



# Procurement Countdown

Spring 2002 No. 123

## Procurement's Most Wanted

By Diane Frazier and Donna Triplett, Inspector General's office

*We must be vigilant to the criminals' use of all phases of the procurement process in their attempts to defraud the government and the taxpayers of millions of dollars. Among the many types of criminal cases the Office of Inspector General (OIG) prosecutes, foremost is procurement fraud. Many of these cases might not be successfully prosecuted without the help and cooperation of NASA procurement personnel. We wish to share some of these cases with the procurement community and, in so doing, heighten the awareness of NASA procurement professionals to fraud indicators in their everyday dealings with NASA acquisitions.*

### The Case of the Slim Trimmer

The crate containing the laser trimmer was delivered along with specific instructions regarding its contents. Though seemingly just part of the contract, the role of those instructions in a scam to defraud the government became apparent as events unfolded.

Gustave "Gus" Fralick, an electronics engineer at the Glenn Research Center (Glenn), had ordered the precision laser trimmer for use as part of a trimming system in fabricating sensors for jet aircraft engines. Glenn procured the laser trimmer from Nexex Corporation of Altamonte Springs, FL, under a fixed-price contract for \$138,900. During the award process past performance checks were conducted. Both references provided by Nexex checked out—or so it seemed. Investigation later disclosed that

Philip Bolen, President of Nexex, used aliases that established the references. He and the references were one in the same.

Jon Schultz, a Contracting Officer at Glenn, assumed administration of the contract after it was awarded and one



modification, extending the delivery time, for assembly, set-up and training, at no additional cost, had been executed. One of Schultz' first actions on the contract was the issuance of a second modification adding an additional specification with a new delivery time at no increase

in contract cost.

The laser trimmer was delivered on schedule with specific instructions from Bolen that the trimmer was to remain crated until he arrived to assemble it, set it up, and provide training on its use. Shortly after delivery, Bolen contacted Schultz and Fralick informing them that he was undergoing a medical procedure and was too weak to travel to Glenn. He told them that, unfortunately, he was the only person qualified to assemble, set up, and train them on the use of that particular laser trimmer model.

Sympathetic to Bolen's situation and wanting to stay on schedule, Schultz and Fralick agreed to allow Nexex to ship the laser trimmer back to the company at company expense,

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## Highlights...

Procurement award winners for 2001 are listed on page 2.

Delene Sedillo, one of several personnel profiles this issue, is featured on page 4.

Articles about IFM are on pages 5 and 7.

See contracting from another point of view, with an article written by a COTR, page 6.

Features this issue include an IT procurement manager at GSFC, page 8, a contract specialist at GRC, page 9, and the DFRC purchase card program, page 10.

ODIN, and how it's changed things at GSFC, is highlighted on page 11.

# 2001 Procurement Award Winners

Eight NASA procurement professionals and one person from outside the procurement organization were chosen to receive the 2002 Annual Procurement Awards. These awards are the highest procurement honors at NASA. The annual procurement awards are used to recognize those people and centers that have made outstanding contributions to the procurement effort throughout NASA. As in past years, it was a very tough competition with many worthy candidates nominated by the centers.

The winners of the awards are:

**Contract Manager of the Year:** Sandra Cover (GSFC)

**Contract Specialist of the Year:** Jason Edge (SSC)

**Simplified Acquisition Specialist of the Year:** Gloria Coffey (MSFC)

**MidRange/Commercial Person of the Year:** Glen Williams (GRC)

**Grants Specialist of the Year:** Donna Burfoot (GSFC)

**Procurement Analyst of the Year:** Panice Clark (LaRC)

**Procurement Support Person of the Year:** Linda Urquhart (LaRC)

**Procurement Supervisor of the Year:** Carolyn La Follette (ARC)

**COTR of the Year:** L. David Wall (LaRC) – see David's article on page 6.



## Previous Articles Right at Your Fingertips

Do you vaguely remember reading an article in a previous Countdown and wish you could look at it again? Well, you can. Issues of the *Procurement Countdown* for the last three years are all on the web at: <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/cntdwn.html>. But say you don't remember which newsletter the training article you want was in, what then? That's easy too. The first item on the link listed there is for an index of all of these newsletters. They are arranged by issue, so just scan down until you see the title or subject you want. The page number is listed, too. Simply go back to the list of Countdowns and open the newsletter you want.

## Check It Out – Now On The Web

The Incentive Contracting Guide is now an electronic document available from the NASA Procurement Library at: <http://ec.msfc.nasa.gov/hq/library/inctfeeguide.doc>.

Please note: This guide is over 250 pages long. It takes about an hour to print, depending on the speed of your machine. It is strongly suggested that you view the guide on the screen and only print the pages you need.



## People on the Move

**DFRC:** Farewell: Robert A. Greco was selected for a supervisory job at JPL-NMO. Carol L. Van Gelder retired as of December 31, 2001 after a 16-year career at NASA-DFRC. Carol, in her career within the Acquisition Management Office, started as a GS-1105 buyer and advanced to the position of Chief, Simplified Acquisition Section. She converted to the GS-1102 series and as a major duty oversaw the implementation of NASA-DFRC's IMPAC card system. Carol was awarded a NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal in 1995 for her work in implementing the IMPAC card system. Also, Carol was recognized in 1994 as an avid promoter of human space flight by representing NASA-DFRC as a Space Flight Awareness Honoree. We wish her well and hope she enjoys her retirement.

