



LookOut

November 14, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 23

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

November

America Recycles Day .. 15th
School Employees Board Meeting 20th
Thanksgiving Holiday 27th-28th

December

ORS Holiday Party 16th
State Employees Board Meeting 18th
Christmas Break ... 24th-26th
New Year's Eve 31st

Road Crew sets ground-breaking record on UBI requests

Those service credit changes for public school retirement system members sparked a 500% increase in our daily UBI requests in October. The Claretty Work List queue rose to almost 6,000 requests. With this kind of backlog and requests arriving daily, leadership recognized that help was needed and additional temporary staff arrived on November 3. These folks joined the current Road Crew (see Comings and Goings) and set to work immediately on creating bills.

The result? UBI requests are CURRENT. Except for a handful of requests that need more information from the member, the Road Crew is working requests for bills as they come in. This should have an

immediate effect on phone calls as members will not be calling to find out when they will receive their bills.

Construction Update

Once UBI requests were under control, the Road Crew proceeded with Change of Information requests. These changes will be a high priority until Member Statements are printed later this year.

Special thanks to **Jeff Dumroese** who trained the Road Crew on service credit transfers, and to **Nancy Ott** who trained them on reconciling retiree wage reports. With their help, the road to fast and easy access should be smooth by the Thanksgiving break.

Two ORS staff members arrested!

On Wednesday, October 30, **Veronica Tsai** of Benefit Management and **Michele Childs** of Employer Reporting both volunteered to be "locked-up" to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Veronica noted that it was amazing how generous people were with their donations. Both of them must have been quite relieved to make "bail" and regain their freedom. Donations exceeded \$200.

The MDA is a voluntary health agency which combats neuromuscular

diseases through worldwide research programs, comprehensive medical and community services, and professional and public health education. It is a partnership between scientists and concerned citizens in fighting these diseases that affect more than a million Americans.

Right: Veronia Tsai serves time to help raise money for MDA.





New DMB Style Guide released

DMB Organizational Services released their latest *Guidelines and Formats for Written Documents*. This resource provides direction for formatting major DMB reports and correspondence written on behalf of Director Irwin or Governor Granholm.

The Style Guide is also a great resource for setting up meeting agendas, compiling meeting minutes, and for creating Power Point presentations. The document is available electronically and anyone

interested can request the file from the Communications staff.

The staff who will use the Guide the most are those who prepare correspondence for the director's or governor's signature. Because this kind of correspondence is only handled occasionally by most of the staff, writers will draft letters in whatever format they are most comfortable with, and the director's office staff will review and format the final letters to Style Guide specifications.

Reports are a different matter. Those staff members who prepare formal DMB reports (such as for the Vision project or the budget), have received copies of the Guide and will reference it often.

A professional and consistent design of documents is important for ORS and all of DMB. Questions about the Style Guide can be directed to **Laurie Mitchell** or **Connie Morse** in Customer Education.

All-staff wrapup

The all-staff planning team thanks every ORS enthusiastic staff member who participated – whether as contestant or audience – in last month's meeting. They also extend a special thanks to EMPAC, who helped purchase the refreshments at the meeting. If you missed the meeting and would like to review the video, contact **Robert Glennon**.

More information you can use.

Chris DeRose answered questions from staff and left some unanswered pieces so he would be able to review the

issue and respond. You can view all of the questions and answers from Chris by clicking [here](#). Portions in italics contain the new information.

The results of the All-Staff meeting survey have been tabulated and are available to view by clicking [here](#).

The All-Staff planning team also distributed a cheat sheet during the meeting for helpful websites. Click [here](#) to access the cheat sheet and its information.

Finally, the Process Puzzle Challenge game at the meeting

was designed to familiarize staff with people and processes in ORS. Only some questions collected were included in the game, click [here](#) to view all of the questions and answers that people and processes provided.

Request for your crazy turkey day stories

If you have a crazy turkey day story you'd like to share the *LookOut* staff would like to hear from you. E-mail your story, 40 words or less, to [ORS LookOut](#). We can't promise we'll publish everyone's story, but, we'll all have fun reading them!



Published by:

State of Michigan
Department of Management
& Budget
Office of Retirement Services
P.O. Box 30171
Lansing, MI 48909-7671

Director:

Chris DeRose

Edited by the Customer Education
Communications Staff

SPOTlight on Phyllis Bradley



At the All-Staff meeting in October, we learned many things about our co-workers and ORS business. One thing we found out is that **Phyllis Bradley** of Customer Accounts is a writer. Phyllis has enjoyed writing ever since she was a teenager, but has really refocused her efforts and talents within the last several years. She currently writes research articles about teens and boosting their self-esteem. She plans to begin a book, which will be a compilation of her articles within the next year.

