

# USDA NEWS

VOLUME 61 NO. 1 - JANUARY-MARCH 2002

## USDA's 2003 Budget Calls For Increases In Key Areas

by Ron Hall, Office of Communications

**T**his budget supports strong farm programs, helps protect the food supply and helps low-income Americans in need of assistance."

That was one of the points made by Secretary **Ann M. Veneman** as she spoke at a press conference, held on February 4, to present USDA's proposed budget for FY 2003. She highlighted several items of importance in the Department's proposed budget, which she said also includes full funding for farm safety net programs, substantial increases for homeland security, funds meat inspection programs at record levels and increases spending for international trade.

Veneman noted that the proposed budget supports the goals outlined in a policy book, titled "Food and Agricultural Policy: Taking Stock for the New Century," which USDA released last summer.

USDA's FY 2003 proposed budget calls for \$74.4 billion in spending, an increase of \$11 billion over the Department's FY 2002 budget proposal last year and \$6 billion above actual budget outlays in FY 2001. The FY 2002 current estimate is expected to reach \$76.6 billion due to reasons related to the slowed economy, homeland security and other uncontrollable events such as forest fires.

USDA's budget proposes a \$146 million increase for programs to protect the nation's food supply from animal and plant pests and diseases, strengthen food safety programs and support related research activities.

"This budget builds on our efforts to protect agriculture and the food supply from intentional and unintentional risks," Veneman said.

"This increase, along with \$328 million in supplemental funds provided in the 2002 Defense Appropriations Act, provides needed resources for more border inspectors at ports of entry, increased security at our laboratories and new research into emerging diseases that threaten crops, livestock and our food supply,"

*continued on pg. 4...*



"Step Aside, Torch Comin' Through!" quips FS's **Mary Ritz**, as she displays the jogging stride she used in Columbus, Mont., as an Olympic torchbearer for the 2002 Winter Olympics. She was one of 11,500 torchbearers—and also one of, at last count, six USDA employees—to participate in that activity. Ritz helped to move the Olympic flame, which was used in lighting the Olympic cauldron at the opening ceremonies in Salt Lake City, through 13,500 miles across 46 states in 65 days. Note the story below.—**PHOTO BY MARTY SHARP**

## We Helped Move The Olympic Flame To Salt Lake City 65 Days, 11,500 Torchbearers

by Ron Hall, Office of Communications

**B**y the time the 2002 Winter Olympics began on February 8, the Olympic flame used in lighting the Olympic cauldron at the opening ceremonies in Salt Lake City had traveled 13,500 miles across 46 states and had been carried by 11,500 Olympic torchbearers. Six USDA employees were part of that group.

**Jason Waggoner**, a public affairs specialist with the Food Safety and Inspection Service in Washington, DC, was the first of the six USDA employees to run with an Olympic torch—at 6:06 p.m. on December 21. "I ran two-tenths of a mile through downtown Washington," he said. The distance—equivalent to one lap around a track—was the standard length that most torchbearers traveled with the Olympic flame.

He said that each runner carries a separate torch and that the Olympic flame is

passed from torch to torch. Participants can then purchase the particular three-pound torch they carried for \$350—or, in many instances, sponsors donated the individual torches to their respective torchbearers.

Back in March the Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SLOC) and private sector sponsors Coca-Cola and Chevrolet had asked Americans to nominate, as Olympic torchbearers, individuals who had inspired them and had embodied "Olympic ideals." Nominations received by the SLOC were then read and judged by regional community task forces, while those received by Coca-Cola and Chevrolet were selected through an in-house process, then checked and verified for authenticity before notification.

"I had worked as a volunteer at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta," Waggoner said, "which may have had something to do with my selection as a relay runner this year." Atlanta was also the starting point, on December 4, for the 65-day, 13,500-mile journey of the Olympic flame, on its way to Salt Lake City.

Fast forward 22 days to January 12 where, at 6:03 p.m. **Joe Meade**, Forest Service's director of recreation for its Southwestern Region, *continued on pg. 3...*

# Secretary Ann M. Veneman



In late January, I had the pleasure of meeting with USDA employees gathered together for a training workshop in Savannah, Ga. In mid-February I met with USDA employees at our consolidated offices in Kansas City, Mo. During the meetings, we talked about many issues facing USDA, including the importance of preparing to implement a new farm bill.

As you know, Congress is currently crafting this important legislation, which will impact virtually all mission areas of the Department. As the Congress works in conference to complete the farm bill, it is critical that all of us at USDA continue to do what is necessary so we are ready to implement the

measure once it is signed into law.

