



GIPSA News

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

March 1998

From My Desk

Jim R. Baker

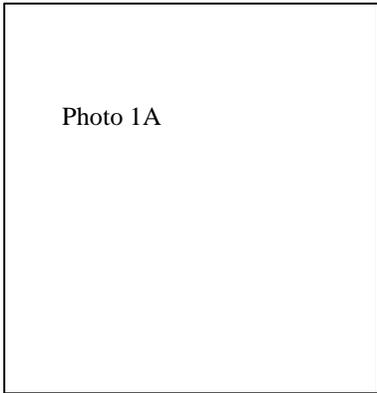


Photo 1A

Administrator Jim Baker

The 1998 Agricultural Outlook Forum just wrapped up. Harold Davis and I had the opportunity to be part of the planning committee this year. The conference really did address new frontiers for Agriculture. The agenda was tailored to involve people with experience to address the issues that are facing agriculture and the effects of how the global marketplace has a real effect on prices and demand.

Many areas today, and especially Asia, are being evaluated not based on a demand factor but on their ability to pay for products. The exchange rate and

value of the U.S. dollar has required foreign buyers to rethink the real value of the goods purchased from us. A decreased demand for our products costs America more than just the lost revenue of a purchase. It affects industry workloads and job opportunities and individuals' careers.

This effect is seen in the grain program, where we've seen huge crops produced but less export demand for the last 2 years. More bulk of grain has gone into domestic use and for processed and value-added products. This trend may shift so that exports go up, but it won't happen this year.

On another note -- I commend all of the GIPSA employees who supported and donated to the Winter Food Drive. You are a special group that gives freely. My hat goes off to the coordinators, but especially to one person I know, who prefers to remain anonymous, who donated over 160 pounds of food items in our D.C. office.

In closing, every day, I challenge you to put safety first and make EEO part of your daily work plans. We will move forward together when dignity and respect are the bases of our actions.

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**National
Women's
History
Month**

March 1998

Names in the News

Personnel

Welcome to **Andrea Giberson**, economist, who joined the Packer and Poultry Division's Packer Branch in February. Andrea comes to GIPSA with 2 years experience at an economics consulting group located in Washington, D.C.

Many thanks to the following field-based people for assisting the Compliance Division's Review Branch with onsite compliance review details in February and March. **Mitch Doak**, agricultural commodity grader, Kansas City Field Office, during his first review with us, helped evaluate a State in the Baltimore Field Office circuit (Georgia Department of Agriculture). **Bill Fedele**, supervisory auditor, Bedford Regional Office, assisted us with evaluating this State's financial programs. **Bob Medley**, agricultural commodity grader, New Orleans Field Office, also during his first review, helped evaluate three private agencies in the Kansas City Field Office and Stuttgart Field Office circuits. **Bob Crook**, assistant field office manager, Cedar Rapids Field Office, helped with the follow-up review of the Stuttgart Field Office, and Greenville and Jonesboro Suboffices. **Rosemary Mayne**, secretary to the director, Field Management Division, assisted us with the administrative portion of the Stuttgart Field Office review.

Awards

Crystal Akins, auditor; **Jennifer Anderson**, auditor; **Bill Fedele**,

auditor; and **Chris McClure**, marketing specialist, Bedford, received extra effort awards for sustained superior performance, dedication, and utilization of innovative computer technology in conducting major complex investigation.

Raymond Andrews, **Wilburn Bennett**, **Regina Landry**, and **Willie Washington**, New Orleans, received spot awards for outstanding performance in sampling inbound corn cars while maintaining both efficiency and safety.

Phil Bishop, marketing specialist; **Jesse Booth**, industrial specialist; **Julie Johnson**, legal documents examiner; **Brenda Oliver**, legal program assistant, and **Ken Palmer**, supervisory marketing specialist, Bedford, received time off awards for dedication and extra effort in organizing and entering data into a computer data base for analysis of a major poultry investigation.

Dewey Blatchford, industrial specialist, Omaha, received a cash award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the scales and weighing program in the Omaha office.

Shelton Buckley, New Orleans, received a spot award for displaying professionalism in efforts to ensure shipholds were free of previous cargo while under intense pressure.

Sheila Davis, secretary, Livestock Marketing Division, received an extra effort award for dedication and extra effort in fulfilling her assigned responsibilities as well as the duties of the Division secretary when called upon.

