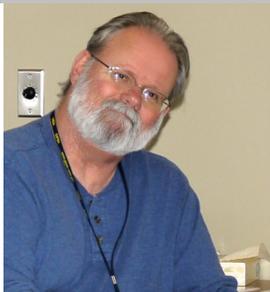
**All gave some...
Some gave all**

**Remember them this
Memorial Day**



Names in the News

Retirement



On May 1, 2015, the National Grain Center bid farewell to another long time employee. **Dave Morris** retired after 37 years of Federal service with the last 19 years here at NGC. Dave began his career with FGIS in Baltimore, Maryland in 1978 where he worked as an ACG at three export grain elevators. At different times in his Federal service, Dave was detailed at numerous places including: Norfolk, Virginia, Duluth, Minnesota, New Orleans, Louisiana, Beltsville, Maryland and Albany, New York. No one particular moment stands out in his time, but according to Dave, the journey all over has been an interesting one. Farewell Dave, you will be missed.

New Hire



Clayton Hansen is the newest member of the Grading Services Lab. He is originally from a small town on the Minnesota - South Dakota border. In 2001 Hansen started working for a local grain elevator in their grain operations. After going back to school to study Sales, Marketing and Management at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Moorhead, he started working as a sampler for North Dakota Grain Inspection on a part time basis. After finishing school Hansen went to work full time for NDGI. From 2010-14 he was Service Point Manager for NDGI's Taylor, North Dakota office. After leaving NDGI Hansen went back to school at Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls, South Dakota for Business Administration, and worked as a contract inspector for Sioux City Inspection. After finishing school at STI, he accepted the position as Service Point Manager for SCI's Windom, MN office. Hansen started working for the GSL on April 5.

Condolences



Bonnie Breau passed away on April 30, 2015, from a serious illness. Bonnie worked with FGIS in Crowley since 1998 where she began her career as an Agriculture Commodity Technician. In 2014 her dream came true when she qualified for the Agricultural Commodity Grader internship program and was promoted to Agriculture Commodity Grader.

Issuance Report

Terri Henry, Washington, DC

The following FGIS Program Notices have been removed from the GIPSA website. They have expired and/or the instructions have been placed on the webpage of test kit instructions maintained by the Technology and Science Division.

FGIS-PN-10-06
 FGIS-PN-10-07
 FGIS-PN-12-03
 FGIS-PN-12-05
 FGIS-PN-12-06
 FGIS-PN-14-01

FGIS-PN-14-03
 FGIS-PN-14-06
 FGIS-PN-14-10
 FGIS-PN-14-13



Our small town Field Office, appropriately located in what is considered to be the *heart* of League City, Texas is making quite a name for itself! Over the past three months we have had an impressive showing of prominent figures in the USDA, pass through our doors. (*If only they were saloon doors.*) In January, **Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture** took a tour of our Louis Dreyfus graders lab where he met our staff. In February, **Randall Jones, FGIS Deputy Administrator** along with **Bob Lijewski, Director, Field Management Division** arrived to participate in meetings addressing the challenges and needs of our team and now on March 27, the arrival of **Elvis Cordova, Deputy Under Secretary for MRP**.



Mr. Cordova's purpose for visiting Texas was to participate in the MANNRS 30th Annual Career Fair and Training Conference, located at the Crowne Plaza in Houston, where he addressed college students on the matter of *making the transition from college to industry*. Unlike the weather when Mr. Vilsack visited (who was greeted with rain coming in sideways), Mr. Cordova's was picturesque; sunny with a high of 79-degrees and a steady light wind. During his brief stay, he was able to carve out enough time to meet with **Assistant Field Office Manager, Alan Wadyko** who then took him on a guided tour of the League City Field Office and its grading lab, ultimately ending at the Port of Houston's Louis Dreyfus Elevator in Galena Park to see our grading facilities inside the J.C. Wooley Bldg. Mr. Joe Olivier and Mr. Santiago Cervantes both extended that same Texas hospitality by finishing the tour, where Mr. Cordova saw the vast difference between what *was* and what is *now* LDC's newly renovated control room. Going from the *green wall* to a high-tech viewing system, outfitted with 13 hi-def. flat screens will always make for an impressive show.

