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Fleet retools for the future

By Mike Mansfield

Demonstrating a commitment to further increase its customer service capabilities, DAS Fleet Operations has completed a number of improvements to its facilities and equipment.

On March 10, Commissioner Barbara Waters announced that Fleet will officially consolidate its Seymour garage into its newly renovated facility in New Haven. The move is expected to take place in April.

Renovations and expansion at the New Haven garage have greatly increased Fleet's capacity to provide quality service to all users of state-issued vehicles.

The expansion has added several bays to the garage, and includes vast improvements in office space, rest rooms, and customer waiting areas.

All Seymour personnel are being reassigned to either New Haven or to other Fleet facilities in

need of increased staffing.

"This combination will be an improvement on every level," said Waters.

Wethersfield Garage...Before



"The larger workforce at a single location means more people to provide backup and get cars back on the road

quicker. Plus, we can enhance and centralize our equipment, parts access, and information systems, and create a greater opportunity for mechanics to share expertise."

Renovations at New Haven are well under way, and are expected to be completed by

... And after !



Commissioner Waters with Fleet staff in the much improved Wethersfield Garage.

See Fleet, page 2

New vendor for state drug testing

By John McKay

Testing. Testing. One, two, three.

Approximately 40 personnel agents from various state agencies gathered on March 4 to meet Connecticut's new drug testing vendor, The Newport Alliance Group. HRBC's Strategic Planning Unit oversees the management of the contract.

Cheryl Welton, who has worked on the administration of the contract since October, said, "With a new vendor comes new ques-



Don't blow it! HRBC's Cheryl Welton breathes into the alcohol breathalyzer to demonstrate its effectiveness.

tions. I wanted to get everyone involved together so they could listen to the vendors' presentations, meet the account managers, and ask questions."

The meeting included presentations from Richard Radebach on the different methods, procedures, and types of drug and alcohol testing. Dr. Susan Green, the medical review officer, covered the mechanics of the tests themselves. Both are from The Newport Alliance Group. Also, Larry Tauro from the Department of Transportation, and Jim Vincent from The Lexington Group spoke about the Employee Assistance Program and the Substance Abuse Professional roles as part of the drug and alcohol testing process.

Tracey Butler from the Department of Correction, who is managing her agency's transition to the new vendor, had some concerns.

"I must admit, when I first heard of the change I was very concerned. We were worried about how different and how difficult the transition would be. Now after listening to their presentations and asking questions, I'm feeling much more comfortable about the whole thing and my worries have faded," Butler said.

Fleet retools, cont. from page 1

the end of April.

In addition to the structural changes, the facility is being painted, will be outfitted with a new exhaust system and new windows, and will feature amenities such as automatic garage door openers.

The improvements to the New Haven facility mark another milestone in DAS' continuing efforts to enhance Fleet Operations and improve customer service.

The original plan for this consolidation stemmed from a study by an independent consultant, which suggested that combining the materials, tooling, personnel, and resources of those facilities into one building was preferable to running two garages so geographically close to each other and investing in necessary upgrades to the smaller, older garage in Seymour.

Improvements aren't limited to the southwestern corner of the state. A fresh cover of light gray paint has turned the less-than-sparkling ceilings, rafters, and lime green walls of the Wethersfield garage into a bright, airy space that almost looks too neat to roll a car into.

Personnel there have commented that the room seems much brighter, thanks to the favorable reflection the nearly white walls create. One was overheard joking that it looked *too* nice - more like a scientific laboratory than a garage.

"I think it's great that the agency is spending money on refurbishing our facilities. It shows a commitment by the administration to keep Fleet Operations as an integral part of the organization. I'm confident that the combined forces at the New Haven garage will be able to provide efficient and quality service to all state vehicles in the southwestern part of the state," said Fleet Operations Director Steve Dygus.

Business Enterprises Manager Roy Dion said that improvements to all state garages will continue.



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Congratulations to **Commissioner Barbara Waters** from Valeria Caldwell-Gaines, deputy director from CHRO, for producing a “classy annual report! Also, substantively, very interesting and informative.”

“Thanks for going the extra mile” go to **Chris Smith** from Kathy Valone “for taking time from your holiday weekend to check on the telephone call accounting system.”

Arlene M. Vogel, program director of the Connecticut Procurement Technical Assistance Program, applauded the **Procurement staff** “for their modern, simplified methods, and the welcome openness, friendliness, and professionalism of the department toward the vendor community.”