**GSFC:** Congratulations: GSFC and WFF recently promoted several Contracting Officers. These folks have worked hard and diligently and are most deserving of this recognition. They include Pam Taylor at WFF, Susie Shaw, Judy Jones, Jerry Edmond, Carlos McKenzie, Dawn Fountain, Cosimo Lucchese and Klaus Sexton at GSFC. Cassandra Atkinson, at GSFC, was selected for a Contract Specialist, Simplified Acquisition position. New Faces: We also extend "A Heartfelt Welcome" to our newest

Contract Specialists, Michael Allen, Glenna Paulson, Kelly Boos, and Patricia Holmes and to Joan Murden at WFF and Jolyn Nace at GSFC who joined our team as procurement technicians. Farewell: We will miss Glenn Emig who left NASA for the Dept. of Justice, Rebecca Barth to Dept. of Treasury, Crystal Davis to Coast Guard, Patricia Thompson to Air Force, Kellie Murray to Code 400, Theresa Becker to Code 190, and Joseph Gray who left NASA in November. Changes: Tom Paprocki is now the Deputy Director of Management Operations. Val Burr is now the Director of the Procurement Operations Division. Ms. Burr replaces Rick Keegan, who has gone to NASA HQ as the Director of the Business Division within Code Y.

**HQ:** Welcome back to Deborah O'Neill. Deborah spent several years as the head of the Federal Acquisition Institute. We are delighted to have her back at Headquarters. Farewell and Congratulations to Donna Fortunat. Donna left Headquarters to expand her career at the National Science Foundation. This position included a promotion to an SES. Good luck Donna!

**JSC:** Congratulations: Lisa Phillips was recently selected as a team lead in the newly formed Science and Analysis Procurement Office which is headed by Robbie LaBrier. Nancy Liounis is now on the BA staff working on Commercialization and Michelle Isermann is a team lead in the Shuttle Procurement Office. Welcome: Genefer Brice has joined the Projects Procurement Office; Cody Corley has

joined the Institutional Procurement Office and Joseph Mladinich is in the Science and Analysis Procurement Office. Mary Kincaid has recently returned to the Shuttle Procurement Office. We are happy to have these talented and dedicated folks working in the JSC Procurement Community. Farewell: Bill Bays retired as Manager of the Shuttle Procurement Office and has been replaced by Wayne Thomas who previously served as the Deputy of the Space Station procurement Office. Linda Garcia also retired from the Procurement Office at White Sands.

**SSC:** New Faces: Rebecca Dubuisson, SSC Procurement Officer, announces the arrival of three new employees and one Presidential Management Intern (PMI). Delma J. Moore came to SSC from the Air Force and is assigned to the Support Services Contracting Division as a Senior Contract Specialist. Kathy L. Spainhower came to SSC from Kennedy Space Center and is also assigned to the Support Services Contracting Division as a Senior Contract Specialist. David R. Keith came to NASA from the Air Force and is assigned to the Policy and Pricing Group as a procurement analyst and Policy Officer. Leslie E. Taylor-Grover, a PMI, has accepted a position with the SSC Office of Procurement and is supporting both divisions and obtaining an overview of the procurement function at SSC.

The list of **People on the Move** only includes those names that were submitted to the *Procurement Countdown*. If you know people who should be listed in this column, contact your Center *Procurement Countdown* point of contact, or send the names to the editor, Susie Marucci, on (202) 358-1896, or e-mail at [susie.marucci@hq.nasa.gov](mailto:susie.marucci@hq.nasa.gov).

# Our Team Lead Rides a Suzuki

By Katherine Autry, Johnson Space Center

Our team lead rides a Suzuki. This is all the more remarkable considering that she is exaggerating when she claims to be five feet tall. But she handles that motorcycle just fine, thank you, and she handles a diverse team of procurement and technical professionals with the same technique – she maintains a well-oiled “machine.” She keeps the connections clean, occasionally revs the engine, studies the manual, provides regular maintenance to all the parts, tunes and polishes it up, and then stands back to watch it not only perform, but shine.

Delene Sedillo is a recent transplant to Texas (recent being anything less than born here) hailing originally from Socorro, New Mexico, about 70 miles south of Albuquerque. She attended New Mexico State University, where she received her BBA in Finance and Real Estate. She spent four co-op tours at JSC, each in a different area, but settled on procurement as her final destination. She brought with her a quaint way of pronouncing words ending with “-ing” which is apparently peculiar to desert dwellers (and she thinks our boss from Mississippi has an accent). But she seems to have almost overcome the decided disadvantage of not being born a Texan, in spite of her failure to adopt our superior speech patterns.

## Working around JSC

Delene’s procurement experience is broad and varied. She was fortunate and savvy,

spending enough time in one place to really become knowledgeable, but not so much time that she got stale. She has worked in procurement support for Research and Engineering, the Shuttle program, and the Information Systems Directorate. She also spent time in the New Initiatives and Exploration Procurement Branch at JSC, where she helped acquire the Lunar Scout. She has worked several Source Evaluation Boards and Committees, including the Outsourcing Desktop Initiative for NASA (ODIN), for which she was nominated for the JSC Certificate of Commendation. This procurement represented the first attempt by NASA at commercial outsourcing of the desktop environment, and Delene’s efforts on behalf of JSC’s delivery order under this contract served as a model to other centers. Most recently, she supported the Space Station Procurement Office and the SEB for the Crew Return Vehicle Project (CRV).

