



# Federal Executive Board Greater Los Angeles News-At-A-Glance July, 1998

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This publication is prepared by the staff of the Greater Los Angeles Federal Executive Board. Its content is extracted from information received in the FEB Office and gleaned from public information sources. Please forward your agency newsletter or "news items" to the FEB Office for inclusion in future FEB News-at-a-Glance editions.

## FEDERAL VOLUNTEERS

1998 may well be the Year of the Federal Volunteer! This issue of News-at-a-Glance focuses on some initiatives that may inspire each of you to similar efforts. If you are already a volunteer, take a few minutes to let us know about your activities.

On April 22, 1998, President Clinton issued a Memorandum, "Strengthening Our Commitment to Service," which avers:

"Citizen service is one of the most important ways we demonstrate that we care for and are responsible for one another. It is also an American tradition that we meet our challenges as members of a true community, with all of us working together...The ethic of service must extend throughout a lifetime...Great numbers of Federal employees have been generous with their time and talents and have made positive contributions to their local communities, even as they have fulfilled their official responsibilities...As the nation's largest employer, the Federal Government has a responsibility to set an example by helping to make it possible for its employees to dedicate time to serve others."

The President went on to direct Federal agencies to increase schedule flexibility and opportunities for Federal employee community service.

One of the 3 FEB missions is "to promote a positive image of the Federal government throughout the community." We believe that the public's opinion of Federal employees would improve significantly if the true extent of Federal volunteerism were known. The Greater Los Angeles FEB is planning a pilot survey to identify Federal Volunteerism in Los Angeles County. We hope that similar efforts occur in our other counties in the future.

"You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give."

Winston Churchill

## Feds in Literature

"And The Oscar Goes To..." was our January, 1998 article on Federal-Hollywood partnerships to foster a more accurate, positive image of Feds in movies, which have such a "profound impact in shaping public opinion." This time, we wonder if you have considered our image in the fiction you read.

The bestseller lists suggest that I am not alone in enjoying escapist suspense fiction. Honorable Enemies by Joe Weber, although not a current bestseller, is of interest to us because it features a Fed hero, CIA agent Steve Wickham, and a Fed heroine, FBI agent Susan Nakamura.

They are described most positively: Steve is a good-looking, fit former Marine captain with a sterling career record, while Susan is attractive, intelligent, academically accomplished, and tenacious, in addition to having the special knowledge of Japanese culture needed for her current assignment.

How realistic is it, however, that Steve, Susan, and Marcus, another highly-regarded FBI agent, carelessly discuss their sensitive case on a plane and in a restaurant where they are overheard by an enemy agent? Also, during a dangerous surveillance, Marcus is described as softly whistling and muttering which could lead to his discovery. In the real world, would such basic errors be prevented through training and experience? Would the non-Fed reader wonder what errors lesser agents make if these top agents are so careless on such an important case?

Although authors, especially novelists, are free to portray Feds negatively and unrealistically, if it suits their plot, we believe that providing feedback may result in long-term overall improvement. Please consider direct contact with publishers and authors writing about your agencies or, if you prefer, FEB can forward the information, as part of our mission to contribute to a realistically positive image of Feds among the public.

We welcome your suggestions on other Fed literature to discuss in future issues, especially if characters work for agencies not usually included in novels, and we encourage you to forward your opinions on how realistic and positive the portrayals are.



# The Inquiring Reporter on Volunteering

Recently your reporter found a few generous employees willing to comment on their volunteer experiences as they rushed to or from lunch.

**Location:** Los Angeles Federal Building Lobby  
300 North Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles.

**QUESTION: HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A VOLUNTEER AND IF SO, WHY? IF NOT, WHY NOT?**

Although your reporter does not claim that this informal survey is representative of Feds anywhere, she was gratified that, of 6 total employees, only 2 had never been volunteers, both because of time constraints. The 4 volunteers shared the following:

**FRANK FAECKE** of USIS, USOPM donates his time to St. Pius V Church "to return some of what I have received."

**ANDREA WECHSLER**, Administrative Clerk with the US Marshall's Service, volunteers for her church, Redeemer U.C.C., because it "feels great!"

