



GIPSA News

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

April 1998

Glickman Announces GIPSA Actions to Help Cattle Industry

At a March 24, 1998, press conference in Washington, DC, Secretary Dan Glickman announced a number of USDA actions to improve prices for cattle producers and the livestock industry. He announced that USDA would purchase up to \$30 million of beef, add meat to existing and new export credit guarantee programs, and send a trade team to Asia to promote U.S. meat and other agricultural exports. The Secretary also announced the restructuring of P&S Programs and several other initiatives involving GIPSA that will help address concerns about concentration and fair trade practices in the livestock and poultry industries.

First, Glickman outlined a plan to strengthen GIPSA's ability to ensure fair competition in the marketplace. "USDA is committed to protecting farmers and ranchers from unfair trade practices," Glickman said, "and this new plan will enhance our ability to conduct investigations and combat unfair or anticompetitive practices in the marketplace. But to get the job done, the Congress must provide us with the resources to make this plan a reality for American farmers and

ranchers," Glickman said. The Administration's FY 99 budget calls for \$3 million to restructure GIPSA.

Under the plan, GIPSA field office consolidations will allow more resources to be located in regions where beef, pork, and poultry production and processing are concentrated, and strengthen field operations with the addition of economic, statistical, and legal expertise needed to more effectively conduct investigations of alleged anticompetitive practices and financial and trade practice violations.

Glickman also announced two regulatory actions to address producer concerns about concentration and fair trade practices. First, GIPSA will publish an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register seeking public comment on a regulation which would make purchasing or selling livestock, with the condition that the price not be publicly reported, a violation of the Packers and Stockyards Act.

Second, GIPSA also will publish a proposed rule requiring that accurate feed weights be provided to contract growers when those weights are used

in determining producer compensation. "These regulations will help to ensure that farmers and ranchers are treated fairly in today's concentrated agricultural marketplace," Glickman said.

Finally, GIPSA and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between prices reported to AMS and prices obtained by GIPSA during its investigation of major beef packers in Texas. Data from recent investigations will be used to evaluate the statistical validity of current voluntary price reporting efforts. Glickman directed that all future GIPSA investigations of competitive issues in the livestock industry include an investigation of price reporting.

"Accurate price reporting and greater information are critical to ensure fair, competitive markets," Glickman said. "These... new steps will provide even greater information to producers and will help to ensure that the current voluntary price reporting system is working effectively for farmers and ranchers."

Names in the News

Awards

Sue Ann Claudon, marketing specialist, Ft. Worth, received a performance award for sustained superior performance and exemplary dedication during a 21-month period during which she served as Senior Field Agent-in-Charge of the Texas Packer Investigation.

Gerald Crawford, New Orleans, LA, received a spot award for performance of assigned duties in an admirable and professional manner.

Edward Duncan, New Orleans, LA, received a time-off award for repeatedly assisting with the training of co-workers and for performance of duties with minimal supervision and his willingness to assist others.

Phil Edwards, marketing specialist, Omaha, received a spot award for outstanding effort and contributions to the overall effectiveness of the

enforcement of the P&S Act in the Omaha region.

Carol Forest, New Orleans, LA, received a spot award in recognition of her consistent willingness and ability to provide timely and accurate results while performing technician duties both in the sample room and the mycotoxin laboratory.

Roger Friedrich, Technical Services Division, was awarded a \$200 U.S. Savings Bond by the International Monitoring Staff (IMS) for his outstanding work on a trip to Finland.

Stephaine Harden, marketing specialist, Ft. Worth, received a time off award for superior performance while assisting in collecting data for the Texas Packer Investigation.

Susan Martin, Standards and Procedures Branch, received a time-off award for providing clerical support to IMS during the extended absence of the Staff's program assistant.

Alvin Sumler, New Orleans, LA, received a spot award for displaying a positive influence in the work environment and for his dedication and performance of assigned duties in a professional manner.

Arthur Williams, New Orleans, LA, received a time-off award for outstanding job performance in completing job assignments in a timely manner and for displaying a high degree of professionalism when dealing with the grain trade.

Tina (Angie) Williams, auditor, and **Donna Jo Wolf**, legal program assistant, Ft. Worth, received time off awards for purging of registrant files of obsolete and extraneous material.

Personal

Congratulations to **Dawn Cowan**, Civil Rights Staff, and her husband **Tim** on the arrival of their new daughter, **Savannah Eileen**. **Savannah** was born on March 22, 1998.