It will be important that all our agencies work together so we can implement the new farm and food programs as quickly and efficiently as possible. Whether it is commodity, food safety, nutrition, conservation, rural development, research or trade programs, our work here at USDA will be critical to successful implementation.

We all know the importance of early planning during this time and I applaud the efforts of many of our agencies for their work and preparation. Working together, there is no doubt that we can and will be successful in these efforts to deliver programs to our farmers, ranchers and other customers.

USDA employees have a strong record when it comes to getting the job done. Let me point out one example. Just this last year,

Farm Service Agency employees worked tirelessly to implement last year's \$5.5 billion supplemental assistance bill. One day after President **George W. Bush** signed the bill, FSA initiated the first payments to 1.4 million producers across the country. This required a lot of hard work, ingenuity and dedication from employees all across the country.

It is through this type of spirit and effort that we were able to deliver last year's assistance in such a timely and efficient manner. And, it is the reason why I have no doubt that as a team and working together, we will be able to implement a new farm bill quickly, efficiently and responsibly.

Thank you again for all your efforts and continued work in delivering the best services to our customers each and every day. And, thank you in advance for all your farm bill preparations. ❖

## Celebrating Black History

**S**ecretary Ann M. Veneman opened the celebration of Black History Month at USDA headquarters in Washington DC in early February. The opening ceremony was organized by **Diana Charles**, a management analyst in the Office of Civil Rights who chaired USDA's Black History Month Committee.

At that opening ceremony Veneman said, "I believe this observance is especially important in these challenging times. For as we stand united as one nation, with one voice, in a new struggle to secure our freedom, we must never forget the courage and sacrifice of those Americans for whom freedom and equality were hard-fought propositions, and at other times so elusive a dream."

Echoing those thoughts **Dylan Coburn Glenn**, a special assistant to the President for economic policy, emphasized the need to embrace the past while focusing on the future. Here are excerpts of his keynote speech:

"It's altogether appropriate that we are here to celebrate Black History Month. African Americans, as a race, are the only Americans whose roots in this country are totally defined by race and ethnicity. When you think about it, our forefathers endured more than a century of slavery followed by a full century of mandated second-class citizenship and legalized and forced segregation.

"This legal mandate, enforced primarily in



**Dylan Coburn Glenn**, a special assistant to the President for economic policy

Southern states, ended four years before I was born, but it has left an undeniable and indelible mark on all of us, as we assume our rights as whole and complete American citizens. And so, again, it is fitting that we remember our tragic past and that we honor those historic figures that led us and our people through those difficult years and strived to bring us freedom, equality and justice.

"**Martin Luther King**, of course, stands as one of the greatest leaders now, recognized by all Americans as a 20th century icon whose birthday we now celebrate as a national holiday. I was proud to have the opportunity to accompany our First Lady, **Laura Bush**, down to Atlanta, as she went on behalf of President **George W. Bush** to celebrate King Day. And she spoke, I recall, movingly about Dr. King, and his deeds and his words, not as a black leader, but more importantly as a true American leader, who was a true American hero.

"That illustrates what I really want to visit with you a bit about today, and that is, yes, our past is a significant part of our lives, and it's important for us to remember. But I would argue it's more important for us now to spend our time looking at the future, our future not as African Americans or Spanish Americans or Hispanic Americans or whatever hyphenated

American, but as Americans who happen to be one color or the other. Americans who happen to be black.

"The theme of the Black History Month program is 'The Color Line Revisited,' and it poses the question: 'Is Racism Dead?' Well, I think that all of us here recognize that racism is not dead in our great nation, but we also hasten to acknowledge the fact that there's been tremendous progress made and tremendous things have been achieved.

"A good friend of mine is a woman who served in the first Bush administration, and she used to tell me that the wisest person she ever knew was her mother who only had an eighth grade education. My friend—who had a Ph.D., who was a very sophisticated woman, served as the dean of the business school at the McIntyre School at U.Va., was the first black and first woman to ever become an officer or a board member of a Fortune 200 company—said her mother was the wisest person she'd ever known because she never taught her that it was a liability to be black or to be a female, and so it never was.

"I was always struck by that comment. As black Americans, we can no longer handicap ourselves and our children. Racism, undeniably, still exists, but our challenge, as my father used to say, is to 'make race the other guy's problem, not ours.'"

—**PATRICIA KLINTBERG**

## Employees Offer Recipes From Mexican Caviar To Jumpin' Juice

Springtime has got to be just around the corner! And is there any better way to celebrate the onset of Spring than with...Food?!