Jeannene Henehan and **Rosemary Mayne**, Washington, received performance awards for outstanding performance of duties contributing to fulfilling the mission of the Field Management Division and GIPSA.

Chuan Kao, Technical Services Division, received an extra effort award for showing initiative by fabricating and repairing broken glassware. He was able to repair dilatomers quickly, returning them to operation and saving considerable funds.

Randy Lunning, Moscow, received an extra effort award for outstanding performance in carrying out quality assurance and other assigned duties in the Moscow Field Office.

Robert Petersen, Moscow, received an extra effort award for outstanding contributions in carrying out protein coordinator, equipment specialist, and ADP functions in the Moscow circuit.

20-Year Service Award

David Morris, Technical Center

15-Year Service Award

Wes Hearn, Technical Center

10-Year Service Award

Valerie Collins, Technical Center
David Funk, Technical Center

FGIS Finances — Furloughs Ahead

Dave Shipman, Washington, DC

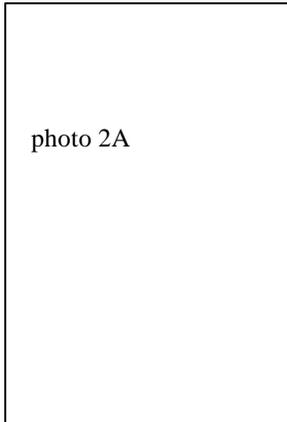


photo 2A

Dave Shipman

The finances of the grain inspection program are taking another hard hit this year. Sluggish grain exports, compounded by the Asian financial crisis, have put us in the red — our revenues are not covering operating costs. While we've lost money in our fee-supported programs each of the past 3 years, we've been able to cover those losses by drawing on our trust fund. This has, however, depleted the fund, giving us no cushion for this year. Both short and long term adjustments in our organizational structure and staffing levels are needed to maintain a workable financial status for the grain inspection program. Right now, we're beginning to restructure some field locations and

starting to conduct furloughs.

At a February 4-5, 1998, meeting of the National Partnership Council in New Orleans, we talked about our financial status and the need for containing our costs. Since that meeting, local Union officials and management have worked to identify potential cost savings and new revenue opportunities. These joint efforts have resulted in many recommendations, many of which are being tried. These recommendations, however, in and of themselves, will not fully address our financial situation.

Other action will be required. We're looking at organizational restructuring to provide long-term savings. We'll also need short-term solutions this year. That's where furloughs come in. At this point, we're planning furloughs in offices with slow workloads. The need for and lengths of the furloughs will depend directly on local workloads, the success of local level cost-containment actions, and opportunities to detail employees to assist other agencies. If local initiatives and furloughs due to lack of work do not sufficiently contain costs, we will conduct an agency-wide furlough.

In addition, a furlough already is being implemented in our Beaumont office because the elevator that is the primary source of the work for Beaumont is closing for 3 months for renovations and repairs. A furlough is simply unavoidable at this time.

Sharing news like this isn't pleasant, but it is necessary. We are taking difficult steps brought about by difficult times. We will continue to explore all available options to minimize the impact of our current financial situation on each of you. I'll keep you informed about how we're addressing our financial crisis as further developments take place.

Closing The Case on Burford

Jay Johnson, Washington, DC

On February 25, 1998, the Federal District Court, Omaha, Nebraska, took the first steps to close a case in which GIPSA played a pivotal role. GIPSA's **Melissa Palan**, **Bill Tiarks**, and **Keith Kienow**, Omaha, and **Maggie Mills**, Denver Regional Office, cooperated with the FBI, the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice, and the Nebraska Brand Committee throughout the investigation and prosecution of Joe Burford.

On February 25, Burford, of Morrill, Nebraska, was sentenced for violating the Sherman Act for his role in a scheme to rig bids on cattle purchases in western Nebraska. The violation was for one transaction involving 468 cattle in which a cattle feeder was defrauded out of \$23,367. Burford was sentenced to:

- a \$20,000 fine,
- \$23,367 in restitution,
- 400 hours of community service,
- 6 months of house arrest, and
- 5 years probation.

Burford's co-conspirator, Casey Wilmot, of Scottsbluff, Nebraska, pled not guilty to similar charges and is scheduled to go on trial on March 25, 1998.

