



Foundations & Perspectives

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*Brings History to Life***

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Electrician Gene Lewis with Lou Scalfari, deputy facility manager for the Supreme Court, at the annual CFC fundraising breakfast for the AOC and Supreme Court.

Photo by: Steve Payne

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Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough

Keeping the House Office Buildings equipment in excellent shape is the job of the Industrial Mechanics shop.

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Front Cover: Photo by Harry Burnett

In this historic photo from 1964, the first Capitol Christmas Tree — a Douglas fir from Birdsboro, Pennsylvania — was planted on the Capitol's West Front.

Letter from the Architect



During this time of year, our thoughts turn to celebrating the joy of the season with family and friends. It is also a time when AOC employees give back to our communities and demonstrate our commitment to serving others through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Employees can make charitable donations and volunteer, as well as participate in events like the annual CFC charity breakfast, organized by AOC employees working at the Supreme Court of the United States (see page 32). AOC employees at the Supreme Court, like Kris Foote and Lois Ort, exemplify the generous nature and selflessness of our staff.

Another great example of the AOC's values is the new Cooperative Education (Co-op) Program (see page 2). Currently five students — three architecture and two engineering — are enrolled in the program, which matches each student with an AOC employee who serves as their mentor. The experience provides these young people with an appreciation for public service while they are still in school. These students are the future leaders in their fields and we appreciate their contribution.

This fall, we marked the 10th anniversary of September 11, 2001, and remembered the heroes who lost their lives on that tragic day. Thanks to those of you who shared your personal stories and remembrances for inclusion in the AOC's September 11 Remembrance intranet page. The stories illustrated the AOC community's dedication to our nation.

Also this year, we remember the crisis on Capitol Hill when a letter containing anthrax was opened in Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle's office on October 15, 2001 (see page 6). As the deputy superintendent for the Senate Office Buildings at the time, I can vividly recall how the AOC pulled together and provided assistance to the many government agencies that came to test and clean the contaminated buildings. These anniversaries are a somber reminder that each of us should remain vigilant and prepared for any type of emergency that may occur on Capitol Hill. In that vein, I want to also thank the AOC teams that responded after D.C. experienced an earthquake in late August. They ensured the safety and integrity of the buildings after a truly unexpected event, enabling Congress to quickly continue their work.

As we continue to evolve as an agency, we are preparing to launch our five-year strategic plan that lays the groundwork for the AOC's future. Many of you participated in its development and I appreciate your creativity, honesty and ideas that will help to shape an even better AOC. Over the next few months, we will continue to add final details to the plan and begin to share details about the initiatives that we will undertake together to achieve the vision you have crafted.

This issue of *Foundations & Perspectives* really showcases the dedication of you, our valued employees. You demonstrate each and every day what service excellence really means.

Stephen T. Ayers, AIA, LEED AP
Architect of the Capitol

Building and Investing in the Next Generation

Photos by: Lanvi Nguyen

“Children are likely to live up to what you believe in them.”

— Lady Bird Johnson

When Robin Morey graduated from the University of Maryland at College Park with a mechanical engineering degree in 1989, he knew exactly what he wanted to do. He would work full-time at the Naval Surface Warfare Center at Indian Head, Maryland, due to his positive experience in their cooperative education program as an undergraduate. The opportunity to attend school and simultaneously gain valuable work experience gave Robin the skills and confidence to successfully transition from the academic world to the professional. Ten years later, Robin joined the Architect of the Capitol, and in 2006 was promoted to superintendent of the Senate Office Buildings.

The experience of smoothly transitioning from an academic environment into his life’s vocation gave Robin an idea. He wanted to implement a cooperative education program at the AOC. So he pitched the concept to Architect of the Capitol Stephen T. Ayers, who thought it was a great idea and gave Robin his full support.

“In addition to providing on-the-job learning experience, we are acquainting students with our mission, programs and projects.”

Robin worked closely with the Human Capital Management Division to structure the program. In May 2011, the AOC established the Cooperative Education (Co-op) Program, which exposes students to public service, enhances their educational experience and provides financial assistance to support their educational goals. The program also helps the AOC attract and recruit recent graduates for its workforce.

“I wanted to see an increase in the diversity of applicants for engineers and architects at the Architect of the Capitol,” Robin says. “I think this program does that. We’ve been able to talk to schools and students with rich and diverse backgrounds.”

Robert Wied, deputy chief human capital officer for operations, adds, “In addition to providing on-the-job learning experience, we are acquainting students with our mission, programs and projects. We have the opportunity to grow our own talent pool — a pool that understands what we do and how we operate.”

In addition to offering practical work experience, another key component of the Co-op Program is mentorship. Each student is paired with a senior professional as their mentor to help foster growth and development. This mentoring experience provides students with valuable knowledge and solidifies the partnership between the student and the AOC.

“There is no better place to work and gain first-hand experience in architecture, engineering, construction, and fire and life safety systems while having direct interface with your clients,” Robin explains. “When you complete a project, you see the direct effects of your work and how it helps the client. This program gives students that opportunity.”



Edward Kessie discusses a project with mentor Chris Miles, assistant superintendent of the Library Buildings and Grounds.

Currently there are three architecture and two engineering students participating in the Co-op Program. Each student is assigned a mentor. Meet two of the students and one of the mentors.



Edward P. Kessie

*Architecture Student at University of the District of Columbia
Assignment at Library Buildings and Grounds*

Why do you want to be an architect?

When I was about eight years old, I promised my mother that I would design and build her a home. Little did I know then, that promise would lead me down the path to becoming an architect.

What do you hope to gain from this experience?

I hope to gain broad, hands-on, professional experience in all aspects

of architecture as it's practiced on Capitol Hill.

Why do you want to work for the Architect of the Capitol?

I have a great deal of respect and enthusiasm for historic buildings. That said, as an architecture student it's an enormous honor to be afforded the opportunity to help preserve and care for our nation's Capitol.

Who are your role models?

My role models are my mother, Bill Cosby, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Frederick Douglass and Stevand Morris, a.k.a. Stevie Wonder.

What is your favorite building in the world?

My favorite building in the world is Falling Water, by Frank Lloyd Wright.

If you could be the Architect of the Capitol for a day, what would you do?

If I were the Architect of the Capitol for one day, I would combine two of my greatest passions, architecture and working with children. What I would propose is that Congress invite all District of Columbia Public Schools up to the Hill for a day of discovery. So many of these children live in the shadow of the Capitol and yet in their lives they feel completely removed from it. Hopefully by exposing them to the art and architecture of the Capitol, they can make a connection with the greatest buildings in the nation so that when they pass by them in the future, they will feel part of it and not excluded from it.

Assigned to the Senate Office Buildings, Stephanie Perry works closely with Michael Shirven, assistant superintendent of the Senate Office Buildings.

“Working for the Architect of the Capitol is a once in a lifetime opportunity.”



Stephanie O. Perry

*Architecture Student at Catholic University
Assignment at Senate Office Buildings*

Why do you want to be an architect?

