

POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE

By Frances Bran Feldman
Information Officer



Postal Inspector J.E. (Janene) Gordon in 1971. Gordon, a polygraph examiner in the Western Region, is the first woman to achieve 20 years of service as a Postal Inspector.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is the law enforcement and investigative arm of the U.S. Postal Service. For more than 250 years, the Postal Inspection Service has been protecting Postal Service assets, the work environment of postal employees and the integrity of the mail and its use. The Postal Inspection Service traces its beginnings to Benjamin Franklin, who, in 1737, was appointed postmaster at Philadelphia and assigned additional duties similar to many of those of present day Postal inspectors.

While the position of Postal inspector has evolved through a series of titles and roles within the Postal Service, today's Postal inspector performs demanding and complex civil, criminal, administrative, audit, security and inspector general functions. The Postal Inspection Service is perhaps the only government entity in the United States that houses all these functions within one organization.

Today, there are 250 women Postal inspectors who serve in the continuing "battle" against perpetrators of crimes involving the United States mails or the Postal Service itself. Postal inspectors are diligent in their investigation of illegal transmission of controlled substances through the mails, the mailing of child pornography, mail theft, assaults on postal employees, bombs sent through the mails, post office burglaries and robberies, frauds against consumers, and frauds against the Postal Service itself.

In the law enforcement and Postal communities, the Postal Inspection Service has jurisdiction in all matters infringing on the integrity and security of the U.S. mails, over 40,000 postal facilities, more than 750,000 employees, and more than \$39 billion in operating revenue. Last fiscal year, the Postal Service handled over 161 billion pieces of mail destined for over 114 million addresses. Possessing statutory powers of arrest, Postal inspectors have primary jurisdiction over more

than 100 federal statutes.

To accomplish our law enforcement mission, we employ 2,010 Postal inspectors and 1,563 uniformed Postal police officers. Nationally, we have five regional offices. There are 38 divisions with more than 150 investigative offices.

Five women Postal inspectors are members of the Postal Career Executive Service. (This is comparable to the Senior Executive Service of other government agencies.) The five senior managers, their inspector appointment date and title follow: Ida Gillis, 10/07/78, Assistant Regional Chief Inspector-Audit, Eastern Region, (ARCI Gillis is also the first black woman inspector to achieve this rank); Joyce King, 01/11/75, Assistant Inspector in Charge, New York Division; Robin Luers, 10/29/77, Inspector in Charge, Atlanta (GA) Division, Christine Macho, 12/04/71, Assistant Regional Chief Inspector-Administration, Northeast Region, and Jayne Schwarz, 04/28/73, Assistant Regional Chief Inspector-Audit, Central Region. Twenty-six women Postal inspectors have achieved the first level of management as program managers or team leaders.

Women Postal Inspectors Achieve 20 Years In Federal Law Enforcement

Twenty years ago, on September 25, 1971, Janene Gordon was appointed a U.S. Postal inspector. She is the first woman Postal inspector to achieve 20 years of service. She and Jane Currie, who later transferred to the regular ranks of the U.S. Postal Service, were the first women to enter and complete Postal Inspector training. Sally Wolfe was appointed a Postal Inspector on Oct. 23, 1971. On Nov. 20, 1971, Marleina Berry became the first black female to be appointed a Postal inspector. Christine Macho, currently Assistant Regional Chief Inspector—Administration in the Northeast Region, was appointed

Dec. 4, 1971.

Patricia Singleton Achimovic was appointed a Postal inspector Jan. 1, 1972. Denise Roos Cann's appointment came through on February 5, 1972, and Cheryl Kinnebrew's on March 25, 1972.

Today, generally each Postal inspector class has a number of women in it. It is no longer unusual to learn of a female law enforcement officer. But, when Gordon became "Inspector J.E. Gordon," she was a pioneer in the field. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service was one of the very first federal law enforcement agencies to recruit, hire, and train women federal law enforcement agents. We are also one of the first agencies, if not the very first, to have several women achieve 20 years of service. In personal interviews with six of them, they tell us a little about themselves and what it was like during those years of service as women Postal inspectors in federal law enforcement.

Postal Inspector J.E. Gordon



Chief Postal Inspector Charles R. Clauson congratulates Gordon on becoming the first woman to complete 20 years as a Postal Inspector.

Inspector Gordon recalls that she was "stripping my Mom's wood floor when I received a call saying that my application as a Postal Inspector had been accepted."

Gordon saw an announcement that the Postal Inspection Service was recruiting women candidates at Sacramento State College (now University of California at Sacramento) from which she earned a degree in Public Administration with a specialization in Police Science. Later, she obtained a Master's Degree in Social Sciences.