Delene received her Contracting Officer’s warrant in 1995, and became a team lead in January 2001. Her broad base of experience included FFP, CPAF, CPFF, commercial acquisitions, IDIQ contracts, and grants. She was familiar with almost every type of acquisition and contract. Almost, but not quite.

Well-prepared with this background, and a long history of highly satisfied customers, Delene entered the world of the Center Operations Directorate in April 2001, newly selected to fill a team lead position. Her team

is responsible for all support to the Center Operations Directorate at JSC, including acquisitions and contract administration for Construction, Architect/Engineer, SR&QA, and assorted other services. Many of these areas are somewhat unique and different, both in terms of acquisition methods and administrative issues. Delene had no previous experience in construction or A/E contracting. She had a lot of catching up to do, and she dug right in. She also quickly earned the respect of our very demanding customers.

Delene’s success as a brand new team lead in an unfamiliar area can be attributed to several factors: (1) she solicited our input first on issues, (2) she has good common sense and excellent business judgment, (3) she dug in and worked some procurements herself as a way to educate herself, and (4) she was not too self-important to do contract specialist work during a crunch. She showed us that she was not only a “working CO,” but a working team lead as well. She was willing to listen and willing to learn. She asked for our help. And even with her own workload of A/E contracts and construction contracts and MIPRS and NDPRs, and her responsibilities towards two ongoing source evaluation boards, she still honored a commitment to continue working the CRV SEB in another organization. This is a woman who gets a lot done in a day.

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# IFM and the Future of Purchase Cards

By Doreen Medzi, Glenn Research Center

What single program in the Agency includes the participation of thousands of civil servants and results in tens of thousands of purchases yearly? If you guessed the Purchase Card (P-card) Program, you would be right. Purchase cardholders number in excess of 3,000 Agencywide. They include procurement and non-procurement employees. Purchase cardholders made more than 175,000 purchases last year that totaled in excess of \$77.5 million dollars. As you can see, the Purchase Card program has really taken off.

Each NASA Center currently uses a different method to record P-card purchases, to receive goods and services against those purchases, and to reconcile and approve purchase card transactions from the Bank of America. These methods vary from completely manual paper systems to almost fully-automated computer systems. While the basic process for use of the government purchase card will remain unchanged, the method used to move through the process and complete it will change significantly with the implementation of the Integrated Financial Management (IFM) Program's Core Financial module.

As many of you are aware, NASA awarded a contract to SAP Public Sector and Education in September 2000 for the SAP R/3 software. The software was carefully reviewed to identify gaps between NASA's current processes and SAP's standard

functionality. From a financial perspective, NASA (and the federal government, in general) has a unique way of dealing with purchase cards when compared to the commercial world. This uniqueness ended up as a recorded gap. Faced with the challenge of finding a solution to



this gap the IFMP Core Financial Purchasing Sub-process team, headed by Jane Maples, set out on a quest for a solution. A number of solutions were investigated. After reviewing all of the advantages, disadvantages, and risks associated with each possible solution, a decision was made to proceed with the procurement of a third party software package that would be interfaced with SAP to maximize the functionality of both pieces of software.

After reviewing the bankcard software products available commercially, the Core Financial Project awarded a contract in April 2001 to Credit Card Solutions, Inc. (CCSi) for its P-Card software. CCSi, located in Richland, Washington, developed the P-Card software in 1995 and has successfully implemented it in numerous large businesses as well as state and local governments. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) has been a successful user of this software since 1997. Ask Ginger Loesch, JPL Bankcard Coordinator, or Jake Ramos, JPL Alternate

Bankcard Coordinator, about their experiences with the P-Card software and you'll receive very positive responses. Some of CCSi's other clients include University of Illinois, State of Alaska, Newport News Shipbuilding, CALTEX (a Chevron/Texaco joint venture), and Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. The P-Card software was successfully interfaced with the SAP software at Newport News Shipbuilding and CALTEX. There are, of course, significant benefits in procuring software that has been successfully interfaced previously with the SAP software. The most obvious benefit is CCSi's previous experience in interfacing with the complex SAP software and dealing successfully with any issues that arise.

The P-Card software provides the functionality for an automated end-to-end bankcard process. You may ask what does that mean? It means that the P-Card software provides the capability for bankcard holders to record P-card purchases, to record receipt of goods or services for those purchases, and to reconcile and approve the purchase card statements — all on line — within a single software application.

The software comes in two versions: client server and web-based. Purchase card program coordinators, auditors, finance personnel, receiving personnel,

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# Have You Overloaded a COTR Today?