Commissioner Barbara Waters was commended by Raymond Ponzillo from the Department of Administration from the state of West Virginia “for all your hard work and dedication to the state of Connecticut. All one has to do is read your annual report to see that your hard work paid off.”

Dorothy Shiff, executive director from the Colchester Housing Authority, was elated with **Bernie Blumenthal** for “his devotion to the success of the Master Insurance Program as his professionalism has surpassed anyone that we have dealt with in government.”

Chris Roberts extends his appreciation to **Linda Hubeny, Audrey Pinette, Mirek Golebiewski, Mark Grzymajlo, and Warren Ondevilla** “for their assistance in helping Recovery move from Building 29 to Building 11.”

Congratulations to **Kathleen Sobieski** from Roy Dion “for your diligence in following through on a particular debt. Nice job!”

Bill Dvoranchik from EDS commended the “outstanding” presentation given by **Carlos Velez, Meg Yetishefsky, and Vin Musumeci** promoting Business CONNections. He said “I look forward to working with your team in promoting the Set-Aside program as the modernization initiative becomes finalized.”

Susan Thomas was praised by Commissioner Barbara Waters for her work with the Perkin Elmer contract and said “it is wonderful to know that they think so highly of you.”

Kudos to **Will Hauschulz** from Devin Marquez for “discovering a programmatic error which will generate more money for the State of Connecticut.”

Commissioner Barbara Waters extended her appreciation to **Larry King and Roy Wynne** “for all of your efforts in preparing our budget presentation for the Appropriations Committee. Your professionalism and dedication made the difference for us.”

Silvana M. Flattery from the Dept. of Social Services, this year’s recipient of the Homer Babbidge Fellowship which is administered by DAS, expressed her sincere gratitude to **Merrily Moynihan** “for her perseverance and attentiveness” during the application process.

Marijane Carey from Carey Consulting praised **Mike Felix** “for consistently providing accurate information in a professional and courteous manner.”

Special thanks to **Carlos Velez, Meg Yetishefsky, Vin Musumeci, and Donna Micklus** from Helen Robbins of DECD for “the marvelous presentation at the Governor’s Small Business Council breakfast and for a wonderful job on the printed programs.”

Hats Off

By Cindy Duberek

Kudos to **Bob Cosgrove** and the **APS team** from Lina Simonu for implementing a PC component to APS to allow users to easily generate reports. “This is the absolute greatest!”

Bill Skyrme was praised by Ann Spencer Austin on the DAS website. “This is very easy to use. Congratulations!”

Doug Belli was commended by Chuck Miller of Martinez and Associates on the conversion of FAR’s hospital billing from Wang to Oracle. “Doug never points fingers when there is a problem, he just goes for the solution.”

Congratulations to **Commissioner Barbara Waters** from Commissioner Shirley Ferris of the Dept. of Agriculture “on your marvelous annual report. It certainly sets a new standard for agency reports!”

Thanks to **Fleet Operations** in Hartford from Arthur Andrade for “always being treated excellently in the automotive service department.”

ADA is on its way

Suzanne Liquerman's American with Disabilities Act (ADA) training is way ahead of schedule. "As of February 1999, we've trained approximately 370 people on ADA," Liquerman said. No small task. Liquerman does a number of training sessions in the New England area and said, "We have more people trained in Connecticut than any other New England state. That says a lot for our program."

The training sessions are flexible to meet the needs of the customers. Liquerman constantly scrutinizes



her evaluation forms and makes improvements to make the training better. "We design the training to meet the customers' needs," said Liquerman.

"Let us know what issues affect you and your business, and we'll fit the training to meet those demands."

The training isn't geared to one particular group. The sessions have covered a wide array of professionals from attorneys and union reps, to large Connecticut businesses and nonprofit organizations. Liquerman said that just shows that there is a big demand for ADA information and that DAS is just the place to get that information.

"Now we're entering our third phase," said Liquerman. Beginning in July, Liquerman will introduce half-day sessions focusing on ADA and reasonable accommodation. This particular topic has been a growing demand from customers.

"Organizations don't know what they are required to do to accommodate a person with a disability," she said. These half-day sessions will address such topics as attendance, performance, conduct, and leave. "Very touchy subjects in ADA if you don't know the rules," she added.

Collaboration to creativity

A meeting of minds resulted in improved services and benefits offered to group home residents in Hartford.

