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Time is on their side

By Donna Micklus

They sure didn't look old enough!

But on January 10, more than 100 DAS employees celebrated ten, fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five years in state government, many of them with DAS for their entire careers.

"This may not be the most glamorous agency in government...our jobs are not the kind of jobs that get our names in the paper...but always remember that what you do is really important," said Commissioner Barbara Waters in her opening remarks before a packed room.

Waters, herself a 28-year veteran in state service, is known for always proclaiming that "DAS is the best."



Two generations of Gores, Jane and son Larry, are honored at the Longevity Awards ceremony.

"The fact that so many of you are still here proves that this is the best agency in government."

How did some of the honorees react to their career milestones?

Jane Gore, a 25-year veteran, echoed Waters' words. "It seems like just yesterday that I started, and while there have been lots of changes at DAS, we still have the best people."

A mechanic in Fleet for 20 years, Jon Hykes said his knees and ankles are beginning to feel the effects of working on a concrete floor for so long. "But I'd go for 30 years if I could think of a way to get off it!"



Nereida Lopez and Alex Caceres enjoy a continental breakfast and a chat with Roy Dion.

Please see Awards on pg. 2

Awards, *cont. from p. 1*

Above, below L and R: employees visit with colleagues following the awards presentation.

When asked how it felt to celebrate twenty-five years in Collections, John Kearney said the time really went fast. "I started out as a young buck, and now I'm a middle-aged buck."

Human Resources' Lisa Chasse had similar thoughts, saying, "I was just a kid when I started."

Bill Rubecka started his career in the mailroom. He was asked if the time went by quickly, and he pen-

sively answered, "some days yes and some no."

Sue Miller, who marked her fifteenth year in MIS, had only six words to say when told she didn't look old enough. "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Perhaps the only disappointed participant of the day was Deputy Commissioner Alan Mazzola when he was told time didn't permit him to deliver his 90-minute prepared remarks. Mazzola also asked for a recount of his twenty five years.

Ten and fifteen-year honorees received framed certificates, twenty-year honorees were presented with engraved nameplates, and twenty-five-year honorees received engraved Seiko clocks.

"I often compare DAS to the boiler room on the QE II," said Waters.

"We're not glamorous, and no one knows we're there until we break down...but we *don't* break down."

Waters closed the ceremony saying, "as you leave here today, you all should be very proud, and feel really, really good about what you do."

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Executive Director Larry Alibozek of the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) thanked **Jim McKenna** for his presentation to help BESB staff move toward the paperless process and also thanked **Jerry Lynn** and **Don Chaffee** for their expertise. “You have a team to be proud of.”

Gil Carvalho from Wyndham Corporate Interiors, LLC applauded **J. Carlos Velez** and the **Business CONNections Staff** for their outstanding service and said, “I salute you and your staff for an extraordinary job well done, from your newest set-aside vendor and biggest fan.”

Albert LaFleur from the Young Marines of Quinebaug Valley commended **Doug DiPersio** for frequently fulfilling their organization’s needs. “Thank you for your continued support and for becoming an important part of our organization.”

Regional Administrator Ron DeLuca from the Eastern Region of the Department of Social Services applauded **Pam Libby, Lionel Corbin**, and the **HR Examination Staff** for enabling them to complete their selection process for a position without delays. “Thanks for a job well done.”

Charlie Duffy from Robinson & Cole commended **J. Carlos Velez** for his “very quick and extremely helpful response for information with the set-aside program” and for taking the time to help him through the DAS website.

Marianne Rosa Guay from the Governor’s Career Internship Program thanked **Phil Karas** for his role in helping to employ a high school student as a seasonal worker with the Department of Environmental Protection and said, “You have provided him with an opportunity for future experiences and growth.”

Diane Donato expressed her appreciation to **Commissioner Barbara Waters, Patsy McLaughlin, Phil Karas, J. Carlos Velez, Suzanne Liquerman, Joann McAllister, Cheryl Sawina, Cheryl Catania, David Krayeski, Sandra Sharr, Laura Breux, Natalie Shipman, Cathy Daly, John McKay, Kenn Stephenson, Doris Vieira, Donna Micklus, Pamela Libby, Andrea Keilty, Martin Anderson, Cathy Bysiewicz-Cluen, Janis Nome, Isabelle McKinney, Mary Stubbs, Roy Dion**, and **Jim Passier** “for your contributions and assistance in helping put together this year’s DAS Affirmative Action Plan. Many thanks to you all.”

Kudos to **Lina Simonu** from Susan Pawloski-Burke for the Core-CT Project meeting she conducted. “Lina ran the meeting in a most excellent manner—very informative and truly one of the most productive sessions I have been to in years!”