Condolences

Mary Steele, retired clerk-typist with the former Financial Services Branch, Resources Management, passed away on March 24, 1998. **Mary** retired from FGIS in 1989.

In This Issue

ARTS Branch is Outstanding	3
NAL Agricultural Calendar	3
March Issuances	3
Idea Hotline Update	4
Getting to Know Jane Spengler	5
Unofficial/Official Weighing Proposal.....	5
Advisory Committee Update	5
Travel Bits & Pieces.....	6
Proposed Fee Increase for Official Services	6
A Different Kind of International Outreach	7
USDA's Online Photography Center	7
Women's History Month	8
Reaching Out	9
May Events	9
1/2 Marathon for Safe Streets	9

ARTS Branch is “Outstanding”

Don Kendall, Technical Center

The American Association of Cereal Chemists (AACC) offers a Check Sample Service by which laboratories can evaluate methodologies and techniques to ensure quality control and laboratory accuracy. Laboratories that subscribe receive specially prepared test samples from the AACC, conduct specified analyses, and submit the results to the AACC. The AACC conducts a statistical evaluation of the analytical results, comparing the subscribing laboratory's data to the data from other laboratories. This allows the subscriber to see how well their results compare to other laboratories in terms of accuracy. Proficiency ratings, or “z-values”, are provided by AACC to assess the accuracy of results relative to target values and other laboratory results. A perfect z-value would be 0.00, i.e., no deviation from the mean. A z-value less than 2.00 is considered acceptable; a z-value less than 1.00 indicates the laboratory results are very accurate.

For the past several years, the former Commodity Testing Laboratory, now a part of the Analytical, Reference and Testing Services (ARTS) Branch in Kansas City, MO, has been participating in the AACC International Check Sample Service. The ARTS Branch participates in three series: Series A, a monthly hard wheat flour sample for ash, protein, moisture and falling number; Series C, a bimonthly soft wheat flour sample for ash, protein, moisture, pH, and falling number; and Series D, a bimonthly feed sample for ash, protein, moisture, fat, crude fiber, and calcium.

In February 1998, the ARTS Branch received the results of the Proficiency Testing/Rating in the AACC Check Sample series for 1997. The laboratory earned Certificates of Proficiency for Outstanding Accuracy and Precision in series A, C, and D. The overall z-values for Series A, C, and D were 0.63, 0.96, and 0.92, respectively.

The following ARTS laboratory staff are commended for their high quality work in achieving these Certificates of Proficiency from the AACC, and for their cooperation, teamwork, and attention to customer service: **Luccile Clark, Valerie Collins, Carey Cook, Gertrude Curry, Martha Davis, Brenda Evans, Gary Gabbard, Tracy Gerke, Sandra Lockridge, Russell Molloy, David Morris, Mary Ross, Bobby Smith, Glenn Terrill, Jason Vanfossan, and Barbara Van Til.**

Congratulations, ARTS!

NAL Ag Calendar

The National Agricultural Library (NAL) has created a new on-line calendar of agricultural conferences, meetings, seminars as part of the Agriculture Network Information Center (AgNIC).

The calendar, maintained by the National Agricultural Library, has information about and links to more than 1,200 major national and international agricultural conferences, with emphasis on those of apparent scientific significance. Local, regional, and organization-specific events are included if they are considered scientifically significant. (www.agnic.org/mtg/)

AgNIC is a virtual information center established by NAL in collaboration with Cornell University, Iowa State University, the University of Arizona, and the University of Nebraska--Lincoln. Fifteen additional institutions will join as partners providing access to agriculture-related resources through AgNIC in 1998. (www.agnic.org)

March Issuances

Charlie Turner, Washington, DC

- ❑ PN-98-5, Compliance Review of Official Agencies, dated 3/9/98.
- ❑ PN-98-6, Implementation of New Official Moisture Meter, dated 3/9/98.
- ❑ PN-98-7, Near-Infrared Transmission Standardization, dated 3/10/98
- ❑ PN-98-8, Computer Automation and Information Sharing, dated 3/11/98.



GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

Norma Phelps, Washington, DC



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

Suggestor

Suggestion

Ralph Regan, Washington, DC	Give Certificate of Appreciation to Retiree's Spouse
Mark Doane, Beaumont, TX	Hire A Re-Employment Staff Specialist for Disposition of Displaced Employees
Terri Henry, Washington, DC	Purchase Shoelace Badge Holders for Agency Employees
Art Boline, Duluth, MN	Pursue Issuing Phytosanitary Certificates As a Source of Revenue
Kathy M. Lynch and Ron K. Jacobson, A.V. Tischer & Son, Inc., Fort Dodge, IA	Establish Tool Free Telephone Numbers for Washington Divisions and Field Offices
Joe Gros, New Orleans, LA	Install 4-Way Splitters At All Export Elevators
Dan W. Gross, East Indiana Grain Inspection, Muncie, IN	Reissue Licensed Inspector Certificate Before Current License Expires
Donald Blalock, Portland, OR	Design An Undivided Lot Official Export Weight Certificate to Correspond to the FGIS Form 961

March's tee-shirt winner: **Terri Henry**, Washington, DC!

GIPSA Hotline Ideas Accepted and Approved for Implementation During March 1998

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.

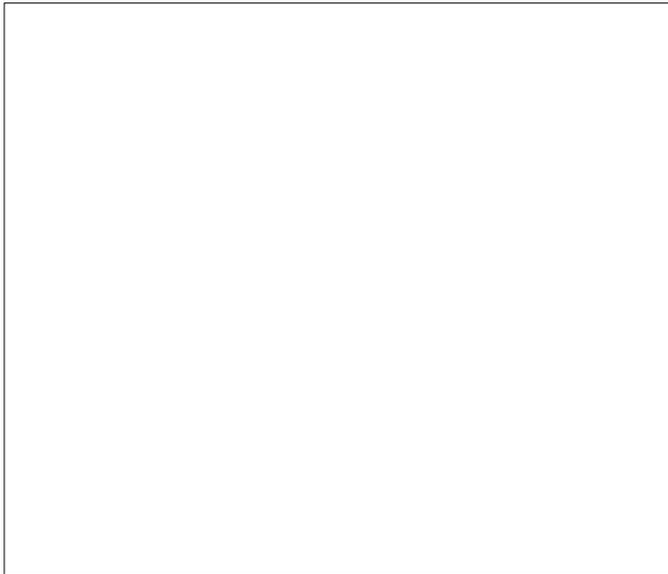
- Add Protein, Falling Number, Mycotoxin, and Equipment to the BAR Q&A Folder and
- Add Q&A folders for Standards and Procedures and Weighing Under the NOTICE Board

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... Jane Spengler

Peggy Smith, Washington

Eight years ago, when **Jane Spengler** started working with Packers and Stockyards, she worked with **Harold Davis** as the Secretary for the Livestock Marketing Division. Today she is still working with him as the Secretary to the Deputy Administrator for P&S Programs. **Jane** told me that she truly enjoys being a secretary and evidence of that showed in her eyes and her smile. The work she does makes her feel "part of the team" and that's very important to her. **Jane's** favorite part of the job is the contact with the great variety of people she's met over the years.



Say hello to Jane Spengler, Secretary to the Deputy Administrator, Packers and Stockyards Programs. And we thought GIPSA was job #1!

Jane is very active in her church and has been heavily involved in feeding the homeless. She has been married for 38 years and has 3 children and 4 grandchildren. She admitted that she was created to be a grandmother. According to her, it's the number one job in the world!

Unofficial/Official Weighing Proposal

In the March 30, 1998, *Federal Register*, GIPSA proposed allowing official agencies to provide both official and unofficial weighing services within their assigned area of responsibility, but not on the same mode of conveyance at the same facility. Currently, agencies designated by GIPSA to provide official weighing services cannot provide similar unofficial services.

According to GIPSA Administrator **Jim R. Baker**, this elimination of unnecessary restrictions will allow official agencies flexibility to provide the weighing services needed by the U.S. grain industry.

Comments on the proposal are due on or before May 29, 1998.

Advisory Committee Update

Marianne Plaus, Washington, DC

Secretary **Dan Glickman** recently selected new members and alternates selected to serve on GIPSA's Grain Advisory Committee. The new members and alternates will serve 3-year terms.

The new members, by state, are: **Robert T. Williams**, Conway, AR; **William M. Cassidy**, Frederick, OK; **Israel A. Lopez**, Corpus Christi, TX; **Robert W. Gore**, Olympia, WA; and **Ronald Mitzel**, Rapid City, SD.

