



- In This Issue
- The 2014 Spring All Staff jazzed us up!
  - From the archives
  - ORS honored with 2014 Advantage Award for Strategy and Growth
  - Picture Your Future pilot helps MPSERS members plan for retirement
  - Spirit Week & Administrative Professionals Day
  - Business Briefs
  - Grower's Garden
  - Take Your Child to Work Day was a growth experience
  - History of Cinco de Mayo: Battle of Puebla
  - Staff Training
  - Comings and Goings

Calendar

<b>May</b>	
State police board meeting	8
Mother's Day	11
State employees board meeting	15
Memorial Day	26

## The 2014 Spring All Staff jazzed us up!

ORS staff members were magically transported to Mardi Gras in New Orleans Tuesday morning for the 2014 Spring All Staff. The All Staff All Star Jazz Band opened the meeting with their amazing musical skill and pizzazz. Emcees **Christina Sanchez** and **Dustin Duprest** welcomed everyone and introduced Phil Stoddard, who then spoke briefly about his recent work with DTMB Director **David Behen**.

ORS staff gave Director Behen (who prefers to just be called "David") a warm welcome. David shared that he became the director in March and has been working on strategic planning for the department. Two of the main purposes behind this planning work are focusing on team and reducing silos in our work for the citizens of Michigan. DTMB is also working to present itself more positively by hiring a public information officer and expanding marketing efforts.



He also spoke about the need for work/life balance and how he manages this in his own life. "I don't expect anyone to work after 5 p.m. or your scheduled end time," he said. All of us at ORS know our work is measured and that is how we know our success, rather than by how much extra time we put in or how busy we appear. David schedules time on his calendar for important family events, like baseball games or parent-teacher conferences.

Public school employees board meeting	29
---------------------------------------	----

 On The Horizon	
• Judges board meeting - June 12	
• Flag Day - June 14	
• Father's Day - June 15	

 Quick Links	
• <a href="#">ORS Member Website</a>	
• <a href="#">ORS Employer Website</a>	

 Commonly Used Acronyms	
--	--

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly ( <i>EPC, BPOs, and BPLs</i> )
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CE	Customer Education
CS	Customer Service
DB	Defined Benefit
DC	Defined Contribution
DTMB	Department of Technology, Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council ( <i>Phil, Laurie H, Laurie M, Anthony, and Kerrie</i> )
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting ( <i>public school employees</i> )
PRO	Preretirement Orientation ( <i>state employees</i> )
PS	Process Support

David also shared some stories about how he developed some of his management skills as the village manager in Mattawan and in his role as Deputy Administrator and CIO for Washtenaw County where his leadership and innovative approaches to business received special recognition by several IT organizations. He also worked in the private sector as Vice-President and CIO for Global Dynamics International before returning to public service as CIO for the state.

Two ORS staff members asked questions after David opened up the floor for questions. The first question was how to address the recent Internet Explorer security bug issue, since miAccount relies heavily on IE. David assured everyone that the security team is on the issue, and will have information that we can communicate to our customers within the day.

The second question, from Phil, concerned opportunities for staff growth and professional development within DTMB. David encouraged all staff to think about what they'd like to be doing and where they'd like to be doing it, and work towards that. He also spoke about a leadership academy he'd like to see, where those who are interested in management have a group of courses to take. Off-site learning opportunities and conferences are increasingly available for professional development.

Everyone thanked David for his time, and then the BPLs introduced new staff in each process.

ING is becoming VOYA, and **Heidi Schiller** spoke about a few upcoming changes to defined contribution plans at ORS. These include a new fee structure, loan provision for the 457 Plan, and new auto-escalation feature for state employees who wish to increase their contribution percentage periodically.

**Steve Crippen** gave everyone a high level overview of what exactly is GASB 68. Basically, public school reporting units are being asked to itemize their share of the net pension liability on their books. Steve talked about communication efforts that have staff from BPD, ER, and CE working together to help reporting units figure this complex issue out.



After a brief interlude from the All Staff Jazz Band, Christina introduced two business initiatives that have a great potential benefit for ORS staff and customers: Business

SME	Subject Matter Expert
UAT	User Acceptance Testing



- Forge Operational Excellence
- Instill Customer Confidence
- Engage Hearts and Minds

Process Redesign and the miAccount/website redesign. **Marcia Sweet** demonstrated her “happy dance,” and Phil encouraged everyone to dance with her to earn casual days. And they did! BPR is a project that will streamline and reduce manual processes at ORS and at Financial Services. This makes many at ORS positively giddy with joy.



