



August 11, 2000

Volume 4, Issue 2

**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.

## ORS Calendar

### August

Capital Quality Initiative Breakfast ----- 16th  
PRIM Presentation  
Previews ----- 18th  
Pension Paydate ----- 25th

### September

Labor Day Holiday ----- 4th  
Public School Employees Board Meeting ----- 14th  
Pension Paydate ----- 25th  
State Employees Board Meeting ----- 28th

## DMB Celebration was a smashing success

Motown move over and give way for the electrifying Dimondale Sound. The Department of Management and Budget's (DMB) Annual Employee Recognition Celebration held on August 2, 2000, was honored with performances by the sensational Supremes, Linda Rondstadt, and John Denver.

Actually, ORS' very own **Joyce Buchanan, Gordy Hicks**, and the ORS Supremes – **Grace Bonofiglio, Lori Powell, Veronica Tsai**, were on hand to display their talents as they performed legendary songs with extraordinary style, class, and talent. Everyone in attendance immensely enjoyed these performances.



The ORS Supremes – Veronica Tsai, Lori Powell, and Grace Bonofiglio – serenaded passersby with their very own "Stop at ORS . . ." (Lyrics are on Page 3.)

Many employees from ORS and other DMB agencies were recognized for achieving 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service as a State employee.

(See the separate listing of recipients.) After distributing the certificates, **Janet Phipps**, DMB Director, invited everyone to visit the display booths of the different DMB agencies.

Approximately 280 employees visited ORS' booth, which had a theme of "Are You Puzzled About Retirement?" Among the 21 booths from different agencies within DMB, only the ORS booth had a guest appearance from the ORS Supremes, singing "Stop at ORS before you leave the State . . ." The next issue of the DMB newsletter, *Inside DMB*, will

See Successful DMB Celebration on Page 3

## ORS receives commendation for achievements

At the August 3 Michigan Public School Employees Retirement Board's monthly meeting, ORS Director **Chris DeRose** shared the good news about our successful summer rush as well as our upcoming award from Capital Quality Initiative for our improvements in customer service. Board members

and others in the audience readily provided additional positive feedback about the caliber of our service. At the end of the meeting, the board passed a motion commending all of ORS for our accomplishments.

Congratulations ORS, and keep up the good work!!

## New electronic billing request database improves staff efficiency

by **Marisa Nedock**, Student Assistant

A new Electronic Billing Request database is now in use in the Customer Information Center (CIC) to record and track specific types of service credit billing requests. Using an idea from **Judy McLean**, a team of **Judy**, **Fred Covert**, and **Anthony Estell** designed a database CIC could use to record customers' requests for Universal Buy-In (UBI) service credit

billings and updated billings for other types of public school employees' service credit purchases. Previously CIC staff wrote down each individual's information and sent the paper request to Active Accounts to calculate the billings.

Using this new process will effectively reduce paper use, avoid duplicate requests, allow CIC to locate previous

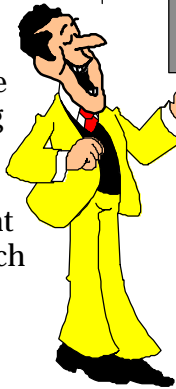
requests, and make billing information easier for Active Accounts to read. The new database was officially introduced on July 24, and as of August 9, CIC has already entered XXX requests.

This new process fits very neatly into the ORS Vision – by providing fast, easy access to complete and accurate information.

## PRIM preview session for ORS staff scheduled

Do you answer questions or provide information to pending retirees? Or do you respond to Retirement System employers' questions about proper reporting procedures or how to complete paperwork for upcoming retirees? If you do, your input could be helpful in reviewing the PowerPoint presentations the Outreach Staff use at public school Pre-Retirement Meetings (PRIMs), Administrative PRIMs, and State Pre-Retirement Orientation sessions (PROs).