Designing has always been a passion of mine. I just love the idea of designing a space that people will use and enjoy for years to come.

What do you hope to gain from this experience?

I hope that I can gain a better knowledge and understanding of how to maintain and preserve our nation’s historic monuments and national treasures.

Why do you want to work for the Architect of the Capitol?

Working for the Architect of the Capitol is a once in a lifetime opportunity; I couldn’t think of a better place for an architecture student living in Washington, D.C., to work.

Who are your role models?

My parents have always been my role models — they taught me that when you work hard you can achieve any goal.

What is your favorite building in the world?

There are so many great buildings all over the world, but I would have to say that my house back in California is my favorite building in the world. I helped my father renovate it over the years and I have so many great memories there. Ultimately, that is what I hope to accomplish with the buildings that I design for others: I want to create homes where people can create their own great memories.

If you could be the Architect of the Capitol for a day, what would you do?

I would make sure that congressional appropriators consistently provide adequate funding to maintain the aesthetic and structural integrity of the U.S. Capitol. It should be beyond politics to protect one of our nation’s most revered buildings.



Mark Reed

*Mentor
Assistant Superintendent of the House Office Buildings*

Each student is paired with a senior professional as their mentor to help foster growth and development.

Mentors like Mark Reed, assistant superintendent of the House Office Buildings, share their wealth of knowledge and experience with the students who participate in the AOC's Co-op Program.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

For critical decision-making, it is important to understand what it is you have to gain and lose. This understanding should lead to a much easier decision.

What do you wish you knew when you were in college?

Good communication is as important to success as technical ability. Further, good communication is not defined by quantity, but rather understanding your audience and providing the level of information that is important to them.

Why do you like being a mentor?

I enjoy helping others develop professionally, and understand the challenges and rewards of facility maintenance. Mentoring allows me to share in the successes of the individual, and also to foster a relationship that ultimately benefits both the mentored person and the AOC.

— By Shalley Kim

“I enjoy helping others develop professionally, and understand the challenges and rewards of facility maintenance.”



Ten Years Later:

Photos by: Steve Payne

AOC Remembers the Anthrax Attacks

October 15, 2001...

an anthrax-tainted letter was opened in the office of Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, located in the Hart Senate Office Building. An aide had opened the envelope, postmarked in Trenton, New Jersey, and the dry powder inside was immediately deemed suspicious.

October 17, 2001

U.S. Capitol, House and Senate Office Buildings closed for evaluation

October 22, 2001

U.S. Capitol reopens

October 24, 2001

Russell Senate Office Building reopens

October 25, 2001

Rayburn and Cannon House Office Buildings reopen

October 26, 2001

Dirksen Senate Office Building and Ford House Office Building reopen

November 5, 2001

Longworth House Office Building reopens

December 11, 2001

USBG Conservatory opens to the public

January 23, 2002

Hart Senate Office Building reopens

Within hours, the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) had cordoned off the area and began testing to determine the exact nature of the substance. It was confirmed to be anthrax. When used as a biological weapon, anthrax spores can be lethal if inhaled or ingested.

As stewards of the buildings on Capitol Hill, the AOC's expertise was immediately sought in the early hours of the crisis.

A number of AOC employees responded to the situation developing in Senator Daschle's office. Scott Birkhead, deputy director of engineering at the time, was one of the first to report to the office and offer assistance. A long-time AOC employee, Birkhead had been heavily involved in the construction of the Hart Building, which was first occupied in 1982. His vast knowledge of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system in the Hart Building was needed to determine the potential air pathways and how the toxic substance could travel throughout the building.

Also on the scene was Rob Davis, then supervisor of the Senate HVAC shop. He was charged with securing the Hart Building ventilation system and supporting USCP testing efforts.

Just a little more than a month after the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Capitol was under attack.

Two days later on October 17, all of the buildings on Capitol Hill that directly received mail were closed, including the U.S. Capitol and the House and Senate office buildings. Susan Adams, serving at the time as the AOC's executive officer for Facilities Management, was supposed to be spending that evening celebrating her fourteenth wedding anniversary with her husband. Instead, she found herself at the USCP Headquarters late into the night, providing support for one of the largest emergencies Capitol Hill had ever faced.



A HAZMAT team enters the Dirksen Building during the early days of the anthrax crisis, looking for additional evidence of contaminated mail.

“There was a possibility that another letter was still in circulation, and every building that received mail had to be shut down and sampled,” recalls Adams.

With the Capitol Hill buildings closed, a majority of AOC employees were sent home, keeping only essential AOC personnel on the scene to provide facilities and equipment coordination and expertise.

A Command Center was established in the building known as the Crib, formerly the Senate Daycare Center, and located near the USCP Headquarters.

As stewards of the buildings on Capitol Hill, the AOC’s expertise was immediately sought in the early hours of the crisis.

Government agencies from all over the United States were dispatched to the scene for the proceeding investigation and cleanup, including: the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Marine Corps. Some of the responding personnel had never stepped foot in Washington, D.C., let alone the buildings on Capitol Hill.



The building known as the Crib, located near the USCP Headquarters, became the first Command Center during the investigation.



Mail drops, such as this one in the Dirksen Building, were a part of the building's original design. Since the anthrax attacks, they have been closed and sealed.

(then known as IRM) was located in the Ford Building, with their secondary IT disaster recovery site positioned in the Hart Building. With both the Ford and Hart Buildings shut down for the foreseeable future, the AOC's IT service was seriously hampered, although the systems continued to operate. The closures compelled the IRM staff to be creative and find new ways of providing IT service.

According to Billy Louis, then the IRM's chief of the network systems branch, "The experience was very surreal — and we all knew that things were going to be very different in the future."

As the number of support personnel flooded the initial Command Center in the Crib, it became apparent that additional space was needed. The potential building had to be close in proximity to the contamination zone and large enough to handle dozens of personnel, in addition to being a building that had not directly received mail.

All eyes fell to the one unoccupied building that seemed to fit the bill.

"I received a call on a weekend to report to work immediately," recalls U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG) Executive Director Holly Shimizu.

"The experience was very surreal — and we all knew that things were going to be very different in the future."

"The AOC was there to provide logistical support and facility coordination," Adams says. "That meant we provided the other agencies with necessities such as building floor plans and maps, keys, information and access — anything related to the buildings that was needed, we supplied."

With the closing of the buildings, including the Ford House Office Building, it was soon discovered that access to critical information such as drawings, floor plans and personnel records was, in many cases, unattainable. At the time, redundant backup systems were not in place and mobile phones were in limited use across the agency.

The headquarters of the AOC Information Technology Division

The USBG Conservatory had recently undergone a four-year renovation, and in anticipation of a November 2001 opening, was completing last-minute construction items.

In the span of a weekend, “the Conservatory was transformed into Command Center offices,” Shimizu remembers. “The AOC turned the Conservatory into a functioning office building.”