In 1985, Ms. Gordon entered the Department of Defense Polygraph Institute. She is now a polygraph examiner in the Western Region. Gordon says that polygraph training was "the hardest course I ever attempted. I am glad I took it, but it was very hard work, with long, long hours. In many ways, it was like a career change. There is a certification requirement, an internship period and one must keep up with polygraph training." In fact, Gordon attended the University of Virginia Advance Polygraph School, October 1, - November 1, 1991, at the UVA campus in Charlottesville, VA.

Gordon credits her father and mother, both now deceased, with instilling good work ethics in their children.

Even before Gordon graduated from college, she had some experience in the security field. She obtained her first security job as an undercover "floor-walker" at a major department store while in college and held it for three years.

As a Postal inspector, Gordon says she has found every assignment interesting. In 1979, while in San Francisco, she became a consumer protection specialist, work she performed for three years. She, Chris Macho, and Jack Sullivan liked to call themselves, "The Mod Squad, in reverse." "There were 18 to 20 Postal Inspection Service consumer protection specialists across the country, and we wrote articles and spoke to organizations about the ways consumers could protect themselves from fraud."

Another highlight of her career, Gordon says, was her participation on the Postal Inspection Service panel at a National Postal Forum

(NPF). "Back in 1980, then Chief Inspector Ken Fletcher caught Denise Roos [Cann] and I 'soliciting' at the Forum — course, we were 'soliciting' private business personnel to attend our Inspection Service presentation. Seriously though, it was at the NPF that I fully realized what an extremely large and well recognized American corporation we work for. It was an honor and a privilege to be able participate on the panel and represent the Postal Inspection Service.

Following her work in consumer protection, Gordon became an undercover narcotics inspector for three years. When Gordon reflects back, she knows going from a high profile to a low profile position may not be the smartest way to do it. She recalls that she was doing undercover work in a post office when she saw her own photograph in a publication that was part of a flats mailing she was working. "Each assignment was a step up," says Gordon, "They have all been pluses, especially from 1977 on. I have had a terrific career."

And Gordon is looking forward to continuing that career. Polygraph examiners are constantly traveling. Recent assignments for Gordon included trips to Seattle, Hawaii, Anchorage, and Guam. Her February 1991 trip to Alaska was one to remember. In four days, she was on practically every kind of airplane, from jets to "nearly a two-seater." She left San Francisco on a Monday night. Tuesday she crossed the Arctic Circle and ended up in a small village called Shungnak, which is so far north that it is not far from what is called, "The Russian Border."

She helped to identify four suspects in a burglary and two in an embezzlement. "In Shungnak, they told me I'd have to walk a mile into town carrying my 50-pound polygraph in the knee-high snow. Instead, they loaded my Polygraph and me into a snowmobile-driven sled which also carried the mail into town."

Late Wednesday night, she returned to Anchorage. On Thursday at 6 a.m., she started out for Mountain Village, which is on the west side of Alaska. Because you can't get there directly, it was a four-hour trip. She finished her work in Mountain Village around 4 p.m. and was driven to the airport in the back of a pickup truck. She arrived back in Anchorage about 9:30 p.m. Thursday and flew out of Anchorage at about 1:30 a.m. Friday, arriving back in the San Francisco Bay area at around 10 a.m.

"I don't want you to think I was doing all this travel in Alaska alone," says Gordon. "Teamwork is important in the Inspection Service, and polygraph is no exception. You work very closely with individual case inspectors, whether male or female. Although the polygraph position requires extensive travel, the fact that you usually work with at least one other inspector, helps to make the travel bearable, even enjoyable."

Perhaps her biggest case was the 1985 Guam robbery of \$660,000 from a post office truck. She and the other polygraphers performed the polygraphs on the major criminals in the case and helped to find the money.

Polygraph examiners also provide expert testimony in court. Sometimes the examiner must make four or five trips, even on a case that involves little money. "But," Gordon says, "the Inspection Service is concerned whenever there has been a violation of postal laws. In polygraph, your interviewing and interrogating skills must be proficient, but knowing how to talk to people in all kinds of situations is an integral part of every inspector's responsibility."

"We realized we were a breakthrough," says Gordon of the early women inspectors. "There were no 'ladies rooms' at the Academy. They put up a paper sign on a locker room for us, and at first they brought in a special instructor for us for the karate class."

