

news

NHTSA

Sorry to See Him Go

Administrator Joan Claybrook wished Dugoff success in his new position as she presented him with a gift from NHTSA employees.



Carl Nash, Special Assistant to Administrator Joan Claybrook, and Nancy Solkowski, a DOT Management Intern, chatted with Administrator Dugoff and his wife Sandra.

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Editor M. J. Noll

July 1979

Well-wishers crowded into Howard Dugoff's new suite of offices on the eighth floor on June 28 to celebrate his recent appointment to the position of Administrator of the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA).

Dugoff came to the Department of Transportation and NHTSA in February 1974 as chief, Handling and Stability Division in the then Motor Vehicle Programs Office of Crash Avoidance. He became Associate Administrator for Planning and Evaluation in November 1975, then Associate Administrator for Research and Development in August 1976. He served as NHTSA's Deputy Administrator from June 1977.

Administrator Joan Claybrook spoke for all when she congratulated Dugoff on his promotion and added that he would be missed by all.

The RSPA is responsible for hazardous materials transportation, pipeline safety, research in all transportation modes, passenger and cargo security and facilitation, and university research. It also operates a research center in Cambridge, Mass., and a safety training institute in Oklahoma City.

Dugoff replaces James D. Palmer, who resigned after serving as Administrator of the Research and Special Programs Administration since August 1978.

Arthur Neill — Tire-Specialist, Inventor



Necessity is the mother of invention - or in this case - the father. Arthur Neill, physical scientist in the Office of Crash Avoidance, focused his expertise on a problem that confronts him and many handicapped people daily and came up with a solution. He has designed and built the prototype of a miniature crane to load his electric wheelchair and its battery power pack into his car.

Neill says as far as he knows, no one else has resolved the problem of loading an electric wheelchair and power pack into a passenger car. He plans to market his design to offer people with some mobility an easier way to get their wheelchairs into their cars.

Many people who use wheelchairs get into their

cars on the passenger side and pull the wheelchair behind the front seat, he explains. But cars are getting smaller and the distance between the floor and ceiling is diminishing. Many wheelchairs will not fit through the door anymore.

Some wheelchair users face an additional difficulty in that their illness or disability makes them incapable of lifting heavy objects, even if they can stand or walk short distances. Neill's device will make putting a wheelchair into a passenger car much easier for them.

Neill who bought his electric wheelchair to use at work says the distances he travels in the halls around the Nassif building convinced him it would be a good investment. "It's

powered by batteries just like a golf cart," he says. "The double battery pack fits under the seat and weighs about 90 pounds. The chair itself weighs about the same."

He sometimes uses his chair on the weekends, too. "It's especially handy at amusement parks or shopping where I might have to walk long distances," he says.

The battery pack and the chair are not really too heavy for a strong man to lift, Neill says, but lifting them high enough to swing into the trunk of a mid-size car is another matter.

His device is like the crane used on shipboard to lift boats, anchors, and cargo. A bracket fastened to the frame and bumper of his car supports the boom, which swings freely to pick up the chair and then swings over the trunk of the car. The upright support and the swing bar are detachable so that the entire device can be stowed in the trunk. It is hand-operated by a small winch installed in the trunk.

The first step in the 10-15 minute loading process is to release the battery pack from compartment under the seat and hook the winch cable to it. After the pack is in the trunk of his car, Neill folds up his wheelchair, hooks it onto the cable, and lets the motor lift it into the trunk.

Neill was born in Puerto Rico and spent his

early childhood there. His family moved to this area in 1953 and he attended the Sharpe Health School for the Handicapped until 1956. He entered the sixth grade at Holy Redeemer Catholic School in Kensington, and attended Georgetown Prep from to 1959 to 1963.

Neill graduated from Georgetown University with a physics degree in 1967, and went to work for the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) on practical applications of high-powered lasers. At NBS, he successfully built a laser-proof calorimetric device to measure multi-gigawatt laser power. "The problem," he said, "was to build a device that wouldn't be destroyed



by the laser you were measuring."

Since 1970 when he came to NHTSA as supervisor of Traction Studies at the Safety Research Lab, he has been involved in various projects dealing with measuring tire properties. He also developed traction tests for the Uniform Tire Quality Grading System and set up the NHTSA's Traction Facility at San Angelo, Texas. He is currently the Chairman of the Administrator's task force for tires. The task force reviews tire standards and develops long-range tire research programs.

