

Tom Powers Down

■ Tom McCarthy retires from DWP after 36 years of City service.

Story and photos by Bev Haro, Club Counselor

Tom McCarthy retired from DWP with a very popular open house March 29 at the John Ferraro Office Building.

Tom went to school at Cal Poly Pomona and graduated with a degree in Electronic Engineering. He fully expected to go into the Aerospace Industry, which was the growing field due to the Vietnam War. He had no intentions of working for the DWP, but he saw the list of interviews and applied. He learned that the on-campus interview list was full, but the representatives volunteered to interview him during their coffee break, and this impressed Tom about the type of people working for DWP. That set the stage.

On June 24, 1968, at age 21, he began work as an Electrical Engineering Assistant at DWP. He was put in the Transmission section. He loved it because he got to go out into the field, work with crews and also have the inside control in designing. During his first week at work, he climbed 150-foot towers as part of the electrode installations from Sylmar to Sunset. This was his indoctrination into transmission. His first supervisor was Army Galindo.

He then worked on the Pacific Intertie DC line (the last 30 miles of the line between Antelope Valley and Sylmar), and he was allowed to coordinate the design and construction of the entire project, which was built by the DWP. The rest of the Transmission Line group worked on the sections between Antelope Valley and the California-Oregon border.

In November 1970, he was promoted to Electrical Engineering Associate. Tom also worked in underground transmission and was involved in installing the third River SS to RSP 230-kV line.

He then started designing the 275-mile-long Navajo line, which went from Boulder City to Page, Ariz. He put the construction contract together and worked on the entire design process. (The only other person remaining at the DWP of that initial Navajo design group is Alan McFarlane in PSP&P.)

When the job started, roads, tower footings and towers went up, and Tom McCarthy was called upon to do the stringing, wire and conductor inspection between Page, Ariz. and McCullough, Nev. He was in a series of towns for a total of a year and a half (at Knab, Utah; St. George, Utah; and Mesquite and Las Vegas, Nev.). He was not married at that time.

Tom married Jerri Oct. 12, 1974. The Navajo line was fired up while he and Jerri were on their honeymoon in Hawaii. Tom called Army Galindo from Maui to find out if the line had been successfully powered up. It had been.

He promoted to full engineer March 19, 1984. He was responsible for the second of the Victorville-Rinaldi lines, which he described as a challenge because it had 200 crossings over its 84-mile length. "It was amazing we even got the

line built," he said.

In July 1990, he was promoted to Senior Power Engineer by Kent Noyes and Bob MacMillan. He was put in charge of Distribution Engineering. The highlight of this position was working with MTA in putting in the Red Line. DWP earned a bonus from MTA for completing the work months ahead of schedule. He also hired Ron Kozovich and Marvin Moon during this period. The notable achievement was putting the Distribution standards onto the computer in Adobe format.

On Jan. 17, 1994, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the Northridge earthquake hit Los Angeles. He was at home, blowing leaves off his roof, when he got a call from Vern Pruett, who headed up the old PO&M. Vern asked Tom to go to Rinaldi and work with dispatchers and linemen to get power back to Granada Hills. He worked a full day and created a temporary connect transmission system to the load bank transformers. By midnight, the temporary hookups had restored power to most of that area.

In September 1998, he was promoted to Bulk Power with Leon Kedington. During this period, they were able to get the DWP \$40 million in FEMA support to replace the Sylmar Converter Station. He also started to work on replacement of the SCADA System for ECC and reconfigured the transmission line into the Valley Generating Station in conjunction with the combined cycle system in the Valley.

After Leon retired, Marcie Edwards came back and headed up Bulk Power. After a short time, she left to accept a job as General Manager of the City of Anaheim, and Tom took over the position as he was promoted to Power Engineering Manager.

This was soon followed by the reorganization of the Power System and the creation of the Power Transmission and Distribution Business Unit. In December 2000, Tom was put in charge of the Transmission side of what was then the largest Business Unit in the DWP.

The highlight of his career was the "people," he said, "the wonderful people who work here whom I was able to mentor," and working on the Navajo line from start to finish. As a higher-level manager, he was not as intimately involved with all the aspects of the major projects. Navajo was his project.

Another highlight was driving the Rose Parade float for Cal Poly in 1968, right before he began working for the DWP.

Another highlight was his involvement in the Donors Welfare Program's Combined Charities Campaign, which has always been a source of pride for him. He appeared before the Board of Water and Power Commissioners Feb. 15, 2005, to praise the efforts of John Erbacher and more than 60 volunteers who have raised \$426,000 in 2004, a six percent increase over last year's donations. "These are the folks who really make it work," he said.

Tom and his wife, Jerri, will be married 31 years in October. They have sons Tom and Matthew, daughter Diane and granddaughter Ellie.

Congratulations, Tom, on an incredible career, Tom. And the Club thanks Patti David Crossley, who contributed Tom's biography.



From left: Anil Desai, Structural Engineering, 32 years, with Tom McCarthy.



From left: Randy Howard with Ellen Schneider, Electrical Rates Supervisor, 33 years.



From left: Dora Maese, Management Analyst, 15 years; Philip Pate, Management Analyst, 17 years; and Lupe Gonzalez, Sr. Clerk Typist, 18 years.



From left: Elizabeth David, Management Analyst, 17 years; Melita Cruz, Principal Clerk Utility, 24 years; Patti David Crossley, Utility Administrator, 10 years; and Sally Guerrero, Utility Executive Secretary, 30 years.



From left: Cynthia Meekins, Utility Marketing Rep, 13 years; Ralph Jaramillo, Electrical Engineering, 20 years; Philip Pate, Management Analyst, 17 years; Dora Maese, Management Analyst, 15 years; and Barbara Matlock, Management Analyst, 19 years.



Bryan Grace, Manager, Employees Association, 10 years.



From left: Tom McCarthy with Theresa Tsai, Property Manager, 22 years.



From left: Craig Luna, Real Estate, 18 years, with Tom McCarthy.

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