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# Inside APHIS

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March/April 1996

## Watkins and PPQ Promote Amnesty Bins at Miami Airport

By Ed Curlett, Public Affairs, LPA



From the left, Pedro Vega, (PPQ) Deputy Assistant Secretary Shirley Watkins, and Vicki Mills and Ron Lee (PPQ) face cameras at the press conference on citrus canker.

APHIS Photo by Vicki Mills

PPQ officers at Miami International Airport (MIA) recently got a boost from Deputy Assistant Secretary Shirley Watkins, who joined in on their task of keeping homegrown fruit from leaving the airport. Watkins and the officers are trying to prevent the spread of citrus canker, a virulent bacterial disease of citrus.

Fourteen amnesty bins placed at airport security checkpoints along with signs in Spanish and English encourage departing passengers to dispose of any backyard (homegrown) citrus fruit, citrus plants, and plant products before passengers board aircraft.

The amnesty bin program began last December, shortly after Asian strain citrus canker was detected

in a 13.5 square mile area of Dade County, FL, adjacent to Miami International Airport. APHIS and the Florida Department of Agricul-

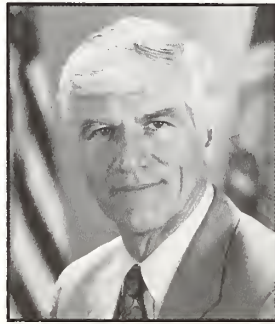
ture quarantined about 100 square miles surrounding the infected area in an effort to eradicate the (See AMNESTY on page 6)

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# New MRP Managers Learn About Our Customers, Programs

The two top positions in Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP) are now filled. Michael Dunn was sworn in as Assistant Secretary on December 28, 1995, and Shirley R. Watkins has assumed her position as Deputy Assistant Secretary. Dunn comes to the position from Rural Economic and Community Development, where he was Acting Under Secretary.



Watkins was appointed to her present position in October but was acting as Assistant Secretary since the resignation of Patricia Jensen last September until Dunn's appointment.

"I was humbled," says Dunn, "when I began looking at what APHIS and the other MRP agencies—the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration—have jurisdiction over. I'm proud to be part of this community. Although I have been involved with agriculture for more than two decades, the constituents have changed radically from those USDA assisted 50, even 20 years

ago. Today, our customers range from the most technologically proficient, large-scale producers to the smallest niche-market farmers, as well as State and local regulatory agencies and private cooperators, wildlife and research scientists, and, most importantly, consumers.

"As I understand, APHIS has been a leader of Department reinvention efforts and in its compliance with the spirit of the National Performance Review, adds Dunn. "In moving beyond traditional roles, APHIS is way out front."

Watkins, who has worked with APHIS since her appointment to MRP last October, also admires

APHIS' efforts to visualize an agency that empowers employees, invests in technology, and streamlines activities for the future. "We recognize that the Federal budget will continue to get smaller and that we must work smarter in serving our customers," she says.

"At my hearing, continues Dunn, "I was asked about APHIS' use of risk assessment. I was happy to say that

although risk assessment is an evolving science, APHIS seems to be in the forefront. I assured the Senate that we will work hard to have a science base as the key to international commerce and trade."

In working with APHIS, Watkins has supported APHIS' efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of diseases. This past December she conducted a press conference in Miami, FL, to encourage the public to help prevent the spread of citrus canker by leaving behind home-grown fruit when they travel.

Both Dunn and Watkins believe that APHIS has moved beyond its traditional role in cooperating with other governments to control major health threats. They are pleased to see that APHIS now acts as a trade facilitator, developing uniform international health standards and working to ensure that U.S. producers meet these standards. "By negotiating new or updating existing animal and plant health

(See MRP MANAGERS on page 9)

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

I would like to add some thoughts to the article in the January/February 1996 issue of *Inside APHIS* on consolidating regional offices. When consolidation of regional offices was first considered, a lot of individuals in each of the APHIS Units expressed interest and support—some actively urging that we collocate/consolidate the regional offices as soon as possible.

As a result, the AMT asked all the Northern Regional units to develop a proposal for their collocation/consolidation. The AMT would then consider the proposal for implementation with the understanding that the APHIS Northern Regions would work out some of the bugs before the agency would implement the concept nationwide.

I would like to emphasize that the development of the proposal was a true team effort involving PPQ, ADC, REAC, and VS. In addition, several other folks from other units including Joe Frick, who is the current leader of the collocation/consolidation effort, were involved. The key team members included Gary Larson, John Kinsella, Valencia Colleton, Don Husnik, John Van der Vaarst, Kay Johnson, Carol Tuszynski, Sue Lendrum, Ron Johnson, Tom Holt and myself.

As indicated in the last issue, the idea for this important project seemed to take off from there. Thanks for the opportunity of sharing some of my thoughts in this regard.

Bill Buisch, Director,  
VS Northeastern Region

## Inside APHIS

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# Pennsylvania Team's Reinventions Win a Hammer Award

Customers in Eastern Pennsylvania now smile when they have their import and export needs served. Smiling too are the five employees who on February 16 received a hammer award from Assistant Secretary Mike Dunn for reinventing the way they serve their customers. Dunn was representing the Vice President, who honors employees who reinvent Government through his National Performance Review initiative.

"As often happens when employees are empowered to focus on the needs of their customers, everybody wins," says Debbie Hawkins, VS veterinary medical officer. "Customer satisfaction improves, employee morale goes up, and the Government gets more done with fewer resources."

Hawkins was team leader for her team's efforts to improve service to customers needing import permit inspections for animal products and organisms and vectors and customers needing to export either live animals or animal germplasm.

## Team Members

Team members are Tim Brennan, formerly an animal health technician (AHT), now a regulatory enforcement investigator; Beth Wittenbrader, AHT; Amy Nesselrodt, veterinary medical officer; and Thomas Schoelzel, AHT/animal identification coordinator. The team focused on working smarter, not harder. Under the old system, VS employees performed permit inspections one permit at a time. The team saw a better way. Team members began batching all import permits for a given geographic area and completed the inspections all at one time. They also began serving low priority permits via fax machines and through telephone consultations.

Team members bought their own answering and fax machines so customers could reach them at any time. One member installed, at her own expense, a separate phone and fax line so she could better meet customers' needs.

