

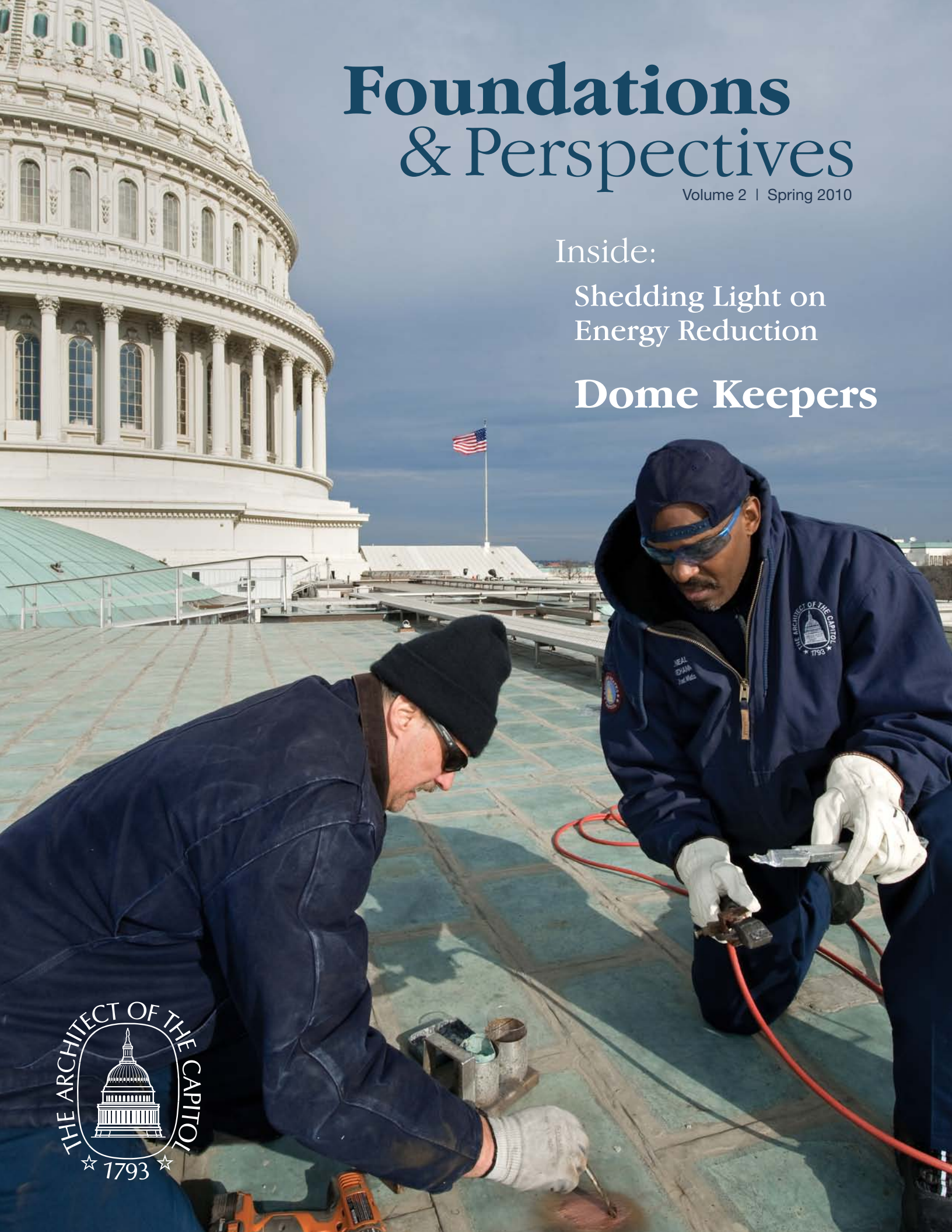
Foundations & Perspectives

Volume 2 | Spring 2010

Inside:

Shedding Light on
Energy Reduction

Dome Keepers





AOC Photo Archives

The last major renovation of the Capitol dome occurred in 1960; the AOC will be undertaking a similar project over the next few years. (see page 10)



Photo by: Susanne Bledsoe

The AOC is working to sustain the architectural features of the 100 year old Russell Senate Office Building. (see page 4)

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Front Cover: Photo by Susanne Bledsoe

As part of ongoing care for the Capitol Mark Focht and Larry Neal patch the roof. (see page 10)

Letter from the Acting Architect



Safety, sustainability, and service—these are three areas where the employees of the Architect of the Capitol are leading the industry and making big differences—often in very quiet ways.

In this edition of Foundations and Perspectives we meet talented individuals like Kirby Broughton who chairs a Jurisdictional Occupational, Safety, and Health Committee, Tom Balderson from the Senate Electrical Division who is reducing energy consumption one light at a time, and Wally Reed, who gives back to his community in a very special way. Each of these individuals represent hundreds of their colleagues who are leading similar efforts.

In an organization as large and diverse as the AOC, the ability to make a difference cannot be achieved simply by management edict or by policy. Real change and leadership come from each AOC employee who reminds a colleague to operate safely or recommends new safety equipment or procedures in their workspace.

Similarly, the goals for our nation and for the Capitol campus, reducing negative environmental impacts and improving sustainability, are only achieved through the work of our craftspeople, laborers, engineers, and architects—to name just a few—constantly thinking in creative ways about how to save energy and improve customer satisfaction at the same time.

“Safety, sustainability, and service—these are three areas where the employees of the Architect of the Capitol are leading the industry and making big differences.”

Ultimately, we improve the environment through our collective, individual acts—no matter our role—with actions as simple as turning off our computers when not in use or using environmentally friendly cleaning products.