Next, **Ben Southwell** and **Marla Milton** (with help from **Johnny Moore**) hilariously role-played a CS phone representative and a customer, while sharing how upcoming changes to the ORS website and miAccount will benefit both. These changes begin in the coming weeks and will increase usability and be responsive (meaning the site changes based on which device the viewer is using.)

**Ian Broughton** shared that ORS recently won a PACE award from the Central Michigan chapter of the Public Relations Society of America for the ORS Facebook Launch, displaying the award which was referred to as “octagonal stabby thing.”

Next, for the Town Hall session, Phil discussed the questions that staff submitted. He prefaced the discussion by sharing how we all should be moving towards increased professionalism. The questions that were submitted were grouped by similar subjects and rewritten in more neutral professional language. All of the questions and their answers can be viewed [here](#).

Phil thanked everyone and then Christina and Dustin adjourned the meeting. Many thanks to the ORS All Staff Team for making the meeting fun and informative: **Sean Douglass, Dustin Duprest, Kristen Forester, Erica Higbee, Josey McCloud, Tim McCormick, Christina Sanchez, Olivia Schneider, and Cherie Vaughn.**

Click [here](#) to see the entire photo gallery from the All Staff meeting.

[back to top](#)

## From the archives

On September 12, 1997, then Director **Chris DeRose** held one of ORS’s first All Staff Meetings at the State Police Training Academy auditorium. He talked about the future and the changes we’d need to make to meet future demands. Check out the entire article in the [LookOut Volume 1, Issue 4](#) to see what we’ve accomplished since 1997.



# ORS Look Out

---

September 12, 1997 Volume 1, Issue 4

---

## ORS staff takes a look at the future

The ORS Staff gathered at the State Police Training Academy auditorium September 3 to hear Director Chris DeRose's vision for the future of ORS.

He outlined four values for the organization. "1). ORS is customer-focused. Everything we do is evaluated based on the benefit to the customer," he said. "2). ORS is innovative: We implement creative, workable solutions to each new challenge. 3). ORS is flexible: We see customer needs or circumstances changing and we react quickly. We have a record of meeting customer needs with projects that are on time, on budget and just done well."



ORS staff listen as Director Chris DeRose presents his vision for the future of the agency at the all-staff meeting September 3 at the Michigan State Police Training Academy.

"And," he said, "4). ORS is an organization that celebrates accomplishments and has fun."

He challenged staff to "stretch your mind." He envisions a future in which active members

*Continued on page 3*

— back to top —

## ORS honored with 2014 Advantage Award for Strategy and Growth

Truven Health Analytics selected ORS to receive a 2014 Advantage Award at the *2014 Truven Health Advantage Conference* in Orlando, Florida April 28—May 1. This award honors our extraordinary success in the areas of strategy and growth in healthcare solutions while using Truven Health products and services.

**Mike Boswood**, the president and CEO of Truven Health Analytics, pointed out at the awards ceremony, "The Advantage Award winners are at the cutting edge of using analytics to improve healthcare quality, costs, and access."

Director **Phil Stoddard** said, "We appreciate being recognized for our hard work and innovation. The real winners here are Michigan taxpayers and the many retirees we serve across Michigan." **Mark Howard**, **Kevin Kubacki**, and **Sean Douglass** from BPD also attended the awards ceremony and conference.

Truven Health Analytics serves the global healthcare industry with advanced analytic expertise and well-respected data assets.

— back to top —

## Picture Your Future pilot helps MPSERS members plan for retirement

The final *Picture Your Future: Advancing on Your Road to Retirement Readiness* workshop for the school year was completed Wednesday, April 23. This new presentation, introduced late in 2013, is an interactive workshop for active members who are 6 to 10 years away from retirement. It's designed to help them understand the importance of early retirement planning, the elements of a successful and secure

retirement, and to help them picture their future and develop a retirement plan. One hundred forty-six members attended the seven pilot meetings held throughout lower Michigan. Post-workshop surveys indicated that the attendees found the workshop beneficial, eye-opening, and thought provoking.