Pretty amazing to think this was just another day in GIPSA!

Civil Rights Training

Raymond Jones, Washington, DC

As mandated by the Secretary's Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT) report, mandatory Civil Rights training currently is underway in GIPSA.

Module 1 of the training, "Sensitivity, Diversity, and EEO Laws and Regulations," will be delivered to all GIPSA employees by September 30, 1998. The training session, which lasts for approximately 4 hours, is designed to (1) identify the needs of a diverse workforce and the behaviors required to successfully interact with that diverse workforce, (2) recognize the impacts and benefits of an increasingly diverse workforce on an organization's mission, and (3) identify key Federal legislation and describe individuals' responsibilities under the law.

photo 3A

Coming your way with Civil Rights Training! Pictured are GIPSA's Civil Rights facilitators Ray Lavine, Stephaine Harden, Amanda Roussell, Yuki Darko, Larry McDonald, Rosemary Mayne, and EEO/CR staff member Raymond Jones.

GIPSA has six trained facilitators who will delivery the training and facilitate the group discussions. They are **Yuki Darko**, Sacramento; **Stephaine Harden**, Fort Worth; **Raymond Lavine**, League City; **Rosemary Mayne** and **Ron Parkerson**, Washington, DC; **Larry McDonald**, Technical Center; and **Amanda Roussell**, New Orleans. We applaud the facilitators for taking on this very important task.

Enjoy the training!

FGIS Financial Overview

*Laura MacKenzie,
Washington Financial
Services Branch, APHIS*

Do you know where the money in your paycheck comes from? The funding for FGIS is somewhat unique in that it comes from two sources: appropriations (tax dollars) and user fees (fees that FGIS charges the grain industry from our services). The user fees we earn are unique in that most government agencies pay their program and personnel costs with appropriated monies. FGIS is different. More than 75 percent of its \$45 million annual budget is earned from user fees. For fiscal year 1998, the appropriation share of the total budget is \$11 million the anticipated revenue from user fees is \$32 million.

The appropriations finance our compliance, methods development, and standardization activities. User fees are assessed to cover the costs of the inspection and weighing, commodities, rice, official agencies, Canadian, and registration programs.

The agency also has legislative authority to invest excess cash balances from the fee programs in interest-bearing financial instruments. Earnings from the investments are put back into the fund (known as our trust or revolving fund) and used for operating expenses, thus helping reduce the amount we charge our customers.

All this means that FGIS functions much like a business to provide services to the public and that we must watch our financial bottom line.

This is the first of a series of articles on the financial operations and status of the agency. Watch for more in future issues of *GIPSA News*!

GIPSA's Winter 1998 Food Drive A HUGE Success!

Amy Van Skiver, Washington, DC

Thanks to every one of the following individuals for their part in collecting the **7,825 lbs** GIPSA contributed to 29 food banks, pantries, kitchens, and mission organizations during the **Winter 1998 USDA Food Drive** which officially ended February 13, 1998:

Wanda Liles, Jonesburo, AR
Tina Crane, Stuttgart, AR
Phil Meacham, Stuttgart, AR
Chuck Britton, Sacramento, CA
Bob Turner, Sacramento, CA
Milton Hansen, Denver, CO
Mel Beck, Washington, DC
Shelly Carter, Washington, DC
Karen Guagliardo, Washington, DC
Terri Henry, Washington, DC
Mack Manis, Washington, DC
Debbie Shipman, Washington, DC
Phil Spinelli, Washington, DC
Pamela Lake, Atlanta, GA
Glenn Diket, Cedar Rapids, IA
Leroy Baker, Moscow, ID
Jill Ainsworth, Indianapolis, IN
Evert Hastie, Wichita, KS
Carla Cambre, New Orleans, LA
Terry Henson, Baltimore, MD
Art Boline, Duluth, MN

Robb Hermanson, Duluth, MN
Don Damm, Minneapolis, MN
Ron Ellis, South St. Paul, MN
Michelle Bosley, Kansas City, MO
Michael Purnell, Kansas City, MO
Brenda Evans, Technical Center
Ken Carter, Greenville, MS
Fred Lindseth, Grand Forks, ND
Ed Haag, Omaha, NE
Martha Carver, Toledo, OH
Melba Twitty, Lancaster, PA
Sara Wright, Memphis, TN
Tom Reagan, Beaumont, TX
Tom Wayne, Corpus Christi, TX
Donna Wolf, Ft. Worth, TX
Sabri Gerguis, League City, TX
Brenda Oliver, Bedford, VA
Kris Aanderud, Olympia, WA

No one plans, coordinates, and carries out a national agency-wide food drive all by themselves--it takes lots of dedicated support. You were my support this time around, and you were great!