We truly hope Mr. Cordova enjoyed his visit to the Lone Star State, where Bluebonnets are in full bloom and Blue Bell Ice Cream never sits long enough to melt. And to Mr. Vilsack, *maybe we'll get that sunshine for you next time*. Until then, as the saying goes... *Y'all come back, now. Ya Hear?*

Question from GIPSA Town Hall Meeting

Employee Question:

In response to Mr. Mitchell's statement regarding those retiring...

Is this agency committed to upward mobility for those in all areas?

We've been offered the opportunity to do cross-training in our office, but, the consensus is that if it's not going to benefit you with upward mobility, many feel as though it's a waste of time and money, if they are going to continue to hire from outside and not offer those with years served an opportunity to move up or cross over into other departments.

Larry Mitchell's response:

I am aware of and can understand the trepidation of those who feel that additional training may be a waste of time if it does not guarantee upward mobility. Education and training seldom offer guaranteed advancement and I guess it is always a gamble. We only need to ask all of the millennials who have received their college degrees, a mountain of student loan debt and are now living back with their parents. But they have certainly bettered themselves by taking advantage of the training opportunity when it presents itself.

Additional training with GIPSA is free to the trainee, other than the extra time it takes – and that time is usually paid for by the agency. It benefits the agency, but more importantly it benefits the trainee. Advancement within the federal government is not based upon years of service. It takes training and experience above and beyond the number of years of service to advance. GIPSA should and will always look for the best candidate for the job, from within or outside of GIPSA. Employees are encouraged to discuss career plans periodically with their supervisors and ask for guidance on how to improve chances for future promotions.

I hope you understand that free training is free to you, not the agency or taxpayers. Or best said, "What do you have to lose?"

Feel free to reach out to me anytime on this or any other issue.

Thank You for your interest in the issue and your service to the U.S.

A Shout-Out Goes to...

A shout out goes to all of the Engagement Teams but a special one goes to the NOFO Engagement Team volunteers ; Danna Mitchell, Wanda Erhabor-Emokpae, Kalian Arnold, Courtney Trask, Myron Emmanuel, Vincent Volpe, Beth Vial, and George Banks Jr., on the excellent job the group did . The information gathered from the "Real Talk "sessions was used during the April, 2015 GIPSA Town Hall Meeting. Keep up the good work!!!

A shout out goes to Rose Alexander and Caroline Thorpe for ensuring GIPSA was prepared for the transition from GovTrip to the new travel system Concur Government Edition (CGE). The roll out date was February 23, 2015. The transition went smoothly without any disruption to the GIPSA mission or travel services. The tasks included:

- *Updating data template for conversion to CGE;*
- *Schedule training on the new system for all GIPSA employees;*
- *Providing ongoing guidance to GIPSA employees and managers regarding the CGE.*

Your hard work was appreciated.

Writing Resources for GIPSA Employees

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

In early FY2015, GIPSA held a writing class for 40 GIPSA employees and many of them asked about available writing resources. Because discussions with employees revealed that offices may have some slightly different styles, we are providing you with the official sources of writing guidance.

Government Publishing Office (GPO) Style Manual

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/search/pagedetails.action?granuleId=&packageId=GPO-STYLEMANUAL-2008&fromBrowse=true>

Plain Language

Site: <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/index.cfm>

Plain Language Training: http://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/take_training/index.cfm

Plain Language Handout in AgLearn: [Introduction to Plain Language Handout](#)

Other topics that came up were certain grammar rules, specifically,

Rules to remember:

- **Which and That (which is a dependent clause)**

The street that I live on is called Quay Village Ct.

The street that I live on, which is called Quay Village Ct., is often mispronounced, because the word “Quay” sounds like “Key.”

- **Rule for writing out numbers.**

Spell out numbers **ten** and under; use numerals **11** and greater, unless starting a sentence.

- **Who and Whom**

Who is the subject? *Who will be there?*

Whom is an object or person acted upon? Whom is the object and requires a preposition. *With whom are you going?*

- **Affect and Effect**

If you want to affect someone's writing, edit his or her work carefully.

The effect should be to improve his or her writing.

Except as in, “Our new director wants to *effect* change.”

Affect is a verb. It means to produce a change in or influence something.

