

DAS Times

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Aloha, winners

By Mike Mansfield

OK, so it was a far cry from the beaches of Waikiki. But with the Royal Hawaiian Resort booked solid through New Year's, the Solomon Welles House in Wethersfield proved an excellent second choice to celebrate the fifth round of the DAS Employee Recognition Awards.

On November 18, the outgoing 1999 Employee Recognition Award Committee extended a hearty congratulations at a messy-but-delicious Polynesian luau feast to MIS' Bill Katzer; New Haven Fleet's Jimmy Civitello; FSC's Cinde Mabry; and the Communications Office team.

"This program was about saying to

our co-workers, *mahalo*," explained Employee Recognition Program Chairman Steve Soklow. "We learned that means 'thank you' in Hawaiian, in a very gracious way, as if to say 'thank you for your help.'"

Katzer, bedecked in a Hawaiian shirt and lei, was thanked (mahaloed?) in the Customer Service category for his "expert handling of HRIS ad hoc reporting needs" and his outstanding and successful interface with CATER.

Mabry, who by virtue of having been born in Honolulu had the closest natural tie to the event's aloha spirit, was all smiles, receiving the Innovation Award

Please see Awards, page 2

DAS is very PC

By Donna Micklus

Community service is nothing new to DAS. Ever since launching the pilot surplus program two years ago, DAS has donated everything from file cabinets and furniture to area nonprofit organizations.

Two weeks ago, in perhaps its most noteworthy donation to date, DAS gave 1,800 personal computers to Computers 4 Kids, a nonprofit organization located in Waterbury.



DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters and Anthony Price of Computers 4 Kids with the first shipment of the 1,800 PC donation.

Computers 4 Kids refurbishes the computers, installs special software programs and then distributes them to schools in the state's major urban areas.

Please see Computer donation, page 7

Awards, cont. from page 1

for her proactive analysis, identification of potential income, and maintenance of quality control within the rapidly changing world



Fleet's Jimmy Civitello and Commissioner Waters at ERP luncheon following the presentation of his award.

of Medicare. "This is wonderful," she said, "and this (Employee Recognition Award) sweatshirt will come in handy with the weather."

Indeed, the brisk late autumn weather kept most attendees from exploring the grounds and patio of the old house. But committee members did all they could to turn up the temperature in the figurative sense with an island-themed luau featuring giant spare ribs, pork, fried bananas, barbecued chicken wings, tropical fruit salads, and a to-die-for punch.

Jimmy Civitello, the New Haven garage's supervisor and chief kahuna,

approved. Civitello won the "Going the Extra Mile" award for his adept handling of his customers' needs in the face of the extensive renovation of the New Haven garage facility, which will be officially combined with the Seymour garage at the end of December.



Cinde Mabry of FSC Newington, winner of the Innovation Award, is congratulated by Commissioner Waters.

Winning for Team Excellence was the DAS Communications Team of Heather Cavanaugh, Cindy Duberek, Michael

Mansfield, John McKay and Nina Ritson.

The group was cited for what Soklow called "contributing to a revamping of the way communications is handled in DAS" and their development of a growing customer list of over 20 other state agencies.

The DAS Employee Recognition Award Committee would like to thank all the nominators and nominees, reminding folks it's never too early to start thinking about someone who might be deserving for the next round, to be held in spring 2000.

With this, the year's second and final event, the 1999 committee will soon be stepping down to make way for a new group.

Please contact Steve Soklow if you're interested in being a part of the 2000 committee.



Commissioner Waters congratulates Bill Katzer of MIS for taking home the honors for outstanding customer service.



The Communications Team proudly poses with Commissioner Waters after winning the Team Excellence Award.



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Jeff Morrisette from the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control commended **Sue Lizee** for the exceptional service that she has given to his agency with human resources issues.

Deborah McMullen from the Dept. of Social Services praised **Jim Passier** and **Lydia Rosario** for all of their help in getting HP printers for their agency.

Don Casella thanked **John Wilkerson** for getting the First Responder Program up and running. "He has done an awful lot to provide us with a valuable service in providing a safer work environment."

Tony Ferreira commended **Pauline Mahoney** for spending time with him on his first assignment as an exam monitor. "Pauline went out of her way to show me how a good monitor should perform."

Commissioner Barbara Waters and Kenn Stephenson applauded **John Pacholski, Joann McAllister, Mike Mansfield, Carol Wilson, Vince McMahan,** and **Lydia Rosario** for making the CCM Conference in October a smashing success. "Thank you all for your hard work and for making us the best agency in government."