These changes produced remarkable results. In 1991, before the team began implementing its new system, the eastern Pennsylvania office received 420 permits and served 130. The average turnaround time was 11 months. In 1993, the team's second year of operation, the office received 580 permits and served them all. The average turnaround time was 30 days.

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"We were able to reinvent the way we serve our customers because we have moved to a true team-based structure."

—Debbie Hawkins

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Just as impressive are the team's efforts to reduce the costs for customers exporting animals and animal germplasm. We began to give our customers an option," explains Hawkins. "We would send a team member to a customer's farm at his or her convenience, or the customer could wait until several other customers in the area required a similar service. Then, our team member would serve everyone at the same time, and the customers would share the costs.

"Many customers found the second option so appealing," continues Hawkins, "that they began to coordinate with other exporters, calling the team when several of them needed service. For example," she says, "the team serves seven horse farms that are on the same show circuit and thus need export isolation inspections

at the same time. One of the owners calls the team, and members travel to the area and inspect all the horses for export."

## Letting Stakeholders Choose

As a result, instead of one farm paying \$350 for an inspection, each farm now contributes only \$50 to receive the same service. APHIS accomplishes in 1 day what formerly would have taken 7 days.

"We were able to reinvent the way we serve our customers because we have moved to a true team-based structure," says Hawkins. After we got approval from our supervisor Ulysses Lane to form a field team, we first created a mission statement and goals for our team. We determined how we would measure progress and established a new performance appraisal system that evaluated members on team accomplishments instead of individual accomplishments. I was the team leader, but no longer the supervisor. It took me 2 years to get the name 'supervisory' removed from my title," adds Hawkins.

"Now, our new supervisor Lynn Siegfried is asking us to expand the team and become a field team for the entire State. Three people in the western part of the State will be joining us, and with the introduction of these new members, we will be reforming as a new team committed to the same principles that brought us our hammer award: arranging our work by customer groups, increasing our efficiency, and evaluating members on team accomplishments." ♦

*Jamie Ambrosi of LPA's Executive Correspondence staff contributed to this report.*



## AMT Launches the Vision at Denver and Dallas Workshops

By Anna Cherry, Public Affairs, LPA

The first vision launch workshops were held in Denver, CO, and Dallas, TX, during the week of January 22, 1996. The workshops are a series of working groups designed to educate employees about the vision and to generate support and enthusiasm for the change agenda. To get the ball rolling, a team of vision advocates selected Denver and Dallas to host the first launch workshops.

"Although most of you have heard our vision, many are still not clear how it impacts your daily work," said Administrator Lonnie King to employees at both locations. "Because of this uncertainty, the APHIS Management Team (AMT) and I will personally answer your questions in workshops at locations around the country. We are also seeking feedback from the field on ways to achieve the vision and support this change process."

Workshop evaluations showed that Denver and Dallas participants valued having the agency leadership present to answer questions. "Being able to attend a meeting with the Assistant Secretary, the Administrator, and the AMT gives me a good feeling about the reality of teamwork within USDA," said Burke Newman of REAC in Ft. Morgan, CO.

### Leaders Available

Both groups said that they were impressed with leadership's commitment to the APHIS vision and gained a better understanding of the vision and change agenda. "It was an excellent idea to have the leaders available for an open discussion," said Robert Sanders of VS in Little Rock, AR. "That really made an impression on a lot of people."

In Denver, AMT members Bobby Acord of ADC, Alex Thiermann of IS, Bill Wallace of PPD, Patrick Collins of LPA, Sally McCammon, APHIS science advisor, and Sharon Coursey of OPD kicked off an agencywide discussion about achieving the APHIS vision with 200 Western States employees.

In Dallas, Don Husnik of PPO, Carl Castleton of IS, and Dale Schwindaman of REAC continued the forum with a group of 100 people. Assistant Secretary for marketing and regulatory programs Mike Dunn, APHIS Administrator Lonnie King, Dan Stone of OPD, and Donald Luchsinger of VS participated in both workshops.

### Can-Do Attitude

Assistant Secretary Dunn cited examples of how APHIS has taken a leading role in reorganization efforts at the department level and even higher. His speech highlighted APHIS progress and said that the agency is an example of reinvention in action. "APHIS has long been a standard bearer in customer service," said Dunn in his remarks.

Customer service is a key tenet of USDA's reorganization plan and in Vice President Gore's National Performance Review. It is also part of the APHIS change agenda. "I've been closely monitoring your agency's progress in this regard," Dunn added, "and I'm greatly encouraged by the commitment you've shown."

Dunn's speech also emphasized the need to keep up the momentum on change initiatives. "We still have many hurdles—both institutional and external—to face," he said. "In today's fast-moving world, change is the only constant."

"However, I'm sure that the flexible, can-do attitude I've seen at work within APHIS and USDA will enable us to meet the challenges that go along with profound change head-on," said Dunn. "Tools like the APHIS vision and change agenda will help us build our tomorrow and ensure the continued health and prosperity of U.S. agriculture."

King rallied APHIS troops with an explanation of why we need to change and how important each member of the APHIS community is as we change. "An old proverb states, 'The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first few steps,'" said King. "I hope you, like me, are ready to lace up your hiking boots and start on a path toward our ultimate destination—success in the next century."

King added that the workshops are the launching point in our journey to make the APHIS vision



APHIS PHOTO BY STUART MCDONALD

Meeting across program lines in Denver are (from left) Bob Clemans, ITS; Gary Church, VS; Rick Engeman, ADC; and Ray Sterner, ADC.

a reality. "I'm looking forward to our travels!"

King explained that interaction among people, behavior, systems, and values are becoming more and more complex and occurring at a fast and furious pace. "As Mike Dunn and I mentioned before, agriculture, Government, and our customers are undergoing unprecedented transitions, all of which substantially impact APHIS—how we work, what we work on, and where, when, and why we do work."

### New Tools

"We can't just declare a vision—we must live it," said King. "We cannot rest on our past accomplishments, nor can we rely solely on the old ways of doing things. We must develop and adapt new tools that will enable us to work more efficiently and effectively and create the plans that will lead us into the 21st century."

Conference participants were asked to take this message back to their work units and share it with their colleagues. "You in the field are the best people to implement the vision and change agenda," said Donald Luchsinger of VS.

