



Good Neighbor Program

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issue 21

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For me, the professional challenge, whether I am an architect in the rural American South or the American West, is how to avoid becoming so stunned by the power of modern technology and economic affluence that I lose focus on the fact that people and place matter.

Samuel Mockbee



REGIONAL NEWS

SITES & DESIGNS



The Lucas County Courthouse forms one end of Toledo's Civic Center Mall.

Collaboration in Toledo Creates Opportunities for GSA, City, and County

In Toledo, Ohio on June 7 and 8, representatives from GSA's Urban Development/ Good Neighbor Program, Center for Courthouse Programs, and Great Lakes Region participated in a unique early planning effort. Their goal was to coordinate the location of a new U.S. District Courthouse with a planned Municipal Courthouse and County Justice Facility, all on the city's grand Civic Center Mall. GSA associates joined representatives from other federal agencies; Mehrdad Yazdani, the architect selected to design the new federal courthouse; a broad representation from the Toledo City and Lucas County governments (<http://www.ci.toledo.oh.us/index.cfm?Article=720>); and three peers selected to provide urban design and landscape expertise: Michael Fifield of the University of Oregon (http://architecture.uoregon.edu/people/fac_ag/fifield.htm), James Urban, a landscape architect in Annapolis, Maryland, and Steve Davies, of Project for Public Spaces (<http://www.pps.org/info/aboutpps/staff/sdavies>). Both days included useful discussions of opportunities for creative land use and possible coordination with local redevelopment efforts. Indeed, one participant noted that the event's success was apparent as stakeholders often became advocates for each others' interests, showing how a common goal can grow out of early collaboration. This first planning meeting will lead to future meetings towards developing a master plan for the city's government center and surrounding area and ensuring design solutions that benefit all stakeholders. Contact Frank Giblin (202) 501-1856.

Red Carpet Becoming Familiar to Erie's New Courthouse

Each month seems to bring news of another award for the Mid-Atlantic Region's new U.S. Courthouse in Erie, Pennsylvania. In March, the federal courthouse complex—which includes renovations of the Moderne-style Federal Building and Courthouse, the Beaux-Arts former Erie County Library Building, and the Art Deco Isaac Baker & Sons clothing store, as well as a new annex—received a Citation for Design Excellence in Preservation during GSA's semiannual Design Awards. In May, the building was awarded a 2005 Historic Preservation Award from Preservation

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Pennsylvania (<http://www.preservationpa.org/>) and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/>) in the category of Public/Institutional Construction. And the courthouse is also the subject of a new book published by the Erie County Historical Society, *Establishing a Presence*, which charts the three buildings' evolution over time in the context of Erie's urban history. Contact Gina Waring (215) 446-2895.



Courtesy GSA. Lois Carroll, Photographer.

Old Post Office Seeks a New “Lease” on Life

Even as it has grown to be one of Washington's most recognizable landmarks, the Old Post Office has never quite fixed its place in the city. Post Office operations moved elsewhere only fifteen years after it opened, and a more fashionable neo-classical replacement was built across 12th Street in 1934. Three attempts to tear it down—in the 1910s, 1930s and 1970s—finally resulted in its current incarnation as a mixed-use facility (<http://www.oldpostofficedc.com/index.html>), but the building has never thrived in this capacity. In May, GSA's National Capital Region took early steps towards rejuvenating Washington's first skyscraper and making the best use of this important asset. A Request for Information sought to determine private sector interest in redeveloping the entire building through a long-term lease (<http://www.gsa.gov/ncr-oldpostoffice>). If there is adequate interest, a Request for Qualifications will follow. The federal government hopes to develop a mutually beneficial partnership with a tenant who will give new life to the Old Post Office while maintaining the public and historic importance of this marvel well into the future. Contact Mike McGill (202) 205-1624.



Courtesy GSA.

New Federal Jobs Will Help Revitalize Downtown Kansas City

On April 15, GSA received the keys to Kansas City, Missouri's former Main Post Office, a major part of what will eventually become the one million square foot IRS National Consolidated Service Center. The redeveloped New Deal-era post office will be joined by three office annexes and additional parking on a 27 acre site in the city's downtown. This project will relocate 8,000 workers to the city's core, including 3,000 year-round employees, serving an important role in Kansas City's effort to redevelop its central business district. The economic impact of a decision to bring a federal agency to a major city's downtown can be immense: Kansas City's Economic Development Corporation (<http://www.edckc.com/>) believes this project alone will contribute 4 billion dollars to the city's economy in the long-term. Contact Dave Fellers (816) 823-2244.