Jerry Lynn complimented **Janet Antani** for the new improvements to Central Accounting's Inpatient report. "The changes you made have definitely dressed up the report with a professional, crisp look."

Kudos to the **Food Distribution Program Staff** from Sharlene Wong of the CT School Lunch Advisory Council on the "excellent work being done with the food distribution program and the significant improvements in customer service."

Doris Vieira thanked **John McKay** for assisting the Food Distribution Program with their PowerPoint presentation during the Program's Learning Workshops.

Sylvia Baird from the Dept. of Mental Health and Addiction Services complimented **David Berry** for assisting when one of their faculty vehicles broke down. "David was very efficient, pleasant, and professional."

Robert King from the Comptroller's Office appreciated **Maureen Costigan's** quick action in arranging the bidding process for their laser check envelopes.

Chris Roberts was commended by Devin Marquez for the fantastic job of clearing out 38 tons of paper from the basement in the FSC Newington offices. "Great job, Chris!"

Special thanks to **Dan Sears, Dick Omohundro,** and **Janet Knopf** from Lorraine Lombardi "for the time you've taken to create, develop, and assist me with the Access database. You're the best!"

Cathy Bysiewicz-Cluen and Cheryl Sawina thanked **Lorraine Lombardi, Nancy Jones, Merrily Moynihan, Fred Ondevilla, Kevin Backman, Dan Sadowski, John McKay,** and the **DAS Print Shop** for all of their assistance with the success of the Workplace Violence Prevention training.

Michelle Romard of the *Making Strides Walk for Breast Cancer*

at the American Cancer Society, Mary Daly, Phil Karas, Laura Breux, Patti Maneggia, Joanne McAllister, Audrey Pinette, and Pamela Young thanked **DAS employees** for their generous donations amounting to \$1,500!

Hats Off

By Cindy Duberek

Chief of Police Jason B. Powell from CCSU commended **Dr. Pamela Libby, Dr. Donald Jordan,** and **Carl Passanisi** for assisting Officer Karin Smith in documenting accreditation review areas pertaining to recruitment, selection, and promotion.

Dave Mariasi from the Dept. of Public Health praised **Bob Sylvester** of Fleet Operations for freeing-up a cargo van for their agency on such short notice.

Jim Passier applauded **Bill Skyrme** for "pulling off another of his miracles" by adding a feature to the DAS website listing contracts and their expiration dates.

Nancy Weber from Paige Designs complimented **Meg Yetishefsky** and **Michael Clark** for their informative presentation at the Governor's Small Business Advisory Council. "You really know your business!"

Patsy McLaughlin expressed her thanks to **Dr. Martin Anderson** for his consistent swift responses to information requests. "Thanks for such reliable service."

Off the paper trail

Chris Roberts gives new meaning to the term “paperless.” He got rid of 38 tons of it! It was a tough job that needed to be done. Over the past few years, thousands of boxes of case records had been piling up in the basement of Building 11 in Newington.

“There was nowhere to put the stuff anymore,” Roberts said. Case records have to be retained for three years after the case is closed, but many in Newington had gone beyond that deadline and began to accumulate.



Roberts had to adhere to a retention schedule in which Records Disposal Authorization forms were filled out for all records, and the State Library would subsequently “sign off” on what documents could be destroyed. After completing that paper process, Roberts managed to haul 3,500 boxes out of the building.

“We dumped everything into a closed container outside because much of the information is confidential.” From there, the container was brought to Sanitary Services Supply where the documents were shredded and destroyed.

“Once we got started, it went smoothly. The FSC staff and the Leadership Team were very cooperative in providing information on what could go,” commented Roberts.

Roberts said that they unloaded 80 percent of what was in the basement, adding that the space is barely recognizable in its new state. “We still have a little more to go,” explained Roberts. He has yet to conquer Building 29 in Newington.

This purge is part of a larger endeavor to become as close to paperless as possible. Gradually, many necessary documents are being converted into electronic format to reduce paper and time. The pending move of FSC Newington to the State Office Building is also a consideration.

“We just can’t take everything with us,” Roberts explained.

Sixty accompanying storage cabinets were transferred to the Department of Transportation because once in Hartford, staff will be using a high-density filing system.

“Chris did such a great job taking point on this project. I know it wasn’t easy,” said Team Leader Devin Marquez. Roberts was glad to have the help of FSC’s Lascel Webley and the Property Management Unit in Hartford.

