



Governor Announces Decrease in State Vehicles

By Donna Micklus

Standing before a field of vehicles turned in by state agencies, Governor M. Jodi Rell announced that the state fleet has been reduced by more than 100 cars, vans and trucks over the past four months.

The Governor said this initial decrease would save the state \$41,000 a month.

Governor Rell made the announcement at a February 17 news conference behind the DAS Surplus Facility in Wethersfield.

Both the Governor and Deputy Commissioner Martin Anderson explained that the decrease is part of the effort to reduce overall travel-related expenses by 10 percent.

"This is an encouraging start, and efforts are well under way to trim the fleet by an additional 20 percent to comply with my Executive Order 22 to further curb spending," the Governor said.

The Executive Order gives DAS final authority over buying and maintaining all state vehicles, except for specialized vehicles needed by the Department of Transportation.

The vehicles in the lot were turned in by 27 state agencies; some vehicles will be sold at public auction, while others will be replacing older, higher-mileage vehicles currently in the fleet.

Anderson said that since October, 460 surplus vehicles have been auctioned off for a total of \$936,000, which is returned to the state's General Fund.

The Governor's order could also rescind an employee's state car privileges if he or she is the subject of two or more complaints or moving violations.

"I will not tolerate unsafe driving habits from anyone behind the wheel of a state vehicle," the Governor stated.

When asked, Anderson said that no employee, to date, has lost driving privileges, but that "a case or two" could result in operating bans.



Governor M. Jodi Rell and Deputy Commissioner Martin Anderson at the February Fleet event

The Governor commended DAS and agencies for their efforts to help develop a smaller, but more efficient fleet.

"I am encouraged by what I see today. It is a great start, but we still have a long way to go. We are all in this together, and we must dedicate ourselves to building a leaner, smarter state government," Governor Rell concluded.

Celebrating Black Heritage Month



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BLACK HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION OPENS WITH THE PRELUDE IN ACOUSTIC CAFE 165

By John McKay

The State Office Building (SOB) cafeteria was temporarily transformed into an intimate nightclub where employees could enjoy the fluid fingers and immense talent of some of the buildings most artistic employees.

With the plan of having an event every Friday in February to celebrate Black Heritage Month, the SOB Black Heritage Committee invited Gift Shop proprietor Joe Neary to perform a little jazz, and DPW's Mary Taylor, a little blues gone gospel.

Neary started with some instrumentals that had everyone movin' to the melody as he manipulated his saxophone, flowing easily though a range of notes and styles. Not just an instrumentalist, Neary then sang "Somewhere Beyond the Sea", made popular by Bobby Darin, a number called "Susan" in honor of his wife, along with another original called "Buy a Loaf of Bread."

DPW's Mary Taylor then took the mic and sang a string of tunes she called her own version of "Blues Gone Gospel" with hymns that have been infused with electric guitar licks and an upbeat tempo.

"If anyone is feeling it and wants to get up and move, go right ahead," said Taylor to the crowd. "I've got to move when I feel the music." The crowd got into the mood and clapped to the beat throughout her entire performance.



Taylor has two CD's and her own website with reviews from Hartford to as far away as Paris.

"She's Got It ... Her voice has real presence and she expands energy in a controlled, knowing fashion that many a better-known singer couldn't hope to achieve," according to *Downbeat Magazine*.

"And rising above it all, the clear but gritty voice of Mary Taylor took it to another level," wrote *The Advocate*.



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M. Jodi Reil Governor

Brenda L. Sisco Commissioner

Donna J. Mickus Editor

Complete coverage and photos of events beginning on page 4

Commissioner Brenda Sisco thanked all of the **Procurement Staff** “for your diligence and efforts in reviewing state contracts as requested by Governor Rell. I know this has been a very time consuming process but all of you have done a tremendous job in putting the information together and recommending strategies that make sense under each contract. I truly believe this is a worthwhile effort that will help Connecticut become more effective and efficient. I can’t tell you enough how appreciative I am of all of your efforts.”

DEMHS Commissioner James M. Thomas applauded **Pamela Anderson** “for her work on the Port Security Grant Program. Her in-depth knowledge of the RFP contractual work

hats off

By Cindy Rusczyk

was invaluable, as the scope of work was new to all involved and difficult to construct. It was through her hard work and dedication that the overall development of the RFP for the consultant work was completed in such a timely manner. We would like to thank Ms. Anderson and DAS for their assistance in helping the State of Connecticut to further strengthen risk mitigation within the Port Security Grant Program.”

Commissioner Sisco sent the following message to **Pamela Anderson**: “Commissioner Thomas, as you know, sent a very nice letter thanking you for all of your work on their Port Security Grant Program. Thanks for always representing DAS well - it’s great to get letters such as this from agencies we’ve assisted. You’ve always been thorough, knowledgeable and quick to respond to any questions. Great job!”