During one of the role plays, Gordon was supposed to be a crook

who jumped out of a car and ran into a forest. "One of the inspectors caught me and grabbed at my neck. 'You're choking me,' I said, and when he didn't release me, I flipped him over. I was carrying a set of keys on a long chain and they flew up and hit him in the eye. He had to return to class with a black eye and he was embarrassed about it. The class instructor called then Chief Inspector William Cotter. 'I think the women are going to make it,' he said, relating the incident to Cotter. Some of the guys were worried, and wondered, 'What are we getting into?' Some of their wives were concerned. I received a letter from INC's wife inviting me to an event for the spouses. I went in and told him, 'I think you better tell your wife the Inspection Service now has some women inspectors.' We laugh about it now, but it was a time of transition."

Postal Inspector Sally Wolfe



Inspector Sally Wolfe is one of four "on call" response inspectors on a seven person External Crimes Team, the only EC team in the Washington division. She handles cases from suspicious parcels (prohibited mails cases) to armed robbery and assault. "You must have energy for external crimes," she says, "You have to be ready for the telephone call from the post office

that's just been robbed, or the liquor store, 'Someone was here trying to cash a stolen money order or Treasury check.'"

Wolfe comes from Indiana, PA, and graduated from the Indiana University of PA. She developed an interest in a career in law enforcement at the age of 16 and majored in Criminal Justice. When she graduated in August 1971, there were fewer than 10 women in the Criminology Department. The Director of the University's Career Services Department told Wolfe's mother (who worked in the same building) about the Postal Inspection Service's new recruitment program and gave her a Pittsburgh telephone number. Wolfe called in July right about the time of Postal reorganization and practically everyone in her Inspector class was from outside the Postal Service.

Wolfe did pre-basic training in Pittsburgh from Oct. 23, 1971, to the end of December. She started school Jan. 2, 1972, graduated in March 1972, and started work in April at the Cincinnati Division. "Of course, that first day, they gave me a name stamp, 'Mr. S.J. Wolfe.' They handed me one of those Sergeant Greenleaf combination locks. I was told it cost a lot of money, that I should change the combination and get it working. I think I surprised them when I did. Then, first time at firearms, I got all 10 in the bull's-eye. That broke the ice for me."

In the Cincinnati Division, Wolfe worked Miscellaneous cases at first. She performed audits for eight counties, five in Ohio, three in Kentucky. "Miscellaneous territories were good all-around assignments," she says. "You handled every type of case in your territory, including office transfers and background investigations.

Then, Wolfe went to Canton, OH, to train for two weeks. During the first week there, a postmaster under investigation for embezzlement committed suicide. It was difficult, she says, going back and telling

his wife that the \$2500 he had embezzled had to be paid back from his retirement. "During that time, I learned that the inspector I worked with had been told that if we had to stay overnight, he was to return home, while I was to stay at a motel. This was part of the over-protectiveness some of us experienced, but only at first." Wolfe worked in Cincinnati 12 years. In March 1984, she career pathed to Washington, DC, which she says, is a "great city."

Wolfe says her family was always supportive of her desire to work in law enforcement. Her dad was in the Marine Corps 20 years and never had any doubts about her working in law enforcement. Asked about her "most memorable case," Wolfe doesn't hesitate, but recalls the August 1982 Elgin, OH, kidnapping and murder of a female postmaster. "The kidnapping occurred on a Monday and I was there Wednesday. I saw what a family goes through during that kind of ordeal. Perhaps it's especially difficult somewhere like northwest Ohio, where people don't think anything like that is going to happen. The assailant is now on death row."

Wolfe, who has two horses and two dogs at her Upper Marlboro, MD, home, was a member of the first Administrative Advisory Group founded in 1983. Inspectors from all over the country in a variety of functional groups were brought together to review suggestions from inspectors in the field.

"This last year there seems to be more crimes - and more violent ones," she says. "We've had six armed robberies, many vehicle break-ins. Criminals are even approaching carriers and offering them money, or threatening them, for credit cards. I enjoy getting out on the streets, working robberies. It's [robbery] the assignment I have enjoyed the most, but I have enjoyed every assignment I've worked. There really is a lot of job satisfaction. Every day something new happens. We spend a lot of time thinking about our work," Wolfe says.

"You get to know your suspects. It's hard to get bored. You always need good field inspectors. I am very happy. I enjoy the job."

Postal Inspector Denise Roos Cann



Inspector Denise Roos Cann is assigned to the Washington Division, Northern Virginia Domicile at Merifield, VA. She originally comes from Long Island, NY. Her father, grandfather, uncles on both sides of her family, and other relatives were in law enforcement. She always saw her future in it as well.

