

CAO CONNECTION

Volume One, Number Ten

October 1996

Visions of the Future and Lessons from the Past

The adjournment of the 104th Congress has launched a thousand pundits. Every commentator in Washington is trying to put the last two years into some context or another. The balance sheets of legislative battles won or lost, and by whom, fill the airways and the print media.

What about those of us who worked long and hard hours behind the scenes? A recent three hour period tells our story. During that time dozens of CAO employees came together to present their efforts in building the third generation of **onlinecao**. It was a truly amazing moment. The website is staggering. In one fusion of technology and creativity, a website like no other has been born. It is a powerful and positive vision of our future in the information age, and it is a real living thing today.

The new **onlinecao** says much about what we are at the end of the 104th. First, the site provides the most comprehensive overview of House services ever compiled. It marks the end of the "oral culture" of having to depend on individual recollections of our services and procedures, and the beginning of a well-defined and documented service organization. More important, however, it reflects that we have become a world class team. The electricity of spirit and accomplishment crackled in the briefing room as each screen was presented. It was a celebration of the successful efforts of everyone in creating something truly important for the institution of the House and for ourselves.

Our benchmark customer survey has been distributed to all Member offices and we have already received over 250 completed ones. Several Members have called it a "good idea," with bipartisan praise for our willingness to get "feedback." One Member believes it is important to "take the comments into consideration for the next Congress, especially in view of all the changes that have occurred." Compliments have been received as well, noting the "improvement in the turnaround of travel vouchers." Watch for a full report next month!

In coming together as a true world class team, we are defining who we are and our role in serving the House. The daily routines of moving furniture, installing computers, and processing vouchers rarely share the spotlight with the spirited Floor debates and the crafting of legislation. However, our capable efforts are the vitally important support structure that enable Members and staff to devote their full attention to serving the American people.

On a distant battlefield, a hundred years ago, a young Winston Churchill wrote about the important role of support.* These eloquent words resound with us today:

"It often happens that in prosperous public enterprises the applause of the nation and the rewards of the sovereign are bestowed on those whose offices are splendid and whose duties have been dramatic. Others whose labors were no less difficult, responsible, and vital to success are unnoticed...Victory is the beautiful, bright colored flower. Transport is the stem without which it could never have blossomed. Yet even the military student, in his zeal to master the fascinating combinations of the actual conflict, often forgets the far more intricate complications of supply."