By L. David Wall, Jr., Center R&T Support Contracts Manager, COTR, Langley Research Center

One of the most difficult challenges as a COTR occurs semi-annually during the award fee evaluation process. Typically the evaluation for the Systems Analysis and Mission Support (SAMS) contract is for approximately \$12 million worth of Langley Center-wide on-site research and technology (R&T) support. This evaluation covers support provided during the previous six months. While keeping the current work technically sound in all contract respects, I had to assimilate about 130 individual technical monitor (TM) evaluations into a COTR's report for the award fee evaluation board. In turn, the board had to report to the Fee Determining Official (FDO) and make timely payment to avoid interest charges and meet NASA HQ award fee metrics for the Center. The challenge at the end of each award fee period was both overwhelming and inevitable.

At first thought, two weeks' notice to the TMs would be enough time to respond and to give me another couple of weeks to assimilate the results. After all they had been monitoring the work for six months and should be able to respond quickly. "Not a problem," you say, but do you know how much procrastination you can find among 130 center-wide evaluators or how many illnesses, travel absences, vacations, or priority duties may occur to short circuit the process? Even if only a few responses are too late for consideration, it is hardly possible for one person (COTR) to assimilate the responses, to add value to them during normal working hours,

and to provide the CO and the board with a meaningful report.

On previous contracts (even after a two- to three-week extension of response time), I had faced an evaluator response rate of 90% or less and at least one weekend at work to "throw something together." Then on one occasion the FDO said that nothing less than 100% documented response was acceptable



when he had to determine the disposition of hundreds of thousands in award fee dollars. The solution not to overload the COTR was simple. I had to get a higher response rate and data that was more manageable.

The improvement process began with restricting the amount of input accepted from the TMs. (I had previously received one task evaluation that ran 19 single-spaced word processor pages.) I created a word processor form that would accept only limited input, and it was evident that an input mechanism was needed to enforce the limit. Furthermore for convenience and to boost the response rate, the situation begged for a web site setup.

One of the contractors easily converted my word processor form into an *html* web page that used *JavaScript* to limit the evaluator input. He also added

*CGI/Perl* script to process the input into various files convenient for assimilating into my COTR's report. Automated e-mail notifications were generated for me so I could track the evaluation progress, and for the evaluators who wanted records of their own responses. After a few days of testing and collaboration with the contractor, I was ready to experiment with progress. (For more information, contact me at [d.l.wall@larc.nasa.gov](mailto:d.l.wall@larc.nasa.gov).)

For a two-week window of access to the evaluation site, the response rate was 129 of 132 or 98%. The site was reopened for two more days and we achieved a 100% response. Assimilating the results was manageable within normal working hours. In less than one week the results were combined with the CO's report and provided to the board a few days in advance of the award fee meeting date. Also, it is estimated that the new input process reduced the individual task evaluation time from about an hour of word processor time to about 15 minutes of web site time. Amazing how a little application of technology to process improvement defied procrastination statistics and kept us from overloading a COTR.

# Core Financial Is Coming – Is Your Center Ready?

By Jane Maples, Marshall Space Flight Center

Implementation of the Integrated Financial Management (IFM) Program's Core Financial Project is fast approaching. Marshall Space Flight Center is the pilot Center for the Core Financial Project. Following the successful pilot at Marshall, the Core Financial Project will roll out to all other centers.

With the implementation of the Core Financial software, NASA will have its first fully integrated financial management system. This will give the Agency timelier, more consistent and reliable information for management decisions. It will also have improved accountability to enable full cost accounting. As important, the Core Financial Project and its use of the SAP software will help NASA achieve efficiencies and operate more effectively, thereby improving its information exchange with customers and stakeholders.

The question is, "Is your Center ready?"

One of the most important ways you can help to ready your Center for the Core Financial Project is in the area of data cleanup. If you haven't started a data cleanup effort at your Center, you need to begin one as soon as possible. At a minimum, you should start to understand the level of cleanup effort required for your Center so you can begin identifying necessary resources for the effort. Beyond the basic understanding of the level of effort, you should also begin

working on the following:

1) Identify and validate the procurement documents to be converted—all active documents. Active documents are those not administratively closed out. Ensure that the field/fields used to determine active documents (Closeout Complete Date, Accession=Blank, etc.) contain valid data.

2) Begin closing out as many completed documents as possible. The less data there is to convert, the easier conversion will be. A recommended metric in this area would be to track the number of 'active' documents with completion dates older than 2 years, 5 years, etc.

3) Resolve obligation discrepancies between procurement and finance. Since obligations in many centers are manually input into each system, there is room for error.

4) Identify documents in procurement that are not in finance. Also, the reverse—documents in finance that are not in procurement.

5) Identify all active documents that do not have an assigned CAGE code or that have an invalid (00000, 99999, etc.) CAGE code. The CAGE code is required to convert vendor information. Therefore, all active documents must have a CAGE code referenced.

This information provides some ideas of the initial types of data cleanup effort that needs to be done at your Center. Your implementation time will be here before you know it, and it is not too soon to start the cleanup and closeout efforts for your Center. For general information on the Core Financial Project, visit our website at <http://corefinancial.ifmp.nasa.gov>.



## Suzuki

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### A Very Full 24-Hour Day

Delene works hard; she also plays hard. She loves sports, and plays volleyball, tag football, soccer, racquetball, and tennis, or whatever sport is in season. She plays the piano and paints. She is a gourmet cook. She also volunteers for Habitat for Humanity and other worthwhile organizations, and travels extensively, recently spending two weeks in Spain. Delene is adventurous, always willing to take on a new challenge, not afraid of hard work, and smart enough to learn anything she needs to know. Buying and learning to ride a Suzuki is the latest challenge that she has taken on, now that she seems to have her team lead duties under control!