We also improve our lives and the lives of others by giving back—something the employees of the AOC did in a record manner this year—contributing more than double our goal for the Combined Federal Campaign. This giving back does not end with the checkbook, as we see in this edition a

number of our long-time employees, like Karen Livingston, are helping share their knowledge everyday and others are serving their community through their faith and volunteerism.

I thank you all for your continued leadership. I am proud to serve you everyday as we work together to ensure we make the Capitol campus and our communities a better place.

Sincerely,

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

Greg Kassab and Anitra Reed are part of the AOC team helping maintain a safe work environment.



Safety:

It's a team effort

Photo by: Susanne Bledsoe

The AOC is comprised of a diverse workforce—a spectrum of laborers, gardeners, architects, engineers, technicians, carpenters, electricians, and masons—just to name a few. A vast array of machinery, tools, and equipment are used daily to design, enhance, and maintain new and historic structures, spaces, and building systems.

“The safety of employees is a team effort across the AOC.”

With such a wide range of workers from various trades, the safety of employees is a team effort across the AOC. Specifically, the AOC relies on the dedication and contributions of individual employees to maintain the highest standards in workplace safety.

“If you see someone doing something unsafe, you encourage them to do better and keep them accountable,” said the Senate’s safety and occupational health specialist, Jean Gilles.

As a result of the collective efforts, the AOC Illness and Injury Rate has been reduced 77% since Fiscal Year 2000, and major progress is being made in abating occupational safety and health concerns.

One key tool in this agency-wide effort is the commitment of employees serving on the Jurisdictional Occupational, Safety, and Health (JOSH) committees. In total, there are 12 JOSH committees, which are comprised of representatives

“The AOC relies on the dedication and contributions of individual employees to maintain the highest standards in workplace safety.”

from each shop and office within the jurisdiction. For example, the House Office Building jurisdiction has a representative from each of its 18 shops who reviews incidents and concerns within their jurisdiction.

One indicator of the JOSH committees' success is the increase in active employee participation in the mission of JOSH committees to improve safety and raise awareness. “There’s a strong desire for employees to participate and that desire is only increasing,” according to the Library’s safety and occupational health specialist, Francis Mowbray.

During monthly meetings, JOSH committee members review real and possible hazards and discuss suggestions for new procedures to mitigate any potential risks. Recommendations are then discussed with managers and superintendents. JOSH committees actively communicate safety messages to their peers.

Other efforts in safety awareness include an annual “stand-down” in the Senate Office Buildings jurisdiction—a special program that focuses on safety on-and-off the job for the entire jurisdiction. On the House side, the House Superintendent’s office and JOSH committee sponsor an annual

Safety is everyone’s job— Barry James (below) reviews material safety data sheets, while Kirby Broughton (right) serves on a JOSH committee.



Photo by: Susanne Bledsoe



Photo by: Chuck Badal

House Office Building safety fair. The fair uses hands-on, interactive demonstrations and product displays along with informational handouts to educate employees about safe practices.

Support for the JOSH committees as a mechanism for safety extends to all levels of the AOC, according to Kirby Broughton, chair of the Library Buildings and Grounds JOSH committee, “There have been no issues with roadblocks. Superintendents are very supportive of what we do.”

And as an added measure, JOSH committee members coordinate

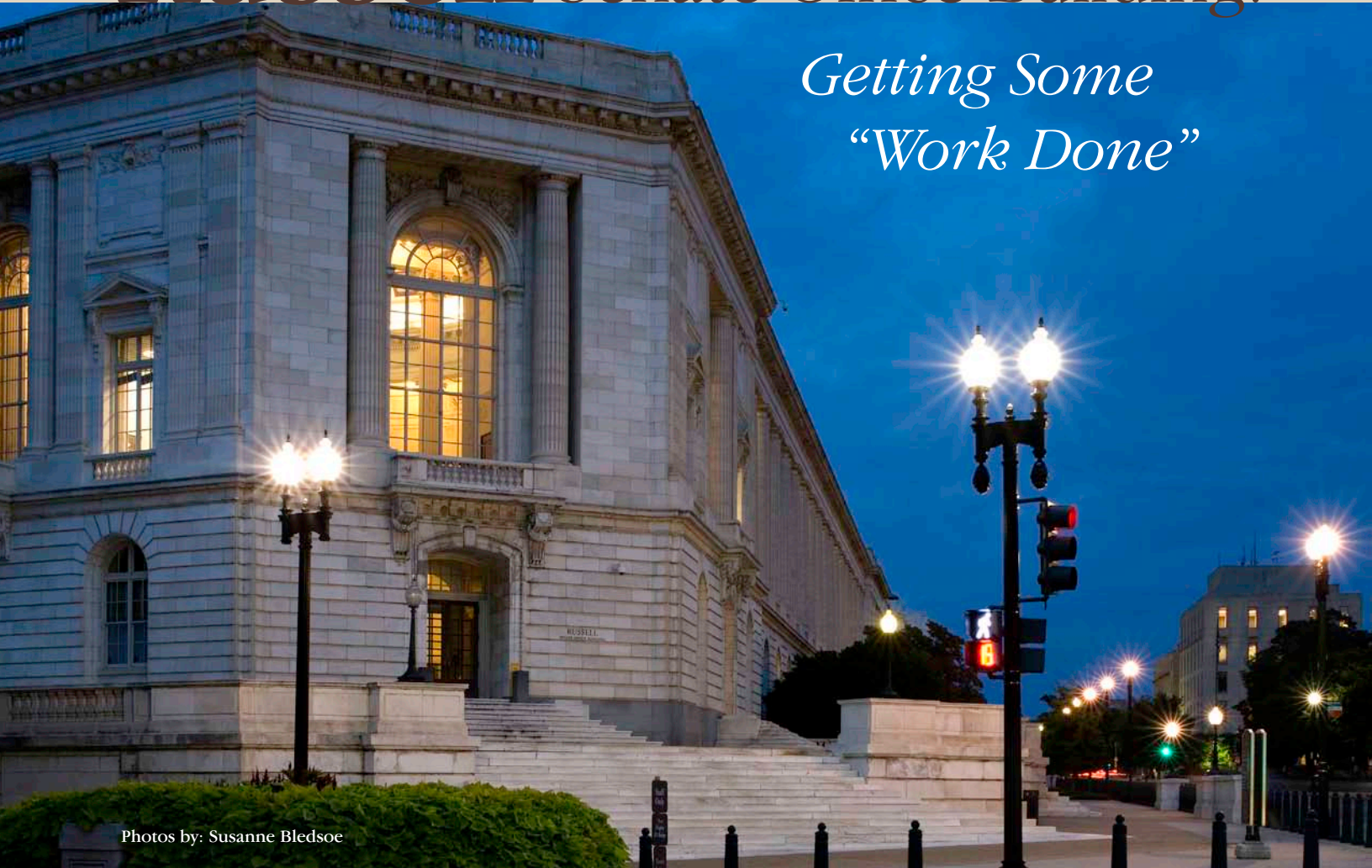
with their chairpersons to develop agency-wide strategies through the Safety, Health, and Environmental Committee (SHEC). During SHEC meetings, members are able to share with other jurisdictions how they address concerns and how they have implemented their best practices to increase safety in their jurisdictions.