"We have been given an excellent charge as to what our responsibility will be and is," said Sharon Moore, of PPQ, Dallas/Fort Worth. John Vigil of PPQ, El Paso, TX, said, "this is a good time for communicating among various



APHIS PHOTO BY ANNA CHERRY

PPQ employees in Dallas concentrate on an exercise in their vision workbooks. From left are John Vigil, El Paso, TX; Don DUEWALL, Eagle Pass, TX; and Diane Vlasik, Hidalgo, TX.

programs of APHIS."

"The striking thing about bringing all these people together was that for many, it was the first time they had met each other," said Stuart McDonald of LPA in Denver. "There was genuine surprise across program units about common problems and how much individuals are already doing in line with the APHIS vision."

"I really enjoyed having the opportunity to meet the other

Regional Directors, compare notes, and discuss possible ways of working more closely together," commented ADC's Western regional director Mike Worthen.

Many attendees at the conferences experienced a genuine feeling of unity and cautious optimism about the future direction of the agency. They left the meetings energized about the future of APHIS and their place in the APHIS of the future. ♦

## Want to Host a Vision Launch Workshop? Here's How

You can help launch APHIS into the future by hosting a vision launch workshop for you and your colleagues. Calling the vision voice-mail number(301-734-7251) will put you in touch with people who will make it happen. Each person participating in a vision launch workshop has an opportunity to understand where the vision came from and how it connects to each employee's daily work.

"We're at the point now in changing our organization that we need the involvement of every employee," says Bill Zybach, an organizational development consultant in OPD." For the first half of this year, OPD, the APHIS Management team (AMT), and a vision support team of two employees,

Bonnie King and Cheri Oswald, are launching vision workshops to engage employees in the vision.

"Engagement in the vision means having employees understand that our connection to it is not a matter of choice but a necessity, given the world we live in," Zybach says. "We intend for the workshops to help our employees see how the vision connects to their work."

"Our administrator and the AMT want employees to know that the APHIS vision didn't come from us or from management but from their peers," Zybach continues. "It was created at last year's future search conference as a response to events that participants perceived were driving change in their environment. Participants were a

cross section of APHIS—all levels and functions. In the Vision Launch Workshops, we talk about the forces in our environment that are driving us to change and that led us to respond by creating the vision—a new direction for APHIS."

"While we are calling the gatherings 'launch workshops,' the vision is actually already happening," says Dan Stone, OPD co-director. "Major activities and accomplishments have occurred in virtually every element of our vision. Now, we face the challenge of achieving the vision throughout the agency."

### Vision Coordination

"Bonnie King and I are helping put together the vision launch (See LAUNCH WORKSHOPS on page 12)

## Amnesty from page 1

disease and prevent it from reaching commercial growing areas.

### Press Conference

Watkins visited the airport in early December to get the message out to Florida travelers and the general public. After meeting with citrus canker program officials and PPQ inspectors, she held a press conference that received extensive airplay in Miami, Orlando, Tampa, and West Palm Beach.

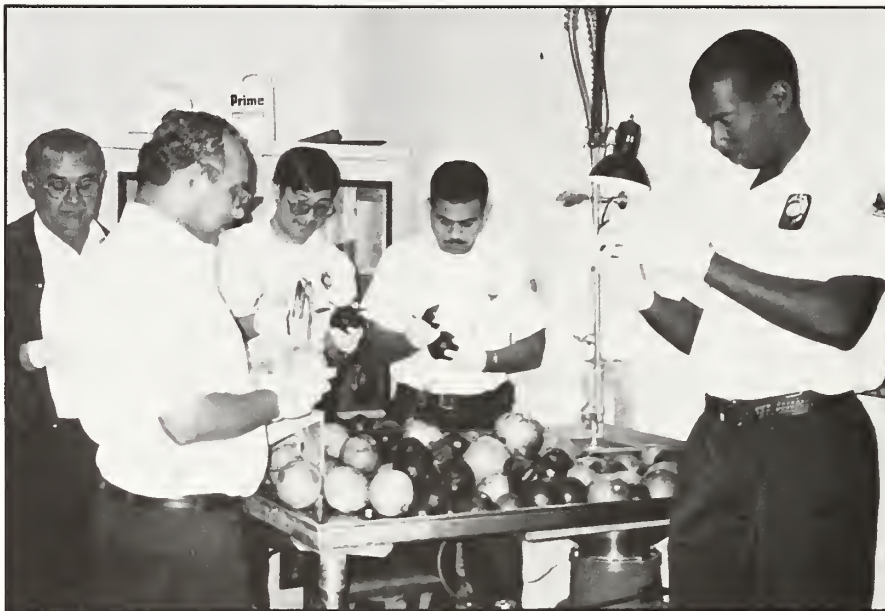
Watkins talked about the importance of preventing the spread of citrus canker and the need for public cooperation. "Increased travel over the holidays makes it imperative that we get this message out to people leaving the region," she said. "Many people like to send or take their backyard fruits to friends and relatives during the holidays, and we asked them not to do that."

### Maintaining the Bins

And the public listened. PPQ officers collect an average of 500 pieces of fruit per week with some totals reaching 700 per week. "It's been hectic here at the airport for the citrus canker team," says Vicki Mills, PPQ officer and leader of the nine-member citrus canker team.

"With the 14 bins comes the enormous task of maintaining them on a daily basis," Mills says. Other members of the team include Victor Arias, Lester Carter, Leon Cholakis, William Cousens, Adaly Ibrahim, Ron Lee, John Martinez, and Pedro Vega.

Because citrus canker has not reached commercial growing areas, passengers may keep commercially sold citrus but they need to show evidence of purchase by keeping fruit in its original container or showing a receipt.



APHIS PHOTO BY VICKI MILLS

The volunteer Citrus Canker Team inspects fruit at Miami International Airport. Clockwise from left are Adly Ibrahim, Victor Arias, Ron Lee, Pedro Vega, and Lester Carter.

### Airline Cooperation

"We have received excellent cooperation from the airlines at MIA," Mills says. "I think they realize the danger of spreading citrus canker and want to do their part to help." Mills talks with ticket agents and monitors curbside and ticket counter check-ins to garner program support. She also attends airline meetings where she briefs them on the amnesty bin program. PPQ is asking airlines to refuse to check in "backyard" citrus and is supporting the airlines' efforts by being available by voice mail, telephone, and, if necessary, in person.

Security personnel at the airport cooperate by asking departing passengers to deposit their backyard citrus in the amnesty bins. Should a passenger refuse, a PPQ officer will help persuade them.