Of special note were the fun ways **Carla Cambre** and the New Orleans Field Office staff encouraged participation in their local food drive

effort. To raise money to buy some of the canned food they contributed, the New Orleans office held a walk-a-thon. Participants in the walk were **John Shropshire, Kerry Petit, Josh Watson, Yohanna Lorio, Jim Brown, Janet Walton, Joy Casler, Rose Fremin, Joanne Matherne, Amelia Gautreau, Angela Proyer,** and **Carla**. The names of all food drive contributors were also placed in a drawing for a free lunch, complements of **John Shropshire**. The three happy winners were **Janet Walton, Dana Coleman,** and **John McCann**. Bravo for your creativity New Orleans!

Thanks to every GIPSA employee who contributed during the food drive. It's easy to get caught up in our own concerns and needs, but by contributing you showed that you care about others who don't have the same blessings you have.

A song I learned when I was little said, "Love's just like a magic penny, hold it tight and you won't have any. Lend it, spend it, and you'll have so many, they'll roll all over the floor. For . . . love is something if you give it away You'll end up having more." If you haven't already done so, I hope you'll experience the truth of this little song for yourself.

Thanks again for "lending" and "spending" your love in GIPSA's recent food drive, many needy people will be nourished as a result.

**"Asking for help is a sign of courage,
not of weakness."**

For free, confidential assistance,
call your Employee Assistance Program

Washington, DC, Headquarters
personnel -- call 301-570-3900

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



GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

Norma Phelps, Washington, DC

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

Suggestor

Suggestion

Jan Roehler, Minneapolis, MN
 John Flemm, WA Federal/State Office,
 and Jack LaRue, WA Department of
 Agriculture
 James A. Holmes, New Orleans, LA
 Ronald Hill, New Orleans, LA
 Tom Wrenn, Grand Forks, ND
 Ken Critchfield, Wichita, KS
 Bob Williams and Juan Salinas,
 WA Department of Agriculture
 Angela Roper and Terry LeBouef,
 New Orleans, LA
 Dean Brown, League City, TX
 Charles Williams, New Orleans, LA
 Scott Cooley, Portland, OR
 John D. Barthel, Atlanta

Place Licensing Files in a Bulletin Board
 Add Protein, Falling Number, Mycotoxin, and Equipment to the BAR Q&A
 Folder and Under the NOTICE Board add Q&A folders for Standards and
 Procedures and Weighing
 Develop Mechanical Shaking System for DON Samples
 Use Old Wrist Action Shakers for DON Samples
 Use Internet to Keep Directives, Manuals, Etc. Current
 Include E-Mail Addresses of OA/Service Points in Official Agency Directory
 Create a Database Computer Program for Proteins

 Use Numbers for Tapes on the FGIS Weights Log in Lieu of Alphabets

 Reduce the Final Retention Time on File Samples
 Provide Engraved Awards to Retirees
 Incorporate Existing Rain Meters on Event Log in Automated Systems
 Teach Defensive Driving Classes for Employees Driving GIPSA-Leased
 Vehicles

February's tee-shirt winner: **Dean Brown**, League City, TX, Field Office!

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline
 via GroupWise to GIPSAIDEA; HP Desk to Ideas;
 Internet to ideas@fgis.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.

Getting to Know... Dagmar Barsch

Ed Durgin, Portland, OR

In August 1968, two days after the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, Dagmar Zoubek and her husband left their homeland and crossed into Austria. A life-changing journey had begun -- a journey that would eventually lead to the Oregon State Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Grain Division and the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS).

After spending 6 months living in refugee camps in Germany, Dagmar and her husband immigrated to the United States in February 1969. Los Angeles was the location of her husband's first job, and they began life anew on the West Coast. Shortly thereafter, on a trip north to visit friends in the State of Washington, they passed through Portland, OR. The hills, rivers, and rain in the city reminded them of life in Prague, and fond memories were both recalled and tucked away in their minds for future reference. Their first year in the United States was a busy one with work involving moves from Los Angeles to Denver to Michigan and to San Francisco. During a return to Michigan, their trip was delayed by a blizzard and they decided to head for the city which reminded them of home...Portland.