On August 18, **Ray Fleming** from Customer Service will be previewing the latest versions of the pre-retirement sessions in Conference Room M. ORS staff has the option to preview the actual PowerPoint presentation(s) and offer suggestions for improvement. The public school PRIM previews are scheduled for



### Planning for Your Retirement

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.; the State and State Police PRO preview runs from 10:30 – noon. The Administrative PRIMs will be reviewed at another time. If you're interested in attending, please work with your supervisor to arrange coverage in your area.

Many potential retirees and administrative personnel from across the State attend these informational meetings. This year, Outreach Staff have scheduled 49 public school visitations for PRIMs and individual appointments, 26 State PROs, 21 administrative meetings, plus some special-request meetings. In the next year, the Outreach Staff antici-

pates reaching over 7,000 members from the Public School Employees, State Employees, and State Police retirement systems. These previews on August 18 are soliciting staff feedback to ensure ORS Outreach Staff are providing the most accurate and timely information possible to future attendees.



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## Successful DMB Celebration

*Continued from Page 1*

announce the winners of the best booth competition. Keep your fingers crossed!



*Sandy Ball and Kathy Hankins had a great time answering State employees' retirement questions.*

Thanks to the following individuals who helped make this year's celebration a smashing success. Planning Team members – **Rosemary Baker, Grace Bonofiglio, Pam Kenney, Linda Mahlow, and Sam Williams.** Information providers at the booth and other staff assisting – **Nick Armit, Sandy Ball, Stephanie Buntin, Mary Burmis, Michele Childs, John Davidson, Robert Glennon, Kathy Hankins, Marisa Nedock, Faye Norris, David Travis, and Veronica Tsai.**

Also, a special thank you goes out to those individuals that came out to support their co-workers and enjoy the celebration.

The team has already started thinking about next year's celebration. If you want to be involved or have ideas, please see one of the Planning Team members.

### Stop in the Name of Retirement

*(to the tune of "Stop in the Name of Love")*

#### Chorus:

Stop - by O - R - S — before you leave the State.  
Stop - by O - R - S — before you leave the State.  
Think it o - o - ver — think it o - o - ver.

You're working hard - each and every day  
Saving money as - you - earn - your - pay.  
But one day you will know — that it is time to go.  
Think it o - o - ver - think it o - o - ver.

Call ORS - we know just what to do  
And we will make it easy too.  
Dial 1-800-381-5111.

Think it o - o - ver - think it o - o - ver.

*- Brought to you by the ORS Supremes*

## ORS employees receive certificates

Janet Phipps, DMB Director, presented certificates to the following 18 ORS staff members at the DMB Celebration on Wednesday, August 2, for their commitment and dedication to the State. Congratulations!!

### Five Years

Rita BeVier, *Operations*  
Susan DeBor, *Operations*  
Kim Pulido, *Finance & Administration*  
Annette Ruiz, *Finance & Administration*

### Ten Years

Kathy Tober, *Customer Service*

*Smiles were abundant as these ORS staff received their 20 year certificates from Janet Phipps. Counter-clockwise from top are Joyce Buchanan, Michele Childs, and Nancy Quick.*



### Fifteen Years

Deb Braun, *Finance & Administration*  
Eve Baumgart, *Operations*

Veronica Tsai, *Operations*  
Darlene Workman, *Finance & Administration*

### Twenty Years

Sandy Ball, *Operations*  
Joyce Buchanan, *Information Technology & Reengineering*  
Joanne Busley, *Information Technology & Reengineering*

Michele Childs, *Operations*  
Laurie Hill, *Customer Service*  
Kathy Parisian, *Operations*  
Nancy Quick, *Operations*

### Twenty Five Years

Margo Keeler, *Operations*  
Debra Mosher, *Information Technology & Reengineering*





## Comings & Goings in ORS

Operations has a new Student Assistant as of August 7 – **Jennifer Aseltine**. Jennifer is majoring in photography at Lansing Community College. She is taking Felicia Woods' former position in Operations. Welcome Jennifer!