According to Joyce People-Smith, chair of the Senate JOSH committee, the main objective of all their efforts is simple: “to create a safe working environment so that at the end of the day, people can go home safely to their families.”

—Shalley Kim

100 Year-Old Russell Senate Office Building:

*Getting Some
“Work Done”*



Photos by: Susanne Bledsoe

Having just celebrated its 100th birthday last year, the Russell Senate Office Building is looking really good for its age. But, to keep it in tip-top condition, the Architect of the Capitol spent some time studying the building’s exterior in preparation to clean, repair, and restore the exterior envelope of this historic Senate Office Building.

As part of their evaluation of the exterior conditions today, staff looked at the following architectural features:

marble and granite facades; marble balustrades; courtyard limestone; mortar and caulking joints; decorative metal lighting and railings; wood windows; and bronze doors.

No Stone Unturned

“Our staff left no stone unturned, so to speak, when examining the Russell Building,” said Martin Shore, preservation architect in the AOC’s Design Services Division. “In addition to surveying the façade from the ground with high-powered binoculars,

we brought in a 150-foot crane, allowing our architects, engineers, and materials experts to study the building’s conditions at its highest reaches up-close.”

Shore noted that material samples were sent to laboratories to identify the stone’s properties such as strength, water absorption, and composition.

In addition, each of the Russell Building’s 622 windows were surveyed during off-hours and weekends.

Given that most of the windows are original to the building, the Senate Superintendent's Office was determined to find an approach to improve the windows' energy efficiency that also was sensitive to the building's original design.

Balancing the AOC's goals for sustainability, reducing energy consumption, and historic preservation, two state-of-the-art computer software packages were incorporated in the study. The first application performed energy model calculations while the second estimated future expenditures (called "life cycle costs") for the next 40 years.

Using these computer programs, three scenarios concerning the historic windows were tested:

- 1) repair the existing windows,
- 2) retrofit the existing windows with insulated glazing, or
- 3) replace the windows with new energy-efficient windows.

"The results were unexpected," said Shore. "The energy modeling and life cycle cost programs showed that retrofitting the existing windows with new glazing was, in fact, the most cost-effective, energy-saving option. And from sustainability and historic preservation perspectives, the retrofitting option was desirable because original building materials would be maintained and preserved."

In the past, historic buildings were torn down and replaced, as were tens of thousands of historic windows.

Today, the concept embraced by the AOC, sustainability experts, and preservationists is 'embodied energy.' That is, the total expenditure of energy involved in the creation of a building and its materials is considered. When a historic building is torn down and its components, such as windows, thrown away, the embodied energy incorporated in that building is also discarded. That translates into a loss of both money and energy already invested. The old growth wood originally used for the Russell windows is considerably stronger than wood grown today. Therefore, it is more cost-effective and sustainable to keep the historic windows than buy new ones.

What's Ahead

With the study results in hand, the AOC will now use the information collected as it plans the design and construction phases of the Russell Building's exterior cleaning and restoration. One of the AOC's main objectives is to create a phased plan to complete the work over several years. This approach will minimize disruptions to the building's occupants and will help to manage the project's cost and schedule.

"This is just one of the ways we are working to identify and implement long-term projects that will fulfill our mission to care for the historic buildings entrusted to our care, and attain required energy saving goals, while providing Congress with the best return on its investment at the same time," said Stephen Ayers, acting architect of the capitol.



“Our staff left no stone unturned, so to speak, when examining the Russell Building.”

“This type of holistic planning approach is essential when working with historically significant buildings like the Russell Building.”

While passers-by won't see scaffolding surrounding the Russell Building in the immediate future, the AOC will be working diligently to develop a plan which will ensure that the Senate's first office building will be around for 100 more years. And while it will be more energy efficient, it will maintain its distinct historical character as it ages gracefully.