## A Closer Look:

# A Quick Look at the Information Technology Procurement Manager at GSFC

By Patrick Logan, Goddard Space Flight Center

*Recently, Patrick Logan was asked to tell us a little about himself. His responses are the article you will find below:*

### **Tell us about how you got into Procurement:**

I went to Towson State University (in Maryland) on a football scholarship. I graduated in 1986 with a Degree in Business Administration. I began my procurement career as a contract specialist for the Defense Industrial Supply Center in Philadelphia, PA. I came to NASA in December of 1988, working in the Engineering Procurement Office. I have worked in a variety of procurement offices: construction/A&E, ADP, support services, and flight hardware. I have been in procurement management since 1993. Currently, I am the head of the Information Technology Procurement Office.

### **What was your most memorable procurement experience?**

I was negotiating a follow-on procurement for Integration and testing services with the incumbent contractor. There weren't many issues to negotiate, just fee. The incumbent wanted more fee for essentially the same level of support. My negotiation position was that there was no increase in scope from the previous contract, therefore, additional fee was not warranted. Every rationale for additional fee was promptly defeated. I had anticipated their every argument. I was a relatively junior contract specialist and the contractor, a long standing incumbent, figured that he had the upper hand. He kept saying that "It would be a shame

to ruin a long standing relationship over such a small issue." I think that he was surprised that I was the only person in the room representing the government. He asked repeatedly to speak to the Contracting Officer or the program manager, but I wouldn't budge. Finally, he realized that I was not backing down and said that he would have to okay the deal with the president of the company and asked to use my phone to call. I watched as he picked up the phone, held his hand on the button and pretended to call and have a conversation. At that moment, I knew I had him. I didn't let on that I knew he didn't call anyone. I just closed the deal.

This is most memorable because I had heard that this guy was a tough negotiator and that he prided himself on getting the most for his company. However, I was not intimidated and held my ground. This was the largest contract that I had ever negotiated. I was the only government person in the room, sitting across from six contractors. I knew at that moment that I could hold my own in any situation. I finally felt like I got this procurement stuff down. I also was quite amused at the games people play.

### **Who has inspired you the most – either a NASA or Non-NASA person?**

I would say that my father is the person who inspired me the most. I'm the youngest of four boys. Being the youngest, I have

always looked up to my brothers and my father. I admire my father the most because he has always been a great provider and the glue that holds it all together. After the Navy, he worked in the Steel Mill in Baltimore. He was a hard worker and believed in doing quality work and being dedicated to the job. In 37 years, he missed only 3 days of work. My father always says that a person should be versatile and stay busy. Consequently, there isn't much that my father, brothers, and I can't do from rebuilding a small block V8 to building a house. I guess what I learned most from my father is pride in a job well done. I aspire daily to be the best procurement manager and Contracting Officer that I can be. I also aspire to be the person that you can always count on. Someday when I retire from NASA, if asked what I would most want to be remembered for it would be as the person you could always count on.

### **What is your life like away from the office?**

I was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. I'm married. My wife is a psychologist (free therapy). We live in Columbia, Maryland. We have no children, as of yet, but are planning a family.

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# Getting the Job Done!

## The Cleveland Federal Executive Board Honors Tom Spicer

By Virginia A. Bittinger, Glenn Research Center

Each year the Cleveland Federal Executive Board pays tribute to federal employees selected as “exceptional public servants.” Thomas A. Spicer, contract specialist in GRC Procurement Office’s Services and Construction Branch, was awarded the Wings of Excellence Award at Cleveland’s 2001 Distinguished Federal Service Recognition Awards Program on May 1, 2001. Tom’s contribution to the Agency as the Lead Contracting Officer for Code R Office Desktop Initiative at NASA (ODIN) and his support of GRC’s New Leadership and Model Workforce initiatives were highlighted as his major achievements leading to his selection for this honor.

Tom was raised in the Akron/Canton area of Ohio. He earned a B.S. in Industrial Management from the University of Akron and an MBA from Cleveland State University. Tom began his Glenn career in 1984 as a co-op student. At the beginning of his career, he was assigned the responsibility to oversee a wide range of contracts with Small Disadvantaged Businesses (SDBs) through the US Small Business Administration’s 8(a) program. Tom took an active role in ensuring the 8(a) contractors were not left to “sink or swim.” He afforded them an opportunity to understand the complexities of government contract requirements and law. He became actively involved in

the education of the companies as well as the GRC technical community. Tom considers his work with the SDBs as one of the areas most rewarding in his career at NASA. He found helping these companies grow was very gratifying and provided him with a sense of real accomplishment. For his work in this area he received an Exceptional Achievement Medal for fostering contracts with SDBs. In more recent years, Tom has served as the CO for many large dollar Source Evaluation Boards/committees for various support service contracts. In 2000, he received the Acquisition Improvement Award for his work on the ODIN Delivery Order Award and was nominated for the Contract Administrator of the Year Agency award.

