

In This Issue...

- JEC Reviews Vendor Proposals
- **business briefs**
- Teamwork fixes problems
- Comings & Goings
- The Feast of Thanksgiving
- Crafting an ORS Purpose Statement
- Mailing targets deferred state employees
- Sounding Out, by Lisa Schmidt
- ORS retires Changing Times
- **Knowledge Library**
- **TRMTips**

JEC reviews vendor proposals

Members of the Joint Evaluation Committee (JEC) are hard at work reviewing vendor bid proposals for vision insurance contracts for our public school retirees. This committee is responsible for reviewing bid proposals from all health benefit providers as existing contract periods will soon expire. According to JEC members **Brian McLane** and **Aimee Ross**, the bid process requires extensive research and review by each committee member.

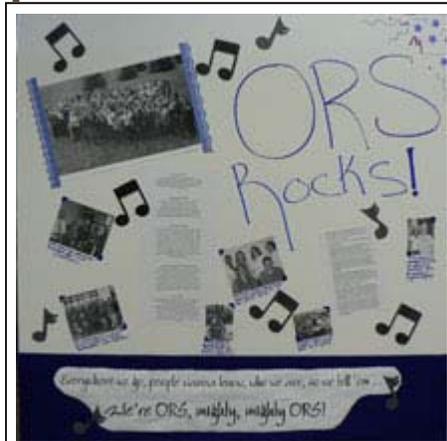
Prior to forming the JEC Brian and Aimee spent two months preparing work statements, researching information about new and continuing practices, and reviewing modes of coverage in vision care. Their reviews and recommendations provided the basis of what the new contract should contain.

Next, their recommendations were reviewed by DMB's Purchasing department, transformed into a proposal, and listed on the state's website for vendor bid requests. Once posted for bid, the JEC (**Brian McLane, Aimee Ross, Kerrie Vanden Bosch**, and two outside consultants) will form.

Each JEC member spends approximately 60 hours reading, reviewing, and scoring each vendor proposal in its entirety. This is no small feat. Each proposal, and there are six vision proposals at this time, consists of about 125 pages. Aggregate scores are discussed among team members who then decide if a vendor's proposal should go to the next level, which may include vendor interviews or presentations to JEC. Once the committee determines which vendor can provide the best plan and service at the most favorable cost, it submits a recommendation with supporting documentation to Purchasing.

Once the vision bid proposal recommendation is complete, a JEC team will repeat the process for the health and dental plans and the Health Care Actuary contract. In addition, they will monitor each vendor's performance on an annual basis to gauge whether they're fulfilling the terms of their contract.

We thank the JEC for taking the time to give us a glimpse of what they do and we commend them for their commitment and hard work on behalf of our customers.



EPC wants to celebrate your accomplishments. Join us for the fun inside the Wing A doors on December 6 at 3:00. More details to come soon!

Calendar

December	
Silent Auction & Basket Sale	12
State Employees Board Meeting	14
ORS Holiday Party	19
Christmas Holiday	23-26
New Years Holiday	30
January	
New Years Day	1

Public School Employees Board Meeting	11
Martin Luther King Day	15
State Police Board Meeting	18
State Employees Board Meeting	25

- On the Horizon**
- Deadline for ORS Excellence Award Nominations is March 1, 2008

- Quick Links**
- [ORS Member Website](#)
 - [ORS Employer Website](#)
 - [Policies and Procedures](#)

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (EPC, BPOs, and BPLs)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CE	Customer Education
CSC	Customer Service Center
DB	Defined Benefits
DC	Defined Contributions
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (Phil, Laurie, Tim, Anthony, and Kathy)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting



ORS updates Public Act 95 information

We have posted new language regarding reemployment of state employee retirees (Public Act 95) on both the [member](#) and the [employer](#) websites. A [memo will also be sent](#) to state employees with their December Warrant/EFT statements.