The new alternates are: **Elizabeth "Kay" Taylor**, Jonesboro, AR; **Warren J. Duffy**, Destrehan, LA; **Thomas E. Meyer**, Topeka, KS; **Randy A. Marten**, St. Louis, MO; **Patricia A. Jensen**, Fargo, ND; and **Jacalyn G. Oncken**, Dallas, TX.

The next meeting of the Grain Advisory Committee is scheduled for May 13-14, 1998, in Kansas City, MO. The agenda includes discussions about:

- GIPSA's financial status,
- moisture meter implementation,
- strategy for implementing corn protein, oil, and starch testing;
- wheat research results;
- and a tour of GIPSA's Technical Center.

The meeting, which is open to the public and free of charge, will take place at the Kansas City Airport Marriott.

Travel Bits & Pieces

Peggy Smith, Washington, DC

International Travel. All GIPSA international travel begins and ends with the International Monitoring Staff (IMS). IMS is responsible for issuing all international AD-202s (travel authorizations), coordinating most if not all of the logistics, and preparing the AD-616s (travel vouchers).

Step number one — **Contact Jessica Carlton of IMS at 202/720-0226.** Jessica can provide information that will help you plan and prepare for safe and productive official travel. Here are some of the basics:

- Give as much lead time as possible, especially if you don't have a passport. IMS can provide you with the forms and instructions for obtaining a passport and/or renewing your old one. After you submit the completed forms and other required documents, IMS will obtain your passport and any necessary visas.
- The State Department requires that everyone traveling on U.S. Government official business have a country clearance from the American Embassy in each country to be visited. Clearance(s) may require 1-2 weeks to obtain and *must be granted before the traveler leaves the United States*. To request a clearance, IMS needs the dates and purpose of travel, the itinerary, the name of the person making hotel reservations, the hotel where the traveler will stay, whether the traveler has a security clearance and the level of the clearance, whether the traveler will be visiting the American Embassy and the reason, and whether assistance from the American Embassy is requested.
- IMS will provide you with a list of the immunizations currently required or recommended by the USDA Health Unit for your designation country. You are, however, encouraged to consult with your family physician prior to traveling and follow his/her recommendations.
- Generally, airline tickets are charged to the GVTS account instead of the traveler's American Express card. Contact IMS to determine who will make your reservations, and how your tickets should be charged.
- After travel is completed, FEDEX your passport to IMS. IMS cannot prepare and process your voucher until your passport is received.

Proposed Fee Increase for Official Services

In the March 27, 1998, *Federal Register*, GIPSA proposed a 2.9 percent increase in certain fees for official inspection and weighing services performed in the United States under the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

The hourly fees covered by this proposal generate revenue to cover the basic salary, benefits, and leave for those employees providing direct service delivery. GIPSA has also identified certain unit fees, for services not performed at an applicant's facility, that contain direct labor costs. This proposal increases those unit fees based on the labor cost of each unit.

According to GIPSA Administrator **Jim R. Baker**, the proposed increase would generate additional revenue required to recover operational costs created by the approximate 2.9 percent cost-of-living increase to Federal salaries in fiscal year 1998.

Written comments must be submitted on or before May 26, 1998.

**Take Our
Daughters
to Work Day**

April 23, 1998

A Different Kind of International Outreach

Byron Reilly, Washington, DC

It all started back in September of last year when I was looking for slides of railcars and ships to add to our agency slide library. GIPSA's Automation and Program Services Branch (APSB) mentioned that there were hundreds of Kodak slide trays, many with slides in them, in the APSB storage room in the basement of the South Building. **Doug Lacefield**, APSB, took me to a room filled with old slide carousels, computers, monitors, and printers. He told me that APSB had to empty the room because the Department was going to renovate the rooms and everything had to go. I replied, "It's a shame to just surplus them. I'm sure someone would love to have them!" Doug replied, "Great! They're yours; just get them off my inventory list."

I entered the adjoining room where I found stacks of Kodak slide trays filled with old slide presentations. Surprisingly, the color in the slides was not faded as I had expected. I told Doug that I would be out of the office for a few days, but when I returned, I'd go through some presentations and pick out some slides. When I returned to my office a few days later, it was FILLED with slide trays and two computers.