Effect is a noun that can also be used as a verb. It means a change that occurred. When an "s" is added, "effects" means personal belongings.

According to Your Dictionary .com

Affect

1. Affect can be used as a noun to describe facial expression.

Example: The young man with schizophrenia had a flat affect.

Continued, see Writing on page 12.

Writing from page 11.

Example: The woman took the news of her husband's sudden death with little affect.

2. Affect can also be used as a verb. Use it when trying to describe influencing someone or something rather than causing it.

Example: How does the crime rate affect hiring levels by local police forces?

Example: The weather conditions will affect the number of people who come to the county fair this year.

Effect

1. If you are talking about a result, then use the word "effect" as a noun.

Example: What effect did the loss have on the team?

2. It is appropriate to use the word "effect" if one of these words is used immediately before the word: into, on, take, the, any, an, or and. (Comment: This does not seem to apply...)

Example: The prescribed medication had an effect on the patient's symptoms.

Example: In analyzing a situation, it is important to take the concepts of cause and effect into consideration.

3. If you want to describe something that was caused or brought about, the right word to use is effect; but, as shown in this example, it would be a verb.

Example: The new manager effected some positive changes in the office. (This means that the new manager caused some positive changes to take place in the office.)

To develop your writing skills below are courses available in AgLearn.

AgLearn Courses

[Business Grammar: Parts of Speech](#)

[Introduction to Plain Language](#)

[7 Steps to Better Written Policies](#)

[Business Grammar: The Mechanics of Writing](#)

[Business Grammar: Working with Words](#)

[Business Writing: Editing and Proofreading](#)

[Business Writing: How to Write Clearly and Concisely](#)

[Business Writing: Know Your Readers and Your Purpose](#)

[Effective Business & Nonfiction Writing Second Edition](#)

[Introduction to Plain Language](#)

[Making your point in writing](#)

[Preparing a Business Case](#)

[Professional Writing Skills A Self-Paced Training Program](#)

[Should this be put in writing?](#)

[When writing for the web](#)

[Where Good Ideas Come From](#)

[Writing a performance review](#)

[Writing at work: How to Write Clearly, Effectively and Professionally](#)

[Writing for Technical Professionals: Effective Writing Techniques](#)

[Writing for Technical Professionals: Preparation and Planning](#)

[Writing important e-mail messages](#)

Writing to customers

[Writing under Pressure: Preparing for Success](#)

[Writing under Pressure: The Writing Process](#)

[Writing under Pressure: The Writing Process](#)



THE NGC REPORT NATIONAL GRAIN CENTER

GC Report Team: Roger Friedrich, Ruth Goff, Jennifer Helber, and Ryan Rudder

Administrative Professionals' Day

Successful organizations are only as good as the teams they have supporting them. That is why Administrative Professionals' Day is all about giving thanks where it is deserved – to the people working behind the scenes to make sure our office is run like a well-oiled machine.

Administrative workers often have tough jobs, they serve a key role in keeping our organization functioning efficiently and, in many cases, they function as the right hands of busy managers who wouldn't be able to perform their jobs without them. And support work is hard – anyone who has ever worked in an administrative role can tell you it's a lot harder than it looks from the outside. Being calm and unflappable is part of doing the job well – but it can be stressful, challenging work. The administrative staff at the NGC are responsible for ensuring so many things that we all need to do our jobs happen without us having to even think about it - that mail is delivered, supplies are ordered, visitors are welcomed, certificates are issued – the list could go on and on - Marsha, Terri, Gail, and Sara make it look easy. Thank you.



Sara Dobbins, Terri Liberty, Gail Parrish, Marsha Schwartz

Reorganization: Grain Services Lab (DIOO)



The Grain Services Laboratory (GSL) has been aligned under DIOO and now serves as the quality assurance body for DIOO in the same manner in which the quality assurance specialists serve in other field offices. DIOO staff members Ron Metz, Jeff L'Heureux, Claudius Price, and Brian Woods have been joined by GSL Staff members Rodney Bell, Darryl Bellin, Don Damm, George Dumun, Roger High, Tim Humiston, Joe Lopez, Greg Zieber, and Clayton Hansen.

NGC Employee Meeting



Administrator Mitchell addressed a meeting of the NGC employees on April 8th.