**TOM MAY** of INS has worked for the Lunney Youth Center because he "wanted to help children, such as being a role model."

**DONNA FARRIN** of US Bankruptcy Court is a volunteer at the Kansas Avenue Seventh Day Adventist Church in Riverside. She "feels blessed" and "feels an obligation to give back to others."

According to the 1997 "Los Angeles Volunteer's Handbook," by Melissa Schwarz/The EarthWorks Group, P.O. Box 1117, Ashland Oregon 97520, volunteers frequently cite the following **OPPORTUNITIES** as reasons for donating their time:

1. To help or make a difference
2. To use a skill or talent
3. To gain professional experience & contacts
4. To express religious faith
5. To meet people
6. To enhance self-esteem & personal growth
7. To achieve a more balanced life
8. To give something back

FEB is interested in your volunteer stories!

IRS bashing has become a popular sport among the media and politicians. We wish they were as interested in publicizing two long-standing volunteer programs of the IRS Los Angeles District.

The **Adopt-A-School Program**, the brainchild of now-retired District Director Richard Orosco, has flourished since 1994, with each post-of-duty choosing a different neighborhood school to help. Employee-mentors visit the school for up to 2 work hours per week to assist underprivileged pupils, typically in reading and math.

Periodically, volunteers raise money for the school, such as the candy sale led by Coordinator Clara Jones which netted \$430 and enabled 4th and 5th graders from the Breed Street School to see state government in action in Sacramento.

John Eubanks, a school board member and IRS manager, who participates in the program along with employees in every IRS job category, shared this, "I volunteer in a first-grade classroom and the little kids are so great! It is fun to see their smiling faces and hear them greet me, 'Hello, Mr. Eubanks!' They are genuinely happy to have another adult helping in the classroom."

The **Volunteer Corps**, created as a response to the 1992 L.A. Riots by Art Hylton, Chief, Collection Division, participates in various projects, some with L.A. WORKS, such as Beach Clean-Up and Landscaping, Public School Painting, and Holiday Angel Trees for Needy Children. The 30 to 70 employees who turn out for each project give up to 8 hours of their weekend time to better the community.

Art founded the **Corps** because, "I was very sad to see L.A. destroyed after the riots. I was born in L.A. and I love the city. I have had a good career and I wanted to participate in something to help make the L.A. the way it used to be."

## FAREWELL AND WELCOME

BOB BENDER, head of the Los Angeles office of the Drug Enforcement Administration, is retiring. We will miss you, Bob, and are glad to know you will remain in the Los Angeles area to work for Guard Smart.

Welcome to ANDREA WINKLER, our new FEB Project Coordinator. Andrea hails from the IRS, where she has spent many years in various managerial positions in L.A. & San Francisco. She began her career as a Management Intern with the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. One of her favorite assignments was to serve for 3 recent Combined Federal Campaigns as a Loaned Executive. Andrea's address: 300 N. Los Angeles St., Mail Stop 7000, L.A., CA 90012, Phone: Dial 800-735-2922 & ask for 213-894-2739 (TDD), Fax:

213 894 2726, E-Mail :  
Andrea\_Winkler@ccmail.wr.irs.  
gov

## UNSUNG HERO(INE)

Although not identified as a Federal employee, Charlotte Edginton, Appeals Officer with the Internal Revenue Service, appeared on the local news program, "Unsung Heroes," because of her volunteer activities.

During the 5-minute sequence, Charlotte was interviewed in her home with the 13-year-old girl she has mentored for 4 years, under the Big Sister Program sponsored by the Latin-American Professional Women's Association (LAPWA). At least monthly on weekends, Charlotte picks up Saira and takes her to a variety of cultural activities, such as art and other museums, plays, historical sites, concerts, and craft classes, and recreational events, such as Disney movie openings.