That's why now is a perfect time to check out a new cookbook on the market. And it's not just any ol' cookbook; this one contains nearly 700 recipes by USDA employees.

The 310-page cookbook is titled "Recipes from the Employees of the United States Department of Agriculture—'We Feed The World.'" It was published by USDA's Employee Services and Recreation Association, which offers USDA employees at headquarters and field locations recreational, educational, wellness and other activities and services.

"I always thought that a cookbook from USDA's employees would be a natural thing to happen," said ESRA General Manager **Roger Lancaster**, "especially with the number of nutritionists, dieticians, food safety specialists and others who work for USDA."

According to **Sharlene Deskins**, a staff attorney in the Office of the General Counsel and president of ESRA's 28-member Board of Directors, Board members contacted employees in their respective agencies about ESRA's plans for an employee cookbook. "The message that went out to employees around the country," she said, "was 'We're looking for your favorite recipes.'" Attached to those e-mail messages was a standard form for use in writing down the recipe, to ensure a standard format.

Lancaster's next step was to contact specialists in the Food and Nutrition Service and the Food Safety and Inspection Service to include tips on nutrition and food safety.

"We wanted to get out such food prepara-

## Administrative



tion, nutrition and health suggestions as "When preparing meals, balance foods that have strong flavors with mild-flavored ones," said FNS nutritionist **Marion Hinners**. Such tips are contained at the beginning and end of the cookbook.

FSIS public affairs specialist **Holly McPeak** added that her agency provided such food safety tips as "Keep the refrigerator clean. This will prevent the spread of bacteria from spilled foods to other foods."

**Teresa Browning**, director of ESRA's Internet operations, said the cookbook costs \$15 plus \$2 for shipping charges, and can be ordered through ESRA's toll-free number at 1-800-626-ESRA or through the Internet at [www.usdaesra.org](http://www.usdaesra.org).

The nearly 700 recipes are grouped into such categories as Appetizers, Beverages, Soups, Salads, Vegetables, Main Dishes, Breads, Rolls, and Desserts.

The book includes such recipes as: "Feathered Corn" (submitted by **Jane Ross** with the Farm Service Agency in Jefferson, Mo.), "Zucchini Pancakes" (**Sevim Erhan**, Agricultural Research Service, Peoria, Ill.), "Mushroom Ragout" (Secretary **Ann M. Veneman**, Washington, DC), "Beer Batter Halibut" (**Tom Rainey**, Rural Development, Hatcher Pass, Alaska), "Applesauce

Oatmeal Drops" (**Dawn Cowan**, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, Washington, DC), "Chili-Pepper Chicken" (**Tonya Ahmed**, Risk Management Agency, Washington, DC), "Jane's Country Pie" (**Jane Waters**, Agricultural Marketing Service, Orlando, Fla.), "Cowboy Stew" (**Tammie Sundin**, Office of Inspector General, Temple, Texas), "Jay's Jumpin' Juice" (**Jay Green**, ARS, Beltsville, Md.), "Cocoa-Mallow Cake" (**Kristin Marcoe**, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, Washington, DC), "Glorious Purple Pickled Eggs" (**Linda Ebert**, FNS, Alexandria, Va.), "Cheeseburger Soup" (**Jerald Carter**, ARS, Beckley, W.Va.), "Mexican Caviar" (**Kay Lichte**, FSIS, Carroll County, Mo.), "Date Fingers" (**Jane Hart**, Office of Administrative Law Judges, Washington, DC), "Broken Glass Jello" (**Marilyn Tagaliod**, ARS, Hilo, Hawaii), "Banana Porridge" (**Salei'a Afele-Faamuli**, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, Washington, DC), "Irish Soda Bread" (**Ann Hassett**, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Albany, N.Y.), "Hummingbird Cake" (**Sandra Ellixson**, Office of Operations, Washington, DC), "Portuguese Sweet Bread" (**Catherine Sanchez**, FSIS, Yucaipa, Calif.), and "Better Than Robert Redford Cake" (**Rebecca Batts**, OIG, Washington, DC). "Just let your imagination run along with the recipe," quipped Batts.

**Joyce Jacks**, a microbiology technician with ARS's Southeast Poultry Research Lab in Athens, Ga., submitted 30 recipes for the employee cookbook. "Hey, I love to cook," she said, "so the cookbook was a great opportunity to share my recipes—especially for my Peanut Butter Pound Cake—with any USDA colleagues who want to try them out."

—**RON HALL**

*The Olympic Flame...continued from pg. 1*

based in Albuquerque, N.M., moved the Olympic flame through that city. "As I was running down the center of the street," Meade quipped, "my guide dog **Navarro** kept trying to move me onto the sidewalk, per his training."