A citrus canker outbreak in production areas could cost residential and commercial citrus growers hundreds of millions of dollars a year in lost crops, lost foreign and domestic markets, and lost jobs. With those factors in mind, PPQ is working hard to eradicate citrus canker.

Working closely with the State of Florida, PPQ is regulating the movement of citrus fruits, plants, and plant products from the quarantined area. Eradication activities include signing lawn-care companies to quarantine compliance agreements, removing and disposing infected trees, surveying for the disease, and informing the public of eradication activities.

Program officials anticipate a 3-year eradication effort. PPQ will declare eradication after 2 years of negative surveys for citrus canker. ♦



## Stakeholders Come Together on a Uniform Program for EIA



APHIS PHOTO BY ANN CZAPIEWSKI

On January 31 and February 1 this year, 13 representatives of the U.S. Animal Health Association's Infectious Diseases of Horses Committee met in Riverdale, MD, to develop a uniform policy program for equine infectious anemia (EIA). The major control actions against EIA currently vary from State to State, but at last November's USAHA meeting, the committee

agreed to ask APHIS to facilitate the development of a uniform policy. VS' Tim Cordes chairs the committee formed to develop the policy. Individual committee members are now at work on chapters of a document that will go before the USAHA this year for final approval. EIA is a disease that causes anemia, intermittent fever, and severe weight loss in

horses, mules, and asses. There is no vaccine or effective treatment for this highly contagious and sometimes fatal disease. Meeting at Riverdale are, clockwise from the left, William Pace, Florida; David Alstad, APHIS, VS, NVSL; Ralph Knowles, Maryland; Tim Cordes, APHIS, VS; James Lindstrom, Texas; Carol Alm, American Horse Council; D.L. Notter, Kentucky. ♦

## Forward-Thinking Council Readies Families for Summer

By Carmen Queen-Hines, M&B and Karen Lowe, OPD

Over 150 employees recently visited a Summer Camp Fair hosted by the Work\*Family\*Life Council at Riverdale, MD. Employees interested in finding a summer camp for their children could ask questions directly to representatives of over 15 residential and day camps. Brochures, videos, and applications were also available to be picked up. Specialty camps included in the fair offered studies in art, computers, Civil War, religion, international topics, special needs, and sports. More traditional camping experiences

were also represented, including hiking, canoeing, archery, horse-back riding, and swimming.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the fair, and I was impressed by the steady stream of friendly parents," said Joe Citro, director of the Maryland Summer Center for Civil War Studies. "I look forward to being invited back next year."

"Too often I wait until the last moment to set up summer camp activities for my daughter and have to settle for what is available," said Coanne O'Hern, PPQ. "The fair helped me think about summer camps earlier in the year and provided me with new and interesting programs. It is difficult to find good programs for pre-teens."

The Work\*Family\*Life Council has recommended sponsoring the

event annually. The council also wants to develop a summer camp fair kit for field locations interested in hosting a fair at their worksites. For more information on these developments, call us at 301-734-5579 or 301-734-5219. ♦

# In Tempe Employees Build Partnerships Along the Red Road

By Janet Wintermute, Public Affairs, LPA

Thirty-eight APHIS employees joined about 160 other USDA personnel at Tempe, AZ, this past December for a training workshop designed to help the Department better deliver its programs to the more than 550 federally recognized Indian tribes in this country. "Building Partnerships With Tribal Governments" featured Native American speakers explaining how they view the opportunity to work more closely with USDA agencies whose various programs can enhance the economic and social conditions of Indian life in the 1990's.

The southwestern locale was particularly fitting. Phoenix, America's seventh-largest metropolitan area, is definitely in "Indian country." Four tribes along the Gila River, including the Pima, live on reservations very close to the Phoenix suburbs. Governor Mary Thomas, political leader of the Pima, arranged for us to visit the Pima reservation, 15 minutes outside town. The social highlight of the workshop was a meal of authentic Pima dishes (flatbread with beef stew, beans, squash, and squaw berries, an out-of-season delicacy, for dessert) at a Pima community center on the reservation. The Blackwater Basket Dancers, a troupe of Pima girls aged 5 to 16, performed traditional dances to the tambourine and rhythmic chanting of a Pima elder.

The impetus for this workshop was President Clinton's April 1994 executive order directing the heads of Executive Branch departments to ensure that their units deal with the federally recognized tribes on a government-to-government basis. That is, the leader of the Navajo Nation is sovereign in Navajo country just as Premier Jacques Chirac is sovereign in France. Mary Thomas, governor of the Pima, is analogous to President Clinton, not to the governor of Arizona.

In addition, the executive order reminds us that representatives of the U.S. Government (including every USDA employee!) must recognize the unique legal relationship between the Government and Native American tribal governments as set forth in the Constitution and subsequent treaties, statutes, and court decisions

involving the Indians. Reservation lands are held in trust by the Government for the benefit of the tribes, but the trust relationship is abstract and difficult to understand.

In this century, some earlier administrations have taken a few positive steps to improve relations between the Federal Government and the Indians. But the current administration is strongly committed to building a more effective day-to-day working relationship between the tribes and the civil servants whose job is to bring services to all taxpayers, including Indian peoples.

USDA provides a broad spectrum of assistance to Indians

Yellowstone bison for distribution to Indian nations.

At the workshop, we learned about representative American Indian cultures, traditions, and spirituality. Understanding how Indian people think, how they view the passage of time (time is cyclic to them, not linear like it is to Eurocentric cultures), and how they feel about Mother Earth and her resources is absolutely central to improving how we deal with Indians. For example, many Indians do not share the Judeo-Christian view that the animal kingdom exists for the benefit of human beings. Indians believe *all* animal species are essential to the universe.



APHIS PHOTO BY JANET WINTERMUTE

**The Blackwater Basket Dancers performed for USDA employees at the Pima reservation's community center. Behind the podium is the tribe's governor, Mary Thomas.**

nationwide. The Forest Service manages land devoted to grazing livestock; the Farm Service Agency manages a host of credit agreements for agricultural investment; the Natural Resources Conservation Service controls water and soil conservation practices via its county plans. APHIS does animal damage control work on tribal lands under cooperative agreements and is currently working with other Federal entities to solve the brucellosis problem in Yellowstone National Park's buffalo herd and free up some of the "excess"

Interactive panel discussions with a group of 10 tribal leaders occupied the first 2 full days of the workshop. Speakers came from these tribes: Poarch Band of the Creek Nation (Alabama), Cherokee Nation (Oklahoma), Oneida Indian Nation (New York), Teton (Rosebud) Sioux (South Dakota), Navajo Nation (Arizona), Jicarilla Apache Tribe (New Mexico), Hopi Tribe (Arizona), Cahuilla Tribe (California), and the Nez Perce Tribe (Idaho) as well as the Gila River Indian Community mentioned earlier.