**THE RIVER WAR by Winston S. Churchill chronicles the fall of the Dervish Empire in the Sudan 1896-1899.*

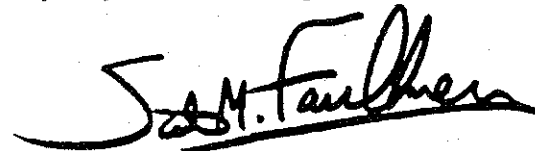
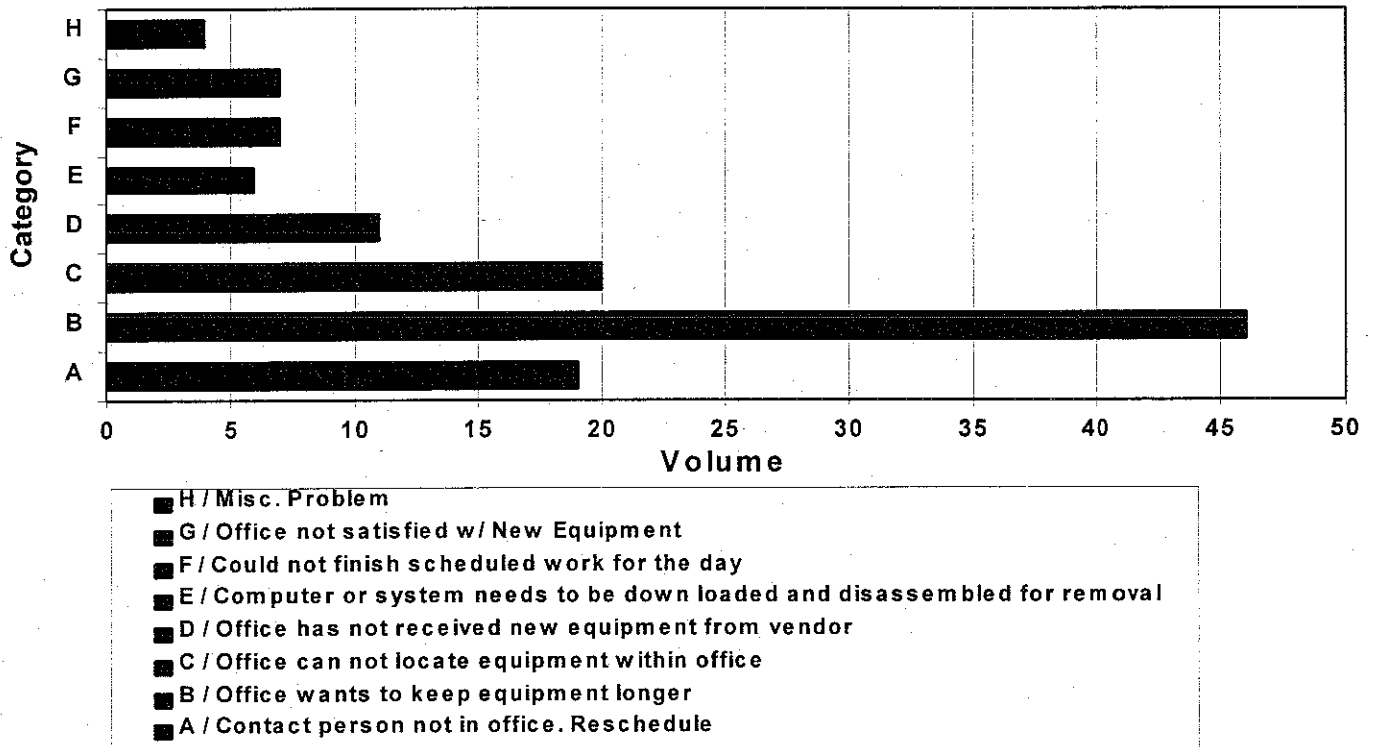


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Office Moves Chart	2
ASQC Annual Meeting	2
Spotlight on Learning	3
Channel 25 Update	3
New Employees	3
America's Salad Bar	4
OEA News	4
New Furniture Catalog	Insert
Gold Room Restoration	Insert

Chart of the Month

5 Month Study Of Assets Mgmt.
Problems with Removals



ASQC 2nd Annual Board Meeting

Last month, for the second consecutive year, the American Society for Quality Control spent two days at the U.S. House as part of their annual board meeting. ASQC is comprised of 400,000 corporate members worldwide and its board members are leading corporate executives.

The group toured the Pitney Bowes operation in the Ford Building, Kiko's Shoe Shine in Rayburn, the Longworth Post Office, and saw how we produce and deliver Floor coverage to C-SPAN from the Television Control Room in the Capitol. They saw how we have saved taxpayers money by privatizing services that used to be subsidized, and they saw some of our newest services, such as video-conferencing from the Recording Studio and the in-house learning resource, Channel 25.

Bill Sturdevant, Gloria Wright-Simmonds, Wendy Younk, Ben Lusby, Jim Davison, Lewis Maiden, Chris Naughton, Elliot Chabot, Scot Faulkner and others gave presentations on what Quality management means within the CAO organization and how we continue to upgrade and improve the service we provide to Members. Specific topics included our training and development courses, performance measurement and recognition programs.

How did we measure up this year?

Deborah Hoppen, Chairman of the Board of ASQC noted: "The scope and speed of your changes to the House exceeds anything ever accomplished in the public sector and is in the upper one percent of improvement efforts within the private sector."

Richard Sandretti, Director of Market Research and Public Relations for ASQC said, "Your success in reforming House service functions is the quality story of the decade."

Thanks to all who helped tell our story of continuing improvement and conveyed our special pride in serving our Congress as professionals.*

Spotlight On Learning

What Does Training Mean To Me?

Like everything in the CAO, the Organization and Employee Development Center, through the Office of Training has been evolving since the beginning of the 104th Congress. Wendy Younk, Director, has developed, designed and facilitated "core courses" essential to building a quality culture and to our own continual improvement.