All runners got to keep their standard issue required running uniform—which included synthetic windpants and pullover windshirt, a cotton t-shirt, and a fleece hat and gloves.

Ten days later on January 22 **Gary Weldon**, the FS personnel and EEO/civil rights program manager for the Winema and Fremont National Forests in southern Oregon, carried the flame through Klamath Falls, Ore., at 5:25 a.m. He said that a support runner, generally from the local community, follows alongside if needed for assistance.

"In addition," he said, "there is an SLOC person responsible for turning on the gas cannister in the torch just prior to the lighting of each torch—and then the gas is turned off once the flame is passed on to another participant."

Nine hours later **Even Evensen**, an FS seed orchard manager on the Siuslaw National Forest in western Oregon, carried a torch at 2:30 p.m. "I'd first found out about my participation when I had read my name in the *Corvallis Gazette-Times* newspaper back on October 24," said Evensen, a triathlete.

"Some of my triathlon training partners had submitted my name to the sponsoring officials." He carried a flame-bearing torch on a street in downtown Salem, Ore.

Three days later on January 25, **Jason Emhoff**, an FS forestry technician firefighter

on the Wenatchee National Forest in central Washington, moved the flame at 7:15 a.m., through a street in Pasco, Wash.

"I had the good fortune of having a group of Forest Service supporters cheering me on during my early morning run," he said.

**Mary Ritz**, an FS rangeland management specialist on the Shoshone National Forest in northwest Wyoming, carried a torch on January 28 at 11:32 a.m., through Columbus, Mont. "I was nominated," she said, "because, as of last July, I became the first woman, and one of only two people total, to complete both ultramarathons and marathons on all seven continents."

She said that the inscription on each torch was "Light The Fire Within." "That motto tells me we all have our own specialty, whether in sports or other endeavors," she said. "So pursue your specialty to the max." ♦



## Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

### DOPP Online Aids Producers

The job of staffers in the Risk Management Agency is to help give agricultural producers the tools they need to manage risk. One such program to accomplish that goal is RMA's Dairy Options Pilot Program, or DOPP, which offers dairy producers hands-on risk management training to learn to protect the market price of their milk by buying futures options.

And now, having entered its fourth year, DOPP is now online.

**Lon Burke**, USDA coordinator of the DOPP program, explained that participants in DOPP are obtaining experience in using price risk management tools. For example, they gain hands-on training in buying what are called "milk put options contracts" to ensure a minimum price for their milk.

Then, after completing the DOPP training,

## Employees make these things...

# HAPPEN!

dairy producers have four months to purchase up to 600,000 pounds of certain classifications of "milk put options."

"And, now that DOPP training is available online," said **Jody Firmani**, RMA's distance learning coordinator, "we're now extending the accessibility of training beyond the program's current classroom limitation."

"Contracting and travel expenses normally associated with traditional training have become prohibitive," said **David Vennell**, manager of distance education and technology for the Video, Teleconference, and Radio Center

in the Office of Communications. "RMA brought this training program online for \$8,000. Plus, it used mostly in-house technical resources—a goal I try to encourage."

"Most traditional CD-ROM courses," he said, "can cost \$100,000 to \$150,000 per training module."

So, who dreamed up the idea for an interactive DOPP online training software? Author **Craig Witt**, who directs RMA's Risk Management Education Program, wanted to extend DOPP's reach. "We had to develop a down-to-earth training package that assured students would understand basic concepts of the DOPP program," he explained, "since some producers can't attend the one-day sessions in their communities."

After prospective users reviewed the package, Firmani and Vennell jockeyed the new training module onto USDA's new distance learning server. But before any online training even began, they quickly discovered an unexpected benefit from the new interactive software: it wasn't very much more expensive, or

### USDA's 2003 Budget...continued from pg. 1

In addition, "The 2003 budget reflects our commitment to a nutrition safety net by including a record \$41 billion for domestic nutrition assistance programs, such as the Food Stamp, Child Nutrition and the Women, Infants and Children programs," Veneman said. "The budget also allows for more than \$2 billion in contingency funds to cover any unanticipated increases in domestic feeding program participation levels."

USDA's budget also proposes legislation that would add \$4.2 billion to the Food Stamp Program over the next 10 years to include eligibility for legal immigrants who have resided in the U.S. for at least five years, streamline the applications process and revive eligibility requirements for working families.

Veneman said the proposed budget reduces funding in some areas, including elimination of earmarked research projects so that peer-reviewed and national priority research work could be increased.