Mailing targets deferred state employees

ORS mailed a letter and a retirement application packet to 447 deferred state employees who appear to be eligible to receive a benefit now through January 1, 2008. A national address database was used to get their most current address

Last call for FSA

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) open enrollment period ends November 29, 2007. If you wish to participate in 2008 you can do so by logging into your MI HR Self-Service account and completing the online enrollment. If you need assistance, contact the MI HR Service Center at (877) 766-6447 (toll free), 517-335-0529, or (517) 241-8046, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

DMB Recognition Event

Join Chief Deputy Director Rose Wilson and Director Lisa Webb Sharpe at a special Employee Recognition Ceremony on Wednesday, November 28, at the Michigan Library and Historical Center. The celebration will include announcements of the 2007 Employee Excellence Awards, congratulations to employees with 30 and 35 years of service, and a cake and punch reception. Register on the DMB intranet if you plan to attend.

Spread ORS excellence

The nomination process is underway for ORS Excellence Awards – nominate someone you work with today! Electronic nomination forms can be found on the F drive or pick up a print copy in Central Perk or the Resource Library. All forms are due March 3, 2008 – don't wait, nominate today!

Teamwork fixes problems

It's not uncommon in a large organization for a minor detail to cause a major problem, resulting in lost productivity and confused or frustrated customers. A recent ORS example illustrates how easily such issues can be solved with teamwork and good communication.

Processing staff was sending back a number of the *Federal Income Tax Withholding Authorization (R0012X)* forms because customers neglected to enter all of the required information. Staff mentioned this to **Nancy Ott** and she contacted **Rosemary Baker** in CE. Rosemary made a few simple changes and the new version of the *R0012X* was redesigned, approved, and on the website the next day.

"Nancy approached me and asked what we could do," said Rosemary. "I suggested that we change the form. That's all there was to it."

"As we go forward with the Forms, Letters, and Barcode project, we're going to want more open communications," said Rosemary. "CE encourages people to tell their supervisors or check with others to see if they are experiencing the same kind of problems. These problems are simple enough to fix."

Comings & Goings

On November 19 **Matt Torok** moved from his student position in the Director's Office

ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (public school employees)
PRO	Preretirement Orientation (state employees)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
STG	System's Technology Group (Web self-service contract vendor)
T&T	Tools and Technology

to a permanent position in CSC.

The Feast of Thanksgiving

In 1621 the Plymouth colonists and the Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest feast, which is now known as the first Thanksgiving. Although there have been changes in things like how we cook and gather the food (no modern ranges or Meijer stores back then), the spirit of overindulgence is still a common trait.

Have you ever wondered how food the Pilgrims and their guests ate at the first Thanksgiving feast compared to your Thanksgiving dinner? Did you ever think that instead of turkey, they might have had seal or eel?



Historians are not certain what foods were consumed at the first Thanksgiving, but they feel it's safe to say the pilgrims were not gobbling up pumpkin pie topped with whipped cream. It's not likely they had mashed potatoes either. The only two items that historians know for sure were on the menu are venison and wild fowl. The most detailed description of the "First Thanksgiving" comes from *A Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth*, in 1621:

Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, among other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought to the plantation and bestowed upon our governor, and upon the captain, and others.

The first feast and many more Thanksgiving facts can be found at history.com.

For "homegrown Thanksgiving" ideas, visit www.absolutemichigan.com, or check out www.michigan.org.

Have a safe and joyful Thanksgiving!

Crafting an ORS Purpose Statement

ORS's strategic planning continues to change and adapt as needed and is currently focusing on changing our Mission and Vision Statements to a purpose statement that aligns ORS with DMB's Mission and Vision. The same group of staff that developed the Mission and Vision statement earlier this year will come together again to create the ORS Purpose Statement.

Our Purpose Statement will play a similar role as the mission and vision statements did. It will define our most important purpose and functions in the organization and describe who we are, where we want to be, and how we align with DMB's Mission and Vision statement.