She graduated from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and she has a Master's Degree in Public Administration from George Washington University. "I remember my mother telling me I'd gotten a call from 'the law enforcement part of the post office,' and I thought, 'What do I know about the post office?' Then, after about a year, I received a call from the recruitment office of the New York Police Department, but, by then, the Inspection Service was an important part of my life."

Cann worked in Brooklyn for six weeks pre-basic training with Postal

inspectors. At the school in Bethesda, she found the training challenging because, "there was so much to assimilate in a short time." From school, she went to Los Angeles, her third choice.

Initially, Cann had Miscellaneous Criminal Assignments, and then, after nearly three years, she worked External Crimes. In 1977, she transferred back East to teach at the school as its first woman instructor. She taught a bit of everything, including defense tactics, and says, "It was a good, satisfying job for a long time. Then, I started to miss the investigations."

In the latter part of 1979 and early 1980, she worked at Headquarters, first in Audit, then on a task force instituting the Postal Inspection Service crime prevention program. "We started a number of things we are still using," she says, "including warning notices and crime prevention brochures. Then, I was assigned to the field - the Washington Division and External Crimes." Cann spent two years in EC and was then assigned to Fraud. She has been with the Washington Division for 10 years now.

Inspector Cann remembers that when she first became a field inspector, she also experienced some over-protectiveness. "One Inspector in Charge told the team leaders that if an arrest had to be made, 'Denise should remain in the car.' The INC didn't want me to get hurt. But, the very next INC, when asked about the female inspector said, 'Why are you asking me that? She gets paid to do what everyone else is doing, and she should do the same,' and that attitude soon became the norm."

Reflecting on her various assignments, Cann remembers the homicide of an MVS driver in LA. She was a member of the task force that

arrested the two guys who were getting ready to commit the same kind of crime again. "There is more paper work in fraud," Cann says, "But new twists to old schemes all the time. But doing a good job in either is very satisfying."

Married in 1982 to Richard Cann who works in a family-owned sporting goods business, Cann is the mother of two girls, Danielle, age 6, and Kelly, age 2. "I feel good about my work," she says, "and I particularly like working fraud. Law enforcement is a good profession, and even after nearly 20 years, I still feel it's very challenging and rewarding. I find that the Inspection Service gives you a great deal of independence in how you do your job, and I like having that kind of independence. It's important to me to like my job; otherwise, it would be difficult to leave the children each day."

Cann speaks with enthusiasm and sincerity when she says, "I am grateful for the satisfaction I get out of the job. I have to enjoy what I am doing, and I like the variety of cases. It's ever changing. Major fraud cases involve tedious work, but the end result is going to give you satisfaction. It's your case and you call the shots," says Cann. "If it goes well, it can be your triumph."

When she worked at the Academy, Cann told the other instructors, "Don't use me as a crutch for the female students. In the field, they won't have a female mentor. They will have to solve their problems on their own.' And, they listened and worked with me. I may be biased, but in 20 years you deal with many agencies. I feel I picked the best. Every job has its ups and downs, but as far as law enforcement is concerned, I think this is the tops."

Both Inspectors Wolfe and Cann

were approached about management opportunities, but preferred to continue their work in the field.



Left to right: Chief Clauson, ACIN K.M. Hearst, and Inspectors Cann and Wolf talking over "old times."

Postal Inspector Patricia Singleton Achimovic



Internal Crimes Team Leader Patricia (Pat) Singleton Achimovic says, "Having applied for various positions within the post office, the Inspection Service recruited me. Always interested in law enforcement, I accepted." Both her grandmother and mother worked for the post office, her mother retiring from the Postal Service in 1977.

Achimovic was born in New York, but was "transplanted" to

Miami, FL, when she was nearly five years old. She graduated from the University of Tennessee, in Knoxville, TN (Big Orange Country), where she majored in Social Sciences.

"As a kid, I didn't play with dolls," she recalls. "I was the only girl in the immediate neighborhood and was considered one of the boys. We played a lot of cops and robbers, and now, looking back, I'm getting paid for what as a child was an enjoyable make-believe game." Achimovic was also a good athlete and played many team sports.

Joining the Postal Inspection Service was "a good opportunity," she says. "At CDB, (Career Development Branch) we studied every night." She found the audit portion the most difficult, but then after working in the field, with hands-on experience, it all came together.

"If you're hired from outside the Postal Service, you find post office audit procedures different from those practiced in the commercial world. Most people easily understand the fixed credit concept. However, those not familiar with postal accounting procedures have difficulty grasping that monies derived from various postal accounts such as money orders, customs, CODs, postage due, customer and Postal Service meters do not increase or decrease a flexible credit."