Burnette Donato from the Workers’ Compensation Commission thanked **Paul Greco** for straightening out their dilemma with a purchase order and said, “It is good to know you are there looking out for the well-being of the state.”

Henry Jovanelly praised **Dick Omohundro** for putting together an application that reformats outpatient services received from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and said, “This allowed us to pump eight months of service information into the legacy outpatient system in minutes.”

Toni Alphonse and the APS Team praised **Dan Donahue** for his diligent response to their heating problems on the 5th floor. “He is a good person to have as part of the DAS team.”

Director of Food Services Chris Mancini from Avon Public Schools

Hats Off

By Cindy Duberek

thanked **Tony Ferreira** for all of his assistance and guidance with the inspection of his district and said, “Tony took the time needed to answer my questions and make sure I was comfortable with the program.”

John Baker from the Department of Labor commended **Teresa Dupont** for returning his call so quickly and walking him through the login process with Orderlink. “Excellent customer service,” he said.

Martin Anderson congratulated **Diane Mazar-Roberts** for receiving designation as an International Personnel Management Association Certified Professional. “This is a wonderful accomplishment. You’re our first!”

Jeanne Berube from the CT Society of Governmental Accountants thanked **Jim Passier** and **Kerry DiMatteo** for speaking at their 52nd Annual Seminar and for providing timely information on the current initiatives being offered through state purchasing.

Please see Kudos, p.4

SLC, FSC participate in Baldrige assessment

By Heather Cavanaugh

You may have heard the term “Malcolm Baldrige” recently at DAS, but aren’t sure what exactly it is.

First of all, it’s a tool.

The Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Excellence is an evaluation of an organization’s performance against a defined set of standards. It assesses the organization: its leadership, processes, values, management, customer and employee focus, and business results.

It is not an assessment of employee performance. Staff are

interviewed to learn about respective work areas and how to improve them.

“We rewrote the questions to make them easier to understand,” said SLC Director Cathy Daly.

In doing so, Daly explained, the criteria was a bit more tailored to DAS.

To roll the program out, DAS employees underwent training to become “evaluators” to conduct a self-assessment of each business center.

Assessments began in SLC and recently wrapped up in FSC.

“After evaluating our business center, we interviewed several employees in FSC about things like leadership, human resources, and results,” said Amy Torre of SLC.

“Employees helped us by providing documentation to aide in our

findings.”

The findings of both business centers reflected similarities, and overall, DAS scored well against the Baldrige criteria.

One of the outcomes will be a plan to improve how well DAS’ efforts involve all employees in all the planning and processes of the agency.

Communication and sharing knowledge were important topics for employees who were assessed.

Communication and sharing knowledge were important topics for employees who were assessed.

“We will be expanding in the next go-around to

include infosessions at remote locations to explain more about the process,” said Daly.

Ultimately, every business center will be reviewed. Evaluations in Business Enterprises will begin toward the end of January.

Kudos, *cont. from p. 3*

Congratulations from Peter Kerensky to **Dick Omohundro** for successfully designing a new Federal Nutrition Service file for the DAS Business Office.

Commissioner Barbara Waters thanked **Mike Owsianko, Natalie Shipman, Laura Breux, Martha Gallagher, and Pamela Young** for organizing and conducting the Department of Children and Families Gift Certificate Tag Sale. “As always, you were there to help.”

Tom Caneschi from Fleet Operations praised **Mike Owsianko** for quickly responding to his monthly attendance report problem. “Mike, you are a credit to DAS!”

As a recent graduate of the Medical Response Technician class, Jeanne Gray thanked **John Wilkerson** for his continued enthusiasm, commitment, and ongoing dedication and instruction involved in making the medical response program a success.

Jerry Lynn commended **Janet Knopf** for her work in putting together a computer-based check-logging database and said, “Thank you for listening to our security concerns and for your efforts to work on this for us. You’re awesome!”

Linda LoSchiavo received praise from Senior Vice President Gary Wnek of Wolf ColorPrint for working with their company on an

adjusted purchase order price. “It was refreshing to be able to work with someone honestly and have it turn out favorable for both.”

Jerry Lynn applauded **Tracie Knapsack** and **Arlene Watson** for taking care of the additional A & R retroactive adjustments again. “As a result of your efforts, our customers will see their retroactive payments show up on time in their paychecks.”

Cheryl Sawina commended the **Communications Office** for December’s special holiday issue of the *DAS Times*. “Great job you guys. We are enjoying it immensely!”