—Eva Malecki

Shedding Light *on Energy Reduction*



Photos by: Susanne Bledsoe

Keith Davis works to upgrade a lighting ballast in the Dirksen Senate Office Building.



Lighting the way—Tom Balderson controls the newly installed smart lights all from the convenience of his laptop.

Kermit the Frog once sang, “It’s not easy being green. It seems you blend in with so many other ord’rary things. And people tend to pass you over ‘cause you’re not standing out like flashy sparkles in the water or stars in the sky.”

Number of Light
Fixtures in the
Senate Office
Buildings Alone:
30,000

This is certainly true of the work of Tom Balderson, and his crew including Harry Booze and Keith Davis in the Senate Electrical Division. This team has quietly gone about its business replacing thousands of lighting ballasts, usually early in the morning well before most staff arrive in the buildings.

Their work is one example of where the “rubber-meets-the-road” in using proven technologies combined with AOC employee initiative; that is quietly reducing energy consumption while enhancing customer service—all without any action required beyond the work of a few skilled technicians.

“As one customer said to me, ‘If we are saving energy and don’t even

know it, that’s great!’” recounts Tom, in describing the reception the new lighting system has received within the offices that have received them.

A few years ago Michael Shirven, Senate Assistant Superintendent, eyed a cost-effective and reliable solution with the ability to make a big impact. The AOC identified a lighting system that could replace existing lighting ballasts with new, significantly “smarter” ones.

A lighting ballast is about the size of two boxes of pens laid end-to-end with wires on each end that control the starting and operating voltages of electrical gas discharge lights such as fluorescent bulbs.

In the Senate Office Buildings alone, there are 30,000 light fixtures, and replacing them with modern smart systems has the ability to dramatically reduce energy usage while increasing customer satisfaction. As of January 2010, the team had installed the new system in 30 office suites that accommodate Senators and their staff.



Teammates Harry Booze, Tom Balderson and Keith Davis installed thousands of new lighting ballasts across the Senate.

“At the end of the day, these employees are quietly revolutionizing the use of energy on Capitol Hill.”

The new lighting control system being installed by the Electrical Division is comprised of digital electronic dimming ballasts and sensors that automatically determine the level of natural light in a space and reduce the artificial lighting accordingly. Ultimately, the system can generate energy savings of 50% to 70% and improve customer satisfaction by allowing for lighting “customization” that can tailor the light level to the customer’s workspace preference.

“It’s a very smart system,” said Tom. Unlike the “dumb” ballasts being removed and recycled for their steel, each ballast in the new system contains a small computer that is tied into the larger system via a central hub allowing Tom the ability

to adjust every individual light across the Senate buildings from a single laptop.

While the system itself may be smart, it takes the creative thinking of employees such as Tom to install, adapt, program and manage the system. In order to learn the system, Tom attended training in simulated labs to learn how to utilize the sophisticated software.

During each installation, from his laptop, Tom configures the lighting system for the office, setting the levels for each work space and area within the office. From the moment of installation of the new ballast, the lighting levels are automatically set at 70%, instantly reducing energy

“The AOC identified a lighting system that could replace existing lighting ballasts with new, significantly ‘smarter’ ones.”

consumption per ballast by 30% without any noticeable effect for the customer. The system also “harvests” the daylight and in some offices with significant sunlight it may save energy by as much as 90%.

Additionally, from his laptop, Tom receives light bulb outage reports so his team can proactively replace them before a customer calls; he can “load-shed” (dim lights to reduce energy use) across the Senate during peak energy consumption, such as summer, helping reduce demand on the regional power-grid; and make adjustments at customer requests such as setting lighting levels differently for a particular workspace.

The work of Tom and his colleagues in replacing the ballasts has served as an early jump on work that will be conducted in the months ahead by the recently selected vendor for the Senate energy savings performance contract (ESPC).

An ESPC is a partnership between an energy services company (ESCO) and its customer formed for the purpose of financing and implementing cost-saving, energy-efficiency improvements. The ESCO pays the upfront cost of purchasing and installing new equipment, and the

customer repays the ESCO over the life of the contract from the energy savings resulting from the project. ESPC’s have been in use by public and private customers for more than 20 years and have been proven to be an effective method for improving the energy efficiency of existing facilities.

Beyond the Senate, ESPCs are being developed across the AOC including the House office buildings and Capitol. In addition to the lighting upgrades, this work will include actions such as upgrading heating and air conditioning controls that adjust automatically to the usage of the room, saving energy and creating more comfortable settings for customers; and installing water saving measures in restrooms.

The analysis estimated that implementing these measures could reduce energy consumption by as much as 20% to 30% in the Capitol, House, and Senate office buildings.

For Tom, Keith, and Harry they enjoy the work but are not disappointed to turn the project over to the ESPC. They do not view their job in terms of just energy savings, for them the primary focus is on the customer and ensuring they have what they need.



Harry Booze and his aptly named gang box the “Booze Cruiser” have helped reduce energy consumption across the Senate.

“I love it,” says Harry of working at the AOC, who joined the agency a little more than a year ago after decades in the construction trades. “My favorite jobs are the ones where I get to interact with the customers.”

At the end of the day, these employees are quietly revolutionizing the use of energy on Capitol Hill. But, perhaps the ultimate energy savings the team realizes is in their choice of commuting. They ride together everyday in the same carpool (reducing their carbon footprint dramatically) giving Harry and Keith a chance to catch-up on their personal energy savings. Tom does the driving.

—Matt Guilfoyle

Postscript: Following the completion of this article, the AOC was saddened to learn of the untimely passing of Keith Davis. His contributions will be missed.