Achimovic can now rattle off what once was "Greek" to her. She remembers when people first would ask her, "What do Postal inspectors do, inspect packages? inspect stamps?" "Now," she says, "with close to 20 years' experience, I can explain even more clearly and comprehensively a Postal inspector's responsibilities."

Achimovic recalls that during basic training she was the first woman in the Postal Inspection Service to qualify as "expert" with the revolver. Upon completion of training, she was the first woman Postal inspector assigned to the Washington Division. She was initially domiciled at the City Post

Office, Washington, DC, and was assigned to Mail Fraud. When the Washington Bulk Mail Center was opened in Capitol Heights, MD, in 1974, she was transferred to that new domicile and worked Miscellaneous cases.

In 1975, Achimovic was reassigned to Internal Crimes at the City Post Office, Washington, DC, then Division Headquarters. For 2 years, her area of responsibility included stations and branches in northeast and southeast Washington. She was then assigned to the Financial Audit team for 5 years, during which time she married and her daughter was born. Having a newborn baby at home didn't preclude her from fulfilling the requirements of the assignment which included extensive travel. In June 1983, she returned to the BMC to work Internal Crimes, and in March 1990, she was promoted to Team Leader.

Achimovic recalls with some sentiment one early case in which she took a personal interest. The apartment in which she was living was burglarized. At the time, she and other Postal inspectors were assigned to a Metropolitan Police Department "sting" operation, appropriately named "Gotch Ya Again (GYA)." Postal inspectors were included in the sting operation because the operators of the sting had purchased stolen mail matter from both postal and nonpostal people. "As luck would have it," Achimovic says, "all the merchandise stolen from my apartment except the film in my camera turned up at GYA."

Achimovic says she has had many interesting cases. She recalls one 1984 case when, "After identifying the prime suspect of four intermittent Registry pouch losses, we literally spent nine months of Sundays in a lookout gallery before the suspect stole another Registry pouch." In August 1985, she apprehended a window clerk who had embezzled \$18,500 in customer postage meter funds in less than six months. "The window clerk is still making court-

ordered restitution," she says.

"The responsibilities of a team leader are greater than when you handle only your own cases," she explains, adding, "fortunately, I have a very competent and conscientious team."

"Times have changed," says Achimovic. "In the past, when a postal employee got into trouble it was usually because of a drinking problem, womanizing, or he or she had poor budgetary practices and simply couldn't make ends meet. Now, drug use is a recurrent problem, and credit card scams are rampant. Overall, the majority of our clerks and carriers are conscientious, courteous, and helpful."

Her husband, former Postal Inspector Andrew Achimovic, Jr., recently retired. "Andy was one of the first team leaders in the country. Back then, the position was called, 'Projects Coordinator for Internal Crimes in DC.'" Their daughter Andrea is now 10 years old.

Like most professional women, Achimovic often feels pulled in several different directions with responsibilities towards job, husband, child, and parent. Still, she finds time to swim, ice skate, and sew.