Bill Gills, musical mariner

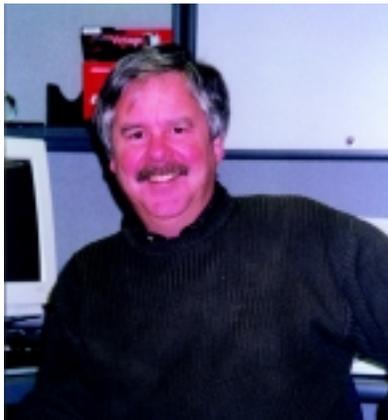
By John McKay

He's one of the original members of DAS. Human Resources' Bill Gills has been with DAS since its inception in 1976.

That may seem like a long time, but not in comparison to his lifelong love of music and boating.

Gills has been through the whole spectrum of boating. From rowboats and motorboats as a kid and fishing with his dad, to powerboats and sailboats with his children, he's enjoyed just about every phase of boating imaginable.

Of course not every story is smooth sailing.



Bill Gills

"And to have your motorboat towed into port by a sailboat is really humiliating. I don't like to talk about it," he joked.

Gills and his wife have their latest boat, *Up to the Gills*, docked in Mystic. He said

that they have only just begun to enjoy it this past summer.

"My wife and I are entering a different phase of our life now," said Gills.

"Our kids are getting older and no longer live at home so the empty nest feeling is beginning to take form with us. So now we're going to expand our boating expertise by taking longer trips maybe over to Newport, Block Island, Long Island ports, or three-day trips to Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket."

With this empty nest feeling approaching, Gills says he's excited to be able to dedicate more time to his other passion, music.

As with the boats, music has been with Gills since an early age. He first picked up a guitar when he was eight years old.

"With the kids around I had to take about a 20-year hiatus from my music, but about a year ago I started to get back into it."

As well he should. Gills has an almost ready for prime-time recording studio in his home with just about every instrument imaginable from drums and horns to guitars and keyboards.

And he's not keyed to only one kind of music. He was in a folk group in his early years, a jazz band, and a southern rock group that used to play at the likes of the old Rocking Horse on Maple Avenue.

"I really appreciate all kinds of music from classical, to hard rock and blues, to other contemporary groups like the Dave Mathews Band."

Gills said that his true passion is writing music.

"I can write it, just don't ask me to put lyrics to it," said Gills.

"I've got a buddy who can do the lyrics so we make a pretty good team."

Music has come full circle for Gills. Both his nephew and his daughter's boyfriend have shown



"Up to the Gills" is docked in Mystic.

an interest in music and have used his studio for practice. "It's great to hear them rehearse and see them develop their skills and hopefully gain the same kind of appreciation for music that I have."

Up Close

"We were caught dead in the water one time with no wind in our sails," recalls Gills. "Things were fine, and we were just waiting for the wind to pick up, when we noticed the New London ferry bearing down on us. The ferry couldn't make the adjustment to go around us so we went around it, paddling frantically with our centerboard and rudder. We cleared the bow by about ten feet, but we were almost sucked under by a massive wall of water and swirling currents."

There was also the forgettable scene of his motorboat being towed into dock by a sailboat.

"There's sort of this unwritten competition between sailboats and powerboats," explained Gills.

The fine print is easy to read on this contract. The new printing contract is a victory for DAS, its customers, small business, and printing vendors.

"It's the only contract like this," said Linda LoSchiavo, printing contract specialist. She said the

Victories Procurement

By Heather Cavanaugh

printing contract is a multi-vendor contract. Every quarter, new qualified vendors are allowed to get on board as they realize the

contract is up and running.

There are currently 28 vendors on the contract and the next quarterly update will be on February 1.

"We are really encouraging small businesses to get on the contract," said LoSchiavo.

Right now the contract is 50 percent small business. Small businesses can choose the county they want to cover, whereas larger companies must be able to accommodate customers statewide.

Not only does this help agencies and municipalities to meet their Set-Aside goals, it enables customers to deal with vendors exclusively in their county.

The contract covers all print jobs

from \$10,000 to \$50,000 and all various kinds of printing, such as newsletters, brochures, pamphlets, booklets, folders, calendars, and annual reports. When vendors submit a bid, they must also submit an equipment list and samples so customers know the company's capabilities. They can also visit the vendor to see proofs or do a press check.

"Agencies save time because they no longer have to fill out an SP-10," said LoSchiavo. All customers have to do is get three quotes on their respective print job. The new process also saves time for Procurement staff.

The contract award number is RFP001-A-15-0647-C, and it is posted on the DAS website at (www.das.state.ct.us/busopp.asp).

DAS in advocacy role

By John McKay

The Connecticut Business Leadership Network (CTBLN) is a partnership sponsored by the President's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities.

As members of the Board of Directors, DAS employees Suzanne Liquerman and Kathleen Sullivan are dedicated to equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

"It's a seamless transition from what I do here at DAS to the goals CTBLN has set," said Sullivan, who is also the secretary of the Board.