Dome Keepers

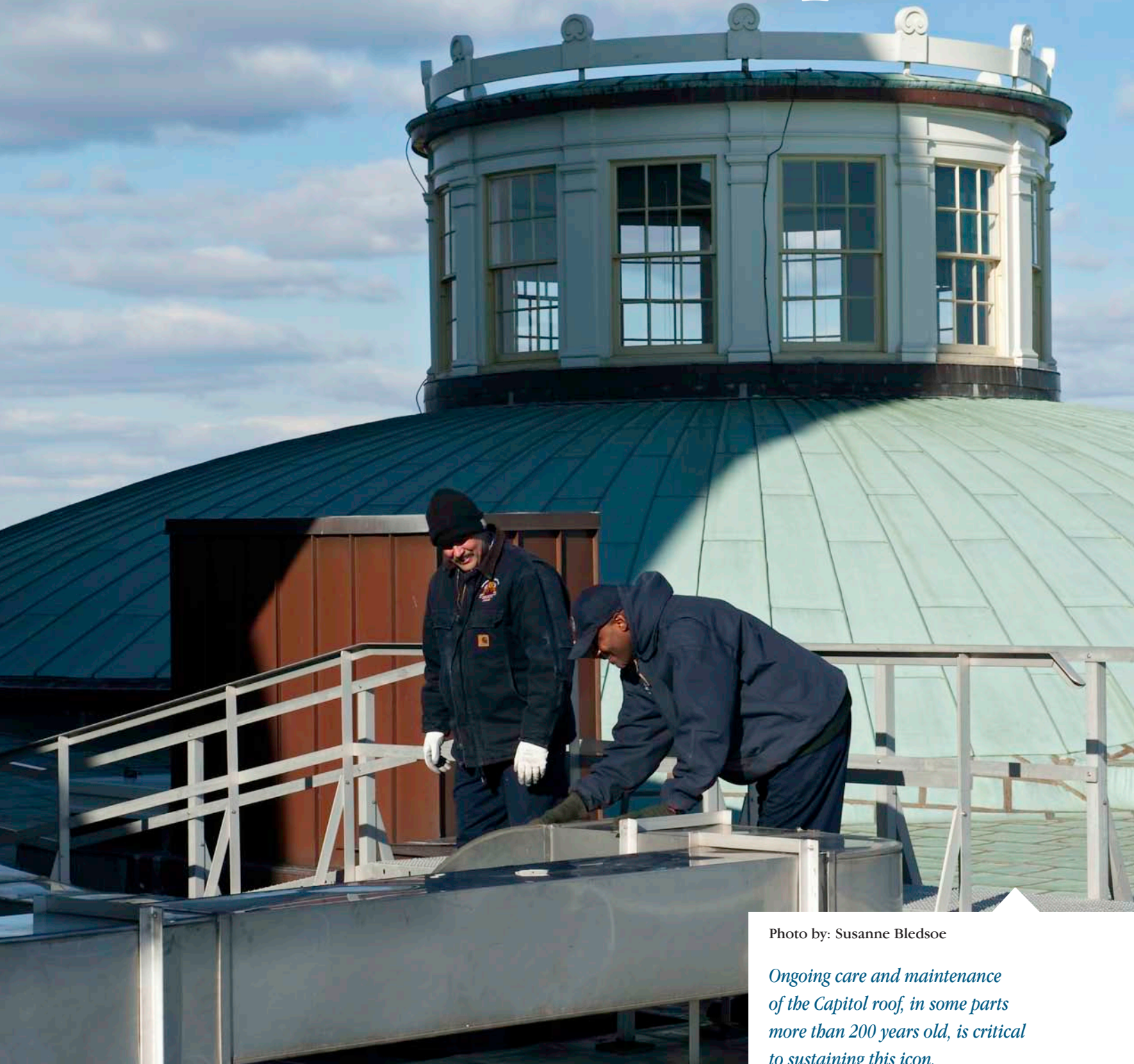


Photo by: Susanne Bledsoe

Ongoing care and maintenance of the Capitol roof, in some parts more than 200 years old, is critical to sustaining this icon.

The iconic “Walter dome” atop the Capitol is recognized around the world as a symbol of American strength and freedom. During its construction from 1855 to 1866, perhaps the greatest threat to the dome was the outbreak of the Civil War. To protect the capital city, a garrison of Union soldiers was stationed within the Capitol.



Library of Congress Archives

Since that time nearly 150 years ago, while the Union was restored, multiple forces have been unrelenting in their attack on the Capitol—time, weather, and nature.

Today, a small unit of men has the task of protecting and preserving this most important American icon. Led by Bryan Glotfelty and headquartered beneath the Capitol like “Men in Black” accessible only by a secure elevator, the men of the Capitol Sheet Metal Shop go to battle monthly with the forces of wind, water, and wildlife.

On a cold winter morning—the wind blowing a steady 20 miles per hour and a wind chill in the teens—Larry Neal and Mark Focht of the Capitol Sheet Metal Shop climb through a locked door out into an open space within the dome skirt (the area around the foot of the dome). This is their base camp next to the original

sandstone walls built in 1824 by Charles Bulfinch in support of the first dome of the Capitol.

While Larry is a bit more understated, Mark is not shy about the pride he has in his shop. He says wryly, “We do it all. If it wasn’t for our shop none of the other shops could function. Everyone needs something metal to do their job.”

Setting out from their small roof encampment to begin their inspection of the Capitol roof and dome, personal protective equipment and tools in hand, they begin the climb up to the top of the dome via the 365 stairs installed during the construction in the late 1850’s.

