

## Signage Upgrade



As part of the Water Bureau's **branding project**, which aims to increase the effectiveness of Bureau communication, staff have completed guidelines for Bureau signage and installed new signs at the Interstate Facility. The intent is to bring a consistent look to Water Bureau signs throughout the system.

The branding team is currently working on upgrading the lobby signage in the Portland Building.

Other communications products sporting the new Bureau brand include hats, shirts, and other apparel; and brochures and other publications.

A "graphic standards manual" will be distributed this fall.

A strong, consistent visual identity will help the public better understand who we are, where we are, and what we do.

-Sarah Bott

## Watering the Roses Since 1895

This is the second time in recent memory that we participated in the Starlight Parade and I want to thank everyone involved for coming out, having fun, and putting a friendly face to the Portland Water Bureau for thousands of Portlanders to see. Once again we were a hit with our crane truck, the Benson bubbler (the ONLY float in the entire parade allowed to have water), our Barney mascot (a stuffed toy rescued from the rubble by Water Bureau emergency responders in New Orleans), our pink hard hats (we have to order more because they were so popular) and our cheer-leading section who was leading the crowd in cheers spelling out W-A-T-E-R.



Dozens of Water Bureau employees participated in this year's Starlight Parade on Saturday, June 2nd.

I want to say thank you to Commissioner Leonard for leading us, and to his grandson Cole Leonard, who marched at the head of our float with his "grandpa".

I also want to give a very special thank you to the many volunteers who worked before, during and after the parade to make it a success.

One special volunteer who should be called out by name is Darren Snider. Darren was the Instrument Tech who made sure that the solar panels that provided the power for the lights and music were working as they should. They gave Darren a run for his money, but like most Water Bureau employees, he never let the balky panels get the best of him and they were working as designed when we pulled into position at the start of the parade and were still going strong when we finished. Thanks to our talented Operations staff, those panels will soon be serving the Water Bureau in their real job, powering important telemetry and monitoring systems.

Next year I am going to see if we can get our Security staff to join us on their Segways.

*David G. Shaff*  
Administrator

## Salmon and Our Drinking Water

Did you know that our water system has changed the Bull Run River and affected fish habitat?

Several species of salmon and trout are currently listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Portland's goal is to ensure a reliable, affordable water supply while also improving conditions for fish and wildlife.

Learn more by attending a special class sponsored by the Portland Water Bureau.

### "The Story of Salmon and Our Drinking Water"

**Thursday, June 14  
8:30 AM to Noon  
Portland Building  
Auditorium**

Learn about the impacts our water system has on fish, how the City is working with partners in the Sandy Basin, and what actions the City is proposing to take over the next 50 years to restore habitat and comply with federal regulations.

No registration required. Supervisor permission is required. Contact Terry Black for more information. (503) 823-1168

# It's All About You

## When the topic is customer service, Portland Water Bureau employees are tuned in.

**This month, Portland Water Bureau employees were treated to a customer service presentation by Michael Meines, an international expert in customer relations. Using humorous stories and personal experience, Michael regaled the audience with the reasons why a person should strive for a positive attitude and great customer service. Here's what Water Bureau employees took away:**

When the red light is on, you are "on the air" no matter how you feel that day.

**-Kathy Koch**

Humor can make all the difference.

**-Curtis Roth**

We can choose to be happy or unhappy.

**-Thomas Echols**

It's up to each of us each morning when our feet hit the floor to make the decision, who are we going to be today? Are we going to let someone who's recruiting from inside the descending whirlpool dictate the way we approach others or are we going to say, "I choose to be a positive person today!" It's something that we all know, but often times need reminded of.

**-Clay Luper**

Everything we do, everything we say has an impact on our customers.

**-Tricia Knoll**

"Treat your customers like your elderly relative", "Ask open-ended questions and listen", "Don't be 'that guy'", and the whole idea of being nice and helpful to others because it makes you feel good. The "Don't be 'that

Guy'" bit really resonated with me because I have that same mentality as a customer; if I'm treated badly by one person within a company/organization it will stick with me for years and I'll do my best to discourage others from interacting with said company/organization. So from now on I'm gonna remember and make sure not to be that guy.

**-Jonathan Gregg**

I learned not to trust your drunk buddies when they tell you to dive into the river. Ouch.

**-Bryan Robinson**

Good customer service is helping people get through a water-related problem. It feels

good and that bit of selfishness is a dandy reason for taking the time to get it right.

**-Rich Brown**

The most memorable was his concept of "positive selfishness". The second idea was his comment to "Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle".

**-Jeanne Collins**

Don't let one negative instance determine how your attitude is for the rest of the day. You make the choice on how your daily attitude will be. Don't focus on the negative. Rejoice in the positive.

Remember, any day you're vertical is a good day.