Fed Foods is on a roll

DAS Food Distribution Program (FDP) launched its first two customer workshops last month and the results were delicious.

Customers, who may have never met some of the “Fed Foods” employees, had a chance to learn more about the program with these face-to-face informational workshops.

DAS’ FDP program is the first to initiate these types of customer outreach meetings.

“Our customers asked a lot of good questions and we were ready with the answers,” said Program Manager Doris Vieira. Attendees also found the meeting a great place to network with surrounding town representatives. “This is great,” said one participant. “I met the school cafeteria representative from the town next to me, now if either of us has too much or too little of something, we can contact each other and share our resources.”

The three-hour sitdown covered such menu topics as: USDA commodities and how they are ordered, food storage and proper food handling, and an overview of order forms and how to complete them correctly the first time. Each Fed Food employee spoke on their individual forte and addressed questions.

A few participants had never heard of FDP’s Swap-Post list - if a customer has a surplus commodity it can be placed on the list, and other customers can take it at no charge.

“Sometimes customers don’t know of all the great benefits we offer,” said Vieira. “We’re working on making sure that each and every customer knows how the Fed Foods system works, and how they can use it to their advantage to save time and money.”

A real roads scholar

By Mike Mansfield

Jim Neil is an attorney. Jim Neil is a college professor. Jim Neil is a devoted father. Jim Neil writes fiction. Jim Neil was just promoted to senior policy advisor for DAS' Business Advisory Group. Jim Neil is an all-around great guy.

And that's why, despite our natural inclinations as jealous humans, it's absolutely impossible not to like him.

The adventure that is Jim Neil's life began in the hills of Ledyard, Connecticut - long before the Mashantucket Pequots transformed it into a world-class gambling mecca - and remained there throughout his formative years.

"I know that reservation as well as anyone!" Neil joked, recalling his childhood obsession with all things outdoors. Hiking in those forests, fishing in the region's many ponds, Neil laid the groundwork for a love of nature that continues to this day.

Eventually, he outgrew the woods of southeastern Connecticut, and like many young people dreamt of leaving home to conquer new, faraway lands. However, unlike most others, he actually went. Soon, Neil and his dog found themselves living in Southern California in a beach house full of surfers.

But his wanderlust persisted. "I went to Mexico dozens of times," he recalled. Then throughout the Southwest, then to every state in America, Europe, and beyond.

Somehow, when he wasn't on the road, or golfing, skiing, playing guitar,

boating, or developing an NCAA-caliber game of hoops, Neil graduated from Long Beach State. For some people, college graduation symbolizes the end of life's wonder years.

But for Neil, that voyage was just beginning.

"I felt like I was on a roll," he said. His scholastic aptitude earned him a

scholarship to the University of Rhode Island, where he earned a master's degree in English.

Neil had been writing short stories and novels for years, most of which deal with the sort of self discovery and personal exploration that is so much a part of his own life.

Perpetually driven, Neil soon found himself on the other side of the lectern, going from English student to English instructor at URI. He loved it. Fifteen years later, he continues to teach, now at Teikyo Post in Waterbury.

Ever on the lookout for a new field to conquer, he looked to the legal profession.

"I never really thought about getting a degree to get a job. I figured I'd write, then got into teaching to pay the bills," he remembered.

"Law seemed like a natural extension of my education; you learn a lot of skills in English that

are readily transferable."

Soon, as an alumnus of the University of Bridgeport's School of Law, he added the title "attorney" to his blossoming resume. He had considered going into criminal justice, but found himself knee deep in corporate law thanks to his work as a legal liaison at Electric Boat in Groton while attending school.

Upon graduation, he stayed at EB, which led to his first association with the state via the Dept. of Public Utility Control. Responding to the defense industry's downward spiral, Neil gradually became even more aligned with the State of Connecticut, eventually joining DAS in June 1997.

Today, he works as an attorney, specializing in procurement and



Jim Neil

Up Close

insurance-related issues.

Yet the adventure continues. Asked what drives him now, Neil answered quickly and decisively, "My daughter Carly. She is my main focus right now." He has instilled in Carly an appreciation of the arts far beyond her seven years.

"She really enjoys hiking and exploring," he reported, "I try to show her as much of our world as I can, she's interested in so many things."

One can only wonder where she got that from.

DAS a friend to small biz

By Heather Cavanaugh

DAS was recognized for its commitment to small business outreach at a recent Connecticut Minority Development Council event, hosted by New England Solution Systems (NESS).