They make their first stop about 85 feet above the floor of the rotunda at the peristyle level. Here that small exterior ledge is accessible only with proper safety equipment. This level has many downspouts that carry water runoff down through the skirt. Each downspout must be inspected and any debris must be vacuumed out.

“Copper’s worst enemy is dirt,” says Mark.

Heading up another 30 feet they reach the boiler plate level with



Stair stepper—making the climb up the 365 steps to the top of the Capitol is no easy feat especially when carrying equipment.

a more accessible ledge that has a balustrade (railing around the edge). Along the interior base of the balustrade is a two-inch gap for drainage covered by wire mesh that traps dirt, seeds, and other wildlife deposits. To ensure proper drainage the balustrade, running the entire circumference of the dome, must be cleaned by hand, broom, or vacuum.

Once the walk around the balustrade has been completed, Larry and Neal head up to the balcony 210 feet above the Capitol’s East front plaza.



Men in Blue—Secure underground the Capitol, Barry Hale works on projects that help keep the building running.

“These specialists are leading the effort to overhaul the dome in the coming years and ensure its health for generations to come.”

Here, wooden floor boards must be unscrewed and removed and then all the debris must be removed for proper drainage. Next, they head into the Tholos and pedestal of the Freedom statue completing the top-to-bottom dome inspection.

Heading back down to the roof of the Capitol, another key aspect of the inspections is the examination and repair, where needed, of nearly 100,000 small copper panels covering the roof that remain true to the original construction. In order to make any repairs, the Sheet Metal Shop team carries fire pots that resemble a portable blacksmith’s shop, along with a 20-pound propane tank and trim irons in order to solder the plates together ensuring a waterproof seam across the roof.

Despite this monthly fight, the dome and skirt require additional support. Like a patient with high cholesterol, the work cleaning the pipes by the doctors in the Sheet Metal Shop keeps the dome alive, but more significant surgery is needed for the long-term health of the dome.

This is where architect Kevin Hildebrand and project manager Eugene Poole with the Project Planning and Management Division come in. These specialists are leading the effort to overhaul the dome in the coming years and ensure its health for generations to come.

“It’s a unique beast. There is nothing like it,” says Hildebrand. “It is the perfect marriage of material and technique of the time.” In fact, the

Capitol dome is the largest cast iron dome in the world.

Beyond the iconic nature, remarkable ingenuity of construction, and history—the dome ultimately sits atop a working office space and is visited by millions annually from around the world. The ability to balance these needs with the work essential to the health of the dome is the challenge the AOC is tackling.

A major renovation within the interior space was completed in the early 2000’s when 80,000 pounds of lead based paint were removed and recycled, and surfaces of the interstitial space were painted with an epoxy paint system. The last significant exterior renovation of the dome was conducted in 1959.

The next phase of the dome restoration project is to repaint the exterior to hold the dome over until a more complete overhaul can commence potentially following the inauguration in January 2013 and lasting up to three years.

During this project, lead paint will be abated from the exterior of the dome and the interior surfaces of the Rotunda, along with the repair of over 1,300 known and anticipated defects in the ironwork. This will be followed by a resealing and repainting of the ironwork with an epoxy and urethane paint system. Additional work will include the installation of new fall protection systems, a new mechanical ventilation system within the interstitial



Darren Barnett (above) and Brian Jerdon (below) apply their skill in the ongoing care of the Capitol.

space, and replacement of the existing lighting systems within the Rotunda and interstitial space with energy efficient lighting and new lighting along the dome tour route.

Meanwhile, the dome will continue to be protected by Larry, Mark, and others in the Sheet Metal Shop in their monthly battle to protect this American marvel of engineering and global symbol of democracy.

—Matt Guilfoyle

“The Capitol dome is the largest cast iron dome in the world.”



AOC Value: *Loyalty*

30 years...40 years...and Counting

Insights from some of the AOC's Most Tenured Employees

Each Congress lasts two years. The average tenure of a Member of Congress in the 110th Congress was 10 years for a Representative and just over 12 years for a Senator.

For the AOC, which must care for buildings whose ages are measured in centuries, the long view is essential and institutional knowledge is a critical component of our success. Luckily for the AOC there are over 6,000 years of combined experience and knowledge to draw upon from 176 employees (as of December 2009) who have served in the federal government for 30 years or more. Among this group some have served entire careers in the employ of the AOC including David Gray (42 years), Bonnie Lemonds (31 years), Karen Livingston (32 years), Leffrich Mayo (30 years), and John Gallagher (35 years). They shared their insights with Foundations and Perspectives:

What brought you to the AOC?

For many of these veterans, what brought them to the AOC in the first



David Gray, one of the longest serving AOC employees, has been with the AOC for 42 years.

Photos by: Dewitt Roseborough

3,000,000 and counting—the number of flags Karen Livingston has seen in her 32 years with the AOC Flag Office.

place was the opportunity for good benefits and the ability to care for their families; many had children on the way. For Leffrich Mayo, Senate Furniture Division, he believes a higher power helped, “I was married and my wife was pregnant. I was making \$2.50 an hour at McDonalds and I got burned. My supervisor took me up to GW hospital to get my burn cared for. We had a special church service and prayer meeting that night. I was a good soldier. I walked all the way from GW to 14th and T Northwest with my cane. I was in pretty bad shape. I started crying. I was feeling so bad for myself. I was in bad shape. Then one of the church members called me and told me about a job. God had something better for me. The next day I went up to the Hill.” Leffrich got the job that day with the Senate Restaurant, under the AOC, and hasn’t left since.

Is there a particular moment/event you remember during your time with the AOC?

