



# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*Enriching Lives*

## Message from the Commissioner

Author Khalil Gibran once wrote: "You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

I am very humbled and proud to have read these uplifting stories of many of our own in DPW and excited to share them with you in this news letter. It is remarkable to see how many share their blessing and skills with others in the com-

munity. Thank you to all featured ( and to others who silently serve others) for lovingly touching people's lives.

I wish you all a Healthy and joyful Holiday season! May you be blessed with the gift of giving.

*Ghassan Korban*  
Ghassan Korban, Commissioner



## Gary Sisley: Fleet Repair Supervisor by Day, Scout Master in the Evenings and Weekends

Gary Sisley has been with the Department of Public Works for 25 years and with the Boy Scouts of America for the past 14 years. His interest in the Boy Scouts began when his son Dillon was a Tiger Cub. After attending meetings with Dillon for a year, he became a Cub Scout Den leader for Dillon's Bear Den. He found the position so rewarding that four years later, when Dillon became a Boy Scout with Troop 260, he became an Assistant Scout Master (ASM). Gary enjoyed being involved so much that the following year, even though he continued as an ASM with Dillon's troop, he became a Cub Scout Den leader for his son Derek's den, Cub Scout Pack 60.



Gary, Linda, son Dillon, granddaughter Haley, daughter Dana, granddaughter Amy, son Derek

It is not surprising that 5 years later, when Derek became a Boy Scout with Troop 260, Gary continued as an ASM and three years later became the Scout Master for the troop. His son Dillon is now 20 and an Eagle Scout. He is following in his dad's footsteps as an

ASM with the troop, and Derek, age 15, is a star scout.

As a Cub Scout Den leader, Gary took the Cubs camping and toured places he had never traveled before. Some of the outings the pack enjoyed included making sub sandwiches at Cousins, pizzas at Dominos, touring the loading area of General Mitchell Field Airport, the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Offices, the Milwaukee Police Department, and the Milwaukee Fire Department. They also traveled outside of the city to the State Capitol in Madison and to the EAA museum in Oshkosh.

The Boy Scouts have camped all over the State of Wisconsin and

had a camping experience in South Dakota. They have camped in 95 degree weather and minus 20 degree weather. Last year, Gary took 16 scouts to the Boundary Waters wilderness in northern Minnesota for a week of back country canoeing, which included portaging from one lake to another. They had to carry everything they would need for a week, no luxuries allowed. The troop has camped in some odd places too, like Road America and the Milwaukee County Zoo. They have sampled some of nature's most beautiful spots by canoeing on the Horicon Marsh, hiking at Devil's Lake, backpacking Wisconsin's Glacial Trails several times, and biking Door County's Peninsula State Park.

Troop 260 has also performed color guard duties at Road America, where they held the flags of different countries for the international races and participated as color

guard in several 4th of July and Labor Day celebrations.

Scouting is a family affair for the Sisley's. Before Gary's sons became Boy Scouts, his daughter Dana went through the Girl Scouts program earning a Silver Star. During that time, she was a junior summer camp counselor at Silver Brook Girl Scout camp. Dana is now 30, and this year, her oldest daughter, Amy is a Daisy in Girl Scouts.

When asked why he got involved with the Boy Scouts program, Gary replied, "(Because of) my sons. I felt it was a great opportunity for them to learn and grow". He says he has stayed involved because he loves working with kids, teaching and giving them experiences they



Scout Master Gary Sisley with Troop 260 at Wisconsin Glacial Park

might never have the opportunity to get anywhere else. "I often marvel at how much they mature over the years while they are scouts. And I enjoy camping."

Scout Master Sisley states that when the boys participate in the Boy Scouts, "they learn everything, from outdoor skills, teamwork and self reliance, to leadership and responsibility. The things they learn in Boy Scouts are life skills for their future". ●

## Ray Hale: Coaching Inner City Children into the Record Books and College

Ray Hale, a painter for the Department of Public Works for 15 years, will celebrate 10 years of coaching young central city youths in track and field in 2012. He helped to establish the Mustang Track Club, a non-profit organization that provides track and field opportunities for youths ages six to eighteen years old. The Club's goals are to encourage and help young people to develop physically, emotionally, and socially through their involvement in track and field. Those on the team participate in USA Track and Field as well as AAU Track and Field meets.