Advisory Committee Meeting



The FGIS Advisory Committee met at the National Grain Center April 7 - 8.

THE NGC REPORT NATIONAL GRAIN CENTER

Take your sons and daughters to work day



Bring Your Child to Work Day provides us with an opportunity to show our children how we spend our day. It also gives us an opportunity to get our children interested in the sciences. This year, we had 21 children attending. In the morning the children toured the building and visited the Analytical Chemistry, Board of Appeals and Reviews, and Inspection Instrumentation branches. Each branch had activities for the children. In the Afternoon, the children got to participate in a variety of fun hands on crafts, do their own experiment, and see a chemical demonstration.

“Writing Up” Course



APHIS Instructor Beth Gaston presented the “Write Up” course she taught to the APHIS LDP training class for NGC Employees April 14th.

KSU International Grains Program Tour



Nineteen participants in an IGP Grain Purchasing course from Bulgaria, Columbia, Egypt, France, India, Japan, Panama City, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and the USA toured the NGC on April 13th. Left: Pat Emick demonstrates the operation of the Perten AM 5200-A moisture meter. Right: Fred Felix describes inspection procedures.

APHIS Leadership Development Training



Twenty-five APHIS project leaders and managers attended Leadership Development training at the NGC facility April 13-17. APHIS Administrator Kevin Shea addressed the class by VTC on the first day. This is the second year APHIS has conducted their LDP training at the NGC.

THE NGC REPORT NATIONAL GRAIN CENTER

The National World War Museum & Memorial



The first official day of summer may not be until June 21, but for many, the beginning of the summer season is Memorial Day weekend. But, before you fire up the grill to enjoy some tasty barbecue, let's take a closer look at why Memorial Day is such a special holiday and a very special tie Kansas City has to Memorial Day.

Memorial Day is the celebration of honoring those soldiers who died in battle serving our country. The fourth Monday in May has been set apart in dedication to honoring fallen soldiers in all wars the United States has fought.

Memorial Day was originally known as "Decoration Day" and was established after the Civil War to honor fallen soldiers. This tradition continued until after World War I, when the remembrance of fallen soldiers was extended to World War I and eventually every war fought by American soldiers. In 1971, Decoration Day was renamed Memorial Day and officially designated a federal holiday by Congress.

Not only is Kansas City home to the National Grain Center, but Kansas City also calls home to the National World War I Museum and Memorial, located at the Liberty Memorial.

Construction of the Liberty Memorial began in November of 1921 and ended in November of 1926. The Memorial was dedicated on November 11, 1921 ("Armistice Day", later renamed "All Veterans Day" and shortened to "Veterans Day") by President Calvin Coolidge. Joining President Coolidge in the dedication ceremony was World War I General of the AEF (American Expeditionary Force) General John Pershing and leaders of various Allied countries including England and France.

The Liberty Memorial has served as a reminder of the sacrifices made during the Great War by the many brave soldiers all those years ago. The vision and purpose of the Liberty Memorial is best reflected in its mission statement: "The National World War I Museum at the Liberty Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the World War I era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations."

The architecture of the Liberty Memorial is another fascinating aspect of the museum and is filled with symbolic elements. The Memorial was designed by H. Van Buren Magonigle in 1921 and was designed in an Egyptian Revival style of architecture. The most prominent feature of the National World War I Museum and Memorial is the Liberty Memorial Tower, which sits 268 feet off the ground and has an observation deck. The top of the tower also has four guardian spirits edged into the tower named: Honor, Courage, Patriotism and Sacrifice. The Memorial Tower is flanked by two Assyrian Sphinxes named "Memory" and "Future." Both sphinxes shield their eyes for different reasons. "Memory" faces the East towards France and shields itself from war while "Future" faces the West and shields itself from an unknown future.

In 2004 the Secretary of Interior, Dirk Kempthorne declared the Liberty Memorial a national historic landmark. Last year, President Obama signed legislation recognizing the Liberty Memorial as the national museum for World War I, renaming it to the National World War I Museum and Memorial.

Having personally toured the memorial, I can attest this humble submission barely scratches the surface of the fascination and inspiration the Liberty Memorial carries. There are many inspiring and moving exhibits that could easily take up the rest of this newsletter. Next time you find yourself in Kansas City for business, pleasure, or just a quick stop, take a few hours and visit the one of the most interesting museums not only in Kansas City, but in the United States as well.

