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Let's plan our future!

All staff have now offered their thoughts regarding WDRA's new mission and vision during focus group sessions. The EPC and Strategic Planning team (**Fred Doll, John Donovan, Brian McLane, Rose Meyer, Leza Rebera, and Linda Reznick**) thank all participants for their energy and for making the sessions fun. Comments about the process have been positive: "I'm excited about this process," and "Thanks for listening to everyone's ideas."

A 12-member consolidation team is now meeting to work on the second phase of the project—to create a draft mission and vision statement. Once they have compiled the data collected at the focus groups, they will draft three to five mission/vision statements. Consolidation team members are **Cindy Adams, Pam Cook, Catherine Jones, Cheryl Moore, Dan Norberg, Beth Nurenberg, Aimee Ross, Angela Sanborn, Ann Schneider, Elaine Scott, Kerrie Vanden Bosch** and **Thomas Zack**.

Beginning November 15, permanent employees will have the opportunity to vote for the mission and vision statement they believe is the appropriate one for Workforce Development and Retirement Administration. You will receive an email with a link to the electronic ballot. You will be able to vote through Monday, November 20.

The EPC is so enthusiastic about this project that they are granting a special casual day for voters. A casual day voucher will pop up on your screen once you have voted; you need only print it off and post it on the door of your personal storage tower. The voucher is to be used on Monday, November 27. Students and temporary staff will not need a voucher to dress casually on the 27th.

Once all votes are in, the Strategic Planning team will begin again with focus groups to work on the strategic plan. Make sure your GroupWise calendar



1st Annual ORS Chili Cook-Off: In recognition of steam shut-down this week, ORS held its first Annual Chili Cook-Off. 14 different chili recipes were judged by the EPC. The judging went down to the wire with Pat VerPlanck's recipe beating Dan Harry's on a coin toss. A big thank-you goes out to everyone who participated and especially the BPLs who coordinated this warm and tasty event.

Calendar

November	
Veterans Day	10
Health & Safety Salad Lunch	16
Adopt-a-Family Begins	17
State Police Board Meeting	21
Thanksgiving Holiday	23-24
Public School	

Mission:
 Our core purpose...
 who we serve, who we
 are, what we do, why
 we do it.

Employee Board Meeting	30
December	
Silent Auction & Basket Sale	14
State Employees Board Meeting	14
ORS Holiday Party	19

On the Horizon

- Spring All-Staff Meeting
April 17, 2007

Quick Links

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

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (<i>Consists of the EPC, BPOs, and BPLs</i>)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CED	Customer Education and Development
CSC	Customer Service Center
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Laurie, Phil, Tim, Anthony, and Kathy</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement

is up-to-date, and get ready to participate in the next round of focus group sessions to help plan our future!

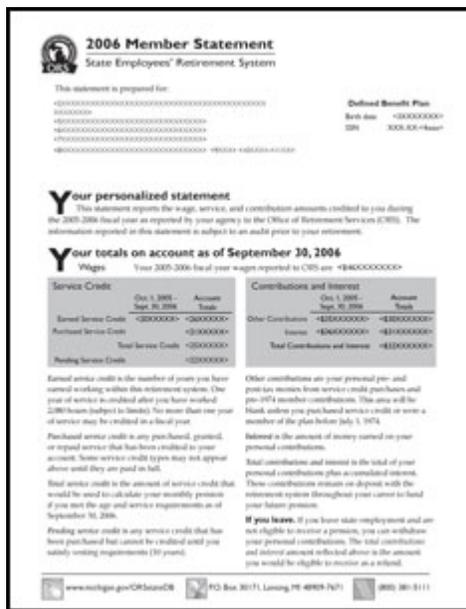
2006 member statements

Each year, we send member statements to all active state police, state employees, and public school employees at the end of the fiscal year. The statements show wage, service, and contribution amounts credited. Judge's receive a statement each Spring showing activity through the end of the previous calendar year.

State Police statements were mailed October 31. State employee statements will be mailed mid-November, while public school employee statements are scheduled to begin in late November or early December. State and public school employees will see the following enhancements in this year's statements:

- Definitions of service credit and contribution terms
- Expanded information about purchasing service credit
- A TDP interest column has been added to the service credit purchases

Our member websites for each system will be updated as statements are mailed. Go online for more information.



What's new in surveys

Each year, we survey our retirees, our active members, our employees, employers who report wage and contribution information to us, and customers who have recently contacted us. In the past, **Fred Doll** of Benefit Plan Design coordinated these surveys. However, BPD is now in the process of transferring ownership of surveys to Customer Education and Development.