USDA's proposed budget also examines the programs and services the Department manages and proposes several management initiatives to better integrate computer systems and technology to provide employees and customers the necessary tools to efficiently operate and deliver services in the 21st century.

"We must look at ways to better serve our customers and ensure programs are deliver-

ing their intended purpose," said Veneman.

USDA's budget proposes a federal staffing level for FY 2003 of 98,772 full-time equivalent positions, or federal staff years. This is relatively the same level as the currently estimated FY 2002 federal staff year level of 98,955.

The staffing levels for most agencies for FY 2003 are proposed to increase or stay the same, compared to their FY 2002 federal staff year levels.

For more details on USDA's proposed staffing levels, as well as additional details on other aspects of USDA's proposed budget for FY 2003, click on [www.usda.gov/budget](http://www.usda.gov/budget).

*Highlights of USDA's FY 2003 budget proposal, thought to be of particular interest to employees, include:*

- Funding for the Common Computing Environment—a modern information system that will allow USDA's Service Center agencies (Farm Service Agency, NRCS, Rural Development), to share data—to facilitate efficient delivery of information and services to agricultural producers and rural residents is increased by \$74 million from the 2002 level for a total of \$133 million. Included is support for accelerated implementation of geographic information systems which are critical components of improving customer service through e-Government and standard program delivery.

- Record support for the Food Safety and

Inspection Service at \$905 million, a \$28 million increase above 2002.

- \$6.4 billion in support for international trade programs—a \$50 million increase—designed to promote U.S. agricultural exports, develop long-term markets overseas and improve world food security.

- \$6.1 billion in support for the Natural Resources and Environment agencies. This includes approximately \$1.5 billion in funding for the National Fire Plan; a \$50 million increase in conservation operations in NRCS; and a \$36 million increase for the National Forest System to support programs such as the National Energy Plan and wilderness management activities.

- \$2.3 billion to support ongoing research programs in high priority areas such as research on new prevention and control strategies for emerging, reemerging and exotic diseases of animals such as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) and Foot and Mouth Disease research. Other research will support the development of biotechnology, industrial and bioenergy products, environmental protection, and expanded market opportunities.

- funding to support a 2.6 percent pay raise for USDA employees.

USDA's proposed budget for FY 2003 was transmitted to Congress earlier on the same day as the Department's press conference. ❖

## Headlining Some Of Our Recent Initiatives

- *USDA To Use Farmer Friendly Computer System* (USDA News Release No. 0050)
- *Secretary Veneman Responds To President Bush's Call For Community Service* (No. 0028)
- *USDA Preparing For New Farm Bill; Veneman Visits With USDA Employees* (No. 0023)
- *President Bush Signs Defense Appropriations Bill That Bolsters USDA Homeland Security Efforts* (No. 0006)
- *USDA To Continue Testing For Salmonella In Meat Plants; Veneman Announces Additional Actions To Strengthen Inspection Systems* (No. 0267)

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For more detail, go to USDA's News Releases, by clicking onto USDA's Web site at [www.usda.gov/newsroom.html](http://www.usda.gov/newsroom.html)

complicated, to add online training for RMA employees as well.

"Since the USDA distance learning server comfortably handles the training needs of RMA employees who take a variety of online training courses," Firmani said, "we had no problem when the DOPP producers and brokers from the pilot counties started their online training. Over 200 brokers and producers have successfully completed the online DOPP course."

Looking to the future, Firmani said, "Moreover, dramatic growth is expected in distance learning programs and in our capacity to serve more students."

—MARY REKAS



## Marketing and Regulatory Programs

### AMS's 'Kitchen' Aided Dialogue

"The idea was to give several American Indian tribal leaders and elders an exposure to AMS's 'kitchen,' in a sense—so they could, in turn, go back to Indian Reservations and promote the benefits of consuming USDA agricultural commodities."

**Shoshana Avrishon**, an outreach specialist with the Foreign Agricultural Service and a member of USDA's American Indian Council (AIC), was describing the purpose of a Commodity Education Forum for American Indians which USDA sponsored last fall.

Coordinated by the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Farm Service Agency, the Food and Nutrition Service, and the AIC, and held at USDA headquarters in Washington, DC, the forum was attended by representatives of the Abenaki, Algonquin, Blackfoot, Caddo, Caw, Cherokee, Hochunk, Hopi, Lakota, Mayan, Mic Mac, Mohawk, Natchez,

Navajo, Ojibway, Oneida, Taino, Tlingit, and Wampanoag tribes.