Cindy Adams, Pam Cook, Catherine Jones, Cheryl Moore, Beth Nurenberg, Aimee Ross, Ann Schneider, Elaine Scott, Kerrie Vanden Bosch, and Tom Zack will begin working on this project with EPC and deliver the new Purpose Statement

before the end of 2007. The team represents each process and each level in the organization and will provide a good cross section of knowledge. Staff members who would like to provide input are encouraged to contact one of the team members.



Sounding Out is a way for ORS staff to share ideas, viewpoints, gripes, praises, and concerns. Email your opinion (300 words or less, if possible) to ORS-LookOut@michigan.gov. Here **Lisa Schmidt** speaks out about what she is grateful for this Thanksgiving.

My vacation this year was spent in the historic areas of Jamestown, Williamsburg, and Yorktown Virginia and was probably the best one I've ever had in many respects. I have been talking about it all year to anyone who will listen. With Thanksgiving upon us, once again I am reviewing my vacation from a different perspective. One of gratitude for what our forefathers/mothers of this country endured and the fact that their era is behind us all.



Lisa Schmidt

Jamestown is celebrating the 400th anniversary of its settlement this year. It is the original settlement in America (nearly 20 years before the pilgrims came) and was created for commercial purposes. Businessmen who saw England becoming overcrowded and not having enough farmland to feed everyone financed a venture for 104 men to settle in America for importing goods to England. These 104 men were confined to the bottom of a very small ship (because the deckhands didn't want them in the way) with no modern conveniences. No sanitation, no baths, only benches to sit on, no beds, no fresh water, poor nutrition, and no stops for 4 months! Surprisingly, only one man died. When they arrived they settled right where they landed. On swampland. Buggy, muggy, marshy swampland where they tried to farm. Eventually it became a failure (even though it spawned fads in England of raccoon and skunk skin coats, animals not native there) but few wanted to take the trip back home. As far as food went, either you hunted and farmed or you starved.

Williamsburg, a few miles away from Jamestown and further inland, became the capitol of Virginia as time wore on. Costumed interpreters at Colonial Williamsburg recreated many historic events. I heard Patrick Henry start a rally outside a tavern and lead a group of protesters (made up mainly of tourists and a fife and drum corps) up to the Capitol building, I listened to Thomas Jefferson explain his views on freedom and why it was important we had westward expansion (oh, and, I got my picture taken with him!) and I watched a slave cry because now that she was free, she really wasn't – society made sure of that. The food picture? If you had money, you ate. If you didn't, hopefully you had some land to farm.

People had to go to the town market every day (no grocery stores or refrigeration) and the selection of food was sparse because lack of transportation made bringing things like oranges from Florida difficult if non-existent and they had their own gardens in the summer. Trials were swift and fierce before the revolution. Many people found themselves hanged for something as treasonous as not shouting "God save the King" when directed. Ears were nailed to walls as punishment for smaller crimes such as gossiping. When the offenders were able to rip themselves away their punishment was over. Of course, they'd have a big tear in their ear but justice was served, they were "earmarked" for life. Other times they were put in those head and hand contraptions for crimes like stealing. If the offenders were hungry their family came to feed them, if they were lucky, because they were on their own.

Yorktown, the battle that won the Revolutionary War, is now just a field protected by the federal government. To me, it is sacred ground. Men lived in terrible conditions in makeshift tents with worn clothing, sometimes no shoes, in all kinds of weather. I

held an iron musket and couldn't imagine marching with one let alone running. The interpreter there stated, "You had to be quick because you only got one shot. You had to stop to fill up the musket with gun powder which took about 10 - 15 seconds if you were experienced. Once that shot was gone, that's when the bayonet came into play." Yuck! Imagine that, will you? They had a "kitchen" in their troop settlements. The "kitchen" was a big, stone pit with individual fires so each person could cook their own meals. If they were lucky the soldiers got meat. That's it. If a woman was nearby she might be able to bake bread if flour was available. No veggies, no fruit. What they had wasn't provided by the government on a regular basis either. We won the Revolutionary War with malnourished, cold, weary soldiers who had nothing but determination to rid themselves of a monarchy.