Galleries that were intended to house plants and flowers were instead turned into offices. Walls of windows meant to bathe the spaces with sunlight were covered to deter prying eyes. White noise generators were placed throughout the building to prevent the recording of sensitive conversations.

“The entire Conservatory was buzzing with people,” Shimizu recalls. “There were so many things to coordinate and so many different groups represented.”

Similar to the other responding agencies, the AOC occupied a desk in the Conservatory that was staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Employees worked in shifts to answer the phone and respond to any and all questions that the investigation and clean up teams might have. For those assigned this duty, weekends were non-existent and the hours were incredibly long.

Scott Birkhead worked for 37 days straight following the discovery in Senator Daschle’s office. “Sometimes my wife and daughters would meet



Botanic Garden employees made an American flag out of flowers after the September 11, 2001 attacks and placed it in front of the Conservatory, which became the second Command Center during the anthrax investigation. At right, employees man the AOC desk in the Crib.

me at Union Station for dinner, then they would drive home and I would head back to work,” Birkhead recalls.

Photographer Steve Payne, who had been assigned to photograph the incident response, requested one day of leave in December for a very special occasion. “I was told at first that I was to report to work that day regardless of my plans — but then I explained why I had to take the day off. It was my wedding day.”

Although the USBG staff was now supporting the Command Center and playing host to dozens of personnel,



they tried to continue planting where appropriate and prepare the building for the inevitable public opening. Luckily the location provided respite for the employees working incredibly long hours.

According to Bruce Arthur, at the time the director of the AOC Architecture Division, “One of the unforeseen positives of working in the Conservatory was that when you needed to get away from it all, you

“The entire Conservatory was buzzing with people,” Shimizu recalls. “There were so many things to coordinate and so many different groups represented.”

Desks were set up in the Conservatory's West Gallery, and AOC employees (from left) Kevin Hildebrand, Scott Birkhead and Susan Adams answered questions about the Capitol buildings.

didn't have to leave the building. Sometimes at night I would walk along the catwalk in the Jungle, where you could see the Capitol Dome all lit up."

Says Birkhead with a chuckle, "I'd never been in an office with palm trees before."

As the investigation and clean up continued, it became clear that the Hart Building would need to be isolated from the Dirksen Building, as they are connected in multiple locations on every floor. AOC Construction Branch workers trained in asbestos removal met this challenge. Wearing personal protective equipment, they entered the contaminated Hart Building and constructed walls to separate the two buildings, thereby enabling the Dirksen Building to be reoccupied, while solutions for eradicating the remaining anthrax in the Hart Building were explored.

One potential EPA proposal was to pump a gas into the building that could kill the remaining anthrax spores. The treatment, however, had never been tested on an entire building.

"What everyone realized is that Senators have fine art in their offices," Arthur explains. "How would



the paintings react when exposed to this gas? Would they survive?"

The survival of the artwork was a tremendous concern for the AOC Curator Division and the Office of the Senate Curator. The curator offices, along with Arthur and his team, sought the counsel of the National Gallery of Art to determine a solution and address the concerns for the paintings. The Gallery was able to provide samples of the types of art materials they would encounter in a Senator's office, which were then gassed to see the effects.

Unfortunately, the gas was incredibly destructive. It was determined that the best way to save the artwork

was for each item to undergo decontamination in the Hart Building and then the pieces would be stored in the Dirksen Building until the Hart Building was once again safe for occupancy.

Once the fine art was removed and other preparations carried out, the Hart Building was decontaminated with a gas, thereby ridding it of any remaining anthrax spores.

Rob Davis and his Senate HVAC shop employees were also on call and available for special projects, like making repairs to decontamination rooms and barriers as needed. Since the shop's tools were trapped in the Senate office buildings, Davis



“For many people, the Conservatory really became home to them. We tried our best to be good hosts.”

all pulled together as a team during this trying event.”

Over at the Conservatory, the Command Center activities began winding down in late November, leaving the Hart Building as the only facility still closed for clean up. The official Conservatory opening had been delayed for a month — pushing the opening into the middle of December — which is traditionally a busy time for the USBG. According to Holly Shimizu, the annual holiday display was created in a mere seven days, which during normal circumstances takes two to three weeks to construct.

“For many people, the Conservatory really became home to them,” Shimizu recalls. “We tried our best to be good hosts. When you work on Capitol Hill, you have to be flexible. That’s just the nature of the place.”

During the anthrax investigation, large containers were brought in to hold all of the incoming mail before it could be processed in a secure environment.

worked with his Capitol counterpart to borrow the necessary tools and find workspace.

“Everyone did what was needed to support the effort, including monitoring the tent heaters at the USCP Headquarters parking

lot, which provided meals for the support agencies, and emptying the building’s trash when necessary,” Davis recalls. “There was really no set schedule at this time — you could be called in the middle of the night to answer a question — but we





Senator Daschle's office in the Hart Building required the most extensive cleaning to ensure the anthrax spores had been eliminated.

When the Hart Building had finally undergone the decontamination process and preparations were underway for the reopening, AOC employees worked to restore the building to its prior state. "There were dead plants in the offices, trash in the waste baskets and rotting food in the refrigerators and vending machines," recalls Adams. "We did our best to return the building to its condition before the attacks."

On January 23, 2002, more than three months after the anthrax spores were first detected in Senator Daschle's office, the Hart Building reopened for occupancy.

"Everyone at the AOC really rose to the occasion and was willing to

support the effort in any way they could," Birkhead says. "There was a real can-do attitude among AOC employees and the dedication of the workers was really outstanding."

AOC 10 Years Later

Ten years after the anthrax emergency on Capitol Hill, the AOC has continued to evolve to meet the challenges imposed by new security realities. Disaster preparedness has become a key pillar of the agency's safety and security planning in order to ensure the safety of employees and the AOC's recovery after a potential emergency situation.

"AOC Security Programs strives to ensure that the security of the

Capitol buildings and grounds is maintained by supporting the USCP in this endeavor," explains Ken Eads, director of AOC Security Programs, a position that was created in the years following the 2001 attacks.

With a staff of 16, Security Programs provides a central location for all security-related issues and provides assistance for any buildings and grounds security enhancements.

"The AOC took away many lessons learned from the anthrax attacks experience," says Susan Adams, now the director of Safety, Fire and Environmental Programs. These enhancements



When each member of the AOC team knows and understands what to do in the event of an emergency, safety and security is enhanced for all.

At right: John Campbell from the Capitol Grounds Masonry Shop planted flowers in preparation for the reopening of the Hart Building.

“We are continually looking at ways to make improvements to the security on Capitol Hill, yet retain the openness needed for members of Congress and the public to interact,” Eads says. In direct response to the anthrax attacks, all mail and cargo bound for the Capitol buildings and grounds undergoes an extensive screening process to ensure the integrity of the delivered items.



include better planning for disaster scenarios, a more robust emergency preparedness program, alternate access to necessary tools and drawings, and improved security infrastructure.