Hale ran track and cross country when he attended South Division High School. It was something that



Midget division of the Mustang Track Club practicing at the Pettit Center

he enjoyed, and he developed a passion for the sport. He said he started the Mustang Track Club after he observed that there weren't any inner city children participating in the local and state track meets. Another reason he started the Club was because he wanted to keep the kids involved with something positive year round. During the winter

they practice at the Pettit Center.

The Milwaukee Mustang Track Club has changed the lives of several young people. Hale says, "Everyone who stayed with the team has been able to receive scholarships to either college or junior college. Not only that, but they have traveled all over the country, something they wouldn't

normally get a chance to do." The team attended the Junior Olympic meet in New Orleans this year and will travel to Houston for the meet in 2012.

Dezerea Bryant is one individual whose life was changed by becoming a member of the Mustang

Track Club. She joined at age nine. Dezerea is a 2011 graduate of Bradley Technical High School. She set two individual State records at the Wisconsin High School State Championships. Ms. Bryant was named the second fastest female in high school in the country.

During her senior year she was recruited by Clemson University in South Carolina and provided with a full scholarship, something that might not have occurred without her participation in the Club. Dezerea is one of many success stories. Other seniors from the program have attended colleges and junior colleges in Northern Michigan, Indiana State, South Carolina, and Harvard in Boston.

The indoor season of the Mustang Track Club has 70 to 80 partici-

pants, and the outdoor season will have 100 to 130 participants. Five members have obtained Division One status while enrolled in the Club. The Club has such a great reputation, the members now come from Brookfield, Whitefish Bay and even Madison.

Coach Hale says that track and field is his great passion. He enjoys being around the children and "showing them that there is more to life than standing around on the street corner. With the experience of being involved with the Mustang Track Club and developing their skills, they can get accepted by a junior college." He said

the organization is important because "many of the kids don't believe or think it's possible to attend school beyond high school. The Mustang Track Club can offer options to kids who may think they can't go any further." Let's hope Coach Hale continues for another 10 plus years for those central city youth that "think they can't go any further," they need Coach Hale to convince them otherwise.●



Dezerea Bryant, left with classmates from Bradley Tech High School and Coach Ray Hale at Wisconsin State Track meet

## Don Stone: Omega Psi Phi

"Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance and Uplift" are the Cardinal Principles of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity. "Uplift" is one principal that the fraternity demonstrates every opportunity it gets. Donald Stone, Jr., Sanitation Area Manager, has been a member of the Kappa Phi chapter for 4 years and with DPW for 16 years.

Stone and his fraternity work on projects to uplift the community including voter registration and mobilization, neighborhood clean ups, blood drives and back-to-school block parties. The Louis M. Adams Back-to-School Block Party held in August of this year was another shining example of an "uplifting" endeavour. The block party provided much needed school supplies, free haircuts and food and refreshments for the children and the adult attendees. Approximately

650 book bags were distributed. Even though it was a back-to-school event, the block party also included educational booths with information for parents and adults. Some of the participants included Lena's Markets, the Blood Center of Mil-



Participants line up for school supplies at the Louis M. Adams Back-to-School Block party

waukee, the Milwaukee Health Department, North Shore Bank, Pearls for Teen Girls, U.S. Army, 100 Black Men, Career Youth Development, All Peoples Church, Milwaukee Fire

Department, and Alverno College among others.

The Louis M. Adams Back-to-School Block Party had the support of local elected officials. Mayor Tom Barrett addressed the crowd and other attendees included Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, County Supervisors Michael Mayo, Johnny Thomas, and Willie Johnson, State Representative Jason Fields, and Dr. Gregory Thornton, Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools.

Stone said he felt the Louis M. Adams Back-to-School event was something the "youth in our community needed as well as the community as a whole. The need (to provide support) is greater now more than ever before due to economic conditions."