When Charlotte began, Saira spoke only Spanish. Charlotte created a special English book with illustrations and a storyline about Saira, to capture her interest. Gradually over the four-year period, Saira has become fluent in English and has improved her mathematics grades by developing better study habits.

Charlotte participates in this program because she wants to "give back the support and encouragement" she received from various mentors as she grew up in the same Hispanic area. "I feel a special concern about the obstacles faced by young Hispanic women," explains Charlotte. "It gives me great pleasure that I am a positive influence in a young person's life."

## KUDOS

### *1998 DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS*

Returning America's Investment - 25 Years of Excellence was the theme of the Greater Los Angeles FEB Public Service Recognition Week celebration on May 6, 1998, in Long Beach, California. Approximately 500 people attended the awards luncheon honoring 415 nominees, who vied for honors in nine categories. Al Iniguez, Los Angeles District Postmaster, chaired the program, deemed the "BEST EVER" because of newly enhanced technology and a faster pace. The host agency, the Los Angeles Postal Service, and the committee are commended for their diligence and creativity on this **Public Service Academy Awards Program**. The 14 winners were very pleased with their award statuettes, which appropriately resemble *OSCARs*. Congratulations to the winners, the 12 runners-up, and the nominees for their dedicated public service!

### *HAMMER AWARD*

On June 26, 1998, Edward W. Gnehm, Jr., Director General of the Foreign Service, presented a coveted *HAMMER AWARD* from Vice President Al Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government to TEAM LEADER TIMOTHY WIESNET of the Los Angeles Passport Agency. Tim led a team of 60 employees who established a state-of-the-art 24-hour-a-day, automated appointment system for URGENT TRAVELERS or VISA APPLICANTS, who lack sufficient time to apply for passports at post offices, courts, etc. This innovation ends the long lines of frustrated applicants for whom appointments were not previously available.

### *MANAGEMENT AWARD*

Congratulations to WARDEN WAYNE SEIFERT of the Metropolitan Detention Center, who received the *EXCELLENCE IN PRISON MANAGEMENT AWARD* at the 1998 Wardens Meeting!

### *CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION*

PROCLAMATIONS FROM GRATEFUL GOVERNORS MARKED THE *CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF THE US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS LOS ANGELES DISTRICT* ON June 25, 1998. KUDOS ON A GLORIOUS HISTORY OF FLOOD CONTROL, EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY, HARBOR CONSTRUCTION, & RESOURCE PROTECTION!

### *ARMED FORCES DAYS*

GENERAL DAVID BRAMLETT, Commander, US Army Forces Command, hosted *Torrance Armed Forces Days*, May 15 - 17, 1998, at the Del Amo Mall. The celebration included a parade and displays of equipment, e.g., a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, a 70-ton tank transporter, and a deployable hospital.

### *"THE POSTAL SERVICE REALLY DELIVERS"*

COLUMNIST GEORGE FREDERICKSON IN THE "AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION NATIONAL NEWSLETTER," EXPLAINS WHY. THIS IS THE KIND OF POSITIVE ARTICLE WE LOVE TO SEE! HATS OFF TO THE USPS!

### *PARTICIPATIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION*

We want to compliment the NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION on the public meeting of June 23, 1998, in which concerned citizens, such as academics and genealogists, were afforded the opportunity to provide valuable input concerning space planning and records disposition and location issues. Public fears were allayed and misinformation was corrected. Participant feedback against records digitization focused on costs, poor reproduction quality, and technological obsolescence.