Working in such a unique environment, AOC employees are reminded to remain vigilant and report activities or situations that seem suspicious to a USCP officer. “If you see something, say

something,” Eads says. “The USCP can’t see everything — you can contribute to security by speaking up if you see something suspicious.”

When each member of the AOC team knows and understands what to do in the event of an emergency, safety and security is enhanced for all. This knowledge allows the AOC to serve Congress and preserve the Capitol’s buildings and grounds, a job entrusted to us by the American people, and a responsibility every employee takes very seriously.

— *By Kristen Wandell*

AOC workers created a privacy partition in front of the main Hart Building entrance in preparation for the final decontamination process.



Baking up a New Batch of *Technology*

Foundations & Perspectives caught up with Jay Wiegmann, AOC's new Chief Information Officer (CIO), and discussed how he plans to use his experience with complex companies like AT&T, and mission-critical operations such as those he managed as CIO for Intelligence and Counterintelligence at the Department of Energy, to help the AOC rapidly advance to a new era in technology.

F&P: First, what is a CIO and what does it do?

Jay: A CIO is often known as the "IT" guy, but it is a lot more than that. The most important role for a CIO is to listen to his customers and help them find the best technology solution for their needs. It is also equally important that he helps prevent bad technology from being purchased, especially to match a bad business solution.

What brought you to the AOC?

New challenges. I had been the CIO at the Department of Energy for seven years and had taken it as far as it could go. I was also excited about the opportunity to work for the AOC with its unique mission.

What most surprised you when you arrived?

I spent 20 years at AT&T, a very large company comprised of competing business units, each with unique customers and cultures. I was surprised to find the same challenge

here within an agency this small. But I am quickly learning the unique features of each of the AOC jurisdictions, and how they serve their customers.

What most excites you about this opportunity?

Coffee — kidding of course. For me it is the immediacy of the impact the changes we make can have. There is opportunity for the improvements we make to have an almost instant effect for our customers.

What is your first priority?

When I started and realized how old some of our technology is here at AOC, I laughed and said they needed a curator, not a CIO.

“The most important role for a CIO is to listen to his customers and help them find the best technology solution for their needs.”



So my first priority is to update our equipment and software, much of which is more than 10 years old. The standard lifecycle in technology is three to four years maximum. Technology doesn't stand still.

What are your other priorities?

We need to bring technology tools to the user — not users to the technology. AOC is a highly mobile workforce, and we need to enable it to have the technology in-hand. In the near future it would not be surprising to have a front line employee have more capability in their smartphone than a supervisor has sitting at a desk. I have really ambitious ideas for the agency of what we can do to exploit mobile

Jay Wiegmann's favorite things: good cookies and good technology.

devices. We can become much less paper dependent. We can bring email, work orders and other tools to the employee as they meet with their customer.

What is your greatest challenge?

ITD employees need to go beyond the Ford Building and get to know what everyone around the campus is doing. We need to get outside our internal business of ITD and really understand all the business of AOC — not just the IT business.

How can ITD catch up and then keep pace with the rapid change in technology?

We need to move very quickly. We are not breaking new ground here. This [mobile] technology is already being exploited by government and businesses all over the place. We can rapidly get tools like iPhones and iPads into the hands of employees and have already begun a pilot project. In the next couple of years you are going to see a huge transformation across the AOC where these tools are not for playing games but bringing value to the customer and improving customer service. Imagine a building inspector being able to snap a geo-coded picture on her iPhone and immediately start the work order process. Meanwhile across campus a visitor assistant is able to confirm a CVC tour reservation, regardless of their location. Then imagine an employee

broadcasting a live video feed to his boss, who quickly pulls up historical data from TMA [AOC's work order system] — all from an iPhone, all in real-time and all just a tap away. You are going to be amazed by the transformation.

Do you think AOC employees will have a challenge adapting to the new technology?

I think all of our employees are sophisticated users of technology already. They use it in their personal lives to talk to their kids, watch videos and do their banking. No one needed to teach them or show them how to do it.

What do you do for fun?

As sad and pathetic as it sounds — I love to program and I like to think of myself as a “recovering” computer programmer, having done it for many, many years. But I also love to cook, especially baking, and have a few recipes I am known for. I also love to woodwork, especially building furniture and restoring old furniture. For example, I found a table someone threw out and I stripped it down and restored it — it is a beautiful piece.

What else is important for people to know about your role?

I need your help. I believe strongly in the value of crowdsourcing. All of you know the business of AOC — I will never know every aspect of the business as well as you do.

I need your ideas on how we can use technology to help you. Send your ideas and thoughts to me at cio@aoc.gov.

What do you want employees to know most about you?

I am very enthusiastic about the mission. At the end of the day I want to serve and help my customers better serve their customers. It is an important mission and I look forward to supporting it. Look, I love being here. I'd do this for free. Don't mention that last part to Mr. Ayers. Okay?

— *By Matt Guilfoyle*

To view Jay's cookie recipe, scan the QR code below or visit www.aoc.gov.



To read this code, download a free QR reader app on your smart phone.



U.S. Capitol Visitor Center Brings History to Life



Photo: AOC Archives



Photo: Library of Congress Archives

Union troops in front of the Capitol at the start of the Civil War. At right: Exhibits Coordinator Carol Beebe adjusts a photograph in one of the cases in Exhibition Hall of Private Samuel H. Decker whose hands were destroyed in a gun accident.

The Capitol Rises During the Civil War

Walk through the U.S. Capitol in the winter when a fireplace is working, and the smoky smell of burning wood might transport you to the 1800s, when during the Civil War, the building housed its own bakery to help feed the troops who were temporarily garrisoned for about a month at the Capitol.

The fourth Architect of the Capitol, Thomas U. Walter, provided a vivid description of the scene at the Capitol at that time. In May 1861, he wrote to his wife, “There are 4,000 in the Capitol, with all their provisions, ammunition and baggage, and the smell is awful. The building is like one grand water closet — every hole and corner is defiled ... the stench is so terrible I have refused to take my office into the building. It is sad to see the defacement of the building everywhere.”

Overrun with soldiers and supplies, there was inevitable damage to the building. Smoke from the ovens caused damage to the books and works of art in the Library of Congress, which at the time was housed in the Capitol. According to Walter, “the Senate chamber [was] alive with lice.”

After the Second Battle of Bull Run in August 1862, the Capitol was again requisitioned for alternative use — this time for six weeks as a hospital. Beds were set up in the Rotunda, the House Chamber and the corridors in between.

On May 15, 1861, Montgomery C. Meigs, quartermaster general of the Army, issued an order stopping construction on the Capitol, and the contractors working on the Dome — Janes, Fowler, Kirtland and Company — were advised two days later by the Secretary of



War Edwin Stanton, not to expect payment for their work until the country's financial outlook improved. Nevertheless, the contractors decided that with more than one million pounds of iron stockpiled on the site, it was in their best interests to continue working.

"The sound of the hammer [was never] stopped on the national Capitol a single moment during all our civil troubles," according to the 1862 Annual Report of the Architect of the Capitol Extension.

