

Staff in Focus - John Kopsa

Laura Houghton



John Kopsa working in the CHES Machine Shop.

In March of 1988 John Kopsa, CHES Machinist, began working at the Cornell Plantations mowing the grass and planting trees. A year later, a call was placed to John, asking him if he would come and hang some lead/steel panels for x-ray shielding of the experimental hutches over at Wilson Lab, to help build a new "East" research area for the Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source (CHES). He agreed.

After the panels were done, Boris Batterman (Director Emeritus), offered John a permanent position at CHES. By the time the East area was completed it was time to rebuild the West section; that was in 1993. John was involved with the plumbing and vacuum work.

When the construction was finally done, John moved into the machine shop with Basil Blank and Walt Protas (Equipment Machinist). It was there that he began to do machine work. On April 20th, 2000 he became a Journeyman Toolmaker. Through a correspondence course and hands on training, John completed the New York State Department of Labor requirements for a Tool and Die Maker.

Except for a period of time spent assisting with the build of G-line, the machine shop is where John can still be found. His time in the machine shop has been spent building the equipment to fill the East, West, and G-line stations. He has touched almost every aspect of the experimental equipment

throughout the lab.

According to John, "The best part of the job has been keeping the Staff Scientists humble, especially Ken Finkelstein".

He told me that he is also looking forward to seeing what the ERL (Energy Recovery Linac) will bring and how the lab will change.

"I met my wife at Wilson lab. We got married in 2000 and have a fantastic young daughter on the high honor roll who loves Math & Science", John states proudly. "We live in a big farmhouse spending a lot of time taking care of the yard and over two acres of flower gardens. Shell, my wife, and I are looking forward to riding our bikes this summer".

John enjoys many different genres of music which can almost always be heard when entering the machine shop. He is a diehard fan of the Grateful Dead as well as Johnny Cash. How's that for a combination?

He takes great pride in his work, is dedicated, and is a well respected member of the CHES team.



... a few words from John's supervisor, Dana Richter ...

John has been involved in most of the large projects in the lab over the past 20 years. He started out putting together our experimental hutches when he first came here in 1989. The work involved putting up large shielding panels and forming and placing concrete shielding blocks. He has also installed cooling and exhaust systems. John is our expert at fabricating and assembling optical tables and translation stages.

Many people do not realize that John and the hutch assembly crew often would put little notes inside the hutch walls as they put them up and we have found some of them as we have upgraded beam lines. He now spends most of his time in the machine shop where he has become proficient with the numerically controlled milling machine. John makes many of the parts used throughout Wilson Lab.