The change in ownership is not the only thing new for surveys; we have also acquired two new tools to help in collecting and analyzing survey data. The first tool, Form Router, allows CED staff to easily create and conduct web-based surveys. The recently completed Active Member survey was mailed to members' homes, and they were given the opportunity to respond via paper and pencil or online. Fourteen percent of respondents chose to complete the survey online; we anticipate that this number will increase once member self-service is implemented and we are able to deliver surveys directly to members via the web.

The second tool that will assist in the survey process is software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data analysis using this tool is quicker and easier than data analysis using Excel and Access. In addition, more robust analyses can be completed, allowing us to delve deeper into the data we collect.

If you have questions about surveys or survey responses, contact [Fred Covert](#) or [Kerrie Vanden Bosch](#).

Revised publications

	Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
T&T	Tools and Technology

Three life stage publications have recently been revised and will be placed in your mailbox as soon as they are delivered from the printer. Changes are outlined below.

CED welcomes the opportunity to review the book changes with your team. Contact Connie Morse if you would like an overview of any or all of these publications during one of your process meetings.

Publication: [If you Become Disabled: Your Disability Protection \(R638C\)](#) 

Audience: Public school employees

Current Version: October 2006

Revisions:

- Clarified duty disability language. Applicants must be receiving weekly workers' compensation in order to apply, and must apply within 12 months of termination because no extension can be granted.
- The layout of the brochure has also changed to accommodate a checklist for those considering a disability application.

What to do: **Please take care to recycle all previous versions you may have as they are now obsolete.**

Publication: [Enhancing Your Pension: Earning and Purchasing Service Credit \(R612C\)](#) 

Audience: Public school employees

Current Version: October 2006

Revisions:

- Conditions for Act 88 and active military duty service credit were added.
- The design of the book has changed from a landscape layout to a portrait layout (at the request of our printer).

What to do: **You should begin using the new version now. The September 2005 version, still in circulation, does not have to be recycled as the information is still correct.**

Publication: [After You Retire: What Every Pension Recipient Should Know \(R614G\)](#) 

Audience: State employees

Current Version: October 2006

Revisions:

- Clarified what to expect during the application processing period.
- Clarified when and how to report Medicare eligibility.
- Included information about Medicare D.
- A correction regarding the conditions in which the 6-month waiting period for health, dental, and vision insurance changes or enrollments can be made (notification and

proofs must be received within 30 days, rather than 31 days).

What to do: You should begin using the new version now. The October 2004 version, still in circulation, does not have to be recycled as the information is still correct.

"My coworker deserves the award because ..."

"... She routinely goes out of her way to ensure that projects are completed on time and with the highest standards." If you have thoughts like these and experience excellence in your day-to-day dealings with coworkers, this is the perfect time and way for you to thank and honor them.

The kickoff of the 2006-07 WDR A Employee Excellence Awards program has begun and we are now accepting nominations for the following categories: *Leadership, Innovation, Every-Day Hero, Living the Values, and Customer Service*. A six-member selection committee (with representation from each process) made up of **Jennifer Dunavant, Lisa Kalchik, Laurie Mitchell, Beth Nurenborg, Erica Waltmire, and Pam Ward** will review the nominations and make the selections. Winners will be announced at the spring all-staff meeting. In addition to receiving WDR A recognition, each honoree will be nominated for the respective DMB Excellence Award.

This year the nomination process is easier than ever before. A revised nomination form is now available electronically at <F:/WDR A Excellence Awards>. While completing the form, keep in mind that the selection committee will make its choices based solely on the information you provide. Please take the time to provide detailed information (real life examples are best!) to support your nomination. If you choose to nominate someone for more than one award, a separate nomination form must be completed for each award.

Printed copies of the newly revised form can also be found in Central Perk or the Resource Library. Grab a form, write down your thoughts and drop the completed version off in mailbox 51 by noon on March 1, 2007. If you have any questions, please contact **Kathy Ciaramella, Terry Jacobson, or Rose Meyer**.

Keep your emergency contact info current

It's important to keep your emergency contact information updated so that your family members can be contacted if an emergency arises. To update your information log into your [MI HR Self-Service account](#), click on Self Service Account, then on Employee, then on Personal Information, and finally on Emergency. There you can view, add, change, and delete your emergency contacts. This emergency contact information can be accessed by your supervisor if the need should arise.



Deer hunting begins

Did you know that on November 15th, the state of Michigan has the fourth-largest standing army in the world? Well, it sure can seem that way when the sun comes up and in nearly ever corner of every corn field there is a bright orange-clad person standing or sitting like a statue, weapon carefully cradled in his or her arms. On that day, over 700,000 Michiganders will take to the woods in search of the elusive white-tailed deer. For those of you who root for the deer, take heart in knowing that last season 58% of hunters went home empty-handed.