NESS, a certified Set-Aside business with DAS' Business CONNecTions, proudly unveiled its new facility in Bloomfield.

Deputy Commissioner Alan Mazzola was one of the honored guests asked to cut the ribbon at the company's new headquarters.

"I felt privileged to be there to witness a true success story," said Mazzola.

"I'm glad that DAS had a part in



Deputy Commissioner Alan Mazzola takes part in NESS ribbon-cutting ceremony.

helping this small business achieve its goals," Mazzola added.

NESS is an independent reseller of information technology products and services, and in the past 10 years, it has grown to serve major area companies such as Aetna, Pratt & Whitney, and United Technologies Corporation. They also provide information technology solutions to many state agencies, including DAS.

Exemplify excellence

By John McKay

DAS is continuing its quest for excellence.

For three days in October, a group of 17 DAS employees attended a training session to learn how to conduct an organizational self-assessment of DAS using the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. The Baldrige Criteria assesses the organization – its leadership, processes, values, management, customer and employee focus, and business results.

"A key element of the assessment is interviews with staff to see how fully people are participating in the agency's quality program," said SLC's Director Cathy Daly.

"If the assessment determines that employees are not participating, it means that DAS has not done a good job of deploying its quality program." One of the outcomes will be a plan to improve how well efforts involve all employees in all the planning and processes of the agency.

"DAS plans to use the criteria as a yardstick against which to measure our quality efforts and to move ahead in our journey toward excellence throughout DAS," said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

The assessment is made up of 19 questions divided across seven categories, which reflect the core values. A team of people trained in the criteria will be fanning out throughout DAS over the next year to assess how well we comply with the criteria.

"During the first quarter of 2000, the team will conduct a pilot assessment in the Strategic Leadership Center to test how well the process works. After making adjustments to the process, it will be rolled out throughout the agency in 2000," said Daly.

Website reaps honors

By Donna Micklus

DAS has made the national scene, receiving a finalist and two semi-finalist awards in the fourth annual Global Information Infrastructure competition.

DAS was named a finalist in the Government category for its "Virtual Warehouse for Surplus Property Distribution."

"The GII awards represent an important validation of the efforts to use technology to make Connecticut government run better, cheaper, and quicker," said DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters.

"We are so proud to bring this distinction to the state," Waters added.

DAS also received semi-finalist awards for two additional website applications, the "Law Enforcement Internet Application Process" and the "On-line Vendor Registration and Bidder Notification."

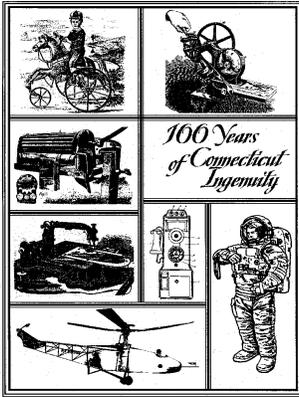
This year's 60 award finalists were selected from an initial pool of more than 500 entrants who represent the best in applications of the Internet and other networking technologies.

Global Information Infrastructure is an executive education and information business that provides a global community of executives and industry experts with the insight and know-how to enable them to effectively use the Internet and other forms of information technology.

The Digest

of Administrative Reports
to the Governor

1 9 9 9



By John McKay

Wondering who is the commissioner of DMHAS? What were Public Health's improvements and achievements during 1998 – 1999? These answers and more can be found in the new *Digest of Administrative Reports to the Governor*.

The *Digest* is a mini annual report defining the accomplishments and goals met by the executive branch of Connecticut state government.

The report is edited, designed, and assembled by the DAS Communications Office every year and includes agency mission statements, statutory responsibilities, strategic planning efforts, initiatives, and achievements.

This year's cover, *100 Years of Connecticut Ingenuity* by Nina Ritson, highlights the many inventions patented in Connecticut. The cover depicts some of the more popular inventions including the washing machine, apple parer, payphone, and the lesser known cyclepede (a cross between a bicycle and a toy rocking horse).

For a copy of *The Digest*, please contact Cindy Duberek in the Communications Office at (860) 713-5195.

The evolution of e-commerce

By Heather Cavanaugh

They asked for it, DAS made it happen.

The new e-commerce system for the State of Connecticut is up and running after its official launch on October 15, and has undergone a virtual face-lift since its pilot stage.

"It's been totally revamped," said John Pacholski of Procurement Services. He explained that after a test run, DAS went back to the Digital Commerce Corporation (DCC) with suggestions and feedback from those who looked at the first system.