Because the CAO is committed to providing training to all, the CAO team is best described as a "learning organization." "A learning organization approaches learning and education as a constant activity in an employee's work life."

What does this mean to me? Do I have time for training? How is it relevant to my job?

Ask Lewis Maiden. Lewis has worked for the House for 25 years, the last 15 in the Office of Furnishings. He loves the Hill and "takes care of furnishings in the Capitol" so the Members can focus on legislation.

Lewis believes the courses on Team Building and Problem-Solving are such a positive step forward, "they should be offered to House employees forever."

Training also includes workshops led by Scot Faulkner (who has taught at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government). "Never before had trainers come to your job site," Lewis explains. "That made us feel the CAO does not want to overlook anyone," but rather "wants feedback from everyone. It showed us the CAO respects everyone."

"The training is designed to help people, even the shy ones who might not otherwise seek to be heard without this opportunity," Lewis says. The workshops demonstrate "how each person fits in so the group can work as one."

Lewis works hard to "keep the House proud." He and his colleagues use their training every day. As Wendy says, "training is not just a one-shot, three-hour workshop. It is continual learning and development." Call Wendy Younk at 226-0526 for course schedules or information.

Channel 25 Update

As part of the new "World Class Speakers" series, Channel 25 is proud to present live broadcasts on quality management by internationally renowned business leaders. The following new programs are also being rebroadcast. Check the Channel 25 listing at onlinecao for times.

* "J. M. Juran on Quality: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," an interactive satellite broadcast from London featuring Dr. J.M. Juran, the world's leading expert on the history and practice of quality.

* "Quality Forum XII," an international conference held in Los Angeles, sponsored by the American Society For Quality Control.

* High Commissioner Maurice McTigue, former cabinet minister in New Zealand for Finance and for State-Owned Industries, presents an overview of the ten-year effort to reinvent the New Zealand government and the use of business practices to rethink all of its public services.

Welcome to Our New CAO Employees!

Keith Campo, HR, Personnel and Benefits
Fred Heyser, HIR, Client Services

America's Salad Bar

Longworth Carry Out

Like other aspects of planning for the 105th Congress, the Department of Food Services is making big plans to offer more "customized" choices than ever before. The expanded Longworth Carry-Out already offers a fresh new "flavor" of things to come. It's called "America's Salad Bar," and is open from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Modeled after "Fresh Inspirations" offered at private companies such as American Express, contemporary theme cuisines were tailor-made for the U.S. House. The Longworth Carry-Out features grilled vegetable selections, over a dozen options of signature salad dressings, gourmet condiments including fresh herbs, dried spices, roasted garlic and oversized home made croutons. Home made seven-grain bread you may slice yourself and sundried tomato rolls are also popular.

In the coming months, thematic cuisines will be offered in each of the cafeterias, each one offering different selections. For up-to-the-minute news and menus, visit **onlinecao**. Click on Arcade and then go to food services.

New menu themes will include "The Cheese Board," "Jazz Salads" in the Capitol, the "Charcuterie" offering a platter-style gourmet salad showcase in the Longworth cafeteria, "down home" cuisine, fusion cooking, regional specialties, and other exciting menu options. Stay tuned and bon appetit!!

National Awareness of Depression How We Can Help

October 10th was National Depression Screening Day and a number of national organizations have undertaken efforts to raise awareness about the identification and treatability of the illness.

The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that 9.5% of adult Americans suffer from some form of depressive illness. For many of these individuals, the challenges of daily life become seemingly insurmountable battles. With appropriate treatment, however, approximately 80% of depressive illnesses can be treated successfully.

Recognizing the symptoms is a critical first step toward receiving appropriate care. The following symptoms are commonly associated with depressive illnesses:

- Persistent low, anxious or "empty" feelings
- Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down"
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities
- Sleep disturbances (insomnia, early-morning waking, or oversleeping)
- Appetite and weight changes (either loss or gain)
- Feelings of hopelessness and pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide attempts
- Difficulty in concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Chronic aches or persistent bodily symptoms that are not caused by physical disease

The Office of Employee Assistance is available to *all* House employees to help initiate treatment. To discuss this or another personal situation, please call the Employee Assistance staff at 225-2400. *All calls, inquiries and appointments are kept completely confidential.*

Contributors: Jane Bennett, Bill Sturdevant, Wendy Younk, Lewis Maiden, Terri Hasdorff, James Davison, Lynn Borkon, Scott Granieri, Joan DeCain, Debora Hansen, John Hitzel, Debbie Frank and Austin Murphy.