Chairperson Barbara Rubin from the CT Health and Educational Fa-

cilities Authority commended **Patsy McLaughlin** for “the tremendous help she provided with our search for a new Executive Director. She gave us insightful guidance and managed the entire process. She handled the advertising, reviewed the resumes, developed a target list for us to review and interview, and managed the mechanics of the interview process. We could not have asked for a more responsive individual!”

Commissioner Sisco applauded **Patsy McLaughlin** “for all of your assistance with CHEFA during their recent search for an Executive Director. Martin and I knew that when Barbara first approached us for advice that you were the person we would ask to help her. As always, you did not disappoint – your expertise and guidance provided them with valuable information to move forward – something they admittedly could not have accomplished on their own. It’s hard working, responsive and conscientious people like you who make DAS the top notch agency that it is!”

Vice President Daniel R. Neagle from Lawrence Brunoli, Inc., wrote to Carlos Velez about “the excellent service I received from **Peter Hunter and Lynn Peccerillo** while renewing my Prequalification Application. Although my past experiences with them were fantastic, when it came time for us to renew I was concerned given that the online registration process had changed. I should have known better. Peter and Lynn continued to provide the same level of outstanding service that I have become accustomed to receiving from them. They are accessible, knowledgeable, and accommodating. They represent the State, DAS and your program well, and you all deserve recognition.”

“Many thanks” from the Governor’s Communications Office to **Donna Micklus, Frank Sanzo, Jim Palmer, John McKay, Cindy Rusczyk, Jim**

Potyra and Kevin Backman “for the set-up and execution of today’s Fleet press conference with Governor Rell.”

City of Norwalk Purchasing Agent Gerald Foley thanked **Pamela Anderson** “for responding to an inquiry in such a timely manner. I was trying to save you some time and respond to the inquiry directly with contract award info for EAP services. However, I wasn’t quick enough. In these hectic times it is unusual to get such an immediate response. Keep up the splendid job you’re doing!”

Kathleen Anderson commended **Mike Owsianko** “for the fantastic job presenting the Core-10 Agency training. Not only did the attendees comment favorably, but also Core-CT Training Manager Tom Vaughan made it a point to let me know you did an exceptional job. Thank you for your continued efforts in the Core-10 arena! Keep up the good work!”

Patsy McLaughlin sent the following message to **Donna Micklus**: “Donna, you, **John McKay, Nina Ritson** and **Cindy Rusczyk** deserve kudos for the January *DAS Times*. It was jam-packed with valuable information, up-to-date changes, and all the other tidbits that make the *DAS Times* a ‘must read’ every month. It was evident that a lot of hard work went into this edition. Well done!!”

Jim Gotta sent a message to Carol Wilson to “thank **Tony DeLuca** for how well he represented DAS at yesterday’s NASPO conference call.”

Donna Micklus relayed words of praise to **Aimee Cunningham**: “My husband was at the NAHRO luncheon last week and sat with some people who knew that I worked at DAS. He proceeded to tell me how they spoke of you in glowing terms and that you are highly regarded among the members of that organization. A totally unsolicited compliment that I wanted to share with you!”

Black Heritage Month: Celebration, Education and Inspiration

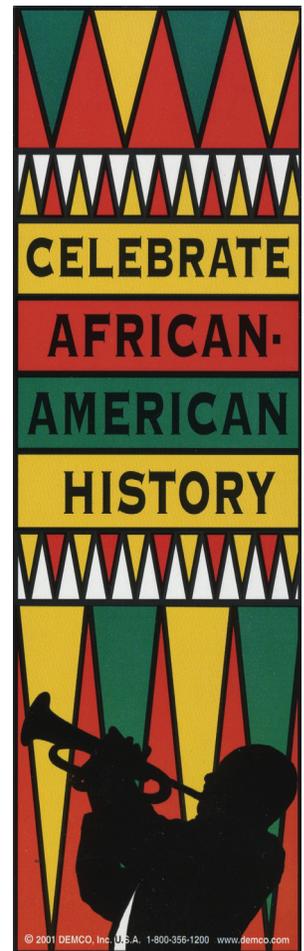
By John McKay & Donna Micklus

The State Office Building celebrated its 8th annual Black Heritage Month in February with song, dance, food and, most of all, plenty of inspiration.

Commissioner Brenda Sisco opened the program with a proclamation from Governor M. Jodi Rell marking February officially as Black Heritage Month. Sisco also thanked the committee members and volunteers for their efforts to enhance the awareness and understanding of the African-American culture.

