



Rell Taps Sisco for OPM, Anderson to Lead DAS

By Donna Micklus

There's always something suspect (and usually with good reason) about division directors being hastily summoned to an "emergency meeting" in the commissioner's office. You just know it can't be good.

But when Commissioner Sisco announced she was leaving, it was a classic case of good news/bad news.

The good news? Governor Rell named Sisco to replace Robert Genuario, recently confirmed as a Superior Court judge, as Secretary of OPM, the budget office for the executive branch and arguably one of the most critical posts in state government.

The bad news? After four years, she is leaving DAS. More good news? The Governor has promoted Deputy Commissioner Martin Anderson to take over as Commissioner.

"Brenda has tremendous integrity and a roll-up-your sleeves work ethic that has earned the respect of many, both in and out of state government," Governor Rell said.

"She has shepherded DAS through many successful and cost-saving initiatives at a time when state government needed to adopt efficiencies without sacrificing service to our citizens. Brenda's professionalism and outstanding management style will ensure for a smooth transition throughout the administration."



Outgoing DAS Commissioner Brenda Sisco and newly appointed Commissioner Martin Anderson mug for the cameras at Brenda's farewell party

In making the announcement the Governor also said that Sisco will lead an agency that reports directly to the Governor, providing information and analysis needed to formulate public policy for the state. The office assists state agencies and municipalities in implementing policy decisions on behalf of the Governor. OPM played a critical role over the past year, helping the state apply for and administer millions of dollars of federal stimulus funds. The agency took the lead on formulating a state energy plan that resulted

Continued on page 6

Inside this Issue

Taste!

2

Web Updates

2

Flu Readiness

3

Fleet Facts

4

Thanks for the memories

5

Meet Betty Collins

7

Left, Right!

8

More Taste Pix!

10

Mmmm...DAS Has Great Taste! By John McKay

The menu is expansive and the guest list inclusive. The 2010 Taste of DAS covered the globe – and everyone’s plate – with culinary cuisine from around the world. Just a sample platter of dishes DASers prepared included:

- From Puerto Rico: Alcapurias – fried Bananas, Rice and beans
- From Ecuador: Moros de Frejoles
- From Colombia: Beef and Chicken Empanadas
- From Germany: Bratwurst
- From Poland: Pierogies

continued on p. 10 and more great pix!



DAS Diversity Council members L to R: Glenda Rollins, Cathy Abadom, John McKay, Tara Talbert, Melissa Colonese-Scutt, Deborah Peterson, Eileen Morin, Joanne Cusano and Chairperson Donna Camillone

Website Update

By John McKay

Procurement has a new addition to its website, a new section solely devoted to Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP).

“Green purchasing becomes more and more popular day-by-day,” said DAS Procurement Director Carol Wilson. “So for general questions on green contracts, statutes and policies, this is the place to go.”

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) is the procurement of goods and services by state agen-

cies that have a reduced impact on human health and the environment as compared to other goods and services serving the same purpose. Environmentally Preferable Products are long lasting, high-quality, less toxic, products that also use less materials, water and energy, minimizing the impact on our environment.

Connecticut State Law requires State agencies to practice Environmentally Preferable Purchasing.

MIS is also working on the Insurance Risk Management Board’s website. The site was in need of some updating and although there are still some last minute hurdles to cover, once the site is under DAS management, the ease of updating the site and keeping everything accurate will be a much smoother process.

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Visit our website at www.das.state.ct.us

Getting Ready for the Flu....How Did We Do?

By John McKay and Nina Ritson

A highly contagious flu virus originating from the Winter Olympics has spread worldwide. Absenteeism is way up. People are afraid to come to work and state payrolls can't be completed.

These were a few scenarios thrown at DAS' Incident Management Team (IMT) during a pandemic simulation exercise to see how the state would respond to various situations.