Special Insert to the CAO Connection

First-Ever Furniture Catalog Makes The Phone Ring!

On September 24th, for the first time ever, all Member offices received a Furniture Catalog. Initiated by Scot Faulkner and created by Debora Hansen, Linda Anderson and all the Shop Supervisors in the CAO's Furniture Resource Center, the catalog marks the first time Members have been given so many choices of furnishings for their offices.

Now, Members may choose among five different colors of carpeting and six different choices of drapery. The catalog includes swatches of carpet and drapery fabrics, and features photos showing all the different desks, chairs, lamps, and cabinets available.

The catalog has been very well-received by Members, starting the week it was delivered, says Cosmo Quattrone, Director of the Furniture Resource Center. "The phone has been ringing off the hook!"

One of the catalog's key features is that it simplifies the process and makes ordering more convenient. Before, Members had to write a letter for service (from construction of a shelf to repairing a Member's desk). Now services may be requested by faxing a form supplied in the catalog. Information will be updated continually and replacement inserts added as items are discontinued or added to inventory.

Other key service improvements the catalog offers are diagrams of typical office suite layouts. In the future, an insert will be distributed showing various set-ups for the Special Event Rooms as well.

Later this Fall, the catalog will be part of the CAO Web site, **onlinecao**. When the catalog comes online, the diagrams will offer interactive capability. This means customers can create their own options and see what they look like on-screen before moving or requesting any furniture!

If you have any questions, service coordinators are standing by at 226-2421.

Congratulations on an outstanding effort to everyone involved!

Special Insert to the CAO Connection

Gold Room Renovations

Room 2168 in Rayburn, more commonly known as “The Gold Room,” is a popular choice for meetings, receptions, luncheons, dinners and other food service functions. When Congress is in Session, it is often used for three to four events per day.

Yet, despite all the wear, the Gold Room had not been renovated for eight years, and it needed it badly. As part of a new maintenance program the CAO is instituting for all event rooms, the elegant “new” Gold Room was finished this week. Reaction has been overwhelmingly positive.

The House Committee on International Relations uses the Gold Room often. It has been used to receive many heads of state visiting the Capitol. Most recently, in July, Egyptian president Mubarak was honored there and later that month so was Israeli prime minister Netanyahu.

The Gold Room has been a favorite event room ever since the Rayburn Building was built in 1957. Although the Rayburn Building itself is one of the newer House buildings, in the words of former Congressman and Deputy U.S. Commerce Secretary Bud Brown, renovation should be undertaken “to beautify the House and preserve [its distinguished] heritage.”

With that in mind, Joan DeCain and Debora Hansen first met with the Historian of the Capitol, whose assistance was invaluable to their research.

While striving to revitalize the Gold Room in splendor, because the room is used so often, practicality was also an important consideration. To provide better durability and maintenance for the future, the design team chose a high-grade commercial carpet of 100 percent nylon.

The walls were painted a pale parchment color, trimmed in historic shades of green and red with gold accents. The distinctive pillars were also painted in faux gold, as were the ceiling medallions, wreaths, and rosettes. Drapery is a gold tone with a Roman stripe and damask overlay with a hint of majestic red, green and royal blue.

What’s new about the overall look is more “gold” — true to its name and true to the proud heritage it represents. Painstaking care has been tendered by the skillful artists and craftsmen in the Superintendent’s paint shop, carpet shop, drapery shop, and office furnishings. All work was done masterfully, with exquisite attention to detail, yet quickly, to meet the high demand for the room. Now that work is complete, the Gold Room is one of the two premier event rooms of the House (the other is the Cannon Caucus Room).

Please visit the elegantly restored Gold Room. It is stately and classic — a virtual work of art befitting the finest of our heritage, of which we can all be proud. Many thanks to all who helped restore its beauty.
