

*Blong Lee
passes away*

John Turi retires

*Martin "Skip"
Tschida, retiree,
passes away*

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*Our mission is to provide reliable,
quality water and services
at a reasonable cost.*

The Pipeline Express

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The challenges and stresses of dealing with Covid have not diverted staff from its mission **President of the Board expresses appreciation to SPRWS staff**

A little more than a year ago, the world of work, indeed the world itself changed in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SPRWS staff adjusted to working virtually from home, working with PPE and social distancing, and adjusted to working with new constraints and concerns.

In the course of that time, we have lost not one, but two SPRWS employees to COVID.

Ali Abdi served in the plant for more than a decade. Blong Lee provided IT and computer support for more than three decades.

Their absence is hard. Their loss is hard. There is nothing easy about the loss of life.

In the midst of the most recent loss, even as fellow employees mourn, work continues. Not because these lives could be glossed over or were unimportant, but rather, because they were important.

Both employees dedicated themselves to their careers and provided the work and services that help make the whole utility operate efficiently.

Providing life-sustaining water and services to nearly 460,000 residents is no small feat. It takes

a professional staff of dedicated employees to make that happen every single day.

The employees we lost and the employees who remain on the job are the dedicated individuals that make me so proud to be a Board of Water Commissioner member and President.

What SPRWS employees do every day makes not merely a difference, but THE difference.

The difference between being able to wash your hands to prevent COVID from spreading and having to find a sanitizer.

The difference between a habitable home and an uninhabitable one. Between a hot shower and the need for one. Between a fresh cup of coffee and going without.

The past year has been strong reminder of how just how essential the water that SPRWS provides is and the important job of employees who ensure that clean water comes out of the tap. Water isn't a nice to have. It is a need to have.

SPRWS staff delivers to our customers the water for a hot shower and hot cup of coffee every morning. That water makes it possible to cool down at the end



Mara Humphrey

of the day with an iced tea, a cold soda, or locally brewed beer.

SPRWS employees work hard to deliver clean, safe, quality water.

This Board's members know the professionalism and commitment of all water utility employees who make that happen day in and day out.

On behalf of the Board of Water Commissioners and the customers we serve, thank you.

Sincerely,
Mara Humphrey

Blong Lee, 30-year employee in IS, passes away due to COVID-19

Blong Lee, IS info/technical analyst V, passed away April 28 after battling COVID-19.

Blong served the water utility for 30 years, starting in 1990 as a EDP (electronic data processing) programmer trainee and then as an EDP programmer.

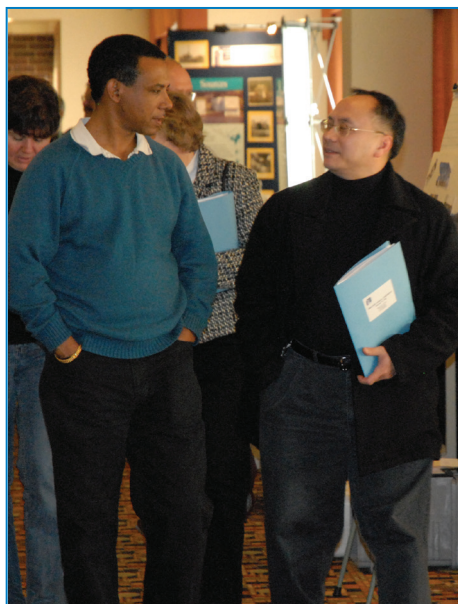
He continued his career at the utility, first as a IS system support specialist IV, in 1998, then as an info/tech analyst IV in 2001. In 2011, he was named an info/tech analyst V, the position he held upon his passing.

His family is finalizing arrangements. The visitation and funeral are currently being planned for May 21 and May 22. Any changes will be conveyed to staff.

Cards or donations to his family can be delivered to Carol Kaszynski in IS, who will ensure Blong's family receives them.

Please contact Carol with any questions and/or concerns regarding any projects Blong may have been assisting on as IS works to re-assign his projects.

Our condolences to his friends, family and co-workers.



Top, Solomon Alemu and Blong Lee at the employee conference in 2006.

Bottom, Steve Schneider and Blong Lee take a CPR course on how to use the newly installed AED (automated external defibrillator) unit in 2007.



Top, Blong Lee answers the phone from his office in 1996.

Bottom, Blong Lee and Tom Buth in an undated photo.

John Turi retires after 20 years

John Turi retired from the water utility after 20 years of service.

He started with the utility in 2001 as a water utility worker I and earned a promotion to water system worker II in 2003.

He held both titles until his promotion to water meter technician in 2006, the job from which he retired on April 30, 2021.

We wish John well in his retirement.



John Turi

Martin "Skip" Tschida passes away

Martin "Skip" Tschida III, 88, an SPRWS retiree, passed away April 29.

He worked for the water utility for 34 years, from 1956 to 1990, much of the time as a truck driver.

Funeral service is set for 10 a.m. Saturday, May 8 at Mueller-Bies Funeral Home-Roseville, 2130

N. Dale St. at County Rd. B. Visitation at the funeral home from 4 -7 p.m. Friday and 9-10 a.m. Saturday.

In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred to your favorite veteran's organization in memory of Skip.



Skip Tschida