AOC staff is providing the public with a glimpse of what was happening at the Capitol and in Congress during that historic conflict.

Spotlighting Civil War History at the Capitol

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil

War, AOC staff in the Capitol Visitor Center's (CVC) Exhibits and Education Division is providing the public with a glimpse of what was happening at the Capitol and in Congress during that historic conflict.

CVC Exhibits and Education Division team members Carol Beebe, Karin Johnston, Andrea Lewis, Maria Marable-Bunch and Kathi Vestal have been integrally involved in putting together an intriguing selection of Civil War-related documents and artifacts on loan from the Library of Congress and the National Archives for display in the CVC's Exhibition Hall.

They have also prepared activities for the public and teachers that complement the display to help explain



Registrar Karin Johnston examines artifacts from the Library of Congress, (left to right): 1864 Port Royal band book open to, “Star Spangled Banner;” Affidavit of Kimbo, a Mendi man, reviewed by John Quincy Adams in preparation for his defense of the Amistad captives; hand-colored lithograph of the “terrific combat between the ‘Monitor’ and ‘Merrimac;”” Ambrotype portrait of an African American soldier during the Civil War.



how Congress ran the country, funded battles and struggled to survive in the face of the extraordinary politics associated with a devastating civil war.

Planning the Civil War Display

Beebe, Johnston, Lewis and Marable-Bunch have worked together since

before the CVC opened in December 2008, so they are accustomed to coordinating efforts.

“This is the first time that all of the display cases in the front of Exhibition Hall have related to a central theme, so we’ve had to look at the Civil War through the lenses of the six aspirational themes from the Constitution that provide an outline for each of our rotating exhibits,” says Exhibits Coordinator Carol Beebe. Beebe has worked for the AOC since 2002, the first six years as a member of the CVC Project Office, which existed before the CVC was even built. As the exhibits coordinator, it is her job to corral the content and develop the themes for each new display.

“This is the first time that all of the display cases in the front of Exhibition Hall have related to a central theme.”

Planning for this exhibit began a year and a half ago when Beebe brought together a large content working group made up of the Exhibits and Education Division team, House and Senate historians, and representatives from the Library of Congress and the National Archives for a general discussion of the display.

The documents and artifacts in the CVC's environmental storage room are kept at a constant 70 degrees, plus or minus three degrees.



A smaller working group made up of Library of Congress and National Archives staff then searched their collections for the specific documents, photographs and other artifacts that would be visually interesting and best exemplify the Civil War themes of the exhibit.

Transporting and Installing Priceless Artifacts

Once the items to be displayed were chosen and approved, Exhibits Registrar Karin Johnston

handled all of the loan agreements with the four institutions whose items would be featured in the display. As registrar, she is responsible for the care and handling of the valuable documents and artifacts.

Johnston also handled the sometimes complicated arrangements for the transportation of these items. "Moving items from the Library of Congress was relatively easy," says Johnston, "as the Library is connected to the CVC by tunnel so the items could be transferred by cart."

Transporting objects from the National Archives was more complex, according to Johnston, as it involved the U.S. Capitol Police, who brought a canine unit to the Archives to inspect the CVC's aluminum packing crates that were then loaded into an Archives van and escorted by the USCP to the Capitol.

Johnston received the documents and artifacts in the CVC's environmental storage room, which is kept at a constant 70 degrees, plus or minus three degrees, where they acclimated in the crates for about 24 hours before they were readied for display.

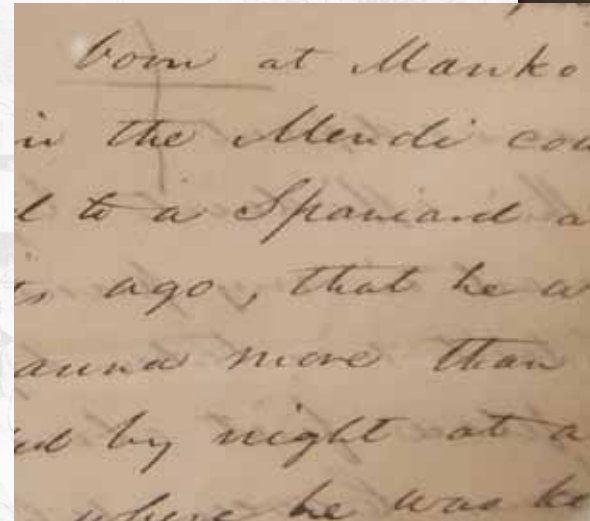
With the assistance of contracted exhibit fabricators, Beebe and Johnston spent an entire weekend installing the display. Using the following week to correct any glitches in the display process, the CVC officially opened the exhibit on Monday, September 19.

Included in the display are hand-typed personal stories and photographs of former slaves. Visitors will also see a hand-colored lithograph on loan from the Library of Congress that depicts the first-ever battle between ironclad warships.

Decoding History Exhibits and Education Division Public Program

Coordinators Andrea Lewis and Maria Marable-Bunch are responsible for helping the public understand and interpret the exhibit.

“We want to provide visitors with a window into the bigger story.”



Lewis helped train CVC volunteers who provide family programs in Exhibition Hall for visitors with children, and she also worked to set up roving “artifact carts” staffed by CVC volunteers who help visitors understand what is in the display by allowing them to touch replicas of documents and objects.

“Let’s face it — documents by themselves can be intimidating,” says Lewis. “So you’ve got to explain that these documents were written by people who were really upset about something — people who wanted others to pay attention to what they were saying. You’ve got to show visitors how the authors put ‘bling’ into what they wrote.”

Marable-Bunch provides resources for a different audience. Through the CVC website, Marable-Bunch created teaching tools to help educators prepare students for visiting the Capitol or studying about it. According to Marable-Bunch, an online version of the current exhibit as well as a special Civil War microsite offer teachers resources they can’t get anywhere else and allow them to use primary documents for their research.

Vestal, the team’s administrative support assistant, who has been with the AOC since February 2010, worked with CVC Webmaster Jason Hendricks to upload images and text and create webpages for artifacts and documents for the microsite and the online exhibition.

The five Exhibits and Education Division team members hope that showcasing original documents and artifacts will enrich and expand a visitor’s experience at the Capitol. “With all the work that Karin and I do to get the documents in the cases, these documents are often impenetrable, and it’s through the programming and activities and resources that Andrea and Maria provide that they come to life,” says Beebe.

“Ultimately,” says Marable-Bunch, “we want to provide visitors with a window into the bigger story about what was happening in Congress and at the Capitol during this critical period in our nation’s history, and we want them to ask themselves, ‘what does this have to do with me?’”

— *By Sharon Gang*



Public Program Coordinator Andrea Lewis provides visitors with the opportunity to explore the materials used in building the Capitol.



To read this code, download a free QR reader app on your smart phone.

CVC guides provide special Civil War-themed tours of the Capitol Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. CVC visitor assistants provide tours of Exhibition Hall at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 3 p.m.