After a year of settling in, Dagmar decided to seek employment in a position which would use her training and experience. In Czechoslovakia she had attended the University of Agriculture for 5 years and received an engineering diploma from the faculty of Agronomy. For 8 years prior to her departure, Dagmar had been employed by the government to map types and kinds of soil for agricultural purposes.

Photo 4A

Dagmar Barsch, getting ready to start on another rewarding journey.

Her application to work as a soil scientist for the Port of Portland was rejected, however, because she was not yet a U.S. citizen. On the advice of a friend, her job search took her to ODA's Grain Division. This pursuit was successful and in February 1971, Dagmar began her career in the grain inspection field. As an ODA employee, Dagmar worked in the lab performing Kjeldahl analysis and falling numbers tests on grain samples. In the mid-1970's she also assisted in identifying the presence of TCK smut when this analysis was requested as part of a sales contract.

In February 1978, a 7-year career with the ODA ended when the State grain division turned over their responsibilities to FGIS. Dagmar continued to work in the Kjeldahl lab for approximately a month after the takeover. But as the near-infrared reflectance (NIRR) instruments became

the official methodology for making protein determinations, she began working with the new technology in the labs set up at elevator work sites. Dagmar has continued to serve as one of Portland's key protein/lab technicians during her Federal career.

Affectionately referred to as "Zoubie" by her co-workers, this name is still sometimes heard even after a marriage in 1993 resulted in a change to her current name, Dagmar Barsch.

As she completes 20 years of service with FGIS, Dagmar is making plans to retire on May 2, 1998. She notes that she will miss the company of co-workers who have become friends during her work for both the ODA and FGIS. The strain of working long hours will not be missed however. In fact, Dagmar anticipates time to pursue her interests as she moves closer to retirement. When asked how she will spend her time, Dagmar replies, "I'll be busy." A love of gardening and time spent visiting with friends and neighbors will fill her days; new activities are planned as well. In recent years Dagmar collected a number of hats, and she intends to pursue an interest in millinery. Weaving is another new activity which she intends to explore.

As Dagmar's career draws to a close, we extend our congratulations and wish her happiness and good health in her retirement. Our hats are off to you Dagmar. (But we'll keep them close at hand lest they end up in one of your millinery projects!) May your retirement journey be as fruitful, interesting, and rewarding as the journey you began three decades ago.

Moisture Meter Update

Steve Tanner, Technical Center

Over the last several years, GIPSA's work in evaluating moisture meter technology resulted in our Agency making a very judicious and well thought-out decision on choosing a new moisture meter for the national official inspection system. The new meter is the Dickey-john GAC 2100. That decision was made on October 1, 1997.

photo 5A

The first five GAC 2100s delivered to Technical Services Division.

Several weeks after that decision, one of the unsuccessful bidders in the process filed a formal protest with the General Accounting Office (GAO) because their meter was not chosen. This, in effect, put our procurement process on hold and caused a delay in the national implementation of the new moisture meter technology.

On February 25, 1998, the GAO denied the protest. Therefore, the Agency's decision stands. Anyone who has access to the internet may visit the GAO's web site and review the decision in its entirety: <http://www.gao.gov/decisions/bidpro/bidpro7.htm>

Some of the advantages of the new meter are reduced labor costs, increased confidence in results, suitability for automation, and improved reliability of the equipment over the current technology (Motomco 919).

The revised implementation schedule for the new moisture meter is August 1, 1998 for corn, soybeans, and sunflower; May 1, 1999 for wheat, barley, oats, rice, and sorghum; and 1999 or later for minor grains.

Adobe Acrobat

The Web Team

If you've been on the Web lately, you've probably seen PDF files and Adobe Acrobat® software. We introduced you to both in September's *GIPSA News*. Since you'll be seeing more use of both in the future, we thought we'd give you a refresher.

What is Adobe Acrobat®? Adobe Acrobat® is a software product from Adobe Systems that allows people on different computer systems to view a computer file and see the same thing, complete with formatting, fonts, pictures, and graphics, regardless of the computer or monitor.