# Congratulations!

... to **Gary Stevens**, area epidemiology officer in Nebraska; **John Belfrage** and **Rodney Howe** of the Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health; Charlie Stoltenow and Mark Teachman of the Food Safety and Inspection Service; and **Robert Southall, Jr.**, of VS in Riverdale, MD. These employees received a team Extra Effort Award from VS' Emergency Programs for developing a new Recorded Emergency Animal Disease Information (READI) system. When the existing system underwent review in May 1995, reviewers determined that the system's automated data collection and transfer were no longer

adequate. Taking the initiative, Stevens volunteered his time to develop the rudimentary computer backbone of a new surveillance and reporting system for foreign animal disease investigations. When the 1995 vesicular stomatitis outbreak began, all the above employees worked long hours so that a functional READI system would be available immediately. The new READI investigation reporting method that they put together has been well received by the VS field force and has shown to be adaptable to new situations. These USDA employees continue to work on modifications and improvements.

... to **Phillip Grove**, **Beverly Gordon**, and **Narcy Klag** for the award of merit given by the Washington, DC, Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication for the new Export Certification Manual. These employees were part of a writing team network that included members of the Frederick, MD, Professional Development Center; PPQ officers from ports throughout the United States; and the Export Certification Unit in Riverdale, MD. PDC's Grove coordinated and managed the project, Gordon served as the project editorial assistant, and Klag was leader of the members of the permit unit who were part of the effort. ♦

## MRP Managers from page 2

protocols, APHIS has helped to secure many new markets overseas for U.S. agricultural commodities," says Dunn.

"I hope to make integrity the hallmark of my tenure", Dunn adds. "In APHIS, we must maintain the integrity of our borders and the integrity of sanitary and phytosanitary protocols. The men and women who work in these areas must have the highest degree of integrity."

A native of Keokuk, IA, Dunn began his public career as housing

director and city administrator in his home town. He chaired the State's City Development Board and was executive director of a regional planning and economic development district. He worked as the Midwest director of the Farmers Home Administration from 1977 to 1981 and became the last administrator of that agency in 1993 until it was abolished in a departmental reorganization. Dunn and his wife Brook have four sons.

A native of Hope, Arkansas, Watkins received a B.S. degree in

home economics from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and a master's degree in administration and supervision from Memphis State University. Watkins came to USDA as Deputy Under Secretary of Food Nutrition and Consumer Services in 1994. In that position she conducted a hunger forum and lead hunger leader meetings around the country. She also provided leadership to improving the American diet for children, and reauthorized child nutrition programs. ♦

On day 3, the audience broke up into smaller discussion groups, each with a tribal representative and about 15 USDA employees. Our job was to formulate a list of barriers impeding Indian access to USDA programs and strategic actions needed to enhance program delivery in the future.

Several APHIS employees chaired these day 3 workgroups: Mike Gilsdorf, Terry Clark, and Roberta Duhaime (all veterinarians from VS), PPQ's Colonel Locklear (a Lumbee Indian), and ADC's Rick Wadleigh. Cofacilitators included Melonie Torillo and Lynn Ann Tesar (VS)

and Nancy Ellifrit (REAC). Linda Moore, APHIS' Native American Program Manager on the Civil Rights Enforcement and Compliance staff, conducted the facilitators' orientation and chaired the workshop planning committee.

Moore is preparing a report for the Secretary of Agriculture on the basic points from all the discussion groups. Several themes recurred, but all the groups agreed on one essential recommendation: that the Secretary fill the position of tribal liaison, which has been vacant for a year now. Indian tribes view the staffing of this position as the clearest single

indicator of the level of the Department's commitment to President Clinton's executive order on Indian outreach. ♦

*Linda Moore contributed to this report. For more specifics on the meeting or APHIS' Native American Program, contact Moore at (301) 734-6139. For details about APHIS' Native American Working Group—the agency committee dedicated to improving APHIS program delivery to the federally recognized tribes—contact ADC's Rick Wadleigh in Denver at (303) 969-6560.*

# Frederick Duo Use Continual Learning to Enhance Careers

By John Patterson, Professional Development Center, OPD

At the Professional Development Center (PDC) in Frederick, MD, are two employees who have absorbed the concept of continual learning into their daily work lives. Their total adoption of this strategy of the APHIS change agenda has increased their value to themselves and to the agency. I see them as individuals who have used continual learning as a business strategy to help them reach the APHIS vision. My purpose here is to sketch for you the accomplishments of two people who have mastered the concept of continual learning and who can therefore serve as models for the rest of us. I supervise these two people, but they have a lot to teach me about continual learning.

According to Malcolm Knowles, a recognized authority on adult education, continual learning is a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.

## The Diagnosis

Bruce Attavian and Phillip Grove, as new employees at PDC, began the continual learning process by creatively diagnosing their learning needs. They used me because I fell into the slot of supervisor. But they went much further than just depending on me. Both joined the Society for Technical Communication so they could get responses from this group on the accuracy of their diagnoses.

Both Attavian and Grove realized that their careers were changing. Their self-diagnosis was that they would have to augment their skills with technical writing knowledge and practice. In addition, the technology was moving toward computers, so they diagnosed their computer sufficiencies and deficiencies. Both had sufficient self awareness to validate their diagnoses.

Both formulated aggressive and broad learning goals. One goal was the completion of university-



APHIS PHOTO BY PHILLIP GROVE

Looking over an award-winning manual are (left to right) Bruce Attavian, John Patterson, and Phillip Grove of the training center's Technical Communication and Standard Documentation section.

level curriculum and certification in Technical Writing. Grove formulated a goal for expertise in on-line documentation (data bases, authoring software, intelligent systems). Attavian set a goal for getting management training and experience. Although their goals were originally quite structured, both employees became fluid enough to adapt to changing technologies, reorganizations, and needs.