Neill's perspective on the problems of handicapped drivers and passengers makes him a valuable advisor on standards for restraints or hand controls for handicapped people.

Clockwise from upper right: (1) Controlling the winch motor with his left hand, Art Neill lifts the battery pack into his trunk; (2) he folds his wheelchair, and (3) attaches the winch cable to it; (4) once the chair is lifted off the floor, Neill guides the boom over the trunk, and (5) lowers the chair.



Although the Veterans Administration has voluntary standards for car equipment, he says, much remains to be done for handicapped drivers and passengers safety. "The types of disabilities and the devices used to overcome them differ so greatly and are so numerous, that improving and regulating the field is difficult," he explains.

Neill, who was nominated Federal Handicapped Employee of the Year in 1973 and was awarded NHTSA's Special Achievement Award in 1975, says he's not an activist. He did, however, contact Metro and the Washington

(See Inventor on page 4)



Inventor (from page 3)

Post when he discovered that some of the elevators and intercom systems at the Metro Stations in the area were not working.

"I waited 20 minutes at 7th and Maryland Avenue for the elevator one cold afternoon this winter," he said. He discovered Metro had turned off some of its equipment to discourage people who were trying to ride for free. After his complaint, they turned the equipment back on. The elevators cost 61 million dollars and for that price Art felt they should be used.

Art Neill enjoys traveling and has done quite a bit on his job. Ask him to tell you about the midnight till dawn snow tire testing work at Olympic Ice Rink in Squaw Valley, California. Or about the police tire-quality work that took him to Daytona Beach. Neill says he loves the Florida weather; he and his family go as often as possible.

At home in Bowie, Neill keeps busy with his favorite hobby - building and "perfecting" stereo equipment. His home even has a specially sound-proofed room where he can work without disturbing the neighbors.

These days, however, the neighbors are more likely to hear new born baby sounds than music. Neill and his wife Sharon had their second child, Arthur Neill III, on June 16. Their first child Wendy Marie is two years old.

YOU CAN'T GET BLOOD
FROM A TURNIP



GIVE WHEN
THE BLOODMOBILE COMES

BLOODMOBILE

July 31, 1979
Transpoint
Rm. 3201

Personnel

Welcome Aboard

J. A. Simon Acheson,
Program Analyst, NTS.

Barbara Lee Hickman,
Personnel Officer, NAD.

Michael Kelly, Program
Analyst, NTS.

Kennard Price,
Accountant Technician,
NAD.

Michael Ward, Elec-
trical Engineer, NRD.

Day Waterman, Engr.
Research Psychologist,
NRD.

'Bye and Good Luck

Richard Frederick,
HSMS, NTS.

Douglass Pritchard,
Standards Engineer, NRM.

Hattie Smith,
Administrative Staff
Assistant, NRM.

Congrats on Promotion

Phyllis Alston,
Secretary, NRD.

Joyce Chapman,
Secretary, Region X.

Dennis Grieder,
Mechanical Engineer, NRD.

Philip Lindsey,
Investigative Case Clerk,
NEF.

Stephen Oesch, Attorney
Advisor, OCC.

Patricia Robinson,
Compliance Systems
Analyst, NEF.

Mignon Turrentine,
Personnel Staff
Specialist, NAD.

Job Openings

General Engineer,
GS-801-5/7/9, NRD.
Opens: 6-29, Closes:
7-19. NHTSA 79-57.

Administrative Staff
Assistant, GS-301-11, NRM.
Opens: 7-3, Closes: 7-24.
NHTSA 79-58.

Safety Standards
Engineer, GS-801-13, NRM.
Opens: 7-10, Closes:
7-30. NHTSA 79-59.

Safety Defects
Information Assistant,
GS-301-7, NEF. Opens:
7-11, Closes: 7-31.
NHTSA 79-60.

Mathematical
Statistician,
GS-1529-5/7/9, NRD.
Opens: 7-12, Closes: 8-1.
NHTSA 79-61.

Multidisciplinary
Position: Operations
Research Analyst,
GS-1515-13; Mathematician,
GS-1520-13; Mathematical
Statistician, GS-1529-13,
NRD. Opens: 7-10, Closes:
7-28. NHTSA 79-63.

Physical Scientist,
GS-1301-15, Office of the
Deputy Administrator.
Opens: 7-10, Closes:
7-28. NHTSA 79-65.