

ShopTalk

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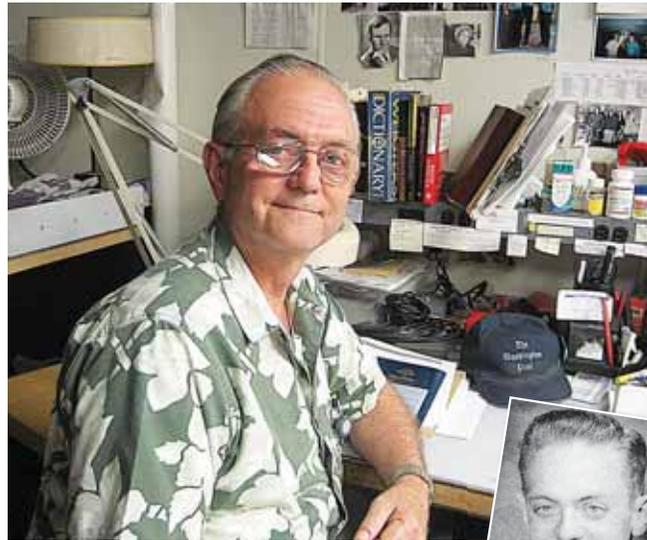
Editor Mario Iván Oña, x4-6803
Graphic Designer Jessica Bravo

A Washington Post 'Product'

Electrician David Ross has done his part in keeping the lights on at The Post for over 49 years. But beyond his work as an electrician, perhaps his most important role has been that of a human sounding board. Often solicited, but sometimes not, Ross speaks his mind and credits The Post with giving him the gall to do so. Ross will be retiring in September.

Although his official hire date is Sept. 9, 1960, Ross started as a weekend mail inserter in 1958, while still a student at McKinley Tech High School in the District. The native Washingtonian had it all figured out: work part-time through high school and then enroll in the Army. He would serve his country, get his college paid for and move on.

"When they detected an ulcer that medically disqualified me for the Army, it really threw me into a tailspin," Ross says. "Since I had already done some part-time work at The Post and had some printing experience from McKinley, I went to The Post as a short-term thing to help



Electrician David Ross, the longest standing Post employee, will be retiring after 49 years of service. Inset: In 1961, Ross appeared in ShopTalk after being promoted to electrician apprentice. He started as a mailroom inserter and a press flyman.



me get my head screwed on right. Here I am almost half a century later."

Ross recalls working in the pressroom. "Back then, when the presses ran, print mist filled the air everywhere, and you came out looking like a coal miner. You'd blow the stuff out of your nose in the rest room."

After about a year in the downtown pressroom, he became an electrician apprentice and remembers upper and middle manage-

ment Production people like Neil Greenwall, Bud Eberly and Leach Leary showing him the ropes. Ross recalls Greenwall telling him: "We grow our own around here."

"As a young, impressionable young man, the first thing that really struck me about working here was the warm congeniality of management," Ross says. "They were never, ever too busy to stop and talk to you. It wasn't a forced politeness."

If it's true that every age has its wisdom, it might also be true that employees at every level can bring their own, unique wisdom and invaluable perspective. Throughout his career, several important Post people called on Ross.

After having built a friendly rapport with Katharine Graham, Ross remembers standing next to her during one of the worst strikes at the paper. They were both looking out into an angry mob that was burning effigies of her. She turned to Ross and asked, "Why are they doing this?"

"I shared my reasons with her," Ross says. "But that's not important. The point was that even in big things, she consulted me."

Following one of Post Co. Chairman Don Graham's first major addresses to employees, he asked Ross for feedback because Graham considered him someone "who really cares about The Post."

There was also the time when Ross weighed in during some heated labor negotiations after a senior member of The Post's legal team asked him for his thoughts.

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Springfield Prepares for Plant Consolidation

By **Brian Pratt**
Special to ShopTalk

With the plant consolidation and the requirement to run all four presses at the Springfield Plant,



Photo By - Brian Day

Machinist Steve Scott synchronizes a press component.

plant employees had to put in long, three-day repairs to enable successful press runs. Replacing a large industrial gear, shaft and bearing in the heart of the press folders demanded plenty of cautious calculation to ensure the timing of adjacent gears remained unchanged once the press started back up. Machinist Steve Scott took lead on all four Springfield presses. He cancelled several weekend plans to direct three other machinists on the three-day (per press) modifications. In all, seven other machinists assisted at various times, including Jaime Aramayo, Ron Akers, Buddy Garrett, Dan Martin, Bryan Lewis, Mark Gregory and Kevin Young. Additionally,

machinist and scheduler Brian Day prepared the work and coordinated with the Pressroom. The Springfield Plant's management team and maintenance department continue to

implement projects and procedures in an effort to improve efficiency, reliability and the continued success of the daily miracle.