I hated to see all that computer equipment just being moved to another storage room to collect more dust! I told Doug that I would find a needy home for FGIS' outdated computers, monitors, printers, modems, AND slide trays. Although these computers are not year 2000 compliant, most of them still work fine. I began my quest in September 1997.

For months, I talked to people from several USDA agencies to find a home for these surplus computers. I wanted to try to get them into the hands of underprivileged children who didn't care if they were year 2000 compliant. I was sure there was a government program by which the hardware could be transferred to another USDA agency and be used by disadvantaged children.

In the beginning of November 1997, I received a phone call from a woman in the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), who heard I was looking for a home for some computers. She knew of a USDA program that would help disadvantaged children in the Virgin Islands under a program administered by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CREES) and the University of St. Croix. This was GREAT!

I contacted the CREES representative in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, to let him know that GIPSA had 31 computers, 14 printers, 14 modems,

other miscellaneous hardware AND the Kodak slide trays to donate. He was extremely anxious to receive the computers.

CREES has a program under which they "permanently loan" equipment to universities. CREES in St. Croix, in cooperation with the University of St. Croix will set up a computer laboratory in a classroom, supplied by the University, to teach underprivileged children of St. Croix how to operate, build, and repair computers. They will learn a viable trade. University students and other volunteers will teach the classes. The slide trays also found a good home; CREES extension agents will use them for their presentations.

The equipment was transferred to CREES property inventory. And, after months of preparation and shipping delays, the computers AND slide trays were finally packed and shipped to St. Croix on March 11, 1998.

I want to personally thank APSB, CREES, and HACU for their assistance in this project.

USDA's Online Photography Center

USDA's Photography Center has set up shop on the Web!

The Center's mission is to acquire and make available useful photography depicting general agriculture, health, economics, resource conservation, forestry, and other programs administered by the agencies of USDA. Visit the Center's on-line site at: <http://www.usda.gov/oc/photo/opchomea.htm>.

For those who want to see and use digitized photos from the Department's extensive collection of agriculture-related photographs, just follow the signs to the "Photo Library."

Women's History Month

Shelli Lopez, Federal Women's Program Co-Manager, Technical Center

1998 is the 150th Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement (1848 to 1998). This also was the 12th consecutive year that Women's History Month has been celebrated by our Nation.

The Women's Rights Movement to achieve full civil rights for women in America started 150 years ago at a tea held by five women in a small town in upstate New York. The women discussed the limitations of their lives in America and planned a convention to address the "Rights of Women." This tea was the initial step toward what was an outlandish idea in those days -- **citizenship for women.**

A tea can launch a revolution and start staggering changes that effect our lives in government, religion, employment, education, and family. This movement is credited with the August 26, 1920, passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

Today, because of those women, and the continued work of millions of men and women who support equal rights for all citizens, our world has changed for the better for all people. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has," said noted anthropologist Margaret Mead.

We have made progress and broken many barriers in the past 150 years. There are many achievements of women to celebrate and

acknowledge. Our generation, and the ones that follow us are today,"Living the Legacy of Equal Rights," that were achieved against great opposition, by the many groups of hard working people who just wouldn't give up.

Women's History Month is a time each year when we recognize and honor the women who were leaders in American history and to acknowledge the leadership, great abilities, and significant contributions of present day women in our work place and the community.

The Technical Services Division had outstanding participation for Women's History Month. I started the festivities by hanging posters, banners, and displays, including a mural showing 25 women leaders in American history, throughout the building.

Brenda Evans wrote, and **Martha Davis** administered, a Women's History Month quiz via e-mail to TSD. **Sharon Lathrop** shared a listing of "Women Who Have Made History." **Inez Mosley** made a display of Black women leaders in the 20th century and their accomplishments.

Our special emphasis activities included two "Lunch and Learn" seminars with the common theme "all of the women are leaders who overcome the obstacles of the times and leave their mark in history. Each week, speakers selected a woman from the past or present who signifi-