---

[back to top](#)



### **Spirit Week and Administrative Professionals Day**

EMPAC facilitated a week of fun and recognition April 21–25. View the [gallery](#) showing some of the special moments we captured.

---

[back to top](#)

## **business briefs**

### **New handout for Medicare eligible employees preparing for retirement**

We created a handout for state employees who are Medicare eligible and considering retirement, since the enrollment rules can be confusing. This handout illustrates when members should enroll in Medicare, apply for retirement and submit proofs, and enroll in COBRA if needed. We sent the handout to state HR offices to distribute to members who fit the profile, and posted it to the [state HR website](#).

### **New online look for ORS**

On Monday, May 5, the ORS websites and miAccount will have a new look and feel, concluding the first phase of the miAccount redesign. The updates were based on recommendations from DTMB's User Experience Team and include enhancements like improved readability, more intentional use of color, and a unified ORS brand across all systems. Thanks to **Ian Broughton**, **Dave Desrochers**, **Praveen Gade**, **Anitha Japa**, **Meg Leonard**, **Marla Milton**, and **Ben Southwell** for their efforts on this project. Watch for more miAccount enhancements in the months ahead.

### Dish with the Directors

**Laurie Hill** and **Phil Stoddard** hosted the third Dish with the Director lunch on Wednesday, April 30. Attendees were invited to join Laurie and Phil for lunch and an open and honest conversation about their work here at ORS. This session focused on “*What would you do if you were the Director of ORS for a day?*” You can find a summary of Wednesday’s discussion and previous discussions on the Director’s Office page in the KL.

### PRIM Season Wrapping Up

The 2014 Public School Preretirement Information Meeting (PRIM) season is coming to a close. The last scheduled meeting is Tuesday, May 13 at the St. Clair County RESA. The list of public school presentations can be viewed online [here](#).

---

back to top



### 30 trees to be planted to celebrate Earth Day

*Roses are red*

*Violets are blue*

*The Green and Garden teams are celebrating someone*

*Do you know who?*

From the numerous entries of Earth Day puzzles three lucky participants each won 10 trees planted in their names in the Superior National Forest in Minnesota. The area is part of the greater Boundary Waters region along the border of Minnesota and the Canadian province of Ontario, a historic and important thoroughfare in the fur trading and exploring days of British North America.

The winners are **Victoria Madejek**, **Kris Morris**, and **Andrew O’Keefe**. Each was given a certificate from the Arbor Day Foundation’s Trees in Celebration program to memorialize the occasion. Thanks to all who joined the fun! Reduce, reuse and recycle all year long because every day is Earth Day.



---

back to top

## Take Your Child to Work Day was a growth experience

They came in shy or nervous or uncertain, but by 4:00 p.m. the 27 children, age 5 to 15, who joined their parents, aunts, uncles or grandparents at ORS for “*Take Your Child To Work Day*” on April 24 were happy, informed and loaded down with all kinds of stuff!

After a photo at our growth chart tree for this year’s national theme, “Experience Growth,” the youth joined **Phil Stoddard** in Crossroads where they saw Phil receive an award for an excellent report card! With Phil they also learned about making piggy banks, and retirement accounts, grow. They toured each of the ORS processes, with several indicating their favorite stop was the mailroom, watching the machine open mail for imaging.

Healthy treats of bananas, apples, and popcorn followed, with **Dustin DuPrest** leading a lively round of Bingo in the cafeteria. **Cherie Vaughn** and several volunteers helped the kids decorate little pots, then taught them how to divide and transplant bedding plants to grow better. Each of the kids took home a bit of iris root to plant, plus a goodie bag of vendor-supplied items—like pens, calculators, and flying disks. The kids spent the last hour of the day at their family member’s desk.

**Jennifer O’Herron** led this year’s team. “I’m grateful for the opportunity to work with the fun, creative, and energetic people who volunteered for this event,” she said. “I think the kids grew in their understanding of what their parents or other relatives do all day, and I know I grew in my appreciation for our work and for the valuable work of raising children.”



You can view more photos from Take Your Child To Work Day in this [gallery](#).