Nearly all those interviewed vividly remember inaugurations, laying-in-state of Presidents, 9-11, anthrax and the deaths of U.S. Capitol Police Detective John Gibson and Officer Jacob Chestnut. For David Gray, supply management officer, House Office Buildings, it was the events of April 4, 1968, just after he joined the AOC, following the assassination of



Karen Livingston (32 years)

“To be happy in a job you really have to enjoy what you are doing.”

the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “It was a very sad moment. We all walked up to sit on the steps of the Cannon building and watched people burn the city.”

What do you like best about working for the AOC?

For Karen Livingston, flag office supervisor in the Capitol, it is “the uniqueness of the job. I love coming to the building, walking into the Capitol.”

John Gallagher, facility manager, U.S. Botanic Garden, shares this same feeling, “I remember my first day,

being a young guy, and the Bartholdi fountain—which is a historic fountain. My supervisor brought me over to the Bartholdi fountain. It was fall and we were going to paint the fountain. He gave me a putty knife; I climbed into the bowl which had been emptied of water. I started scraping. I looked back and I said, ‘I can’t believe it. The U.S. Capitol is right there, I am right here. I can’t believe where I am. A week ago I was digging ditches in mud.’”

What is the biggest change you have witnessed at the AOC?

Nearly all cited safety and security improvements as the biggest changes.



Bonnie Lemonds (31 years)



Leffrich Mayo (30 years)



John Gallagher (35 years)

However, while some of the veterans have seen as many as six different superintendents and four Architects, all believe the changes have been for the better.

“If you have a goal—opportunity is here,” said Bonnie Lemonds, night superintendent of House Office Buildings. “Things are not like they used to be. Some think they are going to be on a gravy train [working nights], but then they find out they have to work and work hard.”

What’s kept you with the AOC?

“To be happy in a job you really have to enjoy what you are doing,” said Livingston, similar to many of this select group. “It is a real rewarding job to me. I never get tired of seeing the expression on people’s faces when you give them a flag that has been flown over the Capitol, it means so much to them.”

“There are not many jobs where you can actually see joy when you give them something. It is not like being at the grocery store where you give them food and a big bill. You are giving them a flag that has been flown over the Capitol, which is a rare gift. It means a lot, especially with soldiers

“The AOC is just a big ‘ol group of people from all walks of life, with all different backgrounds, eventually they all get the same transfusion and the AOC gets in their blood.”

fighting for our country right now. I always get choked-up when I see the ages of some of these soldiers who lose their lives at such a young age. It is sad when we get the requests for flags for their coffins. I think of my son who is 25 and that could be him. So many of his friends are in Afghanistan and Iraq.”

What advice do you have for the next generations just beginning their careers?

“Have a goal and get lots of training. Get advice. You can learn from anyone, and learn all that you can,” said Lemonds, who worked her way on the House night shift from custodian to become one of the first females to hold a title of “Superintendent” in the AOC. Echoing many of her fellow long time AOC colleagues, she added, “Don’t let anyone stop you. I told my boss once my goal was to get his job, he laughed...I did.”

David Gray asks himself, “People ask me, when are you going to retire?”

“I say that’s a good question. When I wake up in the morning and I decide I really don’t want to go to work today. Or when I feel I am not giving the agency what it deserves, then I’ll retire. Steve, my deputy, who has 15 years to go until retirement says he will be retired before I am.”

Why do think there are so many individuals with longevity at the AOC?

“You just can’t find better people to work with,” said Gray. “The AOC is just a big ‘ol group of people from all walks of life, with all different backgrounds, eventually they all get the same transfusion and the AOC gets in their blood.”

—Matt Guilfoyle



Photo by: Chuck Badal

Where in the AOC?

For the AOC, sustainability—ensuring we are improving the future by the actions we take today—is something incorporated into our everyday thinking. Some of these sustainable practices include, among others, improved energy and water efficiency, use of earth-friendly materials, promoting and practicing renewably, reuse, and recycling.

Though it can function as a cinematographer’s backdrop for an epic romance, the landscape above is actually a “green roof” under the care of the AOC and a great example of sustainability in practice.

It is one of the largest of its kind on the East Coast spanning an area

“The green roof serves several purposes including absorbing rainwater, providing insulation, and filtering pollutants.”

equal to three football fields. It is one of the roofs of The Library of Congress Packard Campus National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Culpeper, Virginia.

In addition to its aesthetic benefits, the green roof serves several purposes including absorbing rainwater, providing insulation, and filtering pollutants. Native grasses and perennials that are

tolerant to the local climate, soil, and water conditions have been planted on the roof. In addition, the campus underwent a major reforestation effort with the planting of 9,000 trees and nearly 200,000 indigenous plants.

—*Sballey Kim*

New CHCO Seeks to establish an **EPIC Organization**



Teresa Bailey, SPHR, was recently announced as the new AOC Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO). She sat down with Foundations and Perspectives to share insights into this new role and what it means to AOC employees.

F&P: What is the Human Capital Management Division?

Bailey: What was formerly known as Human Resources Management Division has been reorganized and is now called the Human Capital Management Division.

This new division is comprised of several branches: Employee Benefits and Services; Employee and Classification; Employee Relations; Payroll and Processing; and Training and Employee Development. These branches report to the Deputy CHCO, while the Deputy CHCO, Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Programs Office, and Labor Relations; Employee Assistance; and Workforce Planning Programs, report directly to me.

Photo by: Dewitt Roseborough

Creating an EPIC organization won't be easy, but Teresa Bailey and her colleagues in the Human Capital Management Division are ready for the challenge.

F&P: Your position as CHCO is new. What does a CHCO do?