Members of the FAR/Collection Services leadership team met with DSS and DMR staff to discuss the personal expense allowance given to residents of the Wilson Street and Capitol Avenue group homes, which are operated by DMR.

The allowance has been the same since 1984, and service providers thought that it was time for a change. These concerns were voiced and quickly addressed at a customer outreach program that FAR members participated in.

"Last year we began going out to speak with our clients to find out what questions they had about billing and client finances," said Henry Jovanelly of FAR. "We try to work with them to find solutions - that's how this began."

DMR staff said that residents of these group homes are allotted money to pay for personal expenditures each month, for food and other incidentals. Frankly, they said, this money wasn't enough.

"We talked about ways to exempt more money to benefit them," said Jovanelly. Hopefully, the more experience they have managing money, the quicker they might become self-sufficient.

From this collaboration came the idea of enrolling these residents in the Home and Community-based Waiver Program, with residential services billed to the

"Together we found a creative approach to a complicated situation. People actually clapped at the end of the meeting."

federal government rather than to DMR. The standard for public living arrangements would be applied to these residents, offering them more autonomy and control of their money, and nearly tripling their personal allowances.

"We are still recouping our money, DSS and DMR are spending less, and the client has the opportunity to manage his/her own budget," said Jovanelly.

"Together we found a creative approach to a complicated situation. People actually clapped at the end of the meeting."

Boisclair pursues his goals with dogged persistence

By Dana Citarella

Shawn Boisclair's hobbies leave him dog-tired at the end of the day.

Boisclair, an associate accountant in the FAR Business Office, enjoys training his four dogs for hunting competitions. He said this type of training focuses on tuning the dog's natural instincts.



Shawn Boisclair

a friend, a professional trainer who also ran Springer Spaniel trials. Boisclair was very impressed with

spectacular win in Valley Forge by finding a bird in a place no other dog thought to go.

"The judges were really impressed by her that time," Boisclair said. "They had to give her the win."

Boisclair said the best part about competing is the interesting, talented people he's met and learned from.

"If you work with the best people, like anything else in life, you get better," Boisclair said.

Aside from hunting, Boisclair

"You can't teach a dog what a bird is, you're just controlling its instincts and that takes a while," Boisclair said.

Boisclair's dogs compete in American Kennel Club (AKC) Field Trials. In these competitions, dogs must follow commands to locate live pheasants and cause

them to fly off. Puppies can also participate in the field trials, but they hunt pigeons.

"If you work with the best people, like anything else in life, you get better," Boisclair said.

he only had one dog, a Labrador Retriever. He started hunting with

the spaniels' hunting abilities and admired their flashy nature.

He gradually bought three Springer Spaniels of his own and plans on buying another puppy this spring.

Boisclair has competed in national competitions and has won both Puppy Stakes and All-Age Stakes.

He said competing can be very trying, especially considering over 70 dogs compete in some trials.

"It takes a special dog to win," Boisclair said.

"A lot of bad luck comes, and it's not your fault or the dog's fault."

Last year, Meg, one of Boisclair's spaniels, was winning a trial when she suddenly veered away from an easy retreat. Meg's mother ended up winning.

Another time, Meg pulled off a

Up Close

enjoys scuba diving, fly fishing, and skiing.

Boisclair spent 10 years in the Navy in both active and reserve duty. As a Navy diver, he was able to dive in exotic locations, such as Australia and Belize.

Boisclair now dives mainly in Rhode Island and Florida.

Boisclair likes to keep busy and make the most of his free time.

"Your free time is what you make of it," Boisclair said. "You really should try to live your life to the fullest."

Students' mechanical skills soar thanks to DAS donation

By Dana Citarella

Paul Greco of Property Distribution is flying high. About five months ago, Greco obtained a Jet Ranger helicopter from federal surplus, then donated it to Harvard H. Ellis Technical High School in Danielson. The school offers an aviation program in which students learn airplane and helicopter repair.

DAS was able to give the school the helicopter, which was valued at \$100,000, for only a \$200 service charge.

"We're always happy to be able to help education," Greco said.

Josette Claro, an instructor at the school, said the students remove parts on the helicopter, using the maintenance manual as a guide. They then inspect the parts, correct any defects, and reinstall them.

Claro said this program is a very effective way for the 43 students to learn aviation mechanics.