---

back to top

## History of Cinco de Mayo: Battle of Puebla

Did you know that May 5, otherwise known as Cinco de Mayo, is NOT Mexican Independence Day? Most people think it is. Cinco de Mayo is a day that commemorates the 1862 Battle of Puebla.

### Battle of Puebla

In 1862, a small rag-tag force of 2,000 indigenous Mexicans held off 6,000 French soldiers in Puebla, Veracruz. The French troops didn't anticipate the determination of the Mexican troops. On May 5, 1862, the battle lasted from daybreak to early evening when the French finally retreated. They lost 500 soldiers compared to fewer than 100 Mexican soldiers.

### Who celebrates Cinco de Mayo?

For many in Mexico, May 5 is like any other day. It's not a federal holiday, so banks, schools, and stores remain open. However, in the United States Cinco de Mayo is a time where we widely celebrate Mexican culture, heritage, and food with Mexican heritage festivals popping up throughout the USA.



---

[back to top](#)



**Andrew O'Keefe** attended *Polycom Video Conferencing Training* on April 21.

On April 22, **Elaine Scott** held her monthly training for CS HUB members and had 15 CS staff members and 3 CE staff members who participated. The April topic was SERS DC and SPRS.

**Ben Southwell** participated in a *Responsive Web Design* webinar on April 23.

On April 25, **Steve Crippen** and **Kevin Kubacki** participated in a MAPCA webinar—*The Ethics Thing: Moral Foundation for Professional Ethics*. This course supported their ongoing CPA certifications.

**Clarissa Sheler** attended the Civil Service training *401(k) / 457 #4 - Basic Investing* on April 25.

Staff completed several QuickKnowledge classes in the past couple of weeks:

**Patrick Turcotte**—*Managing Your 401(k) and Personal Financial Planning*

**Julie Wight**—*Accountability*

**Heather Zaban**—*Becoming an Effective Team Member and Solving Problems as a Team*

[back to top](#)



**Comings**



BPD welcomed **Anastasia (Stacey) Ferguson-Nelligan** to the team on April 28 as a financial analyst. Stacey formerly worked for the Department of Treasury and earned her financial administration degree from MSU. She lives in Williamston with her husband and three children, Jamie, Ness, and Jack, and enjoys spending time training her horses for dressage competitions.



**Ethan Hoppes** has been on staff with ORS since last September as a temporary employee and hired in to BPD as a student on April 7. Ethan is currently attending LCC and enjoys the outdoors, especially fishing, hunting, and sports.



**Erica Waltz** joined BPD back on February 10. Erica, originally from Mason, lives in Charlotte and is the oldest of four siblings. She earned a master's degree in Healthcare Administration from Ashford University and attended MSU for her undergrad. In her spare time, she enjoys working out, baking, Michigan craft beers, and motorcycle riding, but not necessarily in that order.



Student **Ted Minix** joined the PS team on April 21 and is currently attending LCC to add to his associates' degree. Ted lives in DeWitt with his wife and has two sons, Logan and Stryker. Ted enjoys watching sports, especially watching his son Stryker play baseball. Away from ORS he enjoys art and movies, and even does some drawing himself.

**ORS Purpose:**  
We are an innovative retirement organization driven to empower our customers for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

The *LookOut* is published by the Office of Retirement Services, Department of Technology,

CS welcomed its two newest team members on April 28, **Joe Grinston** and **Ryan St. Charles**.

Joe earned his bachelor's in sociology at Olivet College, and



has held several positions in customer service—in retail, sales, and as a youth case manager. He lives in Albion and is the proud father of two boys, one age 3 and the youngest is 5 months old. When his boys allow, Joe enjoys watching sports, cooking, and listening to music.



Ryan graduated from Specs Howard School of Broadcast Arts and has worked in the customer service field for the last eight years. He lives in Fowlerville where he enjoys spending time with his family and four-year-old son Noah. Ryan also likes playing golf, softball, basketball, and tennis when the weather permits.

Management and Budget,  
State of Michigan

Director:  
Phil Stoddard  
Edited by Customer  
Education

Thanks for reading!!



**Goings**

PS bid farewell to **Drew Gilliland**, who accepted a position with LARA. His last day was April 10.

**Pam Cook** officially retired from PS; her last day was April 25.

[back to top](#)

**Note:** Because some of the links in this newsletter point to network resources, some of the links may not work if you are reading this outside of the organization.