Jennifer Aseltine

**Mary Burmis** has taken on the CIC supervision role while **Susan Park** works on special projects within Vision ORS.

**Fred Covert** has accepted a new Lead Worker position in the Outreach Program within Customer Service. He will be assisting **Ken Wright** by coordinating Outreach staffs' activities to help keep everything running smoothly. Fred will continue in his BPO role with Process 630 – Service Credit Billings.

**Sue DeBor** left CIC to work as a departmental technician in the Retired Accounts unit of Operations as of August 7.

**Angela DeRose** also accepted a new position as a departmental technician in Retired Accounts.

**Annette Ruiz** from Finance & Administration is serving as Lead Worker in the Report Processing

Unit until **Chantele Geisenhaver** returns from her upcoming maternity leave.

**Angela Sanborn** has accepted a departmental technician position in the Report Processing Unit of Finance & Administration.

**Felicia Wood** and **Patrick Demitz**, Student Assistants in Operations, said their final farewells to ORS on August 4. Felicia is on her way to Colorado to finish her education. Patrick, now an MSU graduate, plans to relocate in either Florida or Arizona. Felicia and Patrick will both be missed.

**Chris Lemieux**, a temporary employee in Claims Processing, recently left ORS.

## Scramble answer from last issue

If you couldn't figure out the Scramble from the last issue of the *LookOut*, here's some help.

oyu natc rieh sooneme  
ot trapicec orf uoy.  
– vekni benrikerey

You can't hire someone  
to practice for you.  
– Kevin Eikenberry

## Updated Policies and Procedures



Check out these new and/or revised Policies and Procedures. You can find them in the pol\_proc directory in the FSRetirementShared@DMBRetirement2.

### New Policies:

- CS29** Releasing Account-Specific Member Information Over the Telephone
- OPER360** Interest Adjustment for Late Retirement Applicants

### New Procedures:

- FA112** Coordination of the Alternative Work Schedule
- OPER359** Beneficiaries - All Systems
- OPER361** Notifying Michigan State Police Troopers Association of SPRS Disability Applicants
- ORS49** Training Registration (Combines ORS55 – Non-Civil Service Training;

ORS60 – Training Out of State and Over \$500; ORS67 – LCI Training Registration; and ORS49 – Civil Service Training Registration. All training registration is covered here except for downtown computer training – ORS27.)

- ORS75** Lightspeed Add or Delete Process Form

### Updated Policy:

- OPER277** Inclusion of Unused Illness Days Pay in Detroit FAC

### Updated Procedures:

- FA96** Receiving Filmed Documents from Offsite
- FA110** Generating Annual MPSERS Statement of Accounts

### Obsolete Procedures:

- OPER101** Rerouting Files to Service Credit
- ORS54** Social Security Modification

## ***CNEX post-study sheds more light on customer needs***

**Strategic Team #2 – Establish Methods to Assess Customer Needs and Expectations (CNEX)**

**Team Members: Andy Daignault, George Orban, William St. Amour, and Sam Williams**

**Team Sponsor: Laurie Hill**

The CNEX team, in partnership with Plante & Moran and MarketVision Research, wrapped up the final phase of their project on July 31 – conducting a post-market research study. Three focus groups, composed of active public school employees and public school employers, were held in Lansing to gain a better understanding of the mail survey results and explore additional research areas. These post-research focus groups reaffirmed many of the findings from the previous focus groups and mail survey, as shown in the comments below.

**Familiarity with ORS.** The post-survey results continue to show a general lack of awareness of ORS, and that customers are generally unfamiliar with the particulars of the pension plans administered by ORS. One explanation for this may be “information overload.” Customers may feel overwhelmed by the amount of information they receive from various sources, and may find it difficult to understand how that information applies

to their lives. They may choose to discard it or not read it completely.

**Customer acceptance of the Internet.** Regarding our customers’ views of Internet based technology, these latest focus groups reaffirmed that



knowledge and use of the web site may be a wave of the future, particularly for younger employees. However, it is not a current desire for most public school employees. Participants viewed highly personalized service as a critical need for our customers.