Of course, it's important to recognize that deer hunting is a critical economic driver in Michigan with deer hunters spending more than \$500 million for food, lodging, transportation, and equipment to pursue deer. Altogether, Michigan hunters will spend more time in the woods than hunters in any other state or Canadian province. Hunters will spend more than 10 million days enjoying deer hunting recreation during the archery, firearm, and muzzle-loading seasons combined.

This information (and much more) can be found at the [DNR Hunting website](#).

WDRA Harvest Gathering results

Harvest Gathering has been providing help and hope to hungry Michigan families since 1991. This year, WDRA employees donated approximately 250 pounds of food and \$110 from the *Earn a Casual Day* fund raiser. If you have a Casual Day sticker, you can use it on Thursday, November 16.



As of November 3, Harvest Gathering had collected a total of \$167,371 and 88,778 pounds of food. If you missed the opportunity to contribute, Secretary of State offices are collecting food or you can make a donation at www.feedmichigan.org. The campaign ends on November 13.



One might wonder how an obsession with Halloween, like **Beth Nurenborg's**, all began.

Beth blames it on her good old childhood. "I recall very clearly my father always doing something at Halloween to make things exciting for our trick-or-treaters. One of his 'treats' was to play Halloween music for a couple of hours every night, for

about two weeks before Halloween, through a speaker located on our front porch (we lived in town). Another trick was to put a sheet over a hoopidy horse (those balls with handles, that kids can sit on and bounce) and attach a rope that ran from our porch to a big pine tree and pull it back and forth across the line as trick-or-treaters were leaving.”

Beth started dressing up for her trick-or-treaters about 15 years ago, and from there it has grown. She began decorating the outside of her house, year after year adding more props. When asked what her favorite prop is, she said, “The gravestones, coffin, and caldron. I really had fun creating the gravestones with my paintbrush in one hand and a can of spray paint in another. I used some custom sayings such as: *Here Lies the Person Who Was Struck By Lightning in Our Yard Last Year.*”

Beth’s haunted house is a family affair. Her husband John makes the graves, coffin, and any other prop Beth needs. But that’s as far as it goes. He leaves the costumes to Beth, her dad, and the kids. Beth’s dad is an active participant in her holiday as the mummy or zombie that comes out of the coffin. Her oldest son Josh also participated in the event for the first time this year. Beth’s three other children also have plans for different characters and new props as they come of age.

“This story would not be complete without talking about embarrassing my kids. It appears I am better than the average parent and I’m not just talking about Halloween now!” said Beth. “With four kids, one of them is bound to be embarrassed at the sight of their mother coming in for their school Halloween party, all dressed up with a caldron full of party food and steam rolling out of it (dry ice with water on it). Perhaps they have simply become immune to it and actually appear to enjoy it. I know this is something my kids will always remember and, I hope, fondly, like my Halloween childhood memories!”

Beth has just put the Halloween decorations in storage and is making way for her Christmas decorations, her favorite holiday— second to Halloween!

Cadillac Place elevator system gets updated

If you have never had the opportunity to visit the Detroit outreach offices located in Cadillac Place (old GM headquarters building), then you wouldn’t know that the elevators are in the process of being updated.



The elevators will be completely renovated inside and out. Insides will receive new wall and ceiling panels and new floors, cameras, and new push buttons. The outside gets new controllers (tells the car where to go) and wiring, while the motors are also being overhauled.

While the GOB has four elevators servicing three floors, Cadillac Place has four banks of elevators with each bank containing five cars servicing 16 floors. These 20 cars get a lot of use. Cadillac Place houses 1,500 State of Michigan employees and has between 500 and 700 visitors per day.

Property Management staff tell us that each car makes between 100 to 125 top-to-bottom trips per day at about 300 feet per trip, so each car averages 6.4 miles per day for a total of 128 miles for all elevators combined!

Cadillac Place elevators are inspected annually by the City of Detroit and are up to

ORS Mission:
 We deliver pensions, related benefits, and services to promote the future financial security of our customers.

ORS Vision:
 Fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service.

the latest code requirements. The modernization process will be completed in late 2008 or early 2009.

The *LookOut* is published by the Office of Retirement Services, Department of Management and Budget, State of Michigan
Acting Director: Phil Stoddard
Edited by the Communications Staff, Customer Education

Thanks for reading!!

Comings & Goings

Process Support welcomed **Lindsey McClelland**, who will be supporting the mailroom. Lindsey is currently expanding her education through Career Quest and enjoys spending her free time with her two-year-old son.



Lindsey McClelland

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.