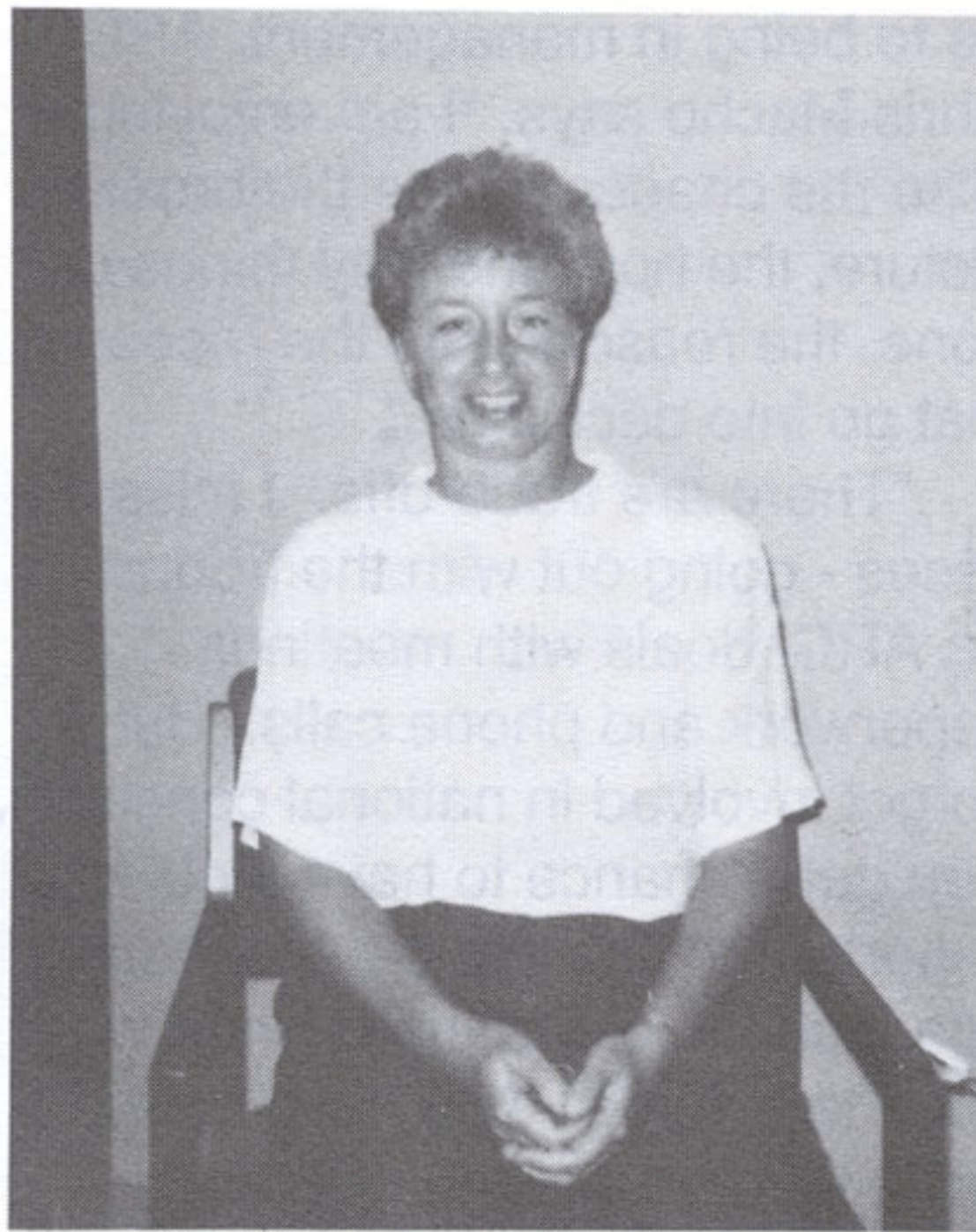
"Setting priorities and making decisions is an important part of the job," she says. "We have a heavy workload, and judgment must be used in deciding when to temporarily put a case on the back burner and when to pursue work on a case. There are more criminals today than in the past, and they are better organized. I want to do the best I can with the resources available."

She says time in the U.S. Postal Inspection Service has gone by quickly. "I can't believe I'm in the Service close to 20 years. I look forward to wearing my pin with pride."



Inspector Achimovic and Assistant Chief Inspector Tom Koerber looking at 1971 article about first female Postal inspectors. Koerber was Achimovic's class counselor.

Postal Inspector Cheryl Kinnebrew



Postal Inspector Cheryl Kinnebrew is domiciled at Tampa, FL. She speaks with a soft Southern accent that has not completely disappeared even though she spent 13 years working in Chicago. Kinnebrew was born in Alabama, but moved to Spartanburg, SC, at an early age. After graduating from Winthrop College in Rock Hill, SC (where she majored in physical education), she moved to Daytona Beach, FL, to teach physical educa-

tion in a junior high school for nearly three years.

Kinnebrew knew something about the Inspection Service - her mother Bernice Kinnebrew was a Domicile Clerk for the Inspection Service in Spartanburg. (Bernice Kinnebrew retired from the USPS personnel office in Greenville, SC, and still helps out now and then.) Kinnebrew met many of the people with whom her mother worked, including now retired Inspector Michael Kelly, who recruited her.

"I knew he was an inspector," she says, "but I really didn't know what he did." When Kelly learned the Inspection Service was hiring women inspectors, he urged her to apply. After all, she had told him that as a child she always wanted to be a spy when she grew up.

Kinnebrew recalls being roommates for the 12 weeks of training in Bethesda with Denise Roos (now Cann). "It was the first time I was ever out of the South," she says. "We used to joke that Denise would teach me how to talk with a New York accent. I keep hoping someday we'll be an investigative team like Cagney and Lacey."

After inspector training in Bethesda, Kinnebrew was surprised when she was assigned to Chicago. She says she didn't like the cold winters, but she "loved Chicago." She worked there from 1972 to 1984 and though she never got used to the winters, she "loved the people, the work, the city." She first worked Miscellaneous cases, then Internal Crimes for four to five years. Then, as she puts it, she found her "niche" in fraud.