For more information about Memorial Day and the National World War I Museum and Memorial, check out the following links:

www.theworldwar.org
www.usa.gov/Topics/Memorial-Day.shtml

THE NGC REPORT NATIONAL GRAIN CENTER

Employee Spotlight: Shayle Williams (CTL)

Welcome back to the latest installment of the "Employee Spotlight" section of the NGC News in the GIPSA Newsletter. Each month we interview a different employee here at the National Grain Center not only to showcase the talented individuals that make up NGC but also to get to know our fellow coworkers. This month we caught up with physical scientist Shayle Williams.



Q: Where are you from?

A: McPherson, Kansas is the town I claim as home. During my childhood, my family relocated a few times. We mainly bounced around the state of Kansas except for a few years that my dad was stationed in Germany.

Q: Where did you attend school? What degree(s) do you have?

A: I first attended Highland Community College where I received an Associate's Degree in Art and Science. I then transferred to Benedictine College where I received a Bachelor's of Science in Biochemistry. I'm hopefully not done yet though. I intend to go back to school and at least try for my Master's degree.

Q: What is your position title and duties/responsibilities?

A: I'm a Physical Scientist for the CTL group. I work in Microbiology with Jennifer Helber. I've been told many people mistakenly think I am a part of the Biotech group, so just to clear the water, I do work in their section at times but I'm not a part of their group.

Q: How long have you been at the National Grain Center?

A: I am still a newbie here at the National Grain Center. I have only worked here for a little over 10 months now.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: In my spare time, I have fun participating in almost any kind of athletic activity. I enjoy a good challenge and am naturally very competitive. A few recreational activities that I've participated in lately are beach volleyball, weight training, pool, rock climbing, and occasionally golf. Ultimately, running is my true passion though. Running helped me pay my way through college and is my therapy on a day to day basis.

Q: Who is the biggest influence in your life?

A: My sister-in-law is by far the biggest influence in my life. It's not what she has accomplished that impacts me, but her wholehearted fight to achieve those accomplishments. She is always striving to surpass the next goal, whether it be intellectually, occupationally, emotionally, or even physically. She betters herself daily. Her enthusiastic demeanor doesn't only impact me but is reflected in her children as well. I aim to integrate her dedication in my own venture of life, and maybe someday influence another the way she has me.

Q: What is the last book you read and/or what book are you currently reading?

A: I am currently reading (and watching) the Game of Thrones series by George R. R. Martin.

Q: What would you say is your greatest accomplishment?

A: My greatest accomplishment, or what I am most proud of, is running my goal time in a marathon. I participated in the Waddell and Reed Marathon in October 2013. My finishing time was about 3 hours and 53 minutes. Just under my goal time of 4 hours! It was a feat that I am very proud of and that I hope to try to improve on in the future.

Q: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A: As a child, I looked towards becoming a math teacher. I have always enjoyed working with numbers and solving equations. I would spend hours counting and organizing anything in large quantities around our house, such as coins, movies, or even popcorn cornels. In school, math ended up being very easy for me so teaching it was an obvious option for the future.

THE NGC REPORT NATIONAL GRAIN CENTER

NGC Electronic Recycling Day

Each year, Earth Day -- April 22 -- marks the anniversary of what many consider the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970. Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, city slickers and farmers, tycoons and labor leaders. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts.



To honor this effort, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) partnered with UNICOR, the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/KCK, BPU, and Operation Brightside to collect electronic waste (e-Scrap) in KCK -- this year's event was held on April 22 from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The event was also open to all Federal government agencies in the Kansas City-Metro area. Gail Parrish coordinated the National Grain Center effort.



Items accepted included computers and accessories, old T.V. sets, FAX machines, old cell phones. Computer hard drives were to be cleared with DOD approved software; items to be recycled if possible (e.g., monitors converted to color T.V.'s); other electronics will be de-manufactured and sold for commodity value.

QAS Seminar(s)



In April, The Board of Appeals and Review (BAR), began presenting a series of two-day grain grading seminars provided for Official agencies and FGIS Quality Assurance Specialists (QAS). The seminars are hosted at the National Grain Center (NGC) in Kansas City, Missouri. The purpose of the seminars is to bring QAS from all over the U.S. to the NGC for training on subjective factors in grain and commodities. These seminars are intended to benefit QAS in their training and development.