●●●● REGIONAL NEWS COLLABORATION WITH CLIENTS & COMMUNITIES

Recognition for One of Our Own

Janet Preisser, the Rocky Mountain Region's Urban Development Officer and Fine Arts Officer, was recently selected to participate in the Downtown Denver Partnership's Emerging Leaders Program (<http://www.downtowndenver.com/>). Monthly meetings from February to October will bring together around forty members of Denver's private and public sector business community to discuss the opportunities and challenges that accompany the development of the city's downtown. Janet will have the chance to interact with local business leaders and city officials, including Denver's Mayor, John Hickenlooper. This perspective on downtown issues will provide a unique opportunity to find new ways GSA can collaborate with Denver on its future urban development. Contact Janet Preisser (303) 236-8000 x5248.

Students Bring Great Smoky Mountains Indoors

The Great Smoky Mountains rise over Eastern Tennessee, serving as a constant reminder of their historic and cultural importance to the Knoxville region. And on July 27, the mountains' image became a permanent fixture in the city's Howard H. Baker, Jr. Federal Courthouse, as GSA's Southeast Sunbelt Region unveiled a 28-foot mural near the Market Street entrance to the building. The mural, called “Evocation of the Smokies,” was painted by Sheena Alton, Jonathan Howe, and Emmy Shubert, and designed by John Newman, all students in the Maryville Col-



Maryville College Fine Arts Professor Carl Gombert helps student artists install a 28-foot mural in Knoxville's Baker Federal Courthouse.

lege Division of Fine Arts (<http://faculty.maryvillecollege.edu/finearts/>). It features a Regionalist-style depiction of the most visited National Park in the United States and its surrounding region. Student artists benefited from working collaboratively with a client to develop the project, and they received course credit for their efforts. GSA, in turn, received a beautiful new work of art to brighten the building's public space. Contact Teressia Blair 404-331-7775.

Unique Partnership Will Transform Anacostia Waterfront

At a ceremony in early June, GSA's National Capital Region gave developer Forest City Washington (<http://www.fcwashington.com/>) the "keys" to 44 acres of GSA-owned land in Southeast Washington, D.C that will soon become a mixed-use community. Over seventeen years, this unique public-private partnership, the first of its kind for the federal government, will create 3.2 million square feet of residential space, 2 million square feet of commercial, retail, and cultural space, and a 5.5 acre park on the Anacostia River waterfront (<http://ncr.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/sefc/>). Groundbreaking is expected to occur in 2007. The \$800 million project is part of a larger effort the District of Columbia has undertaken to revitalize this area of the city, which also includes the adjacent site of a new stadium for baseball's Washington Nationals, and a new headquarters for the U.S. Department of Transportation. Partnerships like this can be key to urban development, as the city will eventually receive millions of dollars in tax revenue from land that has long been tax-free. Contact Mike McGill (202) 205-1624.

Laguna Niguel Basketball Players Score, Pacific Rim Region Assists

In April, adult and youth basketball players in Laguna Niguel, California were given a new home—at the Pacific Rim Region's Chet Holifield Federal Building (<http://www.emporis.com/en/wm/bu/?id=217513>). The building, known for its unique ziggurat shape, is now also the site of the city's first lighted basketball courts. The El Lazo Basketball Courts are located in a section of the Federal Building's parking lot that the city asked to lease from GSA in order to alleviate the large demand that the city's active basketball program placed on existing courts. The space crunch particularly impacted youth basketball players, who often had to find practice time in locations outside of Laguna Niguel. Now, the "ziggurat" is complemented by four shiny new basketball courts that provide an active public use of the federal property. Opening night was commemorated on April 12 by Laguna Niguel mayor Joe Brown and Ed Wasielewski, Director of GSA's Los Angeles Service Center, followed by a series of demonstration games between area youth teams and a particularly exciting match-up between GSA and the City—showing that good community partnerships can also make for great competitive basketball games. Contact Brian Goldstein (202) 208-2080.