"The goal of this first-time meeting," Avrishon added, "was to enhance communications between the Department and those American Indians—located on the scores of reservations throughout the U.S.—who are recipients of USDA agricultural commodities."

She said that the desire for enhanced communications stemmed from an interest, by Indian recipients of USDA agricultural commodities, on how those commodities are selected, purchased, processed, inspected, tested, and ultimately delivered to those reservations. "In addition," she said, "there have been some lingering misconceptions and misunderstandings, on some Indian Reservations, concerning the health, safety, and nutritional value of those commodities."

"So this interaction was designed to foster an environment where our American Indian guests could feel comfortable enough to express their concerns and ask questions about the commodities—and have USDA specialists address those specific concerns."

**Karen Lessard**, a writer-editor in the Forest Service and AIC historian, noted that the 40 participants did actually partake of items on USDA's special 'menu' for the occasion, including baked chicken, spaghetti, chicken pot pie, tuna salad, vegetable dishes, and various fruit cobblers. "All of those items were prepared from USDA agricultural food commodities made available to Indian Reservations," she said. "That's why we served them at this event."

"Food program and commodity specialists from AMS and FSA helped with the servings," added AMS agricultural marketing specialist **Valerie Schmale**. "They wanted to be there to respond to any questions participants had about the agricultural commodities."

The September 1998 issue of the USDA



"The beef in that can you're holding is also available without added salt, for those recipients on Indian Reservations who are concerned about hypertension," notes AMS livestock and meat marketing specialist **Steve Olson** (right), as he and FAS agricultural research advisor **Calvina Dupre** partake of items on the Department's special 'menu' during a recent USDA-sponsored Commodity Education Forum for American Indians. Also enjoying the buffet...



...is **Jean Ann Day** (center), an Indian tribal elder from the Hochunk Indian Reservation in Wisconsin who is sampling a vegetable medley prepared from USDA agricultural food commodities made available to Indian Reservations.—PHOTOS BY KEN HAMMOND

**News** carried a story about nutritional improvements which FNS made to the monthly commodity food package USDA distributes on Indian Reservations as part of its "Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations."

**Wayne Brewer**, an AMS computer specialist and AIC vice-chair, said that the American Indian Council is an employee organization that was chartered in 1996 to give the American Indian and Alaskan Native community greater visibility within USDA. "One of AIC's goals," he said, "is to assist USDA with the delivery of various USDA programs and services to 'Indian Country,' such as food aid, education, and developing agribusiness."

Lessard said that USDA and AIC hope to hold future Commodity Education Forums for American Indians annually, either in Washington, DC or on-site at Indian Reservations.

"It's important for us to continue this dialogue," Avrishon said, "both on behalf of our Indian customers and in support of our USDA agricultural commodities."

—KATHRYN MATTINGLY



**M**ark Rey was sworn in as the under secretary for natural resources and environment.

Before joining USDA, from 1995 until his swearing-in Rey served as a staff member with the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, where he was the lead staff person for the committee's work on national forest policy and Forest Service administration. He was directly involved in virtually all of the forestry and conservation legislation considered during the past several sessions of Congress, with principal responsibility for a number of public lands bills during this period.

From 1992-94 Rey served as vice president for forest resources with the American Forest and Paper Association, headquartered in Washington, DC. He served as executive director of the American Forest Resource Alliance in Washington, DC from 1989-92. From 1984-89 he was vice president for public forestry programs with the National Forest Products Association. He served in several positions for the American Paper Institute/National Forest Products Association, a consortium of national trade associations representing the forest products industry, from 1976-84. From 1974-75 he worked as a staff assistant for the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management in Billings,

## Editor's Roundup

USDA people in the news

Mont., and Washington, DC.

A native of Canton, Ohio, Rey holds a B.S. degree in wildlife management, a B.S. degree in forestry, and an M.S. degree in natural resources policy and administration, all from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

**Jim Lyons**, the previous under secretary for natural resources and environment, held that position from May 1993 until January 2001 and is now a professor in the practice of natural resource management at Yale University in New Haven, Conn. ❖



**Bobby Acord** was selected as the administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

From September 2001 until his selection to this position in November 2001 Acord served as acting administrator for APHIS. He was also APHIS's associate administrator from August 1999 until 2001. From 1990-99 he was deputy administrator for

wildlife services in APHIS.

Acord served in several managerial positions in APHIS's [then] Animal Damage Control unit from 1986-89, both in Denver, Colo., and Washington, DC, after having worked in several other areas of responsibility in APHIS from 1973-86. He began his federal career as an Agricultural Marketing Service agricultural commodity grader in Los Angeles, Calif., in 1966.