"We're actually able to provide our students with

hands-on activities on items which can actually run," Claro said.

The Jet Ranger helicopter cannot run in its current condition, Claro said, but the school is waiting for parts the students can install to restore it.

"The students really enjoy the fact that they're working on actual projects, not just pseudo-projects," Claro said.

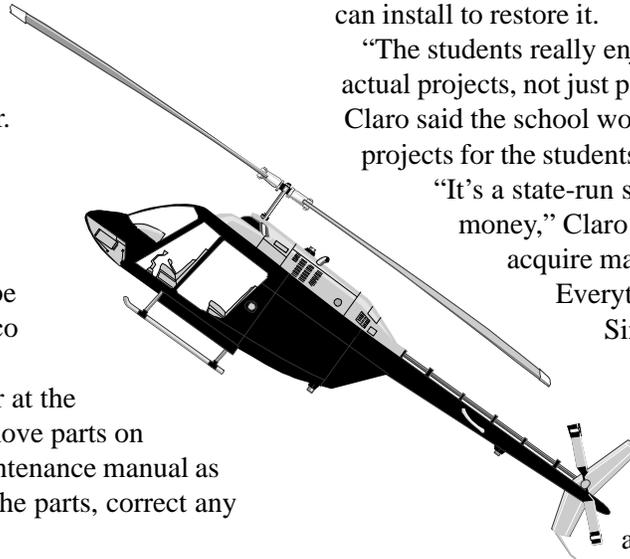
Claro said the school would not be able to offer these projects for the students without donations.

"It's a state-run school, and we don't have much money," Claro said. "We couldn't afford to acquire materials through private means.

Everything comes through donations."

Since 1994, DAS has donated about \$3.5 million worth of helicopters, engines, and other equipment to the school. Claro said students fixed a helicopter DAS donated about four years ago and it is now able to run. Greco had the opportunity to see the restored helicopter during a recent visit to the school.

"I'm really amazed with the work these students can do," Greco said. "The helicopter is really beautiful."



Employees plan "fun raisers"

By John McKay

The DAS summer picnic committee is hard at work to make this year's summer picnic the best one yet.

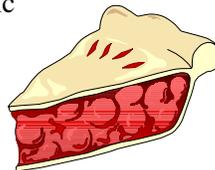
The picnic will be at Mountainside Resort in Wallingford. The resort has a heated swimming pool, softball fields, basketball, tennis, bocci, and shuffleboard courts, and ping pong tables. "We're really excited about this year's event and we expect a good turnout," said Patti Maneggia,

the committee chairperson.

In anticipating the cost of attending, the committee has decided to hold a number of fundraisers.

"If we raise enough money with these fundraisers," said Maneggia, "the picnic would be free to everyone at DAS. That's our goal."

Some of the fundraising ideas the committee has come up with are: tea cup and ticket raffles, selling slices of pies, candy, and flowers around Mother's Day.



The improvements are great, but just where is everybody?

By Heather Cavanaugh

After a year of planning, the walls are coming down. Renovations to the historic State Office Building are under way.

A recent frenzy of activity is proof that plans are coming to fruition. Offices are packing up and groups are relocating. Fifth Floor occupants have nearly all cleared out to make way for asbestos abatement, and following that - construction.

"Everything will be occurring in phases," said contract/designer Christine Hopkins. The current phase includes removing asbestos from the Fifth Floor, and relocating employees to swing space on the Second Floor and to other areas on the Fourth Floor.

"Once this phase is complete, construction can begin," she added.

This well-needed facelift will give a whole new look to the Fifth Floor. Both main corridors will be widened to enable open office space and bring some added bonuses including a lunch room, coffee room, and conference rooms. A new HVAC system will offer better airflow, circulation, and ventilation.

"The open space also allows groups to work together rather than behind closed doors," said Hopkins. These work stations will be new, consistent, and easily rearranged. The goal is that this newly designed space will have a domino effect, and will eventually be carried out through the whole building.

"It will be like a new building - beautiful," said Dan Donahue of Property Management.

"Once everyone sees the space, they will love it."

So far so good. All moves have gone smoothly and quickly.

"Everyone has been very cooperative," Hopkins said.

A strong team behind the effort has made all the difference. Weekly meetings are held with a "construction" team to cover all bases. Linda Hubeny, Lorraine Lombardi, Kathy Valone, Fred Ondevilla, and DPW liaisons including Linda Frederickson Designs meet with Donahue and Hopkins to ensure flawless transitions.