In addition to his procurement duties, Tom has supported efforts to make GRC a better place to work. First as an Equal Opportunity Counselor, and most recently as a Model Workplace and Cultural Diversity advisor. Tom has tirelessly supported the efforts to achieve Glenn’s core values for quality, openness, diversity, and integrity. He has facilitated several workgroup dialogue sessions and led many workgroups in preparing and presenting recommendations to management for improvements in processes, recognition, and accountability. In these efforts he gained the ability to see where people were coming

from through their eyes versus his own way of viewing things. He saw the importance of recognizing the contributions everyone makes.

Tom states that through the experiences he has had over the years, he has been challenged by the teamwork of GRC personnel to go a step further, to learn more, and to be better. He has learned how to work with people of different backgrounds and experiences, how to be proactive in solving problems, how to think quickly to resolving daily issues, and, subsequently, to make the right decisions based on the facts at hand. Tom contributes his ability to listen and then analyze all possibilities/viewpoints, as the key skill that has helped him most in his career. He believes this ability has been invaluable to him in his efforts to communicate ideas and negotiate positions, ultimately leading to his determining the best way to represent NASA in any given situation. In conclusion, Tom acknowledges the support of the GRC management and his colleagues who have help him become a dedicated member of the procurement community.

## What's it all about:

# Who Will Buy? The Purchase Card Program at Dryden

By Roberta Ross, Dryden Flight Research Center

How do you get people excited about using a system that they both love and hate? Any NASA Agency/Organization Program Coordinator for the Purchase Card can fully understand why this question was posed. People want to be able to quickly purchase their recurring and/or small dollar value orders without the complicated paperwork and lead-time, yet they do not want the responsibility associated with the function.

Carol Van Gelder, who recently retired in December, took on the challenge of the bankcard program by becoming Dryden's first Agency/Organization Program Coordinator (APC) back in the early 90s. It was an innovative program that she was eager to learn and initiate at Dryden. The number of cardholders was small at first, but they quickly increased as word got out about the great new tool for purchasing.

Besides Carol's regular function as a contract specialist (awarding, administering, and closing orders/contracts), she managed the credit card program on a "part-time" basis (which in reality was more like a full-time job). For those who are not aware of the duties of APCs, they conduct information briefs about the bankcard program, review and submit new cardholder and approving official requests, train new cardholders and approving officials (sometimes even hold refresher sessions), initiate paperwork for delegation of authority letters/warrants, participate in audits of the

bankcard program, and act as liaison with Bank of America and the NASA Agency Program Manager at LaRC (Connie Stott) for administration of the Bankcard Program. It doesn't sound complicated, but these duties are just the basics and



each Center is unique in its requirements and functions. In essence, the APC is a business advisor, a marketing consultant, and a public relations professional for the Bankcard Program.

## Talking to a Lot of People

As change is inevitable, Carol had to keep abreast of changes that would effect the cardholders' purchasing abilities. Not only were there Acquisition regulations to keep current on, but she had to keep in contact with other internal offices to ensure compliance with their requirements. Let's see, there was the Quality Assurance Office, the Safety Office, the Logistics Office, Finance, Legal, the CIO Office, and ISO. Of course, do not forget about the Acquisition Office with all of the Federal Acquisition Regulations and other rules that are applicable to the program. It is a never-ending cycle.

What tools were used to keep the cardholders informed of the information they needed to know? There were many

different tools available to use, so she choose the most appropriate ones based on the type of outcome she desired. Her primary communication tools were face-to-face meetings, telephone, fax, and e-mail.

One event that Carol co-initiated with her Air Force APC counterpart, Sandra Jenkins, on Edwards Air Force Base was the Credit Card Vendor Fair. The Vendor Fair was established in order to introduce cardholders to the mandatory sources of supply (Unicor, National Industries for the Blind, National Industries for the Severely Disabled, US General Services Administration, and Federal Supply Sources) and other local vendors whom they could purchase supplies and services from. The event was also a method to let cardholders know of other sources of supply/services that could be used in order to fulfill source rotation requirements. Since its initiation four years ago, it has received positive reviews from the cardholders and vendors, who wished it would happened more than once a year.

## Change in Direction

Last year when Carol decided to move on to bigger and better things, her APC backup (Roberta Ross – that's me) took over the APC duties. One of my first duties was to review the credit card program.

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# ODIN Isn't Truly a 4-Letter Word

By Doris Wood, Goddard Space Flight Center

ODIN is a name most people at NASA are familiar with these days. The Outsourcing Desktop Initiative for NASA (ODIN) program was established to transfer to the commercial sector the responsibility and risk for providing and managing the majority of NASA's desktop, server, and intra-Center communication assets and services. Each desktop in ODIN (referred to as a "seat") is bundled with Information Technology (IT) support services, including hardware and software acquisition, installation, maintenance, technology refreshment, administration, customer support, e-mail, print and file services, relocation, and training.

Master contracts were awarded on June 18, 1998, to seven companies: Boeing (now known as SAIC), Computer Science Corporation (CSC), Dyncorp, Federal Data Corporation (FDC), OAO, RMS (now known as ACS), and Wang (now known as Getronics). The ODIN program covers each NASA installation Center and HQ. Through the Government-wide Acquisition Contracts (GWAC) portion of the contract, any other federal agency may utilize ODIN with order placement and administration handled by GSA/FTS.