Photo By - Brian Day

From left, machinists Jaime Aramayo, Steve Scott, Dan Martin and Buddy Garrett after making modifications to press V2.

Post Employees Take Injured Vets Boating

For three years in a row, a growing number of boaters docked at Occoquan Marina in Virginia have volunteered to take injured veterans stationed at Walter Reed Medical Army Center on a day-long boat ride through places like Mount Vernon and the National Harbor as part of the annual Patriot Cruise and Salute (PCS).

This year "Final Edition" Captain and Springfield Assistant Plant Manager Roddy MacPherson, along with first mate Liz Alexander, Production, and escorts Liz Finos, Advertising, and Eric Brinkmann, Production, volunteered to host Staff Sgt. Rafael Delgado and his



Liz Alexander, Production (far left) and Springfield Assistant Plant Manager Roddy MacPherson (far right) hosted wounded veteran Staff Sgt. Rafael Delgado (center right) and his family during the third annual Patriot Cruise and Salute. Not pictured: Liz Finos, Advertising; Eric Brinkmann, Production, and Ed Thiede, News, who brought along his group of Boy Scouts.

family on June 14.

Ed Thiede, News, who is a Boy Scouts scout leader, heard about the program and also decided to volunteer along with his scouts. They formed part of PCS's Social Committee.

In an e-mail from PCS President Ed Mason addressed to MacPherson and Alexander, he writes, "Our intent for the PCS is to safely expose wounded, injured and ill veterans of the United States Armed Forces, their spouses and children to the world of boating, providing a carefree opportunity to experience a boating lifestyle while also providing an opportunity for a mental respite from their medical concerns."

"I had an opportunity to influence a whole group of influential people and to tell them as I saw it through my eyes," Ross says. "What impact could a little electrician possibly have at a massive communications corporation? Probably not much. But I felt perfectly comfortable speaking out and being at ease. I wouldn't have said anything unless I felt like my opinion mattered."

Sometimes his opinions mattered to the tune of \$5,000. That's the amount he once received for submitting one of several winning suggestions over the years that saved The Post a significant amount of money.

Ross attributes his confidence in speaking out to The Post's "culture of listening."

He talks about the time when he made a recommendation to management about The Post helping to rebuild Miami following Hurricane Andrew. Although his idea was turned down, he received a personal call from Don Graham at home. "He took the time to explain to me why it wasn't feasible to do that," Ross says. "I couldn't believe he took the time to call me."

To bring the point home, Ross shares his memories of Phil Graham. "I remember Phil being gracious, thoughtful, and he always asked thought-provoking questions. He could have asked, 'How are you?' But instead he asked about my work and showed genuine interest. He always seemed thankful for any input. It always felt like he came down to my level and brought me into his world.

Sounds like Don doesn't it? I found this to be true with Phil, Don and Katharine."

Ross concludes, "Over the

years, I've been outspoken because I care. I consider myself a product of The Washington Post."



Wellington Ross, father of Suggestion Award winner David Ross, speaks of his son's long devotion to the Post. This appeared in the March 29, 1984 issue of ShopTalk.

Remembering Jim Pruitt and Jerry Phillips



Jim Pruitt

Springfield Pressroom Assistant Superintendent Jim Pruitt passed away on Sunday, June 7, at home. Mr. Pruitt had been recently diagnosed with cancer.

He began his printing career at Gannett's Springfield Offset plant. He then started his own printing business in the Springfield area. Mr. Pruitt joined The Post in August 1991. With

his extensive printing and management experience, he quickly rose through the ranks, serving as a team leader and tech leader. In January 2007, he was promoted to assistant superintendent.

Springfield Pressroom Superintendent Melinda Ford said, "Jim was a powerful influence in the Springfield Pressroom. He knew newspaper presses and the people who ran them. Jim influenced everyone he worked with. His first priority was ensuring the pressroom delivered top-notch printing. In doing so, he became a mentor, a coach and a friend, who truly achieved his goals and made us all better people in the process. We'll miss you, Jim."

Raymond "Jerry" Phillips

Journeyman Mailer Jerry Phillips was 61 when he died of pneumonia at the University of Maryland Hospital on May 23. Krishna Sharma felt compelled to eulogize his colleague and contacted ShopTalk.



Sharma wrote: *Jerry's death was something the Mailroom employees were talking about for weeks. There are some people who don't need to be powerful or famous*

to be remembered. His goodness will reverberate long after he has left us.

Jerry served The Post for 38 years after bravely serving in Vietnam and earning five Purple Hearts [for combat-related injuries]. Yet, Jerry never boasted about his military service. In fact, the only way anyone found out was when someone asked him about some Vietnam movie and Jerry casually said that he had seen enough of Vietnam for himself. Even his longtime friend and fellow mailer Bill Cohen, who attended Anacostia High School with Jerry back in the '60s, said that he didn't know that Jerry had joined the Army after high school.