To view the CVC's website, including the online exhibition, the Civil War microsite and the new "Civil War and the Capitol" brochure (also available in hard copy at the CVC), scan the QR code at left or visit www.visitthecapitol.gov.

Follow the CVC's Civil War historical messages on Twitter: @visitthecapitol

The Civil War documents and artifacts will be on display in Exhibition Hall through March 2012.

*Behind the Scenes, but
not Waiting in the Wings*

Industrial Mechanics

Photos by: Dewitt Roseborough

Equivalent in size to six Empire State Buildings, the buildings of the U.S. Congress and Supreme Court must be operational at all times to ensure the continuity of our democracy. Maintaining them at the highest level possible demands the best effort of the employees of the Architect of the Capitol and their equipment — they can't afford to go without critical equipment for even one night.

17.4 million square feet

45 major facilities

24 hours a day

365 days a year

So, who do AOC employees in the House Office Buildings, responsible for 3.9 million square feet of space, turn to for service on equipment that's often one-of-a-kind, knowing repairs have to be done fast and done right every time to avoid interrupting the business of Congress? They turn to the fastest and highest quality mechanics they can find: the AOC House Office Buildings' Industrial Mechanics shop.

Dan Murphy, assistant superintendent of the House Office Buildings, says, "AOC always works behind the

scenes, but this crew is who's behind the behind-the-scenes crews, so most people have never heard of them. But without them, everything we do would take much longer and cost much more."

Industrial Mechanic Equipment Leader Brian Bradley says that although his crew works behind the scenes, they don't just wait in the wings. Rather, they try to avoid the need for repairs. "We perform regularly scheduled preventative maintenance on all of it," says Bradley. "In fact, we've been

“AOC always works behind the scenes, but this crew is who’s behind the behind-the-scenes crews.”

designated by some manufacturers as certified service providers.”

In addition to all the standard equipment that his crew maintains — including floor scrubbers, forklifts, pallet jacks, balers, lifts, fire doors and garage doors — “Anything someone else can’t fix ends up down in our shop,” explains Bradley. That’s no wonder, since the Industrial Mechanics crew is skilled in electronics, hydraulics, electrical and mechanical systems, and can perform welding and metal fabrication.

All of those disciplines were needed when the trash truck lift at the Rayburn House Office Building loading dock failed. This was no small problem since every day Rayburn Building cleaning crews fill 225 1-cubic yard trash trucks, which can hold up to 1,000 pounds each.

Fork Lift Operator France Chambers said it was unreliable and unsafe. “It would raise up, but wouldn’t tilt all the way over, so you had to use a stick to push it over further for the trash to come out.” Electrician Audrey Swann was president of the Jurisdiction Occupational Safety and Health (JOSH) Committee when Laborer Levon Bennett alerted the group to the problem. “The lift was just not safe,” Swann says.

The House Office Building’s safety committee recommended a new, safer lift, which was installed, but operators found that despite the manufacturer’s assurances, it couldn’t handle the long workdays.

The problem, Bradley explains, is that “the hydraulic fluid had to cool for two to three hours after one hour of operation.” In addition, when crews washed the loading dock, the electronics in the lift got wet, causing it to malfunction.

After listening to what the lift operators needed, the Industrial Mechanics team got together and brainstormed. Industrial Mechanic Edward Lindsay came up with a solution: moving the hydraulics and electronics safely out of the way by mounting them to the wall next to the lift. The team also dramatically increased the size of the hydraulic system.

The result is a system that is “100 percent better,” according to Chambers. “It’s a lot safer, so nobody will get hurt.”

Another safety hazard was right next to the trash truck lift on the loading dock, which is used by truck drivers and AOC laborers. “There was a heavy metal ramp that they connected from any truck

to the dock. For the taller trucks, it got pretty steep,” says Bradley. “If someone was coming down it with a heavy load on a pallet jack, they couldn’t slow down and it would smack into the walls.”

AOC laborers, concerned that someone would get injured using the ramp, researched a solution and proposed an electric lift system. After it was installed, Industrial Mechanics and the lift operators got together to address a serious safety concern as well as a maintenance problem. Industrial Mechanic Fred Blake, Jr. stepped up with some excellent suggestions and the Industrial Mechanics team went to work.



Industrial Mechanic Equipment Leader Brian Bradley tests the pressure switch on the loading dock leveler in the Rayburn Building.

One of the repairs made by the Industrial Mechanics shop to the new trash truck lift included mounting the hydraulics and electronics to the wall next to the lift.

Originally, the controls to raise and lower the lift were mounted on a 25-foot cable, allowing someone at either end of the lift to use them. However, the cable was too long for the small, busy lift area and was run over several times by pallet jacks, requiring Blake and the rest of the mechanics to repair it.

The Industrial Mechanics shop determined that the controls should be mounted to the frame of the lift with the cable run inside the lift frame to protect it. But when Bradley asked the drivers and laborers where he should mount them, “The truck drivers wanted the controls at the truck end, while the laborers wanted them at the dock end,” explains Bradley. Displaying Solomonian wisdom, Industrial Mechanics split the cable and mounted controls at each end.

“All the drivers love it. They say that they wish they could have it at some of the other locations they deliver to,” says Swann.

As Industrial Mechanics worked on the lift, they also noticed that when



it lowered, there was a risk that someone standing on the dock to receive cargo could have their toes crushed or amputated between the descending lift platform and the dock.

“It was a huge pinch point,” says Bradley. He installed a pressure plate on the bottom of the leveler that meets OSHA standards. “It stops the lift from going down if it encounters only three pounds of pressure, so you can pull your foot out.” He also wired the safety mechanism so that it doesn’t shut off the lift. “You can raise it to release whatever’s underneath.”

Collaborating with Industrial Mechanics on these projects made it easy to successfully complete them, Swann explains. “Everybody wants it to be safe. Everybody wants it done right. Everybody’s good at what they do.”

Stopping when descending wasn’t the problem that brought Industrial Mechanics to the cardboard baler. The limit switch that normally stops the baler as it rises, compacting cardboard for recycling, had gotten out of sync, allowing the platform to rise too far and inadvertently peeling back a section of steel plate in the baler frame. For safety reasons, Industrial Mechanics installed a second, fail-safe limit switch and rebuilt the controls.

“Originally, this had 220 volts coming straight to the control switches, so if it wasn’t grounded, that would have gone straight through whoever

“Without them, the trash doesn’t get removed, the floors don’t get cleaned, the garage doors don’t open, and nobody can deliver anything to the buildings.”

touched the controls,” says Bradley. “We installed a new control panel and stepped down all the controls and safety switches to 24 volts control voltage to protect the operators and mechanics.”

Repairing the steel plate was more challenging, however. Lindsay and his crew found that it was welded securely in place and would have to be cut out of the frame. This work had to be carefully scheduled to ensure it wouldn’t interrupt the functioning of the baler and therefore cardboard collection from members’ offices.