The DAS "Situation Room" was in Commissioner Martin Anderson's office where division directors and their deputies gathered to receive e-mails from the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS). Workers' Compensation Director Doug Rinaldi is DAS' Incident Commander and coordinated agency efforts in responding to the simulated emergency.

Although the drill takes place just a few hours on one day, Strategic Services' Steve Soklow has



Andrea Keilty and Pam Libby discuss HR issues



Doug Rinaldi and John McKay receive further news from the EOC

been coordinating DAS' pandemic response for the past four years. He's kept everyone on the IMT informed and updated on procedures and policies on how everything should be addressed and directed through the proper channels. It's his behind the scenes work that made this exercise flow so smoothly. Peggy Zabawar also provided oversight of the development of the exercise, and administrative support functions throughout.

The overall theme of the drill revolved around rising absenteeism rates; starting at 14% and, over the short course of about 6 weeks, escalating to 38% absenteeism. DAS' IMT had the answers regarding what functions could continue, which could be postponed and how to address shortfalls by reassigning staff from lower priority projects to focusing on core DAS functions.

IMT itself was tested midway through the exercise when DAS

was informed that IMT Operation Chief Andrea Keilty was reported as absent – in theory being hit with the virus. Her deputy, Erin Choquette, effortlessly filled the void and the team proceeded without missing a beat.

As the exercise progressed, certain actions had to be taken. Social distancing where meetings, bid openings, and job exams had to be postponed indefinitely to prevent spreading of the virus.

Other agencies reported into the Web Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and their absentee data became a useful tool for DAS



Jim Palmer, Dave Lynn and Pam Libby review their respective division plans

planning, especially with respect to human resources and statewide loss of services because of absenteeism. Staff out sick was a concern – but staff refusing to come to work because of fear of getting sick was a bigger concern.

"Is this exactly how it will all play out during a real life pandemic situation?" asked Anderson.

Fleet Facts on Fueling By Jim Palmer

While we recognize that some agencies have 24/7 responsibilities to serve their customers, which can make purchasing 100% of their gasoline only at state stations a logistical challenge, we would hope that most all fuel purchases can be done at any of the over 80 DOT-operated fuel stations located throughout the state.

Fueling state-owned vehicles at state-operated stations is important for several reasons. In addition to not paying a dealer mark-up, we also benefit from a low price that has been determined through a competitive bid process.

Another critical reason is our status as a government entity, which entitles us to be exempt from state and federal taxes that total over \$.43 per gallon (we do pay a 7.5% gross receipts tax regardless if the fuel is supplied through our fueling network or from a retail outlet).

If circumstances dictate that filling-up at a retail station is necessary, then those agencies should file for tax refunds from both the state and federal governments.

Another option that soon could be widely available is the Voyager fuel card. DAS Procurement is just beginning a pilot program with six agencies on the effectiveness of using this card for fuel purchases at retail stations. Accepted at most retail stations, regardless of brand,

the Voyager fuel card also tracks purchases, offers management reports, and deducts federal excise taxes before sending DAS the bill.

By paying the lowest possible net cost for fuel and saving state employees the hassle of filling out refund paperwork, fueling at state stations also ensures that we are updating vehicle mileage to help keep our maintenance schedules current and identify any vehicles that have become overdue for service.

These updates are available because the software used to manage the fuel dispensing system downloads odometer readings captured at fueling to the DAS fleet management software. Besides updating mileage, the number of gallons pumped is also shared with DAS so that we can determine MPG by agency, department or specific vehicle.

To recap, why should fueling be done at state-owned stations?

Did you know that the DAS fleet alone requires close to 200,000 gallons of fuel per month?



- The state pays the lowest possible cost for fuel based on our buying power and lack of need to generate a “profit margin”.
- This eliminates the need of filing for tax refunds from the Department of Revenue Services to recover the \$0.25 per gallon CT state tax or to the IRS in order to recover the federal tax of \$0.184 per gallon.
- Fueling at state-owned stations allows for vehicle odometer records to be updated which helps to ensure that we achieve proper maintenance intervals.