Brass Caps Problem Leads to Brass-Tacks Solution

The Great Lakes Region recently found a creative solution to a problem many GSA-owned buildings in Cleveland were experiencing—thefts of the brass protective caps on exterior fire department sprinkler connections. These open connections became clogged with garbage from passersby, interrupting the fire safety system and increasing the risk of a large fire loss in the event of an emergency. The GSA Regional Fire Protection and Life Safety Branch partnered with GSA's Ohio Service Center, the Office of Property Development, a vendor of protective caps and the City of Cleveland Fire Department to find a solution to the city-wide problem together. For federally-owned buildings, GSA purchased UL approved locking fire department connection caps which cannot be stolen. Likewise, the Cleveland Fire Department worked with the vendor to develop a formal program for the use of locking caps throughout the city, and the vendor provided the appropriate key wrench for each fire apparatus in the city at no charge. This collaboration has made Cleveland safer, and provided GSA's Great Lakes Region with a model partnership that will soon be implemented in Rockford, Illinois and South Bend, Indiana as well. Contact Lowell G. Black (312) 886-4408.



Austin's newest spot for alternative rock—the future site of the United States Courthouse. Courtesy GSA.

GSA's Greater Southwest Region is Ultra-Hip

Music-crazy Austin, Texas will one day also be known for the dramatic courthouse that is planned near the city's Republic Square. However, because of a moratorium on courthouse construction, the future courthouse site, where the unfinished infrastructure of an Intel building now stands, will remain unchanged for at least a little longer. But that doesn't mean there isn't time for a little rock and roll first, as GSA's Greater Southwest Region recently made the most of the delay to contribute to the city's mission to squeeze music into every venue conceivable. They allowed one of the hottest bands in alternative rock—Spoon—to film their latest video at the site (<http://www.spoontheband.com>). The band liked the site for the unusual views that it offers of their hometown, and Region 7 and the local GSA Property Management Office were glad to work with Spoon's "people" to arrange compensation for its use over a weekend, putting the federal government one degree closer in the Kevin Bacon Game to *Wedding Crashers* and the OC, both of which have featured Spoon's music. The video, entitled "Sister Jack," should be released in the next few months. Contact Harold Hebert (817) 978-4660.

GSA Gives a Hand to America's Best High School Artists

The Annual Congressional Art Competition displays some of the best work by America's high school art students in the U.S. Capitol. Each of the 435 Congressional districts is represented by one student, who must first compete against other students in their district. Winners are awarded scholarships, as well as the honor of having their work seen by millions of visitors for a full year. This year, GSA provided a key helping hand when D.C. Congressional Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton requested the agency's help locating partitions to exhibit the students' work. Representatives from the National Capital Region's Public Buildings Service and the Mid-Atlantic Region's Federal Supply Service located 30 partitions stored at the Department of Housing and Urban Development Headquarters, and coordinated a loan of the pieces for the duration of the exhibition. Honorees were recognized by their representatives at an award ceremony on June 14 in Washington, DC. Contact Rickey Parker (202) 619-8968.

UN World Environment Day Features One of GSA's Rising Stars

The San Francisco Federal Building, which is currently under construction, was recently the site of an exciting event celebrating this year's United Nations World Environment Day theme, "Green Cities" (<http://www.wed2005.org/>). A sold-out afternoon session on June 2nd at the Historic Court of Appeals Law Library Atrium examined the environmentally sustainable aspects of the San Francisco Federal Building, which, when complete, will use fifty percent less energy than a comparable office building built with traditional technologies. Pacific Rim Regional Administrator Peter Stamison introduced the building's architect, 2005 Pritzker Prize Winner Thom Mayne (<http://www.morphosis.net>), who discussed the promise of sustainable architecture. Maria Ciprazo, GSA's project executive, described the government's role in green building practices. Following discussion, attendees toured the federal building, which is rapidly approaching its 2006 completion. Contact Joelle Colliard (415) 522-2768.