Therefore on this Thanksgiving in addition to be grateful for a brother-in-law who is cooking me dinner, I will be grateful for leftovers I can refrigerate. I will be grateful I can grocery shop once a week and choose anything I want. I will be grateful for frozen veggies in the winter and fresh fruit all year round. I will not only be thankful of the wonderful life I have, but for all those who made a wonderful life possible for all Americans over the years. Those people who lived, worked, and died in horrible, hard conditions for their dreams of freedom. Freedom of religion. Free enterprise. Freedom from slavery. Democracy. Freedom like Scarlett O'Hara voiced for so many, "I'll never go hungry again." After all, we are remembering our first settlers and the lives they sought in their new land. Most of all, I will remember what it took for them to find what they were looking for.

ORS retires Changing Times

When we first began defining Vision ORS nearly ten years ago, ORS leaders realized that big changes were ahead as we prepared people, processes, and technology for the demands of the future. Helping staff adapt to coming changes was considered a priority by ORS leaders.

The Change Management team, comprised of **Linda Reznick** and **Kerrie Vanden Bosch**, eased the way for most of us as we took on new ways of doing things. They assessed people and processes for their readiness for change; ensured that training was complete and effective; and worked closely with staff as changes were implemented. One of their most important tasks, though, was to make sure people knew what was happening—timely and reliable communication was key.

The *LookOut* now has a reserved section for Knowledge Library updates. Be sure to watch for updates that are important to your work.

Kerrie and Linda sent out frequent project updates as an emailed newsletter called Change Management Update. Later this morphed into the 3.2 Update. Once these phases of the project became part of daily business, their communication tool was renamed and repurposed. It was named Changing Times (by **Fred Covert** who won the naming contest) and was used to communicate information that was relevant across all processes.

Since February 2006, Linda has used Changing Times to deliver information that needed to be shared in between the *LookOut's* biweekly schedule. A recent review of these communications found that most updates (primarily Knowledge Library news) could be included in the *LookOut*, and news that is urgent or time-critical could be delivered via email by BPLs or BPOs. Changing Times, like its predecessor communication tools, has served its purpose and has now retired.

Change management remains important in ORS, but is now part of our daily business. Likewise, good communication was and continues to be an ORS priority—and a hallmark we can be proud of. Thanks Linda and Kerrie for helping pave the way for us.

Knowledge Library

[Click here to go to the Knowledge Library now.](#)

- 253068: Pays-Us Due to an Insurance Change
- 263311: Siebel Contact Screen/New Contact
- 252227: Generating the Monthly Invoice for Long Term Care Insurance
- 236210: Siebel Reminders
- 266912: VANGUARD, November and December 2007
- 266623: Use of Social Security numbers in E-mail
- 264710: Sending an Incorrectly Indexed Document to be Re-Indexed
- 267632: Creating/Activating a Web Administrator Account
- 243963: Loading Payroll Calendars for New Fiscal Year
- 267724: Service Credit Purchase Impact on Insurance Subsidy Qualification
- 267742: Member Investment Plan Member Contribution Rates (MPSERS)
- 267748: Health Insurance Subsidy for Retirees Who First Worked on or After July 1, 2008
- 267754: Minimum Earned Service Credit Needed to Purchase Service Credit (MPSERS)
- 267788: Reestablishing Membership for the Purchase of Qualifying for an Insurance Subsidy (MPSERS)
- 267797: Retirees Returning to Work (SERS)
- 257641: Creating an Account for a Newly Established Reporting Unit
- 210701: HIPAA Training Process
- 229534: Death Processing - Non Reported Deaths, Berwyn Report
- 263162: Creating Two Tickets Under One Interaction
- 247588: Creating a MPSERS Out-of-System Pre-74 Billing Statement
- 264257: Death Processing - Collections
- 209944: Audit MIP Window Billing Statements
- 268569: Audit MPSERS Post-74 Out of System Billing Statements
- 268571: Pays-Us Drops
- 269216: 2007 Deferred Member Letter FAQ (SERS)