## Resources and Strategies

Sure, universities and agency-sponsored training were a learning resource. But here are a few more sources that they used in the continual learning process:

—Cruising the Internet and World Wide Web;

—Participating in Professional Societies;

—Volunteering for cross-cutting team assignments (volunteering to teach international students and new officers, for example);

—Volunteering for assignments that would transfer the skills learned to others in APHIS (like leading writing workshops);

—Working with peers and professors collaboratively as learners;

—Taking courses on their own time, and sometimes paying for the courses themselves;

—Participating in user groups associated with a technology or a product (for example, participating on Adobe Acrobat's user's group); (See Continual Learning on page 14)

# Qualified Employees Can Opt for Early-Out Retirement Now

By Rosemary Witcoff, MRP Human Resources, M&B

Thinking of retiring? APHIS' early-out retirement window of opportunity is from January 1 through September 30, 1996. Eligible employees applying for the early-out option must retire on or before September 30, 1996.

Early-out eligibility requirements are age 50 with at least 20 years of service, or any age with at least 25 years of service. At this time, we have no legislative authority to offer voluntary separation incentives (buy-outs). Applying for early-out retirement is strictly voluntary; the agency prohibits any coercion exercised by managers or employees against an employee who is eligible to retire.

As in ordinary optional retirement situations, the employee must have been covered by Federal employees health (FEHB) and life insurance (FEGLI) programs during the last 5 years of service in order to continue coverage in retirement.

Eligible employees interested in applying for early-out retirement may contact their servicing personnel specialist for information on eligibility or annuity estimates. See the side bar for the

right office to call. Employees in these offices will prepare your annuity estimate as soon as possible, but if they have a large number of requests, receipt of your estimate could take 3 weeks. ♦

## Servicing Personnel Offices

### If you are a . . .

### Then contact . . .

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • Field employee           | HRO, Minneapolis, MN,<br>(612) 370-2188             |
| • Washington, DC, employee | Steve Carpenter, HRO, Washington,<br>(202) 720-5209 |
| • Riverdale, MD, employee  | Alicia Rodriguez, HRO, Riverdale,<br>(301) 734-8349 |
| • SES employee             | Joyce Mayo, (301) 734-6466                          |
| • Foreign Service employee | Freida Skaggs, (301) 734-7550                       |

# African American History Quiz Challenges Riverdale Takers

## Winner Kohn Racks Up High Score

To celebrate African American History Month in February, REAC's Ron Stanley threw out a challenge to Riverdale, MD, employees: Take the quiz in two parts available in his office. Stanley would score it and announce the winner at the end of the month.

"I think I made it too hard," says Stanley. "A lot of people picked up the quiz, but a lot also didn't return it." Stanley got the multiple choice questions from the VS Southeastern Regional office where he used to work.

"It was fun to speculate on who did what and who fit where," Stanley recalls. "I thought making the quiz available in Riverdale would be a good way to celebrate the occasion and learn at the same time."

Here is a sample from his quiz: "Philosopher and intellectual spokesperson for the creation of a body of black literature by Black American authors. He was the first Black American to be awarded the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship. He studied at Oxford University and became a distinguished professor of philosophy at Howard University in 1917. Is it, a. Ralph Ellison, b. Paul Dunbar, or c. Alain Locke?"

The winner of Stanley's quiz was REAC's Barbara Kohn—an animal care veterinarian who scored an average of 92.5 percent on both parts. Did you know the answer to the sample? It's c.—Alain Locke. ♦



APHIS PHOTO BY ANN CZAPIEWSKI

## Launch Workshops from page 5



Bonnie King (left) and Cheri Oswald add another vision launch workshop to the schedule.

APHIS PHOTO BY ANN CZAPIEWSKI

workshops for units and groups who request one," says Oswald. These two employees, who are on this special detail from their jobs in IS and LPA, monitor the voice-mail phone line and respond to requests for workshops and other information about the vision.

"We are encouraging offices who want to have a workshop to invite nearby program units to come too," she says, "because working across program unit lines is part of the vision. At these workshops, employees can meet their coworkers and start exploring ways to work together and ways to share resources, knowledge, and experience."

Oswald and King are responsible for scheduling one or more AMT members and champions of the Change Agenda to attend each workshop to provide information and leadership and to receive input. The Vision Support team also arranges for facilitators, helps with logistics, helps create the agenda, and gets workbooks for each employee to the chosen sites.

"We want as many people to have the experience as possible, continues Oswald, "so we are keeping costs low. The cost of a workshop is minimal—OPD pays travel costs of its facilitators; AMT members pay for their travel, and

wherever possible, we use APHIS or other free meeting facilities."

The kickoff workshops at the end of January in Denver, CO, and Dallas, TX, (see page 4 of this issue) were both 2 days, but organizers can run single-day workshops or half-day orientations as well. The PPQ office in Gulfport, MS, for example, requested a 1-day vision

workshop to be scheduled in conjunction with its work conference. The office agreed to be host for other programs nearby, so BBEP, REAC, ADC, and VS offices also participated.

### Linking With Unit Visions

Both types of workshops have two parts: The first part deals with understanding the vision; the second part relates to aligning with the vision. "To accomplish the second part," explains Zybach, "we look at each program unit's vision, discuss how it relates to the APHIS vision, and identify what "one APHIS" would look like and how to get there. In the 2-day workshop, we move to empowering people to think and operate in a way that will help us to achieve our vision by having them examine what employees can do in their work units to make the vision a reality.

"The Change Agenda is the action part of our vision," Zybach says. "The language is deliberately general. In the latest thinking about what makes successful organizations, the detailed strategic plans are discarded in favor of empowering employees to work out the details. Employees are bright, creative people. They know what about their work needs changing to serve their customers best—and

### Vision Launch Workshops

Host	Location	Date
VS	Denver, CO	Jan. 23-24
PPQ	Dallas, TX	Jan. 24-25
PPQ	Gulfport, MS	Feb. 13
PPQ	Sacramento, CA	Feb. 13
HQ	Riverdale, MD	March 4-6; 12-14
IS	Brussels, Belgium	March 12-14
PPQ	Richmond, VA	April 2-3
REAC/PPQ	Sacramento, CA	April 3-4
PPQ	Philadelphia, PA	April 16
PPQ	New York City, NY	April 17
VS	Atlanta, GA	April 23
M&B	Minneapolis, MN	April/May
IS	Mexico City, Mexico	
VS	Ames, IA	May 2-3
PPQ/VS	Hawaii	April 16-17
VS	Newburgh, NY	April 18-19
PPQ	Puerto Rico	late April
PPQ	Boston, MA	May 8-9
Your session?	Call us at 301-734-7251.	