*"Behold, I do not give lectures or a little charity,  
When I give I give myself."  
Walt Whitman*

## CLASS OF 1999 FEB ASSOCIATES

THE FEB LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATES PROGRAM, WHICH RUNS FROM JULY 1998 TO JUNE 1999, REPRESENTS A COST-EFFECTIVE MEANS OF DEVELOPING SKILLED, FUTURE LEADERS. EXECUTIVES APPRECIATE HOW THE PROGRAM BENEFITS BOTH THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE FEDERAL AGENCY. WE WELCOME THE NEW CLASS OF 29 PARTICIPANTS:

customs: Thomas Fitzpatrick, Jeannette Lewis, Timothy Sarnecki, Eleanor Thornton  
army 63rd: farrell j. Chiles  
faa: jeffrey curtis bazemore, arthur m. Lawler, cheryl m. Thompson  
irs: vanessa jean allen, clarita g. Almuets, anita bjornestad, frederick g. Crane, josue ruiz elizalde, francisca c. Farias, jesus franco, antonio gonzalez, james j. Keating, kenneth I. Lester, shirley moss, sandra rodriguez, maria romero, maurice j. Rosaler, eric e. Smith, mary m. Snoddy, gloria d. Turner, rochelle wallace  
west la va medical center: darryl g. Blackwell, richard steven reese, sadie m. Stewart

## 13 Soldiers Making a Difference

How would you like to know that for every dollar you earn, approximately \$300 of illegal drugs are seized? The following ARMY 63RD DIVISION RESERVISTS from California, Arizona, and Nevada on 166-day active duty tours in various intelligence centers have the satisfaction of knowing they are contributing to the work of Joint Task Force-6 and the National Drug Control Program in curtailing the supply of drugs entering our country:

CPT John Hill, 259th MI Gp, US Forestry Service Cleveland, San Diego, CA  
1LT Alan Dadd, 376 AG Bn, US customs Service, El Centro, CA  
SPC Michael Hynes, 155 CSB, US Army S., San Juan, PR  
SPC Kerry Miler, 368th MI, SD/Imperial County Regional Narcotic Information Network, San Diego, CA  
MAJ Victor Sarna, 372d MI, US Border Patrol, Boulevard, CA  
CPT Emily Thomas, 372D MI, Los Angeles, CA  
SSG Raymond Rivera, 7230th IMSU, US Customs Translation Cell, El Paso, TX  
MAJ Robert Spessert, 368th MI, Drug Enforcement Agency, Tucson HIDTA, Tucson, AZ  
MAJ Steven Klingel, 259th MI Gp, US Border Patrol, Imperial, CA  
CPT Christopher Jensen, 5th Bde, 91st Div, US Forestry Service Los Padres, King City, CA  
CW2 William Culver, 259th MI Gp, US Customs Service, Phoenix, AZ  
SGT Lynne Manganaro, 368th MI, US Customs Service, Phoenix, AZ  
CPT Kevin Falk, 372d MI, US Border Patrol, Imperial, CA

## ergonomics

how many hours a day do you spend at your computer?

ergonomics, the science that studies the relationships among your body, your tasks, and your environment, may help you prevent a CTD (cumulative trauma disorder). chances are you know at least one federal employee so disabled. most commonly affected are the hands, arms, neck, or back. symptoms, which may not appear for months or years, include swelling, fatigue, aching, tingling, pain, weakness, & numbness. repetitive tasks, such as typing at your computer, when performed in poor body position, put you at risk for a CTD.

posture check: ask a coworker to photograph you in profile typing at your computer workstation.

1. if you draw a line from your ear to your shoulder to your hips, it should be vertical and perpendicular to the floor.
2. arms and wrists should form a straight line parallel to the floor. watch out for keyboards on desks which are usually too high. use pull-out trays.
3. keep your elbows close to your sides.
4. your knees should be level with your hips or slightly lower.
5. keep your feet flat on the floor, using a footrest if necessary.
6. arrange your workstation with frequently-used items within a 16- inch reach to minimize stretching, twisting, & bending.
7. use a large, cushioned mouse pad or consider alternates to a mouse: cursor keys, keyboard commands, trackballs, touch pads, etc.
8. vary your activities throughout the day and at home.
9. since a healthy blood supply helps tired or damaged tissues recover faster, improve your fitness with at least 30 minutes of daily exercise, eat less fat and more produce, and quit smoking.
10. if you already have symptoms, notify your agency and consult your health care provider without delay.

**REMEMBER THAT PREVENTION IS THE ONLY WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CUMULATIVE TRAUMA!**