Custom solutions like this are common for Industrial Mechanics since much of the equipment they work on is old, and sometimes originally installed when the buildings were constructed. In addition, the equipment was often custom-built.

“There’s no owner’s manual,” says Bradley. “The manufacturer, if they still exist, can’t help unless we write a contract with them, which could take months. So, to keep the buildings running, we have to fix it ourselves.”

In the Rayburn Building garage, this meant building a new power washer and mounting it to a vehicle.

“The ramps build up a lot of soot. We were lacking in the detail work, like corners and edges,” says Vincent Incitto, supervisor of the day Labor Division who was, at the time, assistant supervisor of the night



Labor Division. “They used to bring a small, portable power washer down there, but it’s a never-ending battle. By the time you get done at one end, which is going to be months, the other areas are all dirty.”

Industrial Mechanics Derek Matthews and Jeffrey Weiskott mounted all the gear for a power washer — including a 100-gallon tank, water pump, hose reel, washer wand and a gasoline motor to power it all — in the bed of an all-terrain vehicle.

“We thought a truck might be too large and that this would be easier to maneuver,” says Weiskott. This not only met current needs, but also any potential future needs.

“We also put all the equipment on a steel pallet that we can lift out of the vehicle if we need to use it for something else.”

This kind of planning for the unexpected is standard for Industrial Mechanics. They understand that AOC’s ability to maintain

Industrial Mechanics Jeff Weiskott and Derek Matthews perform maintenance on the cardboard baler to ensure its continued function.

the buildings of the Capitol and serve members of Congress would dramatically decrease without these behind-the-scenes workers.

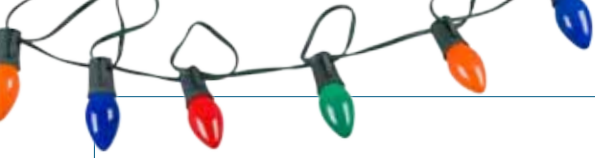
Dan Murphy sums up the importance of the Industrial Mechanics crew. “Without them, the trash doesn’t get removed, the floors don’t get cleaned, the garage doors don’t open, and nobody can deliver anything to the buildings.”

— *By Franklin Bradley*

To see a short video of these machines operating, scan the code below or visit www.aoc.gov.



To read this code, download a free QR reader app on your smart phone.



A Holiday Tradition:

AOC Trims the Tree



“When the lights of the Capitol Christmas Tree are finally turned on, everyone has that ‘ahh’ moment,” says Tree Surgeon Supervisor George Rollins.

In 1970, the current tradition of the United States Forest Service providing the tree began.

Rollins has served with the Architect of the Capitol for 30 years and the moment of the official Christmas tree lighting by the Speaker of the House each year never gets old. It’s when the hard work that the AOC has been performing — around the clock and behind the scenes — finally pays off.

The Capitol Christmas Tree tradition has been an AOC responsibility for nearly 50 years. In 1964, House

Speaker John W. McCormack suggested to Architect of the Capitol George Stewart that a Christmas tree be placed on the U.S. Capitol Grounds. That year, a live 24-foot Douglas fir was purchased for \$700 from Buddies Nurseries of Birdsboro, Pennsylvania, and was planted on the West Front lawn.

Each year through 1967, this tree was decorated and a tree-lighting

Architect of the Capitol Stephen Ayers was present for the 2010 Capitol Christmas Tree delivery.



Photo courtesy of: U.S. Forest Service

Above: The 2010 Capitol Christmas Tree from Wyoming made a stop in front of the Grand Tetons before its long journey to the U.S. Capitol. Below: In 2009, Capitol Christmas Tree Project Manager Rick Davalos met with Ted Bechtol at the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest in Arizona.

ceremony was held. Unfortunately, due to a combination of factors — including a severe windstorm in the spring of 1967 and root damage — the tree died and was removed a year later.

The 1968 Christmas tree was made from two white pines from Finksburg, Maryland, and was 30 feet tall; the 1969 tree was a 40-foot white pine from Westminster, Maryland. In 1970, the current tradition of the United States Forest Service providing the tree began.

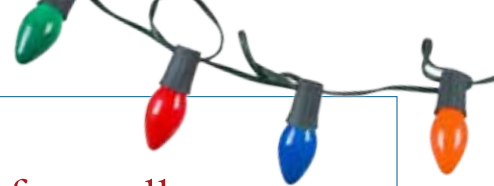
Generally, the responsibility for providing a tree rotates through the nine national regions of the Forest Service. During the summer, the host Forest Service staff nominate about a dozen potential Capitol Christmas trees. These trees are carefully measured, photographed and mapped and this information is then shared with the Architect of the Capitol. Ted Bechtol, superintendent of the AOC Capitol Grounds Division, reviews this information when he visits each of the candidate trees to make the final selection.



Photo courtesy of: Ted Bechtol



Photos by: Steve Payne



The ideal tree is 60 to 90 feet tall. It must be healthy, have good growth and density, and be rich in color.



Bechtol considers many criteria when selecting the Capitol Christmas Tree. The ideal tree is 60 to 90 feet tall. It must be healthy, have good growth and density, and be rich in color. The tree must be straight and perfectly conical in shape.

“It is positioned out in the open of the Capitol’s West Front lawn, visible from 360 degrees,” says Bechtol. “Unlike at home, you cannot hide the bad side of the tree in the corner of a room.”

The Capitol Christmas Tree becomes the responsibility of the AOC when the U.S. Forest Service delivers it to First Street each year after the Thanksgiving holiday. The AOC Construction Division staff use a large mobile crane to lift the massive tree off of the trailer. From that moment, AOC staff has about 10 days to secure and decorate the tree before the lighting ceremony.

Preparing the Christmas tree is a true team effort for the AOC. Once the tree is positioned in the center of the

The hanging of the Capitol Christmas Tree lights is the job of the AOC Capitol Grounds Division.

The final step in the tree's preparation is the hanging of as many as 5,000 handmade ornaments.



Photos by: Chuck Badal



Photo by: Harry Burnett

AOC workers anchored the 1971 Capitol Christmas Tree, a Black Spruce from New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest.

West Front lawn, it is lowered into a 4-foot hole. Then the AOC's Capitol Grounds Masonry Shop mixes concrete and pours it into the hole to anchor the tree firmly in place.

Members of the Capitol Grounds Tree Care Branch then attach guy wires in two locations on the tree, which are then attached to four ground anchors, allowing the tree to be adjusted for straightness. Once the tree is in place, the AOC's High Voltage Shop provides electrical service and lights for the tree.

A close-up view of some of the unique handmade ornaments that decorated the 70-foot Douglas fir from Oregon's Umpqua National Forest in 2002.

The final step in the tree's preparation is the hanging of as many as 5,000 handmade ornaments by the Capitol Grounds crew.