"We had comments from agencies that the first system wasn't user-friendly and did not have a good search engine," said Joann McAllister of Procurement Services.

Programmers from DCC came to Connecticut to meet with users to discuss potential pitfalls and possibilities. On their four-hour ride home to King of Prussia, Pa., the programmers had a revelation and conceived the new system. Six weeks later, it was a reality.

So far, the new e-comm system has been described by users as "awesome." Two major improvements include a new search mechanism and shopping cart configuration.

Search capabilities have been extensively improved. In the former system, users had to know the contract they were seeking. "Now, we've made a 180-degree turn. Just type the item name and all contracts will be listed. Users can choose the vendor, so if they want to use a local or small business, it's all right there," said Pacholski.

The search can also be refined if too many contracts appear.

"We're trying to develop a one-stop shop. The number of products

available will grow exponentially, so we will be able to offer a much broader array of products that will meet the needs of many government entities," Pacholski explained.

"Once you know how to search, the system is a piece of cake," McAllister noted.

While kinks will continuously be worked out, enhancements will also be made. "Although we have had many breakthroughs, we want the system to be the best it can be for all users, so we will always welcome suggestions," Pacholski said.

Computer donation, cont. from pg. 1

"These PC's are all 486's that can no longer support today's business applications in state government. Since they are of no value to state agencies or municipalities, what better way to use them than to enrich the technology know-how of children," said DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters.

Waters said she first learned of Computers 4 Kids from Lieutenant Governor Jodi Rell.

"The Lieutenant Governor contacted me with the idea of donating surplus computer equipment. She was a strong proponent of the organization's mission of helping kids acquire the computer skills they need in the future by providing equitable access to technology and by facilitating the use of technology as a learning tool," Waters said.

Computers 4 Kids confirmed that DAS' was the largest single contribution in the organization's history. Channel 3 and 30 were on hand to film the presentation and numerous radio stations carried the story statewide.

All the news that fits, we print

By Heather Cavanaugh and John McKay



Who you callin' turkey?

The turkeys arrived in droves with the help of DAS and other State Office Building employees. This year, 191 turkeys were collected for Foodshare of Greater Hartford, far surpassing last year's record. Also, \$430 was collected for the purchase of even more turkeys! Special thanks go to Mike Felix of FSC for coordinating the event, and to Jerry Lynn and Sonji Fonseca for pitching in. Thanksgiving dinner will be a lot brighter for many Connecticut families because of their efforts.



Read 'em and reap

DAS contributed 151 books to First Lady Patty Rowland's Reach Out and Read program, benefiting the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. HRBC's Joyce Chin and Jennifer Levine took charge of the program and reached their goal of \$500 in donations.

"I can't tell you how pleasantly surprised I was to hear of this accomplishment," said DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters. "What a fantastic effort made by Joyce, Jennifer, and everyone at DAS. Thank you."

FSC gets good ink

CT Business Magazine recently cited the outstanding accomplishment of FSC Newington's collection of over \$640 million to the State of Connecticut. The aggressive collection effort, new program initiatives, and strong partnerships were all applauded in the article. Go DAS!

Employee breakfast

Being "the new guy" isn't so bad if you work at DAS.

On November 17, new employees, core manag-



Employees enjoy the breakfast mixer.

ers, and senior staff were treated to a breakfast "mixer" in room G-38A of the State Office Building.

"It's great to see folks here from so many areas of DAS. Even the Fleet guys were able to make it!" said Commissioner Waters. "We're excited to add these valuable employees to our front line," she added.

From February through August, DAS has welcomed 24 new employees to the ranks.

Event coordinator Patti Maneggia of Human Resources said, "We're excited to have such a great turnout. It's a wonderful opportunity for these new employees to meet their colleagues and learn about the other business centers."

"The DAS new employee breakfast with the Commissioner speaks volumes about this agency's commitment to recognition. Commissioner Waters' 'open door' policy was on display and I felt very comfortable meeting the heads of all our Business Centers," said Michael Clark of the Business Connections Unit.

Come one, come all

Join your coworkers for the last DAS Holiday Party of the millennium on December 17 from noon until 5:00 p.m. at the Gallery in

Glastonbury. Tickets are only \$14. For tickets and more information, contact one of the representatives: Laura Breux, Mary Daly, Marisol Feliciano, Sherry Kellish, Patti Maneggia, Carl Passanisi, Ed Urbansky, or Pam Young.