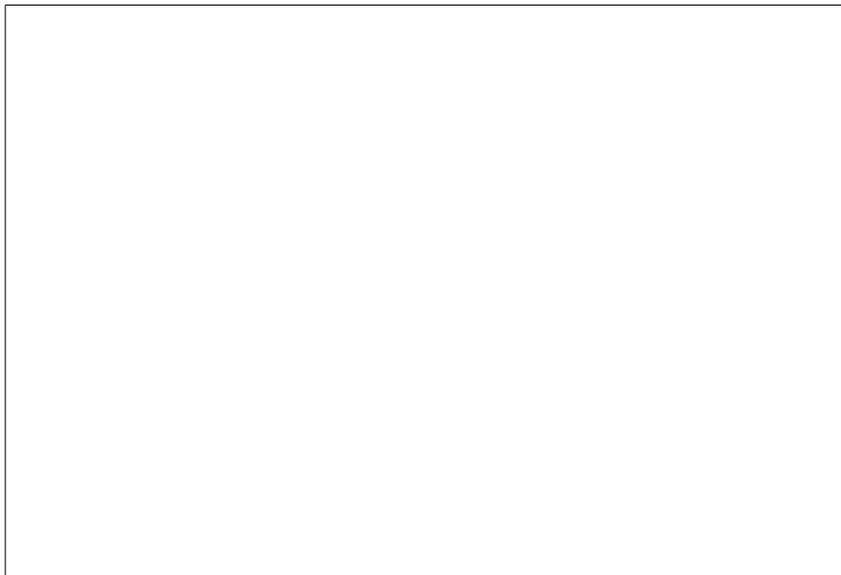
cantly impacted the community. The speakers for the first seminar were: **Alice Swaite, Barbara Van Til, Eric Poling,** and myself. I spoke about this year's theme, "Living the Legacy of Equal Rights," and how women's lives have changed. **Alice** talked about the accomplishments of Madame C.J. Walker, an entrepreneur and millionaire at the turn of the century. **Barbara** discussed Eileen Collins, NASA's first female space shuttle commander. And, **Eric** led a discussion about the changing roles of women in the military service.

Our second seminar was a potluck luncheon and presentations coordinated by **Valerie Collins, Vickie Rivers,** and **Martha Davis.** The speakers were **Sharon Lathrop, Glenn Terrill, Luccile Clark,** and **Ganga Murthy.** **Sharon** talked about Angelina and Sarah Grimke, sisters who were the first women to speak publicly about the need for women's rights in society and government. **Glenn** spoke of the life and times of Audrey Hepburn. **Luccile** discussed Mae Jemison, the first African American woman astronaut selected by NASA. **Ganga** wrapped up by reviewing the ground that women have broken over the past 200 years.

The Women's History Month celebration at TSD was extensive and a great success due to combined efforts of many people. Thank you all very much for your support of Women's History Month and the Federal Women's Program.

Reaching Out

On January 22, 1998, **Ken Critchfield**, field office manager, Wichita, and **Diane Palecek**, field office manager, Kansas City, represented GIPSA at the Husker Feed Grains and Soybean Conference in Kearney, NE.



The Husker conference is the premier agricultural convention held in Nebraska for corn, sorghum, and soybean producers. **Ken** and **Diane** spent time with many of the attendees, most of whom are active in producer associations at the local, state, and national levels.



May Events

- May 4-6 American Feed Industry Association 90th Annual Convention, Dallas, TX
- May 4-8 1st International Conference and Exhibition on Grain Flour and Processed Products Quality (Quality '98), Moscow, Russia
- May 10-13 American Oil Chemists' Society Annual Meeting & Expo, Chicago, IL
- May 12 USDA's World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) Released
- May 12 -14 GIPSA Grain Advisory Committee meeting, Kansas City, MO

1/2 Marathon for Safe Streets

Joshline McLean, Sacramento

On Sunday, March 22, 1998, **Robert (Bob) Turner** ran in the Tower-to-Tower 1/2 Marathon Run sponsored by Tower Books and Records in support of a organization called "Safe Streets". The organization helps promote safe streets throughout the city.

The 13 mile course started at one of the Tower bookstores on the east side of Sacramento, CA, and wound its way through the city streets past the State capital into historic "old" Sacramento before finishing at the Tower bookstore located downtown.

Approximately 1,200 runners started the race with very cloudy skies and a strong possibility of rain. However, their luck held and the rain waited until the race was over.

Bob completed the course in 1 hour and 59 minutes -- not bad for a guy 50 plus.

Our hats off to **Bob**, we are very proud of him!

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

USDA, GIPSA, Stop 3601
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3601
Phone (202) 720-5091
FAX (202) 205-9237
Internet: dstewart@fgis.usda.gov

by April 25, 1998!

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
USDA, GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS
AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION
STOP 3601
1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE, SW
WASHINGTON, DC 20250-3601