"You have to adapt your personality to investigative work. I have a method of doing something that might not work for somebody else. Each inspector develops his or her own manner of doing things. I try to be human with everybody, and I like challenging cases. Although sometimes when you're waiting for a breakthrough in an important case, it seems that a day goes by very slowly, in the big picture, it seems like

yesterday that we started as Inspectors. I still love my job.”

**Assistant Regional Chief
Inspector Christine Macho**



Assistant Regional Chief Inspector (ARCI)-Administration, Northeast Region, Christine Macho is one of five women Postal Inspectors who are members of the Postal Career Executive Service. Macho majored in Speech and Theatre at Kansas State University, graduating in 1971.

The summer after graduating, she had a job selling barbecue chickens in New Jersey, when her Dad, Mark Macho, called to tell her that the Inspection Service was hiring women inspectors. He thought it might be a good opportunity, and he knew something about it since he had been a Postal Inspector since 1958. (He retired in 1978.) Christine contacted the inspector in Trenton, NJ, and sent in an application. “I knew what my Dad did and I liked the people I met through him. He was always positive about his work, he truly loved the Inspection Service.”

“I was concerned that he would be disappointed if I wasn’t happy with the work,” Macho continues, “but, I have enjoyed every minute of it from day one. I have been very lucky. I like the work and the people I work with. I like the opportunity to live in different parts of the country.”

Chris Macho has had numerous assignments since becoming an inspector. She was assigned initially to New York for six years and worked miscellaneous, criminal, credit card fraud and internal crimes. She then transferred to Los Angeles and held fraud, consumer protection and operational audit assignments. In 1983, Macho was promoted to the training academy in Potomac, MD, and then in 1986, she was assigned as Inspector in Charge, Harrisburg, PA, where she worked for three years until promotion to her present position in Newark.

Macho is accustomed to moving. She was born in Los Angeles and was living in Whittier, CA, when her Dad became a Postal inspector and the family moved to Dodge City, KS. She was nine years old at the time, and at 15, in the middle of high school, the family moved to Wichita.

“I enjoy moving, and I like big cities,” she says with enthusiasm. As to being in management, ARCI Chris Macho says, “I am enjoying it. I like the chance to see the broader picture, the how and why things get done, the reasons and the research that go into decisions.”

“There are trade-offs. I miss the cases - going out with the troops. An ARCI deals with meetings, paperwork and phone calls. But, I do get involved in national concerns. You get a chance to have input into important things like the pay package task force and the diverse work force task force. You have opportunities to influence the direction in which the Inspection Service moves.”

Macho says she also enjoyed teaching at the school. “Perhaps that was my favorite assignment,” she says. The students are so eager to learn; they have so much energy. Everybody is ‘up.’ It’s challenging to try to prepare the students as well as possible. You do put in a lot of hours, but you see almost instantaneous results.”

“There is no question that the Inspection Service has come a long way in the past 20 years,” she says.

“Compared to other law enforcement organizations, ours is way ahead.”

“We have more freedom to do our job. We have the chance to try new things,” Macho continues. “Levels don’t make a difference when working on cases. ‘Do the job. Get the job done.’ Some students think that when they first get to the field, they’ll just be getting more experienced inspectors their coffee. We tell them this is not so. As soon as you’re on the job, you are handed a case load. If you develop a good case, it’s yours. Other inspectors will help you out, but nobody will take it away. You run it.”

Asked what she would tell a potential inspector candidate, Macho says, “You must have a good sense of humor. You must like people, like dealing with all kinds of people, from high level postal managers to the president of the bank to the ‘junkies.’ You have to be able to approach all kinds of people. A sense of humor really helps. And, with cases that involve child pornographers, you can’t help but feel, ‘I’ve taken someone off the streets.’ This really makes a difference.”

“The Inspection Service is a career,” says Macho, “not just a job. It’s a way of life, a culture. Law enforcement is a culture. There have been students who said, ‘I don’t want to dedicate this much of my life to my work,’ and they have left the school. Law enforcement is not for every female; it’s not for every man either. It does involve your family, moving, bringing home problems. When you’re out on an arrest, your adrenaline starts pumping. An interrogation is stressful. The people you are interviewing may be highly emotional. You must have a good deal of common sense and good judgement.”

Macho says her advice is the same for a man as for a woman. “You have to enjoy controlling the situation. In both audit and criminal investigations, you will be the first one in the door and you will be telling people what to do. You will orchestrate, direct, control. You

must be comfortable doing that. You must be comfortable being a leader.”