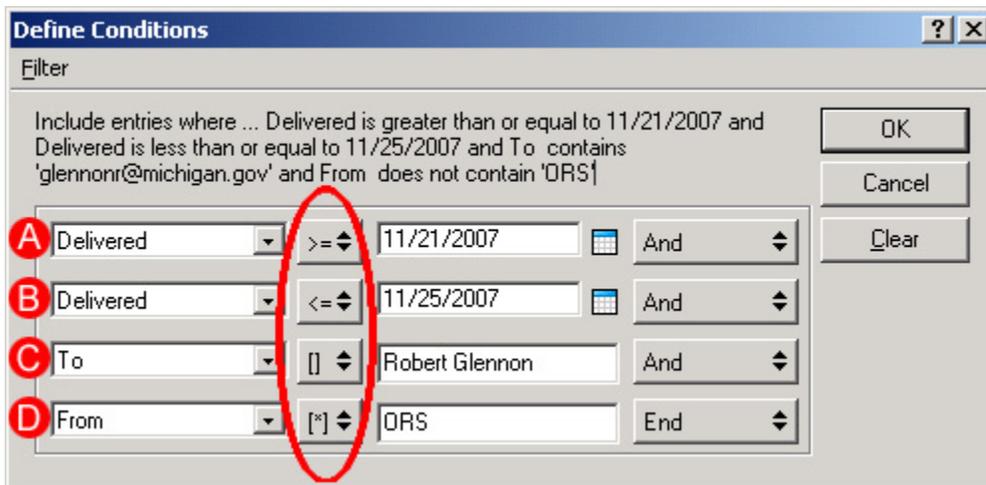
Simplify your GroupWise rules to simplify your life (and your coworkers lives!) We all know how tricky it can seem when trying to set up our GroupWise vacation rules just minutes before running out the door to begin our days of rest and relaxation. Here, we show you how to create a reusable vacation rule with the following benefits:

- It will only run between the dates you specify, so you don't have to worry about turning it off when you return.
- It won't send your auto-reply to mailing list groups that result in entire lists being notified that you're out of the office. Your colleagues will LOVE you for this!

The best part?

Once you have this set up, you can reuse this rule for all your vacations by simply editing the start and end dates and the text of the auto-reply message.

Since most of you probably know how to create a vacation rule already we'll just cover the conditions part of the rule here. However, for those who need a little more help, [please view our detailed instructions](#).



DMB Mission:
Partners in achieving excellence

ORS Mission:
We are a customer-focused organization that serves members and employees today and prepares them for tomorrow.

ORS Vision:
Empowering people for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

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Director:
Phil Stoddard
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Row	What it does	Operator to use
A	Tells the rule to only run when the date is on or after the date you specify. This means you can set up your vacation rule weeks before you leave when you're not so swamped with wrapping things up before you leave.	 On or After Date
B	Tells the rule to stop running after the date you specify. This means you don't have to be concerned about turning off the rule when you come back to work.	 On or Before Date
C	This part will cause out-of-office replies to be sent only to GroupWise users. Be sure to type your name as it displays at the top of your folder list. If you wish to include everyone who sends you email then skip to row D.	 Contains
D	This tells the rule to NOT reply to any email address that contain ORS (e.g. ORSCustomerService, ORS-Supplies, or ORS-LookOut). This prevents unnecessary replies to emails that are forwarded to you from email boxes that contain ORS in the mailbox name.	 Does Not Contain

Thanks for reading!!

Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to resources within ORS, some of the links may not work if you are outside of ORS.