Phyllis has always had an interest in teens and has worked with them through various volunteer positions in a youth choir and a football league. As the Youth Choir Director of her church, she observed first-hand the low level of self-esteem in teenage girls, which contributed to the focus of her writings. When working with teens, Phyllis' message is simple "Talk to each other and a parent or adult, don't be afraid to talk about issues openly. I try to reinforce the importance of

personal value and self-respect, which will help them become successful."

She has been rewarded in many ways with her volunteer work. When she sees youth who she has worked with performing some of the same activities that she once did she knows she has made a difference.

Phyllis' articles are geared toward parents about maturing teenage girls. Again, her message stresses the importance of communication. "To be open, honest, and upfront with our youth ensures that we don't miss any messages. When we teeter around the edges of communication, we will miss the message." When mentoring a child, Phyllis stresses the importance of knowing the balance of teaching life skills to your own children and to other people's children.

Phyllis also stays busy with elderly family members and her niece and nephew. She regularly takes steps to assist elderly family and friends with their mail, errands, or just any daily activity. Phyllis is also very active in raising her 13-year-old niece and 14-year-old nephew and participating in their school activities.

Thanks, Phyllis, for sharing your story with us, and good luck on your book!

Drive carefully – deer are on the move



The Michigan Deer Crash Coalition reports that the number of car-deer crashes has risen dramatically in the last 10 years. In 2002 alone there were 63,136 reported car-deer crashes in Michigan with five motorists killed and 2,220 injured. Almost 80 percent of all car-deer crashes take place on two-lane roads between dusk and dawn.

With the opening of gun season, deer are being roused from their favorite spots. They're more active and more mobile, which means they cross the roads more often.

What can you do to stay safe?

- Be alert for deer, especially at dawn and dusk.
- Heed deer crossing and speed limit signs,

particularly on two-lane roads.

- If you do spot a deer, be aware that more deer are usually close by.
- Stay aware, awake, alert, and sober.

If a crash is unavoidable:

- Don't swerve!
- Brake firmly.
- Hold on to the steering wheel.
- Stay in your lane.
- Bring your vehicle to a controlled stop.
- Remember, safety belts are your best defense in any collision.

Information in the article was taken from the Michigan Deer Crash Coalition web site at:
<http://www.semcog.org/TranPlan/TrafficSafety/MDCC>

Comings & Goings

ORS welcomes **Kim Groh**, from CareerQuest, as she joins the Benefit Management Staff on October 24. Kim was hired to assist with refunds. She is married with three beautiful stepdaughters and her "babies," her two pugs, Stitch Jr. and Lilo.

Joining the BC/BS team is **Jake Wagner**, from AccounTemp. He is dealing with member audits from insurance carriers, in addition to other projects. Jake will graduate from Baker College in the spring with a BA in accounting.

ORS is also pleased to welcome the newest members of the Road Crew. The following five people from CareerQuest came on board November 3.

Candy Ellison is a U.S. Army Veteran and mother of two. She enjoys reading, crafts, and genealogical research.

Dee Florence previously worked as a legal secretary and is a mother to three children.

Jane Fuller is a decorative artist, who loves to paint scenes and florals on furniture. She has a son who is a rock star in Florida. In addition to being new to ORS, Jane recently relocated to Lansing.

Gina Noble is newly married with two teenage stepchildren, Ashly and Brent.

Angie Weller is a junior at Central Michigan University who is working on her master's degree in Counseling, with a major in Family Studies. In addition to her work here, Angie is mom to a four-month-old baby girl!

Welcome aboard everyone!



Jake Wagner Kim Groh Candy Ellison Dee Florence Jane Fuller Gina Noble Angie Weller

Two pints from one donor

During our recent blood drive, the American Red Cross brought some new equipment that allows some donors to donate two units of red blood cells. Thanks to this new procedure, 33 pints of blood were collected from 31 donors. In addition to the regular eligibility requirements for donors, men must weigh a minimum of 150 pounds and be at least 5'1". Women must weight a minimum of 175 pounds and be at least 5'5". Both men and women must have an iron level of 40 percent.

The next blood drive will be December 30. If you have questions about the new procedure or about donating, please contact **Kim LaClear**.

Thanks to all past donors, and welcome to all new donors.