The fraternity has started a tradition of naming the event for one

of their fraternity brothers who has passed away. Louis M. Adams was a retired MPS teacher and served with the U.S. Army in Korea, part of the 2nd Ranger Infantry Company. It was an airborne unit of black soldiers who helped break down racial barriers during the Korean War. The rangers were an elite fighting

unit known for their unconventional fighting, parachuting behind enemy lines, and raids on Chinese units. Adams was also a Purple Heart recipient. When he returned home to Milwaukee, he became an active volunteer and veteran involved in all kinds of groups and the community, much of it as an Omega Psi Phi

fraternity brother. Stone says that being a member of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity is a great way to serve the community. "It is a fraternal Brotherhood that forms a bond of friendship for life and we have the pleasure of making a difference in our community together." ●

## Leggings for Life

When Lisa Krolasik learned how to crochet two years ago, she had no idea that her crocheting skills would be a benefit for pets around the world with problems with their limbs. Lisa, who is an Engineering Drafting Tech II in Central Drafting and Records, Infrastructure Services, started crocheting leggings for pets after she heard about a cat named Willow who belonged to her "facebook friend" Wendy, who lives in Mancelona, Michigan.

Willow was born with deformed back legs and was forced to drag them when she walked. Her owner was using medical tape to protect her legs which had to be changed every day and was getting to be expensive. The leggings now protect her skin and are far more comfortable than the tape.

Lisa crocheted her first pair of leggings back in June of this year.

Since that time, she and her friend Wendy started a facebook page in August, "Leggings for Life" which has recruited 35 people from all over the country to crochet leggings. The facebook page has more than 1,100 followers.

The leggings are protective, and for some pets, they help them to walk and prevent further injury. Many of the pets can't be helped any other way. So far 11 dogs and 10 cats have received leggings with more in progress.

Leggings have been sent all over the world to animal shelters in Greece, Indonesia, and Canada. Pet owners

that need leggings send Lisa their measurements, explain the animal's condition and she creates a design. She sends the design to volunteers to crochet the leggings. Once they are completed they are shipped to the pet's owner.

The project has provided Lisa with "the personal satisfaction of working with others who crochet and provide a necessary service for the animals in need". Lisa's expert handiwork can also be found at Bentley's One of a Kind, a shop located on 88th and North Avenue. ●



Lisa Krolasik demonstrates her technique for crocheting the leggings

## Hales Corners Lutheran Church Mitten Tree

The Hales Corners Lutheran Church Mitten Tree has been collecting and distributing hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves to shelters and pantries in Milwaukee for 10 years. Gwen Sauer, Urban Forestry Technician with the Department for 20 years, took over the responsibility of organizing the activity after one of the older volunteers gave up the job. She said she likes to organize things, and she loves to sew.

Sauer takes care of making the an-

nouncements for the project, collecting the items at church, and getting them to the people or places that distribute the items to those in need. She stated the job is made easy by the many willing volunteers at the church.

For the past five years, there has been a small corps of women who get together to make hats and



Gwen Sauer, Judy Schmid and Sally Soderland with a stack of hats, scarves and mittens collected or made by the "Church Mitten Club".

scarves from fleece as part of the donation drive. The fleece is sometimes donated by others and sometimes purchased by the women. Each year they make an average of 100 hats; this year they will have approximately 125 when they are done.

Gwen says that her family has never been in need of much and wants to give back to those who are in need. She shared the following story: "I had the opportunity to see the community our activity reached

while temporarily assigned to a location in a central city neighborhood. While waiting for van passengers to unload on a narrow street, I saw a little girl waiting for a bus on the nearby street corner. A woman came out of the child care center with a scarf to wrap around her face as it was near zero that day. When I passed by the building, I could read the name of the church that the child care center was housed in. It was one of the recipients of the items we collect at our church. It may not have been

one of "our" scarves, but it brought a smile to my face to think perhaps it could have been and to see her all bundled up against the cold."

Sauer had this final statement about the Hales Corners Lutheran Church Mitten Tree program, "so many public programs are being cut for the poor. If volunteer organizations do not step up to help those in need, there will be those (who will be) going without basic needs. I think it is an important part of my faith life to serve those around me."●

## Congratulations to the First Graduating Class of Public Works University!

The inaugural class of Public Works University received their certificates of completion on December 7, 2011 at the Department of Public Works Field Headquarters. The first offering of Public Works University, Professional Management Training commenced in January, 2011. Public Works University is a commitment by the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works to the professional growth of its employees through training and continued education. Public Works University includes training at all levels – from front-line worker to executive management. Part of the Professional Management Training curriculum included Advanced Communications Skills, Budgeting and Financial Management, Managing Troubled Employees and Leadership Development. Exclusive training opportunities will be developed and offered to Public Works University graduates on an ongoing basis to further enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities. Public Works University is one way DPW is "enriching lives" through investment in its workforce to improve service

delivery and provide benefit to the community.