Thank you, Nancy By Nina Ritson

A state budget is passed, and DAS is entering a new fiscal year.

All eyes are on the forefront and the challenges and changes a new administration will bring.

All eyes but two – that is.

Nancy Jones, of the Office of the Commissioner will be focused on life as a new retiree.

After over 36 years with DAS, Jones is leaving for the



stress-free life of golf, gardening, shopping and leisure. But she is taking with her over a third of a century of knowledge and agency history – a career that began when Thomas Meskill was Connecticut’s governor and lasted through five other governors and 11 DAS Commissioners!

“Well my husband Ed and I aren’t exactly empty nesters as our college-age children are still at home, along with their friends, and I help

care for my 86-year old mom who is still living at her home and going strong. I expect to be as active as I am now – probably more – and I am really looking forward to be able to golf more, do renovations on my house and go down to the beach,” said Jones.

She went on to say she will truly miss her coworkers – many she has worked alongside for decades. “And I am really going to miss the workout with James three days a week!”

Nancy, we wish you all the best – and thank you for the years!

Flu, cont. from page 3

“Of course not. But it is an excellent drill for what could happen should a pandemic flu or statewide health emergency occur.”

During the exercise, Carol Wilson of Procurement Services was able to confirm with vendors on contract that an ample supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) like gloves and masks was available and ready to ship. “We were able to verify that our key dependencies – outside vendors – were operating normally,” Wilson said.

Commissioners from the four lead agencies, DAS, DEMHS, DOIT and DPH gathered at the State EOC to form the Unified

Command team. Their role was to provide state agency leadership, and coordination with the Governor’s Office.

Using a dedicated emergency interface called WebEOC and email, the groups communicated with one another and responded to simulated pandemic events. Agencies coordinated their actions according to their plans and reported to the Unified Command. The Unified Command, in turn, advised agencies on statewide procedures.

Then, in the critical hour DAS could not make payroll – this was serious!! So the CORE payroll emergency plan kicked in and paychecks were issued based on prior paycheck data.

Preliminary reports from the exercise show 90% of the 71 state agencies were engaged actively in the exercise.

What happens next? There will be the development of an after-action report, and a statewide improvement plan to make Connecticut state agencies even more efficient at keeping essential state functions operational in a pandemic or other emergency situation.

The bottom line is that in case of an emergency, the State of Connecticut has plans and people in place to keep the necessary functions of the state moving...oh, and get your flu shot!

Continued from P. 1

in the state receiving more than \$130 million in federal dollars for a variety of energy programs.

Sisco was the DAS Deputy Commissioner from 2006-2008 and formerly served as Director of the Governor's Office of Legislative Affairs, where she worked for more than 10 years.

Most of DAS already knows that Anderson is a native of Oklahoma, where he attended Oklahoma State University and earned his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees. He's been a familiar face at DAS for 22 years and has held a number of positions; his responsibilities have centered on performance and accountability measures, productivity enhancement and strategic planning.

"Martin has had a distinguished career at DAS and that is a testament to his commitment for improving efficiencies in state government," Governor Rell said. "A hard worker with great ideas, Martin has been a true asset for all of state government. We are fortunate to have someone with this talent and expertise to oversee this vital agency."

Sisco was feted at an after-work gathering at a downtown restaurant on May 13, where she was presented with an "agency class picture" and a card signed by hundreds of DAS well-wishers.



UP CLOSE

With Betty Collins *By Nina Ritson*

If you could bottle and sell energy – Betty Collins of the State Marshal Commission would be a millionaire!!

Born and raised in Hartford into a political family, Collins became energized early in life by her father, Judge James Collins, who ran for Congress in the 1960's, but whose life was cut short when she was 21. "I have fond memories of the family sitting around the table stuffing envelopes and doling out campaign materials," says Collins, "I truly admired and loved my Dad – and because of him my career took the path it did in law and public service."