Jerry was from West Virginia. He is survived by his wife of 40 years and their two sons.

Outstanding Contribution Award



Publisher Katharine Weymouth recognizes Keith Jones, IT, with the Outstanding Contribution Award for the second quarter of 2009.

Photos from Upcoming Farewell Ceremony

Photos taken by ShopTalk during the upcoming farewell ceremony on July 27 will be available on Flickr for viewing and downloading. Visit www.flickr.com/twpccommunity. Any retirees interested in joining The Post Alumni group should contact Marty Kady at wva1946@yahoo.com or visit <http://www.twp-alumninews.org>.

ShopTalk Survey

An important ShopTalk readership survey will be distributed via e-mail in the next few weeks. If you read ShopTalk, please take the time to fill it out.

Matching Gift Program on Hiatus

Over the past six years alone, Post employees have donated a grand total of \$2,083,811 to numerous

PostScripts

nonprofit local organizations through The Post Matching Gifts Program. The Post thanks its employees for their efforts and generosity. Unfortunately, the program will go on hiatus as of July 31, 2009. The deadline for submitting match requests was on June 29, as previously reported. Contact Community Relations at x4-7969 with any questions.

Post Archives

If you need a Post event photographed for archiving purposes or need archived photos or old ShopTalks, contact ShopTalk Editor and Archiver Mario Iván Oña at x4-6803 or onam@washpost.com

Note to All Post Employees

It is imperative that all Post employees contact Monica Williams at the switchboard at x4-6000 or Mary Robinson x4-7880 to ensure that their contact information is up to date. If you are new at The Post, you absolutely need to call and provide your contact information. The information is used to reach you in an emergency, a crisis or if someone is trying to contact you from outside the building.

Use ShopTalk to Communicate Internally

Communicating new initiatives and programs through ShopTalk can assist employees at the paper and

Web site in working together more efficiently. It can also empower employees to become word-of-mouth advocates. Finally, ShopTalk can also be used to publicly recognize outstanding colleagues. Contact Mario Iván Oña at x4-6803 or onam@washpost.com with any tips or suggestions.

Printing Services

For all of your printing needs, look no further than The Post's own Printing Services. Open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. They offer the following services:

- Digital color/black and white printing and copying
- Finishing, folding, cutting, laminating and binding
- Shredding

You can easily upload any digital project and request your order at the Post Print on Demand (PPOD) site at: freeflowwebsrv.washpost.com/ws/. Contact Kunle Aboderin at x4-5563 or at aboderina@washpost.com with any questions.

Zip Out of The Post

Need to zip out of work to somewhere that's not Metro accessible but don't want to drive in? Zipcars are now available at a discounted price in the alley next to the 15th street entrance. Contact sellers@zipcar.com or 202-552-5927 for more information. Visit www.zipcar.com/washingtonpost to become a member.

In the Green Corner

FACT:

Post newspaper recycling bins are available at most Metro stations.

GREEN TIP:

From Green Living Tips, some ways to keep air conditioner costs down: Do all your physical activities early in the morning or late in the evening to keep your body temperature down and to avoid having to lower your thermostat. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/7d5v4c> for other washing tips.



News From News

This is a new, recurring segment in ShopTalk. The idea is to inform readers about new content being offered by the newsroom with the hope that employees will pass it along to friends and family or post it on Facebook:

- Alexandra Garcia was awarded the 2009 Concentra Award for Outstanding Video Journalism for "The Healing Fields: Hidden Hurt." <http://tinyurl.com/m7bm38>.
- Video journalists Travis Fox, Alexandra Garcia, Pierre Kattar and Ben de la Cruz also received awards during the National Press Photographers Association's annual "Best of Journalism" contest. For list of winners, go to <http://bop.nppa.org/2009/>.

Marketplace

FOR RENT: 5 BR Colonial in Gaithersburg, Md., available for rent beginning mid-August (or Sept. 1). Only 3 miles from Shady Grove Metro. \$2,800. 7200 block of Antares Drive. Details: <http://tinyurl.com/lh53k8>. Contact Reshma Yaqub at 301-527-9318 or reshmay@gmail.com.

FOR SALE: Segway I2 Commuter 1 year old, 332 miles, kickstand and accessory bar. \$4,300. Contact Keith Jones x4-6709.

FOR RENT: Timeshare rent/sale in Colonial Crossings in Williamsburg, Va. 12-13 weeks available every year. 2 BR with fireplace, washer/dryer, full amenities, grill, pool, close to Busch Gardens. Contact Veronica at 571-292-6524 (after 5:30 p.m.)

MARKETPLACE DEADLINE:

Close of business on Fridays. Please include your name, extension and phone number. Ads are for Post Media and Digital employees. E-mail ads to shoptalk@washpost.com or onam@washpost.com. Ads will run for two issues unless otherwise requested. ShopTalk reserves the right to publish and edit all ads.