United Technologies has taken on the role of the lead company. Other members range from state agencies (DOL, DAS, BESB) to large corporations (Pfizer, Aetna, SNET) and various other employers, large and small.

DAS has been instrumental in organizing and heading up the

CTBLN programs and initiatives.

The CTBLN is an employer-driven association that:

- Assists employers in adopting proactive strategies to employ and retain individuals with disabilities
- Identifies and promotes "Best Practices" in the employment of people with disabilities
- Provides employers with relevant information and technical support
- Works in concert with other key disability and business organizations to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities

"I also think it's a great relationship between private and public organizations," Sullivan added.

"We're allowed to share ideas and discuss mutual barriers to hiring people with disabilities. Sometimes this discussion leads to a lot of cooperation and camaraderie. It's a great step in the right direction," she added.

Now why didn't I think of that?

Employees with creaky joints should thank FSC's Laurence Goulart.

He submitted an idea to the DAS Suggestion Box that some file cabinets be replaced to be more accommodating to employees. In order to reach lower drawers in the old file cabinets, employees would frequently be seen on their hands and knees, or sitting on the floor in search of information.

Thanks to Goulart, the problem is being rectified. At press time, new file cabinets are en route so that employees no longer have to hit the floor and hunch over the cabinet drawers to seek out files.

Have a suggestion? Send it to the DAS Suggestion Box on DAS Central. It's a great way to have your voice heard!

Visit their new website at www.ctdol.state.ct.us/ctbln/default.html

Around and about DAS

“Green” DAS

The Environmental Protection Agency recently issued a report: “State and Local Government Pioneers: How State and Local Governments Are Implementing Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Practices.” The report mentions Connecticut as one of the states working steadfastly on “green” purchasing. Connecticut was specifically recognized in areas of EPP Legislation, Best Value Purchasing, Training and Education, IPM, and CNG and Hybrid Vehicles.



and Laurie delivered the table to the thrilled recipients, who look forward to air hockey tournaments. They were also able to donate \$45 in cash for a pizza party. Great job!



New sponsor for First Responders

With the State Office Building’s (SOB) First Responder Program in place, certain building employees are trained to handle a number of emergencies like choking, administering CPR, and rescue breathing. But what if the First Responder’s or Medical Response Technician’s training isn’t enough? Who do they call and who will advise them?

John Dempsey Hospital at the University of Connecticut Health Center has signed an agreement to be the medical sponsor for emergency situations for the First Responders at the SOB.

“First Responders will have direct access to physicians at John Dempsey,” said DAS’ John Wilkerson, organizer of the First Responder Program. “The hospital has a system in place to handle these types of emergencies, and First Responders will have access to a doctor’s advice in just a few seconds.”

Wilkerson said that the sponsorship would give First Responders an excellent medical resource that goes beyond their training in case of an emergency. In addition, they will provide emergency protocols, as well as feedback and recommendations for improvements by reviewing the documentation of each incident.

The North Central EMS Council, which approved the union of the SOB and John Dempsey Hospital, was impressed with how far the program had come, and requested that it serve as a role model for other agencies and other states.

“This is just another example of how forward-thinking we are here at DAS about the health, safety, and well-being of our employees,” said Commissioner Barbara Waters. “This isn’t the first time we’ve been asked to take the lead on a program, and I’m sure it won’t be the last.”



Food Drive a big success



Yet again, state employees came through for Foodshare of Greater Hartford. The combined effort raised over \$19,000, almost 23,000 pounds of food to be delivered to families across the state. DAS alone collected 410 pounds of food and

\$237.35 for a grand total of 2,069 pounds! Thanks to all who helped.

Lunch and Learn sessions

SLC’s John Wilkerson has put together an excellent series of Lunch and Learn programs as part of DAS’ ongoing commitment to employee health and well-being. Further information will be forthcoming as the dates are finalized. The February 14 session is scheduled for the 5th floor North Mechanical Room.



- Feb 14** *How to Maintain a Healthy Heart*
- March** *Breast Cancer: Every Woman’s Concern*
- April** *Preventing and Detecting Diabetes*
- May** *Ticked-Off About Lyme Disease*
- June** *Alzheimer’s Disease: Warning Signs You Should Know and What to Do*
- September** *Prostate Cancer: Let’s Talk*
- October** *Beyond the Blues: Recognizing Depression*

Procurement Philanthropy

Laurie Melesko of Procurement, along with the help of colleague Jim Gotta, coordinated an effort in Procurement Services to collect money to buy a Sports Craft Hockey Game air hockey table for DCF children. Jim

And what a Holiday Party



it was!



**But just wait
'til next year..**