Charleston's Custom House Becomes Concert Hall...For One Night

Spring in Charleston, South Carolina brings flowering Dogwood trees, thoughts of beaches, and Spoleto USA (<http://www.spoletousa.org>), one of the nation's foremost art festivals. Almost every performance space and public space in the city is filled for 17 days and nights with concerts, visual arts exhibitions, theatre and dance. But tickets to see the world-class performers can be very expensive and hard to get, so a second festival called Piccolo Spoleto (<http://www.piccolospoleto.com>) began running concurrently in 1979 to open the arts to a larger crowd. It offers hundreds of events, all of which are affordable, and many of which are free. Among the most popular is the free Sunset Serenade Pops Concert, on the steps of the Southeast Sunbelt Region's U.S. Custom House, which took place this year on May 27. As dusk set in, a packed crowd delighted in the Charleston Symphony's



Reggae revelers enjoy live music at Charleston's Piccolo Spoleto Festival. Courtesy City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs.

rendition of the music that would fill the next two weeks, while the neoclassical Custom House provided a grand—and civic—backdrop to opening night. The next evening, the Custom House found a different tempo, as the setting for the lively Reggae Block Dance, replete with drummers, dancers, and live bands. Contact Connie Bays (843) 727-4233.

McClure Federal Building's Garden Becomes Home for Boise's Wildlife

The National Wildlife Federation began its "Backyard Wildlife Habitat" program in 1973 to promote gardens and landscapes friendly to both the humans and animals who enjoy them (<http://www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/>). The many recipients of this certification have included parks, yards, and workplaces throughout North America. But recently, a federal building joined this list for the first time, as the Peggy Satterfield Wildlife Garden was dedicated on May 20 at the James A. McClure Federal Building in Boise, Idaho. The garden, named in tribute to a long-time court recorder for U.S. District Judge Edward Lodge, is "homegrown"—tenant volunteers including U.S. Courts employees organized the project—and GSA's property management team provided funding. Now, birds in the Northwest/Arctic Region have a new home with feeders, and the building's tenants have a sunny place to sit, surrounded by native plants. Contact Sue Foster (509) 353-2457.

●●●●● NATIONAL NEWS

September in Denver Means Downtown Development

On September 10-13, the International Downtown Association (IDA) Annual Conference (<http://www.ida-downtown.org>) will take place in the lively center of the Mile-High City. Participants will learn from Denver's revitalization efforts, and will also have the opportunity to attend two sessions held by GSA. An informal "roundtable" will invite participants to discuss federal "good neighbor" issues with representatives from GSA and other IDA members from around the country. A second session will take attendees on a "mobile workshop" tour of the downtown Denver Federal District, where the city, the Downtown Denver Partnership (<http://www.downtowndenver.com/>), and GSA have been working together to improve this downtown business neighborhood. Both sessions promise to provide great ideas for partnerships with the federal government in your community. Contact Frank Giblin (202) 501-1856.

Site Security Design Guide Will Make Buildings Safer and Friendlier

For the past year, the First Impressions and Good Neighbor programs have been busy developing a *Site Security Design Guide* for GSA. The guide will build on the success of the *Lobby Security Design Guide*, focusing this time on the spaces surrounding our courthouses and federal buildings. It will include a series of site security models that maintain our high safety standards, while also creating a welcoming environment for the people who use our buildings daily. The effort began last fall with a series of building surveys conducted by First Impressions IDIQ landscape architects, and continued in January with an Industry Roundtable that brought together experts from government and the private sector. This fall, two of the firms that have participated in the project's development will begin writing the guide. Gensler's Washington office (<http://www.gensler.com/offices/washingtondc.html>) will contribute technical knowledge and Rios Clementi Hale Studios of Los Angeles (<http://www.rchstudios.com/>) will provide design expertise. Look for the final Site Security Design Guide to arrive in the spring of 2006. Contact Casey Jones (504) 589-6094 x122.

Do You Want to Find Out More? Do You Have Ideas to Share?

We file each enews on our website at <http://www.gsa.gov/goodneighbor>. While you're there, you can check out other publications and policies, find the partners that can help GSA to be a good neighbor in your community, and get contact information for your local GSA representatives.

Please email questions, comments, & contributions—as well as mailing list additions and deletions—to Frank Giblin at frank.giblin@gsa.gov or Brian Goldstein at brian.goldstein@gsa.gov.

If I wasn't Bob Dylan, I'd probably think that Bob Dylan has a lot of answers myself.

Bob Dylan