**-Ted Roos**

A lot of the points Michael made hit home with me, but one that I have had the opportunity to put into practice on the phones since then was his statement about people needing a little bit of empowerment. I discovered if you can keep that in mind when



**Got your smile on? You may be the one person who makes a customer's impression of the Portland Water Bureau!**



**"There is no question how important our customers are to our success. There also shouldn't be any question about how important our employees are to our success. If you feel good about yourself, feel good about what you are doing and feel good about where you are doing it – positive customer service is a by-product. Everyone has the power to choose. We choose our actions, our body language and every word we speak. We cannot control any other person, including our customers, or choose for them." -Michael Meines**

dealing with someone who is being difficult, not only does it make it easier for you to see their perspective, but it gives you a chance to give some license to their feelings. In the end they feel better and they have accomplished something with their phone call.

**-Kate Tanner**

He helped me remember that it's up to me to be the best, not do it just because the organization I work for tells me to. I felt his message was something I can use in my life, not just work.

**-Tamara Mersereau**

One person can make an impression of the whole organization.

**-Christina Wale**

I loved his example of when his wife asked him how is day went and he said "Horrible, this guy was mean, awful, horrible." Then his wife asked, "Well, how was the rest of your

day?" Embrace positive comments when you hear them. We can always remember the negative things about ourselves or other people but what about the positive things.

**-Krystin Castro**

It's all about me!

**-Rick Lapp**

Everyone in an organization sets the customer service policy - by how they act to customers.

**-Patrick Easley**

The part about not knowing anything about an individual and where he/she is coming from really stayed with me. It put in perspective some of my responses to people I have not had patience with in my past and made me more aware of how I will handle my reactions in the future.

**-Sam Spackman**

## New Water Rates

On May 31 the City Council approved the new water rate ordinance for fiscal year 2007-2008. New rates go into effect July 1.

The typical monthly residential bill will increase about \$.44 cents per month or 2.8%. Portland's water will still be cheaper than water in most cities in the region.

Water rates fund important bureau maintenance and construction work to protect and preserve the water system.

This year a community budget committee worked in a public process to scrutinize every bureau expenditure.

We were able to hold system development charges - the basic fees for installing new services - below most of the cities in the region but also ensure that developers pay the full costs of new system development.

New flexible payment plans including online or by-phone payment with credit cards offer new ways to help households pay their bills. Our customer service representatives at 503-823-7770 can offer customers payment options .

# It's the Water...and a lot more

I am a friend of 30 years for a woman who has lived next to Washington Park for almost 60 years. Emily is 89 years old and suffers from arthritis and dementia.

She has always enjoyed walking and being out enjoying the beauty in the park. I share all of this as part of the background for wanting to send a "thank you" to the **Water Bureau's security team.**

The team (especially Jim, Tim, Jennifer, Jayden, and Michael) has been wonderful to Emily. They are always friendly and make her feel very welcome and special. She looks forward to her visits at the reservoir and even though she may say the same things over and over with each visit, they always demonstrate interest and compassion.

The walks in the park are essential for combatting Emily's arthritis. Looking forward to seeing her "friends" at the reservoir is a big help in motivating her to walk even when she

is feeling pain in her hip. In addition, the enjoyable conversation with her "friends" helps to stimulate her fading memory.



Our security officers provide smiles in addition to safety.

I can't say enough about this special group of people. They are genuinely compassionate and caring. They go well beyond any expectations as goodwill ambassadors to the community.

As a retired Qwest Communications Workforce Manager, I recognize the importance of hiring employees that genuinely care about their clients. Your team exemplifies success in this effort.

Sincerely,  
Steve George

*This letter was written to Commissioner Leonard. It has been edited for space reasons.*

## Water Bureau Retiree Takes Aim at Graffiti

**Retiree Jerry Stevens** and his wife Patty have been in the news recently for their work cleaning up gang tagging in their Fairview neighborhood.

On his Segway scooter, he patrols his Fairview neighborhood on the lookout for the vandalism. Then, he and Patty load up their van with paint, rollers and brushes and covers the vandalism up. He cleans off defaced electrical boxes, traffic light switches and other high-visibility targets.

Jerry first noticed the graffiti phenomenon during his job with the Water Bureau. He recalls seeing it on fire hydrants and other public utilities.

They have received plaques of appreciation and other recognition, including an award for volunteers of the year, from the city for their efforts.



Story/photo from the *Gresham Outlook*, May 4, 2007  
Jerry retired after 31 years with the Water Bureau.

## Personnel CHANGES

### Internal Promotions:

**Mark Gipson** from Utility Worker 2 to Water Meter Tech 1 in Maintenance & Construction

**Cynthia Wells** from Office Support Specialist 2 to Maintenance Planner/Scheduler in Maintenance & Construction

**Brian Stoops** from Water Meter Reader 1 to Business Systems Analyst in Customer Service

### New Hires

**Sandra Maines** as Emergency Operations Intern in Engineering Services

**Kevin Getner** as Utility Worker II, Apprentice in Maintenance & Construction

**Roland Putman** as Seasonal Maintenance Worker at Sandy River Station

**Ruchita Ingle** as Engineer Trainee in Regulatory Compliance

**Christina Barstow** as Engineer Trainee in Engineering Services

**Carrie Pfaffle** as Community Service Aide II in Emergency Management

### Transfers:

**Kevin Kilduff** from the Bureau of Development Services as Capital Project Manager 2 in Engineering Services