The seminars are organized based on geographical regions, this allows the BAR to bring in QAS from one regional area and discuss issues that are effecting the quality of inspection in that region. The BAR also reviews current national issues that may have an effect on the seminars' participants. This is an informative process that allows regional QAS to have information on issues effecting FGIS nationally.



If you would like to make a contribution to “The National Grain Center (NGC) Report” please send information to Roger Friedrich, Leader, GIPSA, Digital Media Group roger.l.friedrich@usda.gov

NGC Report

April 9, 2015

OUTREACH ACTIVITY MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Larry Mitchell, Administrator
 Susan Keith, Deputy Administrator
 S. Brett Offutt, Director, Policy and Litigation Division
 Elkin W. Parker, Regional Manager ERO
 Joe Moore, Business Practices Supervisor ERO

FROM: Cary Ainsworth, Marketing Specialist

SUBJECT: Livestock and Animal Scale Training Class, Nashville, Tennessee

During the week of March 23-27, 2015, I assisted with the instruction at a Livestock and Animal scale training class hosted by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. This class is sponsored by NIST weights and measures division to train State inspectors and scale company technicians in the most modern and proper testing procedures for these type of scales.

I was one of three technical instructors from my Train the Trainer class along with John Barton our representative/mentor from NIST. We were asked to conduct this class because we are the most knowledgeable in this subject matter and to get us Certified by NIST to conduct these classes. We had 26 participants; 19 from six different State Weights and Measures jurisdictions from the all over US, 5 from Scale Companies, plus 2 from PSP, Resident Agent Gordon Peters and Marketing Specialist Stacey Schofield. The class consisted of 2 days of classroom instruction and one day of hands on field testing and a final written exam. All participants will receive a certificate and continuing education credits. I would also like to compliment Stacey and Gordon, they made some of the higher grades on the exam, with Stacey making the second highest in the class.

PSP is the gold standard for Livestock and Animal Scale testing and procedures. We had to turn down many individuals that wanted to attend the course. We are considering having another Livestock Scale testing training class later this year, 2015. I will be working with John Barton, NIST, to get dates and locations set. All travel costs for me to conduct this training are paid by a grant from NIST to NCWM so there is never a cost to PSP, but my time.

John Barton's comments about the class to me, "I just wanted to thank you for your help and to provide you with some feedback on your portion of the class. You were able to see the class evaluations for you, Mike and Tim, which were all very complimentary and positive. The class responds very nicely to you since you are approachable and easy to talk with. The information you brought to the class was a very valuable part of the course and there seemed to be a lot of questions that the folks had which were related to PSP regulations. I believe that your being there adds a great deal to the course."

I also received several phone calls and email thanking us for conducting the course, this one email in particular from Joe Grell, Rice Lake Weighing is very encouraging.

Cary:

Thank you very much for putting on an excellent seminar last week. Although my final score on the test could have been much better, I learned a great deal during the course and have a much deeper understanding of the testing process for Livestock and Animal Scales. Coincidentally, we are beginning a NTEP test on a single animal scale here in Rice Lake tomorrow. I also met and got to know several regulatory inspectors during the course. I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this class and commend you and the entire staff for a wonderful experience.