Here's the big picture - Newington employees will join Hartford, space will be better utilized, and the design will be state-of-the-art. DAS employees will be consolidated to the Fourth, Fifth, and Ground Floors.

The activity doesn't end there. The DAS Print, Mail, Courier will move from 80 Washington to renovated space at 18-20 Trinity Street.

"Demolition has already begun in that building," said Donahue. The Print Shop should be there this summer.

If all this relocation seems a bit confusing, it is. This updated list of all recent moves should make it easier to find your coworkers:

Human Resources:

Classification/Compensation- Rm. 291

Agency liaisons- Rm. 287

Director Tina Lawson- Rm. 279

Strategic Planning- Rm. 281

QA/Business Rules- Rm. 233

Personnel/Payroll - Rms. 408-412

BAGS

Sandy Sharr, Lauren Shuck and Natalie Shipman - Rm. 281

FAR

Fiscal Management - Rms. 202-216

SLC/MIS

Vin Lombardo/MIS- Rm. 411

COMMUNICATIONS - Rm. 407

ALL ABOARD !!

By Mike Mansfield



Get on the bus! A new online tool has just been launched called "DAS Central."

DAS Central was designed as a one-stop source for late-breaking news, Infograms, and press releases; reference and policy information; even forms. Its as well-suited for disseminating up-to-the-minute news as it is for storing and archiving older information.

Plus, it's remarkably user-friendly. Users access DAS Central through Lotus Notes. To get into DAS Central, users simply click the bus icon on their "Workspace at Office" screen.

"This will eliminate a lot of the confusion and buttons on your desktop," said Rick Bolduc of SLC.

Instructions for using DAS Central are featured on the site itself. More in-depth demonstrations have already begun at DAS facilities in Hartford and Newington, with the next orientations scheduled for the SOB on March 29 and 30 at 1:00 and 2:00 p.m.

All the news that fits, we print

By Dana Citarella

ERP Spring Fling

The Employee Recognition Program (ERP) is springing into some changes this season.

“It’s a new program building off the great start made by the original inventors, the 1998 committee,” said Steve Soklow, committee chairperson.

The awards ceremonies will now be semiannual events taking place in May and November.

The next ceremony will be on May 26 and will have a “Spring Fling” theme. Official kickoff parties for this phase will take place between 10 and 11:00 a.m.

Short takes

on March 31 in Rm. G-38 of the SOB and also in Newington. Event coordinators promise refreshments, special Frisbee “flinging” contests, and some interesting spring theme prizes. Please drop in and learn about the new online nomination form accessible through the new “DAS Central” button on Lotus Notes (see related article on page 7).

“If you’ve received great service, take the minute or so to fill out the form to recognize that person,” Soklow suggested. The deadline for nominations is May 14.

At your service...

Lost your keys again? Broke your chair? Have a desk drawer jammed? If so, Property Management is definitely at your service.

Property Management of FAR recently offered informational sessions to their DAS customers to explain the services they give and clarify their role in

the agency. Dan Donahue led the presentation, and various members of the unit offered their expertise on topics such as inventory, surplus property, mail and courier, record storage, moving, and services offered to outside agencies.

These sessions are part of a series that FAR is giving to ensure greater customer satisfaction.

Attention: Group Life Insurance Increase

All employees insured under the Group Life Insurance Plan whose yearly gross compensation rate increased on or before April 1, 1999, will have an automatic increase in their insurance coverage.

The increased payroll deduction will appear in check dated April 9, 1999. If you have any questions, please contact the payroll office at (860) 713-5172.

Business CONNections in the spotlight

Business CONNections’ Meg Yetishefsky and Carlos Velez gave a well-received presentation at the Governor’s Small Business Advisory Council’s Small Business of the Year Award Breakfast on February 26 at the Hastings Hotel and Conference Center in Hartford. More than 200 attendees witnessed a thorough explanation of the benefits Business CONNections provides small businesses and those owned by women, minorities, and the disabled, focusing on the group’s new online resources. Electro-Flex Heat, Inc., a heating element manufacturer based in Bloomfield took the award as small business of the year.

Intern named to Dean’s List

Congratulations to Dana Citarella, an intern in the Communications Office who was named to the Dean’s List at the University of Connecticut for the Fall 1998 semester. Citarella is a senior majoring in journalism.