"The donated ornaments are made mostly by school children throughout the Christmas tree's home state. This makes the tree unique each year and more typical of an 'old fashioned' sort



Photo by: Steve Payne

The 2010 Capitol Christmas Tree — a 67-foot Engelmann Spruce from Wyoming’s Bridger-Teton National Forest — was a breathtaking sight on the West Front lawn.

of style that many of us grew up with,” says Bechtol.

Seeing the ornaments each year is also a favorite part of the process for Rollins. “I always enjoy the ornaments made by grade school children with pictures on them wishing us a Merry Christmas.”

The Speaker of the House then marks the start of the holiday season with the annual lighting ceremony. The tree is subsequently lit by the AOC each evening throughout the season for everyone to enjoy.

— *By Lori Westley*

The 2011 Capitol Christmas Tree will be lit from nightfall until 11 p.m. each evening through January 1, 2012. This year’s tree — a 65-foot Sierra white fir — comes from California’s Stanislaus National Forest and will be decorated with approximately 3,000 handcrafted ornaments reflecting this year’s theme, “California Shines.” For more information, visit www.aoc.gov or scan the code below.



To read this code, download a free QR reader app on your smart phone.

Doing Good:

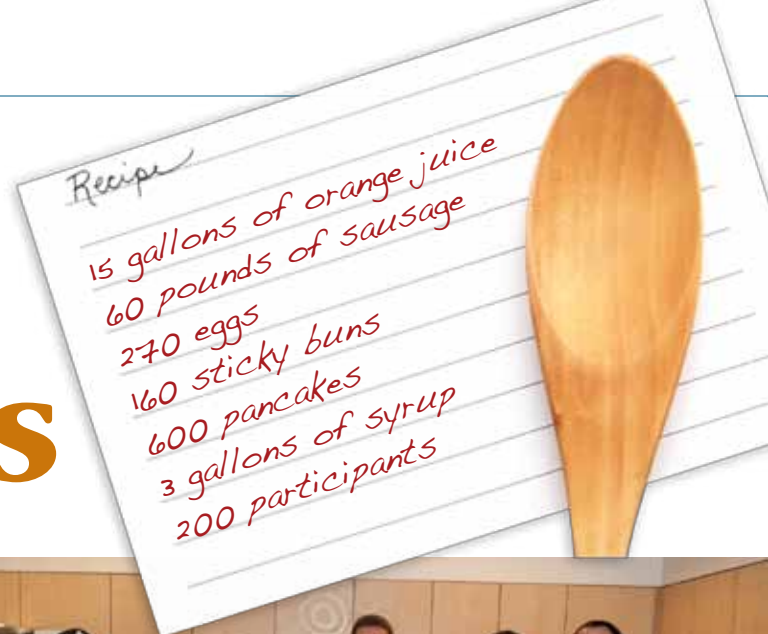
Recipe for Success

Add up those ingredients and what do you have? A successful AOC fundraiser for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

Every fall, thousands of federal workers all across the United States pledge amounts —large and small — to non-profit organizations that take part in the CFC. In addition to individual pledges, employees can also volunteer to plan fundraising events that raise money for CFC charities.

For the past two years, two AOC employees working at the Supreme Court of the United States — Secretary Lois Ort and Supervisor Kris Foote — have come together to organize a CFC fundraising breakfast

for both the AOC and Supreme Court. They donate the money to two organizations close to their hearts: the American Institute for Cancer Research and the



Photos by: Steve Payne

National Down Syndrome Society. Ort is a cancer survivor and her father is now fighting the disease. Foote has a son Jaxon, eight years old, who has Down syndrome; Ort has an uncle with Down syndrome.

The proceeds from the breakfast are split evenly amongst the AOC and Supreme Court CFC fundraising goals. “This is a big deal for the Court,” says Ort. “We’re like a small family and everyone knows everyone else. This is one way we can come together and interact with our coworkers.”

AOC employees at the Supreme Court banded together to feed over 200 people and raise money for the CFC. Below right: Steven Pounds serves one of his famous sticky buns to Louis Burrell.

“Everyone really pitches in,” agrees Foote. “It boosts morale and really unites us as a team. And at the same time, I get satisfaction out of knowing that I’m helping someone I might not even know.”

Supreme Court evening shift Maintenance Mechanic Steven Pounds was happy to share his delicious homemade sticky buns with the hungry masses that flock to the event. It takes him three days

“Our goal this year was to double the amount of money we raised last year — and we met that goal.”

of preparation, and includes making the dough from scratch and topping them with a homemade cream cheese icing.

“For me, cooking is like therapy,” says Pounds. “I enjoy cooking and baking for my coworkers, who like to joke that they’ve gained weight since I started.”

This year, Pounds spent extra time baking 160 sticky buns, after the 96 sticky buns he made last year were snapped up in no time.

“The event really creates a team atmosphere,” Pounds adds. “It’s a nice way to have camaraderie with your coworkers, who sometimes you see more than your own family.”

As Foote can attest, the money raised at CFC fundraising events does reach the community level. This summer, Foote’s son Jaxon received a scholarship from the National Down Syndrome Society to attend Camp Co-op in Charles County, Maryland. The camp is for people with special



needs; activities include field trips and a community fair.

“Our goal this year was to double the amount of money we raised last year — and we met that goal,” says Foote. “Every year we’re going to try and raise the bar we set the previous year.” A new addition to this year’s event was a raffle of donated items.

The AOC’s Chief Operating Officer Christine Merdon has attended the breakfast both years and enjoys the elaborate spread. “The Supreme Court team is very creative and it’s a fun event for everyone — those doing the cooking and those doing the eating,” says Merdon. “I encourage other jurisdictions to hold these types of fundraising events to raise money, and at the same time, host a fun team-building activity.”

The AOC’s goal for this year’s CFC is set at \$75,000, according to Lisa Maltbie, work/life specialist and CFC agency campaign manager.

“This year marks the 50th anniversary season of the CFC,” Maltbie notes. “We can take pride at AOC that our employees’ donations have consecutively passed the agency’s goal for the last three years. The effects of the economy, salary freezes and budgetary constraints have only bolstered the generosity of AOC employees to help others less fortunate than themselves.”



Thor Svendsgaard used more than 40 pounds of dry mix pancake batter to make 600 pancakes during the CFC fundraising breakfast.

Adds Maltbie, “My inspiration as the campaign manager is borne out of the philanthropic spirit of our employees.”

By hosting fundraising events, such as a breakfast at the Supreme Court, AOC employees raise money to help out their communities, the nation and the world — with the money benefitting people they will probably never meet. In that respect, the CFC embodies the AOC’s commitment to serving others.

— *By Kristen Wandell*

For more information about the CFC, visit the local website at www.cfcnca.org, scan the code below or contact Lisa Maltbie at 202.226.6595.



To read this code, download a free QR reader app on your smart phone.



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In 1877, the United States purchased Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi's "Fountain of Light and Water." Beginning in 2008, the AOC undertook a complete off-site restoration of the cast-iron fountain. The fountain returned to Bartholdi Park in May 2011.

Photo by: Susanne Bledsoe