Thanks

Joe Grell
 VP, Heavy Capacity and Strategic Accounts

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Training Updates

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

Mandatory Training Due

Course	Due Date	Trainees
Civil Rights: No Fear Act Comprehensive	Within 30 days of hiring (USDA)	New Employees
Cultural Transformation and Civil Rights: Harassment Prevention for Federal Employees Sexual Harassment Prevention for Federal Managers	September 30, 2015	All Employees and Managers
Cultural Transformation: Maximizing Employee Engagement	September 30, 2015	All Supervisors, Managers, and Executives
Cultural Transformation: Business of Coaching: Getting Ready to Coach	September 30, 2015	All Hiring Managers, Supervisors and SEPMs
CyberSecurity: FY2015 Informational Security Awareness	March 31, 2015	All Employees (284 complete-441 incomplete)
Ethics Training: To access see instructions below	June 30, 2015	All employees
<p>Click the Curriculum tab (circle) in the lower-right corner of your account Click "2015 Annual Ethics Training" Click the small triangle next to the "1 item from item pool" Choose one of the training options which are: Acquisition Leadership Classroom or Live Option: Only choose classroom training if you know you will be offered this option. The originator of the course will mark you complete (Usually the ethics office). The Hatch Act (Recommended for all employees who do not do contracting or are not "official leaders")</p>		
LincPass Training:	December 15, 2014 (Past due)	All Employees w/computer access (164 employees are incomplete)
Performance Training: Performance Management in USDA.	Due: May 15, 2015	All Employees whose Performance Training was incomplete for FY2014 due to technical issues.
Safety-New Course: "Active Shooter: What You Can Do." (Either Web-based or PDF version)	April 30, 2015	All Employees

Training and Development Tools in a Nutshell from USDA and GIPSA

If you're not in an organized development program, what options and tools do you have to move forward in your career? Below is a standard list of ongoing resources employees may use to identify career moves and make sure they take the next step.

1) Identifying next steps based on job series: Considering a move in your current government series or to another series. First look at your own Position Description and also find the series on OPM's website for the next grade higher. Carefully review the documents to clearly identify associated competencies and review this with someone in your office on what those skills are. For those in FGIS that do grain grading you may want go to the *InGIPSA* website at <https://ingipsa.gipsa.usda.gov/training.aspx> and under "steer your career" click on Career Information for ACGs, ACTs, and ACAs.

2) Goal Setting: Individual Development Plans (IDPs) - Set developmental and training goals using your IDP and follow through.

Continued, see Training on page 20.

Training *from page 16*

It is easy to identify activities but often the issue is executing or following-up on those plans. See if you can commit to a trusted friend to verify if you are following up on your developmental or training goals whether they are on your IDP (job related and organizational) or personal goals (financial, health, career or personal (house, family hobby). Further, the Department will be rolling out a coaching program over the next year. Initially this will probably be open to those in leadership training programs. Coaching, is a teaching, training or development process via which an individual is supported while achieving a specific personal or professional result or goal. As a result, the coach often asks a lot of questions to clarify next moves that help the coaches identify their next best moves. This is for usually a short duration less than six months. The object here is to meet to move forward with your goals, ideally to become a more engaged employee.

3) Mentoring: Some of you may participate formally and others may opt out of the formal process and do this informally (finding someone with the skills you want and simply talking with them). Either way, this is a great opportunity for you to get information on both the technical skills or soft skills or career development of an employee. Mentoring is defined as an individual who facilitates personal and professional growth by sharing knowledge and insights learned through the years. The assumption is that, unlike coaching, the mentor has some form of information or advice needed by the mentee.

4) Developmental Opportunities: With support and assistance of the supervisor, the employee's present job can be restructured or arrangements made to have the employee temporarily transferred to another area to learn firsthand the necessary technical and managerial competencies required for effective performance in that job.

Examples of developmental activities include the following list:

- **Shadowing:** Providing a trainee or learner with the opportunity to observe a well qualified, journeyman level employee perform a particular skill. Immediately after the shadowing period, the learner needs to have the opportunity to perform the same skill and be given feedback on that performance.
- **Detail/Rotational Assignments:** Short-term assignment particularly appropriate for important skills that make up a small portion of an individual's job, but can lead to full-time work in that field.
- **Task Force Assignments:** This is particularly effective if the learner has an opportunity to work with well qualified people who will provide feedback to the learner on his/her performance and participation in the group.

5) Development of Job Aides: Requires that the learner develop a product that will assist in the performance of the job, while, at the same time, serving as a vehicle for learning job-related information.

- Cross-Program Assignments
- Special Work Projects
- Coaching Lower Level Employees

6) Finally, Communication, Communication, Communication: Studies show that one skill clearly associated with job success and leadership is communication. Consider taking courses on AgLearn to strengthen both written and oral communication. If you want to enter leadership polish your briefing skills by joining Toastmasters, which is only about \$50 per year. See if you can find someone in your office who writes well and may be able to work with you on a basic writing program.

Many of these items are not new, but reviewing what is available now since you completed your IDP may be of value if you feel the need to adjust your activities throughout the year.

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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