Bailey: My primary responsibility is to ensure people programs are strategically and organizationally aligned, and that employees have workplace opportunities to enrich their professional and personal lives.

These programs include talent management—recruiting and retaining employees with the talents, knowledge and skill sets needed to execute the AOC’s mission; performance management—cultivating a workforce that strives for high employee and team performance; diversity management; employee development; pay and benefits administration; and employee wellbeing initiatives. It also includes managing our relations with our organized labor organizations, and integrating workforce planning functions that were previously managed by the Chief Financial Officer.

F&P: What are your first steps in the new role as CHCO?

Bailey: We have a remarkable opportunity to start fresh with a renewed focus on meeting the needs of our customer. This includes new perspectives and new ideas that transform the way we do business.

We are in the beginning stages of building effective business models and human capital strategies that will successfully support the AOC. We endeavor to work smarter and faster, apply strategic approaches that streamline processes, eliminate duplication of efforts, and

“The AOC’s mission is to serve Congress with a commitment to excellence, so we too, must be committed to excellence.”

discontinue work practices that provide no real value.

We will rely on feedback from our customers as to what we can improve, how we can better serve the Agency, and ways to address some of the systemic issues.

F&P: How do you want AOC employees to see your division?

Bailey: Our goal is to become an ‘EPIC’ organization—Excellent, Professional, and Innovative Customer Service.

We already have a great team of hard-working and dedicated employees, but we can be of greater service to our customers. The AOC’s mission is to serve Congress with a commitment to excellence, so we too, must be committed to excellence.

AOC employees want and deserve to have delivery of services and programs that go beyond the usual and ordinary. Going forward, our customers should expect us to provide high quality service, to be responsive and professional in our interactions, and novel in our approach to handling human capital issues.

We are keenly aware of our role as AOC employees’ caretakers.

While balancing the needs of the organization, along with adhering to pertinent AOC policies and laws, the chief reason for our existence is to address employee needs, hear and attempt to resolve their concerns, and to be a useful resource.

F&P: What would you say to a friend who is considering applying for a job at the AOC?

Bailey: The Architect of the Capitol is a best-kept secret, but it shouldn’t be. This is a great place to work and HCMD will work to share the story of the AOC with more people.

We are a diverse organization made up of employees from different backgrounds bringing unique approaches, ideas, and thinking to our jobs. When that diversity is drawn upon, it makes for an interesting and rewarding work environment.

An equally compelling reason to work at the AOC is that each employee at every level contributes to the care and preservation of the nation’s most revered treasures, and we are fortunate to see and work in these beautiful treasures every day.

How many employers can top that?

—A. Sean Bailey

Union President *is One Cool Cat*



Photos Provided Courtesy of Wally Reid

“Wally is a shining example that no matter how busy we are, there is always time to give back.”

If you have worked at the AOC at any point during the last 20 years, you are likely to be familiar with the name Wallace Reed, Jr. His colleagues at the U.S. Botanic Garden know him as the work leader of the Blue Plains production facility and the Conservatory.

If you are a member of the AOC management team or a member of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 626, then you know him as the union president.

Lending a helping hand—whether in the ice rink or in the garden, Wally helps his teammates succeed.

Between his work at the Botanic Garden and his responsibilities as union president, it is difficult to imagine that Wally, as he is better known, would have any time for activities outside of the AOC.

However, Wally somehow finds the time to coach the Northern Virginia Cool Cats, an ice hockey team made up of kids with developmental disabilities from around the Washington, D.C., area.

The goal of the Cool Cat program is to emphasize the development of personal characteristics such as dependability, self-reliance, concentration, willingness to share, and personal accountability.

The Cool Cats are one of four teams in the region made up of 50 kids, most of whom are autistic, that are members of a global league that can be found in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. Each April, the league meets in Toronto, Canada, for a four-day tournament that is capped off with a banquet.

Wally's interest in children with special needs dates back to the years he spent as a special education teacher. At age 40, Wally strapped on his first pair of ice skates and learned the game of hockey. In coaching the Cool Cats, Wally brings together his love of ice hockey and his desire to help developmentally challenged kids.



“Normally kids with autism are antisocial, but when these kids are in the locker room, they are talking and joking around like regular kids,” said Wally.

David Cordell, the father of one of the Cool Cats adds, “The NOVA Cool Cats program is incredible. My son has developed a great deal of self confidence in learning not only how to skate, but to play hockey. The coaches—Randy, Wally and Bob—are amazing and words cannot describe how wonderful this program is for those with developmental disabilities.”

When he is not giving pointers on life lessons and slap shots, Wally works with 13 employees and several volunteers to ensure the plants featured at the Botanic Garden and displayed throughout the Capitol complex are of the highest quality thereby making the visitor experience unforgettable.

As the current president of the AFSCME, Local 626 and the past president of the Employee Advisory Council, Wally often gets involved with issues ranging from disciplinary actions to union contract



Photo by: Steve Payne

negotiations. In fact, the union is preparing to negotiate its second contract with AOC management later this year.

When asked how he feels about the work that he does on behalf of the union, Wally enthusiastically stated, “I love it! I love working to solve problems and seeing issues from both the labor and management perspective. My goal is to have a good relationship between labor and management and I have seen tremendous progress over the last ten years.”

Wally is a shining example that no matter how busy we are, there is always time to give back.

—A. Sean Bailey



AOC Office of Congressional and External Relations
SB-15 U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

www.aoc.gov

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It's s'no problem! During the record-smashing blizzards of February 2010, 444 AOC employees worked over 34,000 hours hauling away more than 22,600,000 pounds of snow.



Photo by: Chuck Badal