One annual theme of the event is the unveiling of the U.S. Post Office's Black Heritage commemorative stamp. This year's honoree was Anna Julia Cooper, an educator, scholar, feminist and activist who gave voice to the African-American community during the 19th and 20th century, spanning the Civil War to the dawn of the modern civil rights movement. Cooper's life is one that exemplifies an individual's commitment to social change; her work is evidence of the tremendous energy demanded of those wanting to create social and educational opportunities in the black community during the tumultuous period in which she lived. She was called a true champion of her students, always challenging them to "Finding and Fulfilling Life's Purpose."

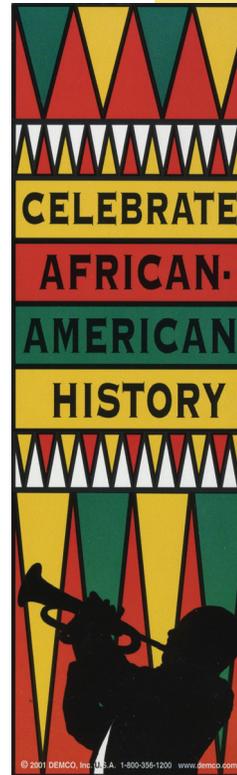
Other commissioners in the building also spoke on Cooper's





many achievements, noting her drive to become an educated black woman and her unrelenting passion for learning. Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan saw her as a role model in the pursuit of education and noted her contributions and achievements

in evolving education to include people of all races. “In researching her life, it makes you understand why education is so important to our democracy,” said McQuillan.



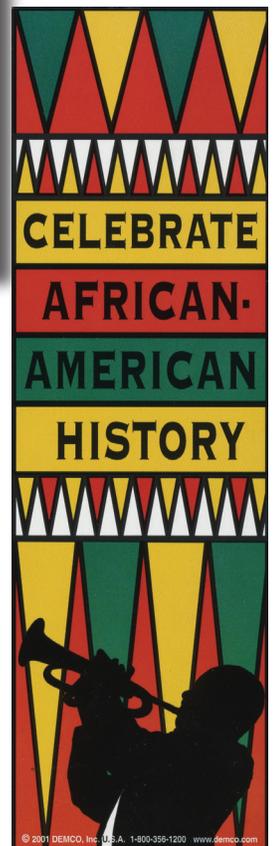
Consumer Protection’s deLinda Brown-Jagne narrated a creative piece entitled “Perhaps Someday,” giving an overview of Ann Julia Cooper’s life while intertwining historic African-American people and events such as Martin Luther King and the election of President Barack Obama. She closed

her poem stating, “Perhaps someday race will be irrelevant – perhaps someday.”

Keynote speaker Charlene Russell-Tucker, an educator from the State Department of Education gave an inspiring and moving speech that echoed Ann Julia Cooper’s life long mantra, “Have you found your talent – your strength – your true passion? Or do you wake up in the morning and say – “I’m exhausted, I

am frustrated, I am bored – then stop yourself when you hear these words. In 1967 Martin Luther King said, 'life's blueprint is to set out to do such a good job – whatever the job is you are doing – that the living, the dead and the unborn cannot do this better.' Even if your job is sweeping streets...be the best street sweeper there is. This is a call – move out of your rut. Engage in work that taps into your talent. Therein lies your voice – your calling – life's purpose. Find your voice and make a difference in this world!"

A visit to Room 126 saw it transformed into a market place by vendors of African attire from Gambia and West Africa and African-themed jewelry and accessories. One attendant commented on the incredibly vibrant colors and exclaimed over the unique feel of the design and craftsmanship of the jewelry.



Health awareness is always an important part of the event, and this year there were several informational forums on Sickle Cell, the National Kidney Foundation and Hartford Hospital's Cancer Program: Breast and Prostate Cancer.



But it was the entertainment portion of the program that really brought the house down! The dance troupe Dance-Like-David gave an artistic and energy-filled performance; from interpretive dance to a "Let's Get Happy" church dance, the company moved in synchronized coordination with the music that had the audience clapping, toe-tapping, and jumping to their feet with an enthusiastic standing ovation at the completion of the performance



A huge thank you to Committee members: Chair, Nathaniel Jenkins, Laura Guilmartin, Glenda Rollins, Tara Talbert, Rosemary Woods, Rita Rose, Johnette Tolliver, Quincy Cole, Juliet Colebrook and John McKay



The troupe's movements were perhaps reminiscent of a quote by Anna Julia Cooper herself when she said, "I constantly felt, as I suppose many an ambitious girl has felt, a thumping from within unanswered by any beckoning from without."



As Commissioner Sisco said, "This wonderful event is as much about inspiration as it is about education and celebration."