**Desired frequency of contact from ORS.** Post-study focus group participants felt customers would desire contact from ORS a minimum of twice a year. One of the programs requiring greater contact is the Tax-Deferred Payments (TDP) program to help people better understand the program, make a decision about participating, and then complete the paperwork for the TDP contract.

**Other suggestions.** The post study group also provided ideas to improve the Annual Member’s Statement of Account, create a new employee information booklet, and help

ORS better communicate with customers and become more accessible to them.

The overall purpose of the CNEX project was to learn our customers’ views of their needs and expectations. The information we’ve gathered from the surveys reaffirms that

ORS’ Vision statement addresses what our customers want – “Fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service.” Now we just need to focus on the best

ways to keep the channels of communication open between ORS and our customers, as we continue to face the challenges of the new millennium.

If you’d like to learn more about the different market research studies CNEX conducted, check the Resource Library or ask any of the CNEX Team members.

### ***Thought for the Day***

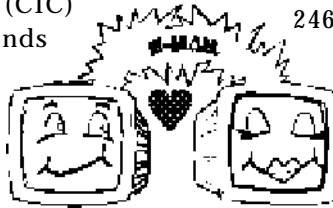
Reactive people focus on circumstances over which they have no control. The negative energy generated by that focus, combined with neglect in areas they could do something about, causes their “circle of influence” to shrink. Proactive people focus their efforts on the things they can do something about. The nature of their energy is positive, enlarging, and magnifying, causing their “circle of influence” to increase.

## ORS customers use e-mail to reach us too!

More and more ORS customers are taking advantage of our Customer Service e-mail address: [ORSCustomerService@state.mi.us](mailto:ORSCustomerService@state.mi.us).

The Customer Information Center (CIC) pulls these e-mails daily and responds directly, whenever possible.

Occasionally a message requesting more specific information is forwarded to the appropriate ORS staff member for a response.



By using e-mail, these customers received exceptionally quick responses to their questions:

246 e-mails – same day response

41 e-mails – 1 day

6 e-mails – 2 days

1 e-mail – 3 days

Great job CIC!!

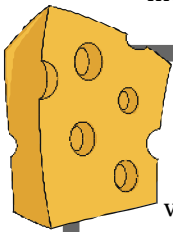
To give you some statistics about the nature and responses to these e-mails, in July, we received 294 e-mails through this mailbox. Of these,

- 66% (193) related to public school employees (112 active, 42 retired, 22 inactive, 9 pending, 2 Reporting Units, 5 deferred, 1 spousal pension recipient)
- 21% (63) involved State employees (43 active, 14 retired, 4 deferred, 1 pending, 1 inactive)
- 13% (38) were other (3 State Police, 35 miscellaneous)

### Corrections & Additions

In the "All-Staff meeting" article in the July 28 issue of the *LookOut*, on Page 3, the completion date given for Steps 5, 6, and 7 (Design, Build, and Deliver a Solution) was wrong. These steps are scheduled for completion in 2003. Steps 1 – 3 are to be completed by the end of January 2001.

In the "Annual interest posting . . ." article in the same issue, we didn't mention the behind-the-scenes support provided by **Barry BeVier** and **Debbie Edmondson** from ITSD (Information Technology Services Division). Their efforts kept ORS' daily programs running while others ran in the background. Thanks for your help!



## The Cheese Corner

Slightly over 100 years ago, when people wanted to get somewhere they usually either walked or were taken by horse. Then the automobile came along, bringing the need for filling stations, traffic signs, mechanics, paved roads, freeways, and on and on. And it's pretty hard to find a buggy whip maker today!

The point is, change begets change. As we've learned from the book, *Who Moved My Cheese*, change is constant, and the person or organization who doesn't move with change, gets left behind.

Think of some pretty amazing things that probably didn't exist when you were born:

CD players, the Internet, cell phones, digital cameras. Or, if you're a little older, VCRs, computers, fax machines, microwaves, and Nintendo. Obviously, if we didn't have change, we wouldn't have all this neat stuff. So embrace change and make it work for you!

To help you look at things from a different angle, try these brainteasers. The answers will appear in the next *LookOut*.

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