Acord holds a B.S. degree in animal science from West Virginia University in Morgantown, W.Va.

**Craig Reed**, the previous APHIS administrator, held that position from July 1998 until September 2001, when he became a visiting professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Va., as well as work on the development of a Joint Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Health. ❖



**A.J. Yates** was named as the administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service.

Before joining USDA, from May 2000 until his recent appointment Yates worked as a senior marketing consultant and agricultural specialist based in Fresno, Calif., with Panagraph Marketing Solutions, an agricultural marketing firm. He served as under secretary of the California Department of Food

## PROFILE PLUS

More About: **Eric Bost**



It's been six months since **Eric Bost**, Secretary **Ann M. Veneman's** pick for under secretary for food, nutrition and consumer services, came to Washington DC (the August 2001 issue of the *USDA News* carried his complete biographical sketch, following his selection to that position).

Since then he has visited all six regional offices under his jurisdiction. "That afforded me the opportunity to visit the vast majority of my staff that are responsible for our programs and they are absolutely wonderful people and do a great job, day in and day out," Bost said. He also had high praise for the staff in the "agencies I am responsible for along with other staff persons I've had the opportunity to interact with in the Department. They are very knowledgeable, very professional and very responsive and

generally very nice and friendly and that's a real plus."

Bost oversees the food stamp, school lunch and breakfast programs as well as the women, infants and children feeding programs. His agency is also responsible for food distribution through various programs and community food security. President **George W. Bush** has proposed spending \$41 billion on these programs in the coming fiscal year. In addition he wants to allow legal immigrants to receive food stamps if they are otherwise eligible.

"The program will be implemented by state offices around the country and they feel very positive about it," Bost said.

What's his favorite experience thus far? "During National School Lunch week I went back to the elementary school that I went to in North Carolina—that was just a wonderful, wonderful thing for me." The school is Coltrane-Webb in Concord, N.C., where Bost's parents, who've been married 61 years, still live.

Bost observed that "the food we have in

the school lunch program today is more nutritiously balanced than when I was a kid, plus kids have many more choices. I visited a high school with a salad and fruit station and a sandwich station. Another had a grill where you could order hot dogs and hamburgers."

**Last Book Read:** "The Painted House" by **John Grisham**

**Hobbies:** Photography, reading, saltwater fishing

**Favorite Food:** All seafood

**Last Movie Seen:** "In the Bedroom" with **Sissy Spacek** ("Not a feel-good movie, but still excellent")

**Favorite Breakfast:** Pancakes or waffles  
**Priorities in the Months Ahead:** Reauthorization of food stamps, which is part of the farm bill. Developing a nutrition campaign to help tackle obesity in this country. Reauthorization of child nutrition programs which is coming up in 2003.

—**PATRICIA KLINTBERG**

and Agriculture, based in Sacramento, from 1996-2000, after having served as its deputy secretary from 1991-96. In those positions he managed a number of CDFA divisions, including Animal Health, Food Safety Services, Inspection Services, Marketing Services, Plant Health, Natural Resources and Environmental Planning, and Pest Prevention Services.

Yates served as president of the Fresno County Farm Bureau from 1989-90 and was state director of the California Sugar Beet Growers Association for six years in the 1980s. He has been active in farming since graduating from college, and most recently farmed almonds in Kerman, Calif.

Yates is a native of Gorman, Texas and grew up on a farm in Kerman, Calif. He holds a B.S. degree in agronomy from California State University in Fresno.

**Kathleen Merrigan**, the previous administrator of AMS, held that position from June 1999 until January 2001 and is now a professor at the Tufts University School of Nutrition in Boston, where she directs a graduate program in agriculture, food and the environment. ❖



**Hilda Legg** was sworn in as the administrator of the Rural Utilities Service.

Before joining USDA, from 1994 until her swearing-in Legg served as executive director and CEO of

The Center for Rural Development in Somerset, Ky. The Center is considered a state-of-the-art facility and a national model for economic development in rural areas and for related educational, cultural and job creation purposes. In that position she was responsible for the management of the facility as well as program development and outreach. She also assisted in the development and implementation of a telecommunication program designed to maximize technology hardware in rural communities throughout Kentucky.

Legg was appointed as alternate federal co-chair for the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington, DC, from 1990-93, where she represented and promoted economic policies and assisted in the management of a \$190 million budget for job creation, building infrastructure, education and work force training, as well as research programs for economic development.

From 1987-90 Legg served as the director of admissions for Lindsey Wilson College in Columbia, Ky. She worked as a field representative in the Bowling Green, Ky., office of U.S. Sen.