# Border at Detroit is Wide Pathway for High-Risk Produce

By Thomas Wallenmaier, PPQ, Detroit, MI

PPQ officers at Detroit, MI, recently were confronted by evidence that the pathway for entry of regulated fruits and vegetables across the Canadian Border may be wider than they thought. As a part of an extensive evaluation of pest risk at the Canadian border, PPQ employees at Detroit have found that a pathway already exists for bringing regulated items into the United States from Canada.

Since Canada has no regulations for many types of fruit that are regulated by the United States, these fruits are available in markets in Canada. Individuals can drive to Canada and bring back fruits and vegetables that are prohibited in the United States.

## Kinds of Vehicles

The pathway is made up of two kinds of vehicles: individual passenger vehicles with small quantities, and vans with fairly large quantities. On July 29, 1995, for example, the U.S. Customs Service called our PPQ office to report a truck with smuggled litchi and lansone fruit. We sent PPQ officer Dan Lundgren to the scene, and he gave the driver a \$250 penalty. While there, Lundgren examined a number of vehicles referred for secondary inspection, and in an hour, Lundgren caught six more vehicles with smuggled prohibited fruit. He wrote six penalties for \$100.00 each. While that day in July was unusual, PPQ in Detroit has found



APHIS PHOTO BY TOM WALLENMAIER

**PPQ Officer Dan Lundgren removes prohibited mangoes from a van at the Canadian border at Detroit, MI.**

that throughout the year non-Canadian fruits, vegetables, and meat products come across the border into the United States.

In September, 1995, U.S. Customs Officer Berry Sphinx working at the Canadian border crossing in Detroit called the PPQ office to inform us that they had in custody a white van with 40 cases of unmanifested longan fruits. PPQ

sent an Officer Dan Lundgren to the scene, and Lundgren issued the driver a \$250.00 civil penalty.

## Smuggler Evens the Score

Upset that he had been caught, the driver of the van wanted to know why his competitor's truck was not being stopped. Lundgren responded that if he were given the license number of the other truck, he would stop it. A few days later the driver called Lundgren with the license number.

We notified Customs, and on September 23rd a Customs officer stopped the driver of the other van. Called to the scene, our PPQ officer seized longans, papayas, lichiis, mangosteens, jackfruit, and live snails. We gave the driver a civil penalty of \$250, evening out the score on both smugglers.

Vegetables can also be a problem. In December 1995, we discovered that a truck that supposedly carried 317 cartons of Canadian peppers was found upon examination to have 220 cartons of Spanish peppers and only 97 cartons of Canadian peppers. We had to destroy the Spanish peppers. As you can see, the Canadian border, often thought to be of little quarantine risk, can be a pathway for high-risk materials at times. ♦

customer service is at the apex of our vision triangle. At the Vision Launch Workshops, we challenge employees to begin immediately to implement some specific activities that signal a new way of doing business. These activities are positive first steps toward reaching our vision."

Oswalt and King encourage people to call the vision voice-mail number and record their successes that come out of these workshops. In June there will be a wrap-up of the workkshops broadcast via satellite to all major APHIS offices. "At the wrap-up we intend to highlight success stories

from around APHIS," Oswalt says.

"It is the empowerment of the employees throughout APHIS that will ultimately achieve the vision, said Administrator Lonnie King in his call to action via conference call on February 1. "Each of us will play a role and decide how to implement the vision in our own work activities." ♦

## Continual Learning from page 10

—In periods of diminishing training dollars, attending trade shows and entering drawings for free training and workshops, or attending vendor-supported workshops;

—Reading textbooks and completing self-instructional dialogs;

—Serving as consultants to universities and others in APHIS;

—Bugging me continually to find out what's available and what they need to do to advance their computer and technical writing capabilities;

—Volunteering for operational assignments that would stretch their abilities (for example, Grove volunteered to run PPO's Permit Unit); and

—Taking a lead role in introducing and recommending new standards for excellence in the documents we publish.

### Evaluating Outcomes

Attavian and Grove went far beyond their supervisor's annual evaluations. They additionally evaluated learning outcomes through the following techniques:

—Participating in professional, non-Government writing competition so their work could be scrutinized by their peers (evidence of whether they could apply the skills learned)

—Through comment sheets, asking the users of their manuals how well (or how poorly) they were doing;

—Working their current projects into class assignments so that they could get evaluation by their professors and mentors;

—Working collaboratively with coworkers and team mates to get continuous responses to how they were doing;

—Taking college-sponsored exams solely to evaluate their competencies, (for example, they took a grammar exam that was outside the class' required exams); and

—Based on outside review and critique of their work, making improvements to their next publication by implementing the reviewers'/judges' suggestions.

"So," you say to yourself, "I'm taking all this with a grain of salt—we all know that Patterson's a braggart." Well, you don't have to take my word. Let's see what Attavian's and Grove's peers and mentors say about their progress in continual learning.

Both were just awarded Montgomery College's certificate in Technical Writing (a 2-year program). Both graduated with honors. Both wrote manuals that took awards in international, professional competi-

tions. The awards were presented by the Society for Technical Communication. Most recently, Grove won an award of merit with his entry of the *Export Certification Manual*, and Attavian won an award of achievement with his entry of the *Biological Control of the Diffuse and Spotted Knapweed Project Manual*.

Here are a few comments from Bryant Davis, one of their professors: "Kind of student every teacher wants. Did more than even I would expect. Grew in the technical writing field. Made himself and every class he has taken better."

Grove was asked to serve on Montgomery College's Technical Writing Advisory Committee where he currently serves. Attavian was awarded Phi Theta Kappa's "Excellence in Technical Writing Award."

Grove has paved the way for others in OPD to get quality training from Montgomery College at a reduced rate. He has also opened up this opportunity to other units in APHIS.

I hope you'll become part of my cheering squad by congratulating these two employees either by phone or by message mail. With employees like Attavian and Grove, APHIS will keep up with the rapid pace of change and, therefore, ultimately achieve its vision. ♦

## Alumni Organization

Retirees and employees from across the country attended the February meeting of the APHIS Alumni Organization (AAO) in Riverdale, MD. Besides 13 from Riverdale, 12 others participated by conference call from the APHIS office in Sacramento, CA, and two more tuned in from Savannah, GA, and Howell, MI.