What are PDF files? The basis of Adobe Acrobat® is the PDF (Portable Document Format) file. A PDF is created by the document originator and can then be distributed to and read in its original form by any person who has the Adobe Acrobat® Reader software. The Reader allows users to see PDF files as the creator intended them. A PDF file lets our Internet browser show us documents that have a lot of fonts, tables, and graphics as they would appear if you held them in your hand as hard copy.

PDF offers many benefits. Document publishing is faster; customers can view the document exactly as it was meant to be viewed, regardless of its original format; and users can directly print individual pages. And, PDF files cannot be downloaded or modified.

What is the difference between a PDF document and a regular web page file? All of the documents you see on the Internet must first be converted from their original format -

Continued, see Web on page 11.

Safety First

Richard Pffor, Washington, DC

As part of the expansion of GIPSA's Railroad Track Scale Testing Service, the Weighing and Equipment Branch (WEB) requested agricultural commodity grader (ACG) volunteers to perform track scale testing at selected locations. **Sandra Metheny**, Stuttgart, and **John Godfrey**, Toledo, volunteered and were assigned these duties collaterally.

Safety led the list of items on the training agenda that had to be learned to provide this service. Unloading and operating the new test cars requires handling heavy duty mechanical equipment that is very unfriendly

if done incorrectly. Part of the test includes moving a 90,000 pound test cart on and off the scale with a portable car pusher. Chocks are used to hold the test cart in place when necessary. Extreme caution must be used at all times to maintain control of the test cart.

Shortly after putting the new cars in service, our ACGs suggested ways to improve the safety of using the test car. Their suggestion prompted WEB to review of equipment, methods, and regulations.

Although the equipment met the requirements of the Association of American Railroads, and GIPSA's

own safety requirements, all agreed that changes had to be made to ensure Safety First for our employees.

At considerable expense and delay to the program, the new test cars were returned to the manufacturer for modifications that will include an electrical drive and braking system. The test carts will move slowly on and off the scales with a simple push of a button.

Expensive - yes, time consuming - yes, but well worth it if we avoid any accident, big or small.

Everyone remember -- keep your suggestions for improvement coming and keep SAFETY FIRST.

'98 Ag Outlook Forum On-Line

Speeches and publications from the Agricultural Outlook Forum '98 are available electronically. The annual Forum provides an up-to-date assessment of farm and commodity prospects and major economic developments in agriculture.

Thanks to the World Agricultural Outlook Board, you can read or download speeches from this year's forum by visiting the following Web site:

www.usda.gov/oce/waob/agforum.htm

All texts received from speakers to date have been posted; others will be posted as received.

Travel Bits & Pieces

Peggy Smith, Washington, DC

Beginning May 4, 1998, American Express may begin to impose a late fee of 2.75% on all balances which are post due 60 days or more. American Express is taking this measure because it is incurring inordinately high expenses due to late payments. The fee will allow American Express to partially recoup those expenses. If you do **not** want to be subject to the late fee, please contact American Express immediately to arrange alternative payment. The number for the Telephone Service Center is 800-492-4922.

Reminders and Tips...

- The Travel Management Centers ask that travelers keep their travel profiles up-to-date.
- Real-time flight tracking lets you keep tabs on a specific flight — it is convenient for monitoring the progress of a flight you may be connecting with or need to meet. You can also access detailed maps that can ease your way around unfamiliar airports, obtain ground travel information, review city maps, and more (<http://www.thetrip.com>).
- The Federal Travel Regulations and current per diem rates are available on the Internet (<http://policyworks.gov>).

Reaching Out in the Mid-Atlantic

Fred Kelley, Baltimore, MD

From January 10-15, 1998, GIPSA sponsored a booth at the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg, PA. Both FGIS and P&S personnel were on hand. **Meredith Silvers** and **Mark Campbell**, Lancaster, joined me in greeting the many interested farmers, processors, auction owners, and future agriculturalists who visited the booth. More than one-half million people attended the 5-day event.

photo 6A

Fred Kelley, Baltimore Field Office; and Meredith Silvers and Mark Campbell, Lancaster Regional Office, are ready and waiting to meet and greet visitors at GIPSA's booth at the PA Farm Show.

On February 10, 1998, I joined the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's Division of Marketing at a booth at the Virginia Corn and Soybean Conference in Williamsburg, VA. I was on hand to support the State's effort by answering questions on issues pertinent to grain inspection.