So the Loomis Chaffee graduate went on to Mt. Holyoke and Trinity colleges and finished at UConn Law with her Juris Doctorate. After a brief time in New Hampshire, Collins dove right into the good stuff – criminal law - as a Hartford Superior Court TAC, sitting on murder trials and rape trials. She even sat on a trial where a man was acquitted of a rape in one room – and in another courtroom in a separate trial he was convicted of a separate rape – yet the two juries were to have no knowledge of the other trial.

In addition, she was the chair of the Bench-Bar Committee of the Hartford County Bar. Collins served as First Assistant Bar Counsel to the Statewide Grievance Committee which monitors the conduct of lawyers in Connecticut. Her bird's eye view crafted her belief in Connecticut attorneys, "Most lawyers are decent

people – good people and try to be honest. Problems usually come from personal problems – when drugs and alcohol or gambling begin to take over someone's life and bring the person down."

After fifteen years of intense work in litigation in the Superior Court, Appellate Court and the Supreme Court, and countless hearings before the Grievance Committee, Collins says, "You see human life in drama, you see people in unusual circumstances and you try to be fair, to be ethical and to have mercy. I was constantly weighing judgment calls."

Although Collins comes from a family of educators and professors, (her brother teaches at Georgetown; a sister was an adjunct at Johns Hopkins and is now a professor in Connecticut, and another sister does counseling and nutrition) and she at one point did dabble in the professions of her siblings by teaching medical and legal ethics at the UConn Medical Center, she soon realized she did not want to be a teacher.

Now going on five years with the State Marshals she shares her time and weekends as a volunteer at the Hill-Stead Museum in Farm-



ington. "I am a hiker and I just love it there. I do outdoor tours of the estate and tours of the trails. I also help manage the trails. I love to research what I am giving talks about – to find out more about the history and nature! I even enjoy helping out with the Farmers' Market they hold on the grounds! And I truly

love spending time with friends and family so I have learned to put a cap on my volunteering!" Collins credits her mother for her natural ability to stay healthy and fit. "She is still living independently at the age of 86 with my step-father who is about to be 90 and walks two miles a day."

She parallels her life to a houseplant she was given by her sister years ago while still in law school. "I still have that rubber plant – it has survived thick and thin – and depending on how much sun it gets and what room it is in sometimes it really flourishes. Plants can teach us all sorts of things – certainly about survival." The change to DAS has been good for Collins so far, except for the dire need of a secretary, "So far so good at DAS! I am incredibly thrilled with the camaraderie of the agency and I am very thankful for such a welcome and for the transition."



CT Fit Kicks Off New Walking Competition

By Nina Ritson

WALKING into Summer

The North Mechanical was filled once again on May 12 with DAS employees, but this time they were leaner, healthier and happier. It was the Kick-off event for CT Fit 9, "Walking into Summer" and the close-out of "Ready-Set-Lose II" – the weight loss program that has been running since February.

So who won the big prize in Ready Set Lose II? The team named Young and Beautiful of Amy Whitehouse and Linda Canalia took the top prize of \$125 each - from the participant funded "pay-to-play" pool - for losing a combined total of 8.59% body weight. Second place went to the team Sneakers, Anna Tara and Patsy McLaughlin, who took home \$50 each and lost 5.69% body weight.

"You know I have really been dieting or consciously trying to lose weight for four years now. I had lost quite a bit then got "stuck", sort of a plateau, until I started this program in the fall. That and doing the workout with James is

what pushed me to lose this weight!" said Linda Canalia, first place co-winner.

Watching the pounds fall off is a wonderful thing, but it is not only about losing weight. It is about thinking and eating healthier **and** exercising! And no one can deny that DAS owes a huge thank you to James Gary, the trainer, for all he has brought to shrinking the waistlines of DASers.