**Mitch McConnell** (R-Ky.) from 1985-87. From 1981-83 she served as the acting executive director of the National Council on the Handicapped with the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, DC. She taught junior and senior public high school social sciences in Adair County, Ky., from 1974-81.

A native of Adair County, Ky., Legg holds a B.S. degree in sociology from Campbellsville College in Campbellsville, Ky., and an M.A. degree in education from Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Ky.

**Chris Mclean**, the previous RUS administrator, held that position from July 2000 until January 2001 and now works for National Strategies Inc., a Washington, DC-based consulting firm which specializes in telecommunications and public policy. ❖



**Alisa Harrison** was named the deputy director of communications and press secretary for USDA.

Before joining USDA, from 1986 until her appointment, Harrison served as

the executive director of public relations for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), headquartered in Washington, DC. NCBA, a consumer focused, producer-directed organization that represents the largest segment of the nation's food and fiber industry, is also the marketing organization and trade association for America's cattle ranchers and feeders. At NCBA, Harrison managed all media relations and public relations activities designed to support consumer marketing and public policy goals.

From 1983 to 1986 Harrison worked for the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service in Knoxville as an editorial assistant.

Harrison is a member of the National Press Club and the National AgriMarketing Association.

Raised in Knoxville, Tenn., Harrison holds a B.S. degree in journalism from the University of Tennessee. ❖



**Gary Cunningham** was selected as the associate administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

Before joining USDA, from 1968 until his selection Cunningham served in several positions at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. From 1997 until 2001 he was its vice-president for research, where he concentrated on building interdisciplinary



*It's 6:03 p.m., and the temperature is only in the high 30s, but FS's **Joe Meade** is smiling nonetheless, as he and his guide dog **Navarro** jog two-tenths of a mile through downtown Albuquerque. What's significant about this particular jog is the torch in Meade's right hand. It's an Olympic torch, and Meade is using it to help transport the Olympic flame 13,500 miles from Atlanta to Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Olympics. He was one of 11,500 torchbearers and also one of, at last count, six USDA employees to participate in that activity. Note the story on page 1.—PHOTO BY SUSAN ALDEN*

research programs, including social sciences and liberal arts.

From 1990-97 Cunningham served as associate dean of NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics as well as director of the NMSU Agricultural Experiment Station. He was head of the Department of Biology from 1984-90, after having started as an assistant professor in that department in 1968.

A native of Tucson, Ariz., Cunningham holds a B.S. degree in secondary education in biology and an M.S. degree in botany, both from the University of Arizona, plus a Ph.D. degree in botany from the University of California at Los Angeles.

**Colien Hefferan**, the previous associate administrator in CSREES, served in that position from August 1996 to October 2000, when she became the agency's administrator. ❖



Secretary **Ann M. Veneman** (3rd from left) and **Orion Samuelson** (left), who is with Chicago radio station WGN's "U.S. Farm Report," are introduced by Deputy Director of Communications **Larry Quinn** (standing) to 4-H members **Lucas Shivers** of Kansas, **Marcus Cook** of Florida, and **Brita Thomas** of Minnesota during a March 1 radio interview with farm broadcasters celebrating the 4-H Centennial. The students typify "Leaders of Tomorrow," which is also the name of a new initiative Veneman is promoting, in which adults are encouraged to mentor 4-H students and those enrolled in the Future Farmers of America. The goal of the Leaders of Tomorrow initiative is to inspire young adults by encouraging community involvement, careers in public service, and learning about agriculture. More information is available at [www.usda.gov/leadersoftomorrow](http://www.usda.gov/leadersoftomorrow). — PHOTO BY BOB NICHOLS



HELP US FIND

**Dorien Thomas**

Missing: 10-26-1998 From: Amarillo, TX  
 D.O.B. 05-06-1989 Sex: Male  
 Hair: Black Eyes: Brown  
 Height: 4 ft. Weight: 60 lbs.

If you have information, please call

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN

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 Calendar Highlights**

- ◆ **February 21-22**  
*Agricultural Outlook Forum 2002*  
 Arlington, Va.  
 (202) 694-5118 or 1-800-877-8339 (TTY)
- ◆ **Month of February**  
*Black History Month*  
 USDA headquarters and field offices  
 (202) 720-7314 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY)
- ◆ **Month of March**  
*Women's History Month*  
 USDA headquarters and field offices  
 (202) 720-7314 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY)
- ◆ **Month of March**  
*National Nutrition Month*  
 USDA headquarters and field offices  
 (703) 305-2298 or 1-800-877-8339 (TTY)

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