Fred Kelley, Baltimore, joins the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Don Akers and Randy Sanford at the Virginia Corn and Soybean Conference.

photo 7A

Way to reach out to our customers, Fred!

Wheat Puzzle Answers

So, how well did you do? Here are the answers to the Wheat Grading puzzle that appeared in the February issue of *GIPSA News*.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| ACROSS | 35. whole |
| | 36. contrasting |
| 2. steady | 37. garlicky |
| 3. hvac | 39. green |
| 6. western | 40. insect damage |
| 9. mixed | |
| 10. special | DOWN |
| 12. lgst | |
| 13. US | 1. stress |
| 15. dockage | 4. varietal |
| 17. buckwheat | 5. hadu |
| 19. fumigant | 7. riddle |
| 20. subclass | 8. smoke |
| 21. three | 11. eights |
| 22. defects | 14. swaged |
| 24. approximate | 16. glume |
| 26. chess | 18. unclassified |
| 27. alphabetical | 23. fifty |
| 29. bleach | 25. amber |
| 30. foreign | 28. popping |
| 32. criteria | 31. damage |
| 34. moisture | 33. protein |
| | 38. ergot |

April Events

April 6 (week of) -- Quality Assurance Specialist Conference, Kansas City MO (*tentative*)

April 20-24 -- USDA Safety and Health Conference, New Orleans, LA



Around the World

Ellie Speelman, Washington, DC

On February 17, a major U.S. rice exporter called GIPSA with an urgent request for help. They had shipped seven containers of rice to Sweden, inadvertently without securing official quality certification at loadport, which is required under the European Union Tariff Rate Quota system. They faced a \$10,000 per container penalty without the certification. The exporter asked GIPSA to send an inspector to Sweden (at their expense) as soon as possible to secure official samples and provide U.S. certificates before a February 27, 1998, deadline.

Four days later, **Sandra Metheny**,

Stuttgart Field Office, departed for Sweden to secure the samples. She left Stuttgart Saturday afternoon and after three planes, a bus, and a ferry, arrived in Malmo, Sweden, on Sunday afternoon. A local agent met her at the ferry and escorted her to a warehouse in Helsingborg to sample three containers, and then to her hotel where she settled in for a much needed night of rest.

First thing Monday morning, the agent drove **Sandra** to Goteborg to finish sampling the containers. To expedite things, **Sandra** had shipped the equipment she would need to grade the rice from Stuttgart to Swe-

den before she left. She faxed her inspection results back to Stuttgart, where the field office issued the certificates on time.

The exporter was most grateful to GIPSA for responding to their problem so quickly, and for saving them a considerable sum of money. In turn, we were glad to be able to accommodate their request.

We appreciate **Sandra's** willingness to make the trip, and for so ably representing GIPSA. While clearly this was an unusual assignment, we want to remind all employees that opportunities of this nature do arise from time to time, as do speaking assignments at overseas workshops and seminars. If you are interested in representing GIPSA on assignments such as these, get in touch with the International Monitoring Staff and we will send you a skills profile to complete and return.

Web, from page 8.

for example, a WordPerfect memo or a Lotus spreadsheet - into a format that the Internet browser can understand. During conversion, some or all the data could be lost or rearranged. This creates a lot of work because the document would then have to be completely reformatted especially for the Web.

PDF files require no reformatting. They are easily created using software that let's you "print" to a special driver that automatically creates the PDF document. PDF conversion software is not free and has to be purchased. Currently, the Web Team has this software and can now place many of GIPSA's large, complicated documents into PDF format.

However, the reader software is free! So, when you're surfing the Web and see a PDF label or a note saying you must have an Acrobat Reader -- don't panic! The Adobe Acrobat Reader is downloadable and free from Adobe. Just go to Adobe's Web site (www.adobe.com) and click on "download reader." It will install so that when you come across a PDF document, and the reader software will automatically activate so that you can see the document. If you have any problems downloading Acrobat, call **Carol Remmers** at 202-720-1742.

Items currently on the GIPSA Web page in PDF format include the Grain Inspection Handbook and the GIPSA Directory. Each of these pages on our web site has a link to Adobe for downloading the Acrobat Reader.

Stop by the home page and check it out!

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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