Goddard's current ODIN contractor, ACS is one of seven companies awarded a contract under a multiple

award Request for Proposal for Indefinite-Delivery Indefinite Quantity contracts. For the last year, I've watched as this group of dedicated workers has



transitioned our Center from Oasis to Meeting Maker, installed PKI and Computrace on many desktops and provided very good security for our systems and servers. These are only a few of the services that this team has provided to GSFC.

Pre-ODIN you could call the guy/girl just down the hall and in many cases, get instantaneous service. If you wanted some special hardware or the latest software release as long as your budget could afford it - it was yours.

The pre-ODIN days described above are not gone completely. The process has changed to ensure the objectives of the program. Now that we have ODIN, we can call a centralized help desk and have not one person but a team of experts to assist us with IT problems/concerns. Now that we have ODIN - not only do the folks with the large IT budget get the latest and greatest hardware and software but every one with an ODIN seat receives software and hardware refreshes

on a pre-established basis to ensure that across NASA we're up-to-date and interoperable.

The ODIN program objectives are as follows:

- Focus NASA civil service personnel on core Research and Development (R&D) activities;
- Promote IT systems and product interoperability;
- Enhance and optimize service delivery; and
- Reduce cost and improve cost management and cost containment.

Not only are the program objectives being met but we can meet our (the customers') requirements at a fixed price to include hardware/software/support services and refreshes. ODIN can save time and dollars. So the next time you hear ODIN - think good thoughts and think about other great (4-letter) words - FAST, HELP, SAFE and CARE.

## A Lift for Your Career

Wallops Flight Facility is holding a "Career Development Forum" March 28. This follows earlier forums held at GSFC and HQ earlier in March. The theme for the day is "The ABC's of Navigating Your Career at NASA." All procurement professionals are encouraged to attend. Invaluable resource information will be made available through workshops, panel discussions and web-based demonstrations.

# Most Wanted

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and under Bolen's supervision, Bolen's employee would learn the tasks specified to be performed on delivery of the laser trimmer. Bolen also agreed that Nexex would pay expenses for a NASA employee to be present to observe the training and would pay shipping costs of the laser trimmer back to Glenn. A third modification cemented these



arrangements. The laser trimmer, which was still in pieces, was returned to Nexex after a brief inspection.

Believing the issues concerning the laser trimmer were resolved, Schultz went to Wallops to attend a scheduled two-week training course. However, upon his return

he learned that Bolen had allegedly undergone surgery and was recuperating on medical leave. In the meantime, unbeknownst to Schultz, the NASA accounting office received an invoice and notification from a finance company (MC Holding Company) indicating that Bolen had sold his interest in the contract and that final payment was due to it. Since the notification appeared to be signed by the Contracting Officer (Schultz), the accounting office paid MC Holding Company the amount previously owed Bolen. Evidence later revealed that Bolen had forged Schultz's signature.

After learning that final payment had been issued, Schultz and Fralick attempted to contact Bolen to ascertain when Bolen would return the laser trimmer. They grew increasingly suspicious when their efforts to contact Bolen, including issuance of a

"cure notice," went unanswered (his telephone service had been disconnected and e-mail was undeliverable). Since the laser had been returned to Bolen, Schultz requested assistance in contacting Bolen from the Orlando office of the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA). After all attempts to contact Bolen had failed and upon learning the business address given by Bolen was not a business at all, but was the gated residential community in which Bolen lived, the DCMA agent contacted the NASA OIG at the Kennedy Space Center.

Special Agent Patty Koenig was assigned to the case and worked closely with Schultz and Fralick. The investigation disclosed that the "medical condition" claimed by Bolen was non-existent and that Bolen had used two aliases and three shell corporations to defraud the government (NASA Glenn), a capital management company, two doctors, three publishing companies, and a laser equipment broker of over \$500,000. Agent Koenig stated that Schultz' and Fralick's tenacity and attention to detail made the case. "The documentation was all there—he (Schultz), saved every e-mail," said Koenig, "that's the kind of detail needed to make a case."

The investigation aided by the efforts of a conscientious Contracting Officer and technical end user was successful and resulted in Bolen's conviction on a four-count plea agreement admitting to mail fraud, wire fraud, theft of government property, and making a false statement to a government

agency. Bolen was subsequently sentenced to 30 months in prison, 3 years of supervised release, ordered to pay a special assessment of \$400, perform 150 hours of community service in lieu of a fine, and make mandatory restitution of \$356,951 to NASA and the other victims of his fraud.

It was later discovered that Bolen had a previous conviction for a similar laser scam when he worked for Rockwell under a Department of Defense contract. Although he spent 6 months in jail for this crime, Bolen was not debarred. Schultz is processing a request to have Bolen debarred to prevent him from receiving any future government contracts.

"Red Flag" indicators from this case:

- Requests for extensions to contract performance can be used to string the government along. Use of excuses such as the need for medical procedures may need to be scrutinized.

- Contractors willing to give a lot of consideration (in this case Bolen's willingness to provide assembly, setup, and training for free) in exchange for additional time might be a red flag.

- Contractor's instructions to avoid inspection may raise a red flag. Inspect all deliverables as thoroughly as possible.