- Facilitate a culture of respect, cooperation, and trust among all employees
- Create a positive working environment for all Public Works employees



Group Three members left to right: Nick Flinn, Jason Blasiola, John Schmidt, Haywood Morgan Jr., Jeremy Weisling, and Cathy Johnson.

The goals of Public Works University are to:

- Provide an understanding of all areas of Public Works management and operations
- Empower staff to strategically plan for the future
- Prepare employees for career advancement within the Department of Public Works
- Foster a workforce centered on "enriching lives" through effective management and customer-oriented service delivery

Public Works University participants completed a group Capstone Project to demonstrate a mastery of course material and how it related to City Government. The Capstone Project included both a written report and an oral presentation related to an efficiency or improvement in the provision of City services. Each of the five groups identified and developed their individual project. The Capstone Projects were evaluated based on six criteria: (1) organization of project, (2) topic knowledge, (3) creativity, (4) visual aids, (5) summary and (6) overall quality of the project.

All groups exceeded expectations with the highest evaluated score given to Group Three for Virtual Permitting: Answering the Challenge of Providing Excellent Customer Service. The project examined night parking permit operations and proposed solutions to maximize



PWU graduate Haywood Morgan Jr. addresses Preston Cole, Director of Operations, at the graduation at DPW Field Headquarters revenues for the City and minimize frustration for the public. The goals were to minimize impact on the general public, show

long term budgetary benefits, and demonstrate the public relations benefits of their findings.

The group's recommendation - eliminate night parking permits in favor of a virtual permit tied to the individual's license plate and incorporating a robust license plate recognition system for Parking Enforcement. This solution encourages online purchasing for parking permits and provides Parking

Enforcement the ability to simultaneously enforce numerous violations and meet DPW's operational needs.

PWU Graduates earn credit hours that can be applied to Wisconsin Certified Public Manager Program, the Certificate in Public Administration Program, Public Works Supervisory Academy and Public Works Management Institute.

Look for more Public Works University in 2012! ●

### The 28 graduates of the class of 2011

John (Jack) Bacik III - Administration  
 Diane Berndt - Administration  
 Jason Blasiola - Administration  
 Ruby Boggans - Infrastructure  
 Ian Brown - Operations  
 Richard Davila - Water Works  
 Geneva Ellis - Operations  
 Nick Flinn - Operations  
 Timothy Garczynski - Water Works

Grace Gates - Administration  
 Dawn Harris - Administration  
 Jennifer Holter - Administration  
 Cathy Johnson - Infrastructure  
 Jeffrey Jones - Operations  
 Patricia Klappa - Water Works  
 Daniel Lewand - Water Works  
 Haywood Morgan, Jr. - Operations  
 Patrick Powers - Operations

Raul Ramos - Infrastructure  
 David Rochester - Operations  
 Patricia Roundy - Administration  
 John Schmidt - Water Works  
 Jeffrey Shackelford - Water Works  
 John Tews - Water Works  
 Karen Toth - Infrastructure  
 Jeremy Weisling - Administration  
 Mary Yanke - Infrastructure

## Congratulations to Anthony Sherwin!

Anthony Sherwin, DPW Call Center Manager, completed the inaugural Public Works Management Institute. He received his

certification in November 2011 at the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Public Works Association conference in Wausau. Prior to that, Sherwin also completed the Public Works Supervisory Academy. Both courses were offered by the UW-Madison Continuing Studies, in cooperation

with the Wisconsin Chapter of APWA. Sherwin has been the Department's Call Center Manager for the past four plus years. He said that he took the courses to "enhance my management skills, which will help me transition from the DPW Call Center to the Unified Call Center." ●

I hope you enjoyed the stories about your co-workers and how they share their time and energy to help make our community a better place. If you have a suggestion about other employees or yourself that you would like to share, please contact me, at [Cecilia.Gilbert@Milwaukee.gov](mailto:Cecilia.Gilbert@Milwaukee.gov). We would like to make the profiles a part of each newsletter. Thank you.

# Department of Public Works Newsletter



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