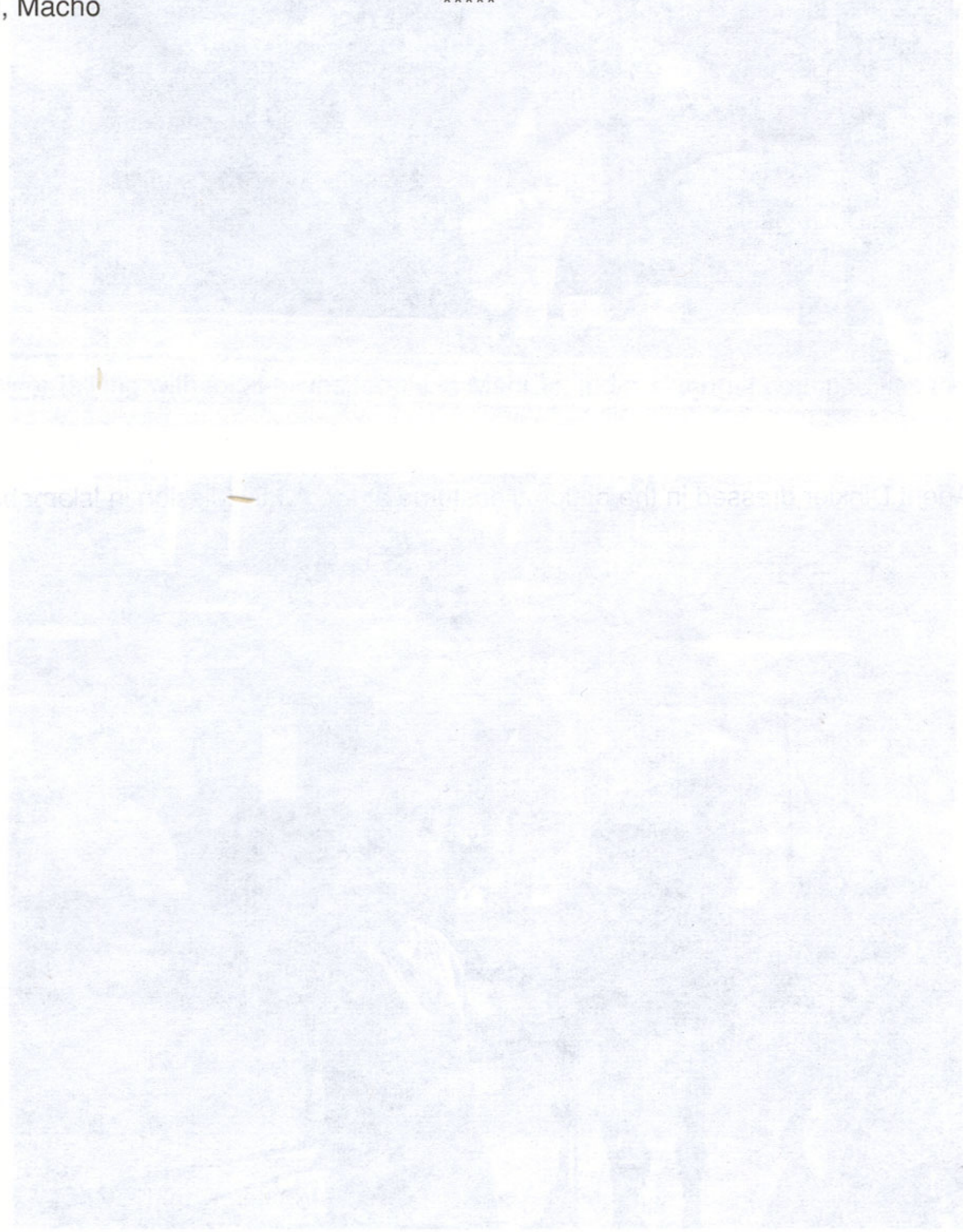
“Postal inspectors do a lot of communicating. They must talk to people and they must listen to them. They must tell people who’s going to do what, and they must listen to find out what happened, why and how. How people tell you what happened affects whether or not you believe they are telling the truth, whether the person is sincere or it’s an attempted snow job.”

Early in her training, Macho

remembers an inspector urging the students to “Always leave them [suspects] with some dignity.”

Macho says, “The Inspection Service is humane. This is the way we were taught. Inspectors deal with each person in a professional manner. We handle situations safely, but we don’t throw our weight around. That’s the way we’re trained. I’m proud of our organization. I like the way we treat people, the way we treat each other.”

Yes, the first women to celebrate 20 years as U.S. Postal inspectors have every reason to be proud. During this 20th anniversary year, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service salutes each of them and every one of the other U.S. Postal inspectors and thousands of federal law enforcement agents who happen to be women.



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