- Third party requests for payment should questioned.

*If you suspect crime, fraud, waste, or mismanagement involving a NASA contract, grant, or cooperative agreement, please contact the NASA OIG. Four members of our staff are former members of the NASA procurement community and are available to discuss any procurement issues of concern. They are: Theresa Becker (301) 286-3089  
Joe Fasula (321) 867-4531  
Diane Frazier (202) 358-0419  
Joe Kroener (301) 286-9269*

# Logan

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## **What are your favorite hobbies?**

Music - I love all kinds. I have been a musician since the age of six. I play all woodwinds and most string instruments. As a teen, I studied at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore.

Fishing - Ask anyone who knows me and they will tell you that I love to fish. If you are looking for me on the weekends during the summer, you'll find me on a boat in the Chesapeake Bay.

Cars - On the rare occasion that I'm not fishing, you will find me under the hood of my 69 Mustang.

## **What were your dreams before Procurement?**

I always wanted to be a famous musician. I have always enjoyed playing on stage before a large audience. Between the family, work, and other things, I don't get to play as much as I want to. I have many friends who went on to do quite well in the business. My fondest memory is of one summer during college break, being on tour in Japan, playing in a band for a vocal group, opening for the Temptations. That was the best summer of my life!

## **What about the future?**

My future plans include continuing to grow in my profession, perhaps getting into procurement policy.

# GRC's Program Cards

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This program had been going on successfully for almost ten years. So, a tiger team was established to review the current process in order to determine what, if any, changes needed to be made. Several high volume use cardholders in different branches were invited to an open forum discussion. It was a very informative meeting. Cardholders had a range of ideas that would benefit everyone in the program. They brought forward many concerns, questions, and possible solutions to assist the credit card program. Foremost, the cardholders wanted more communication. Second, they wanted to be retrained. Imagine that: retrained! The program was changing, and they wanted to stay on top of the changes. Even though information had been forwarded to them on a regular basis, they wanted to meet in a classroom setting to be retrained. The credit card program, already very successful, was being revamped to make it even more so!

They wanted refresher training and that is what they got. Since September of last year, all cardholders and approving officials have been attending refresher training. At this point, refresher training is almost completed.

Also during this time, the Finance Office established an electronic system to input, track, commit funds, and obligate credit card orders (among other things). Moving from a manual system to an electronic one was first met with hesitation; however, the outcome has been well received by the cardholders and

other functional areas. This system gave Dryden a glimpse of the changing management role we would be undertaking when the new credit card system would be implemented under the IFMP.

Communication is a two-way street. In order for communication to be effective, the sender needs to be able to transmit a message that can be interpreted so that a receiver can understand it. If the entire process does not flow smoothly, effective communication may not have been achieved. By involving all stakeholders in the communication process of the credit card program, they became more involved and receptive to the program.

Therefore, several new communication tools were established. E-mail messages to the cardholders and/or approving officials are now titled in the subject line "C/C Newsflash." The header catches their eye and stands out so they do not inadvertently delete the messages (as they had done in the past). A newsletter was established last October as another method to provide information. Also, a Credit Card Open House was held in December as a way for other cardholders to meet and communicate. There are other events being worked, such as establishing a Dryden web page for the credit card holders.

Carol put a lot of work into Dryden's Bankcard Program to make it effective and efficient. That work is being continued with as much enthusiasm as she brought to it. The challenging part is trying to find more hours in the day to work on the program, but that is a time management issue and a different story.

# Purchase Cards

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and system administrators will use the client server version.

Purchase card program coordinators will use the software for a number of activities, which include downloading transaction files from the bank, submitting reconciled and approved purchase card statements to the finance office via an interface, maintaining cardholder profile information, suspending cardholder software privileges, and running a variety of reports from the information contained within the P-Card software. The purchase card auditor will be able to execute the reports necessary to audit the purchase card program within defined parameters. Receiving personnel will be able to record the receipt of goods that are delivered at a central receiving location. System administrators will, at a minimum, be able to insure that software security is maintained.

All purchase cardholders will use the web-based version to create a record of purchase, to record receipt of goods and services delivered via desktop delivery, and to reconcile bankcard transactions. The purchase cardholder will record information for each line item purchased. This information includes a line item description, quantity, unit of measure, unit price, as well as one or more accounting codes for each line item recorded. An interface with SAP will record the commitment of funds at the time the record of purchase is created. The bankcard transaction data will be received electronically from Bank of America. Purchase cardholders will receive a download of their transactions monthly for reconciliation. Upon completion of the reconciliation, the purchase cardholder will indicate that the

reconciliation has been completed within the system and the reconciled transactions has been automatically forward to the appropriate approving official for final approval. Approving officials will use the web-based version of the software to electronically approve reconciled bankcard transactions. A second interface with SAP will record the obligation and cost. It will create an invoice for payment after all transactions are reconciled.

The good news is that NASA will for the very first time use a single process and system for the purchase card program. There are definitely changes on the horizon for anyone involved in the program, but with proper training and a willingness to learn a new way of doing business we can all make this endeavor a success for the Agency.

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## Procurement Countdown

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Editor.....Susie Marucci  
(202) 358-1896  
susie.marucci@hq.nasa.gov