DAS was so grateful for his explosive energy, positive spirit and commitment to educating us



Left: Peggy Zabawar presents First Prize in Ready Set Lose II to Amy Whitehouse and Linda Canalia
Below: Second Prize goes to Anna Tara and Patsy McLaughlin



on how we think about health that Commissioner Martin Anderson presented him with a Proclamation from Governor M. Jodi Rell stating: "This recognition is a testament to your outstanding service and commitment to excellence. Through your enthusiasm and in-

continued on next page

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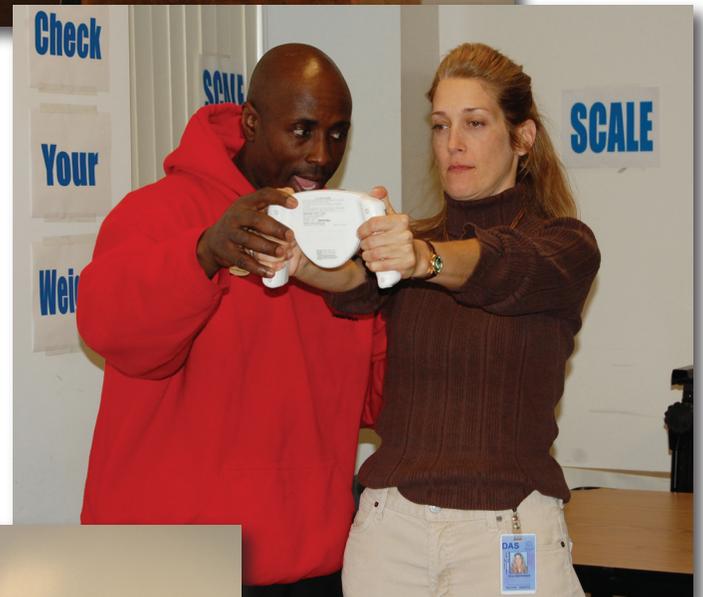
spiration as a trainer and strong motivator for DAS employees during the past year, you have demonstrated your ability to energize so many people to work harder and to push themselves to be toned, healthier, and stronger both physically and mentally.”

The new **Walking Into Summer** program began on May 17 and will end on July 9. This is a pay-to-play program with cash prizes for the team that walks the farthest.

Teams of two can record their miles 24/7 – but these must be miles in addition to exercise they are already doing, and they must be *walking* miles, unlike past programs that included miles from other exercises, such as biking. 32 people - 16 teams of two - joined Walking Into Summer. Prizes for the most miles will be: First Prize of \$75 each to the winning team; Second Prize of \$40 each; and for third place team members will each get their entry fee of \$10 back.

James was available at the kickoff to do body fat testing and to offer health advice. Matt Costa, DAS' pressman who doubles as an Emergency Responder, took blood pressure readings, and DPW's Mary Taylor spoke to interested folks about the benefits of Zumba. Pedometers were available to track miles and route sheets will be sent to all registered walkers. Walkers may also log on to www.walkjogrun.net to view routes in the Hartford area.

Congratulations to all teams for their work and commitment to the program...everyone who commits to better health is a



Top: Frankie Rivera addresses the Kick Off attendees

Above: James works with Eva Merriman to measure body fat

Left: Self Explanatory!!!

continued from p. 2

From Italy: Chicken Parmesan and cutlets, Stromboli, pasta and sausage and peppers,

From America: Fried Chicken, pulled pork, barbecue Chicken, macaroni salad, potato salad, and on the light side: Spinach salad, tomato, cucumber and mozzarella salad, pasta and broccoli salad. There was lentil soup and even a casserole cooked in a crock pot.

The Taste of DAS is sponsored by the DAS Diversity Committee and Chairperson Donna Camillone thanked everyone for participating in the event.

Former DAS Commissioner and now OPM Secretary Brenda Sisco made a special trip over from her new office just for the "Taste."

"This room always smells so delicious during this event," she said. "I just had to come by."