### Why Join AAO?

Reasons include a wish to continue one's professional growth; to be consultants to the industry or to others; to be rehired part time; to keep in touch socially; to be kept current on NAFTA, GATT, and national and international problems affecting APHIS; and to be kept advised of the Federal retirement and health insurance systems.

The group felt the major challenge

at this stage of its development is to get equal input and participation by APHIS leadership. Both current and retired employees should attend AAO meetings at headquarters and in the field.

The group wondered how receptive regional and state directors would be to hosting and assisting AAO from their respective offices. Ron DeHaven (REAC, Sacramento) thought that the knowledge of retirees would be invaluable to draw on in a foreign animal disease outbreak. He would like to see a State-level AAO with close ties to the regional office.

"For the locals to know where retired people are and that they can draw upon their expertise is a benefit," said Neil Williamson (REAC, Sacramento).

### State-Level AAO's

Retiree Harry Mussman suggested that AAO develop by State and roll into a national automated database. Retiree Scott Campbell added that cooperation between retirees and employees would be necessary to make the group successful. He cited the Georgia retiree group as a group that has wanted to keep people with like interests together and recommended that APHIS managers facilitate and host the retirees as a group wanting to assist APHIS.

Retiree George Winegar advised that VS retirees met socially with Michigan Animal Health employees last summer. He thought the AAO could develop a list of retirees interested in participating in activities where needed and provide that list to the area veterinarian in charge.



# Retirements

*This list includes the names of employees who retired between August 3 and December 30, 1995. Dru Dukart of the Field Servicing Office retrieves this information from the National Finance Center.*

## **Animal Damage Control**

Edward Hill, Lakewood, CO  
Bobby Hughey, Santa Cruz, NM  
Harlen McCoy, Milan, NM  
Thomas Nicholls, Lakewood, CO  
Virginia Olund, St. Paul, MN  
William Rightmire, Casper, WY  
Charlotte Sinor, Phoenix, AZ  
Larry Tangen, Lisbon, ND  
Ralph Wetzstein, Bismarck, ND

## **International Services**

Pat Cordero, Jr., Tuxtla Guterrez, Mexico  
Joseph Karpati, Rome, Italy  
Louise Mahaney, Riverdale, MD

## **Management and Budget**

Doris Palusky, Riverdale, MD  
Eugene Skinner, Riverdale, MD  
Charlotte Travieso, Riverdale, MD

## **Plant Protection and Quarantine**

Gilbert Davila, Tucson, AZ  
James Eddy, Los Angeles, CA  
Eddie Elder, Riverdale, MD  
Elizabeth Evans, Little Rock, AR  
Wayne Fontenelle, Seattle, WA  
Charles Guettler, San Antonio, TX  
Billy Hanson, San Angelo, TX

Leonardine Hodon, Austin, TX  
George Mosley, Windsor Locks, CT  
Richard Remsburg, Dover, DE  
Joyce Staggs, Memphis, TN  
Fernando Villa, Miami, FL  
Barbara Worrell, Goldsboro, NC

## **Regulatory Enforcement and Animal Care**

Thomas Callahan, Willard, NM  
Johnny Jennings, Caney, OK  
Theodore Johansen, Sacramento, CA  
Joseph Johnston, Rolla, MO  
Jimmy McFarland, Terry, MS  
Ruth Palmer, Riverdale, MD

## **Veterinary Services**

Robert Armbrustmacher, Weidman, MI  
Mary Beckman, Ames, IA  
John Blackwell, Riverdale, MD  
Marilyn Bray, Springfield, IL  
Malcolm Bostwick, Zachary, LA  
Kathryn Carey, Riverdale, MD  
Bobbie Chancellor, Collinsville, MS  
Russell Darr, Jr., San Juan, PR  
Lois Dittmar, Berne, NY  
Ruth Drummond, Pinkerington, OH  
Betty Fickel, Austin, TX  
Eileen Gilliland, Sacramento, CA  
Frank Howland, Sterling, CO  
Ismael Jirau, Utuado, PR  
Shirley Johnson, Austin, TX  
Joyce Miller, Arlington, TX  
Norman Moore, Ames, IA  
Shelby Moore, Columbia, SC

Arthur Nichols, Orient Point, NY  
Jack Oak, Baton Rouge, LA  
Lee Patch, Englewood, CO  
Peggy Peters, Salem, OR  
Angel Ramos, Riverdale, MD  
Edward Sheehan, Bozeman, MT  
Glen Smith, Cedar Creek, TX  
Norman Stephan, Tampa, FL  
Gerald Toms, Albany, NY

## **Deaths**

*This list includes the names of employees who died between August 3 and December 30, 1995.*

## **Animal Damage Control**

Earl Jones, Montezuma, New Mexico  
Jerry Roberts, Englewood, Colorado

## **Management and Budget**

Terrill Lunsford, Jr., Washington, DC

## **Plant Protection and Quarantine**

Robert Trumbull, Miami, FL

## **Veterinary Services**

Timothy Thomas, Jr., Key West, FL

Retiree Frank Mulhern suggested that AAO contact the APHIS management team and the regional directors of the units to assess their commitment to the idea of supporting AAO. After the meeting, Mulhern contacted the AMT and arranged for AAO officers to meet with the AMT for a strategy planning session on March 14.

Retiree Claudette Hoover thought that APHIS could bring retirees in as collaborators without compensation. This would give them access to Federal buildings and avoid any restrictions on volunteer work. ADC's Gary Simmons

mentioned a personnel action that places volunteers in official nonpay status. Alumni with this status could have ID's and permits, and could be paid for travel.

## **AAO Candidate Slate**

Mulhern thought that it would be best to have the AAO president be a resident of the Washington, DC, area, so AAO could interface with APHIS management at the highest level.

Nominees were as follows: President, Harry Mussman; Vice President, Frank Mulhern; Treasurer, Rosemary Stanko; Executive

Secretary, John Kennedy; At Large Representative, Scot Campbell.

At the March 6 meeting of the AAO, this slate of nominees was elected. The next meeting of the group will be April 3 at 1 p.m. in Riverdale.

Tim Blackburn, Acting as the AMT representative for Sharon Coursey, briefed AAO on the series of vision launch workshops (see the two articles in this issue) and invited AAO members to attend either in Riverdale or at sites around the country (see page 12). ♦

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