



# Look Out

May 30, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 11

## 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

### June

Public School Employees  
Board Meeting ..... 10th  
Flag Day ..... 14th  
Father's Day ..... 15th  
State Employees Board  
Meeting ..... 24th

### July

4th of July Holiday ..... 4th  
State Police  
Board Meeting ..... 17th  
Public School Employees  
Board Meeting ..... 24th

## Spotlight on ... two master gardeners and a landscaper

Spring has arrived and with it the weeds in your flower garden and the dandelions in your yard. Little did we know that we have two master gardeners, **Sylvia Maat** of Employer Reporting and **Ben Louagie** of Plan Design and Deployment, as well as professional landscaper, **Bill Motz** of Customer Accounts, right here in ORS to offer some advice!



*Sylvia Maat stresses selecting the best site for your plants and flowers. Pay attention to the requirements and they will bloom beautifully.*

Let's take a look at our master gardeners first. What does it take to become a master gardener. The answer is simple: an interest in plants; a commitment to volunteerism; and enjoyment in sharing knowledge with others are the only prerequisites for application. The Michigan Master Gardening Program is a 20-week course in a

*Continued on page 4  
... Gardening*

## New General Office Building Hours

As of Sunday, May 25, the General Office Building (GOB) has new hours. All doors including the front entrance will be locked at 5:00 p.m. and remain locked until 6:30 a.m. A security guard is stationed at the security desk from 6:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. You may enter the building after hours by using the phone in the lobby between the two automatic glass doors to call for help. A roaming security guard assigned to the secondary complex will be notified of your request to enter the GOB. It may take 45 minutes

or longer for a response. Be prepared to show your employee ID to the security guard, who will then escort you to and from your destination.

The change in building hours does not affect employees' after hours access cards. However, if you enter the building with your access card after hours, be sure to sign in at the security desk for your own safety.

These changes and the installation of access card readers in DMB buildings are expected to cut \$2.05 million from the 2004 security budget.

## Picture Perfect Process Perseveres



*Tour guide, Lisa Schmidt, compiled questions and answers from the imaging tours earlier this month.*

Earlier this month, 93 staff members signed up for an imaging tour offered by the mythical ORS Voyagers Traveling Association. The tour was well received by the participants who observed and learned such varied things as how to magnify a portion of the document on the screen and how much paper passes through both areas in a day. Here are some questions asked most frequently during the tours.

*How many pieces of mail are processed each day?*

We receive between 500 and 1,500 pieces of mail each day. The time of year (summer rush applications), holidays (processing several days of mail), and what's gone out expecting responses (surveys, EFT mailings, etc.) all play a factor in the workload.

*How big is a batch?*

It depends on what documents are being scanned and how many of them we have to scan. Retirement applications, which consist of many documents, are

generally smaller batches of 5 – 8 sets of applications. Since the documents that are included in a retirement application are different sizes and shapes, we get more rescans or scanner jams. EFTs or beneficiary forms are the same size so they can be batched in sets of 60.

*Do you reuse the red separator sheets?*

Absolutely! The Green Team would never let us do anything less.

*How many days until we see the mail online?*

It varies depending on the type of mail being imaged. Process Support has met with Customer Accounts and Benefit Management to establish targets for when documents can be viewed online. These targets are based on business priorities. For example, the target for viewing Retirement Applications is 1 day, Request for Refunds is 2 days. There can be impacts outside of our control that could hinder our ability to meet the target all of the time.

*What does "indexing" mean?*

Definition of index: "A pointer or indicator." We assign a social security number to the documents so they are "pointed" to a specific member file. When the SSN and a document name are assigned, the image goes into (or is "pointed" to) the member's image browser in Clarety. Just

like placing a piece of correspondence in the member's hard-copy file.

*Where do hard copies go once they are indexed?*

The hard copies are being kept in Records for now. We will develop a policy on how long documents need to be kept before being destroyed. Eventually we will follow a retention and disposal schedule and destroy documents on a regular basis.

For a complete list of the FAQ's from the imaging open house, please e-mail **Lisa Schmidt**. In summary, the imaging process is moving along and in a continual state of fine-tuning. If you have other questions about the imaging process, please contact **Kris Morris**.



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## ***Sounding Out by ...Mr. Mac***

*The LookOut is pleased to introduce Mr. Mac. He recently joined ORS from Copper Country near the cold waters of Lake Superior and brings a wide range of experience and knowledge of Michigan. He is currently assisting Customer Education and is very interested in increasing his business knowledge of ORS for his Individual Development Plan. If you find Mr. Mac snooping around in your process, please welcome him. He will also make his debut in the new SERS Guidelines this summer.*

### ***A look at the new CitiStreet Advisor Service***

Being a newcomer to the Office of Retirement Services (ORS) and the state of Michigan, I have spent some time researching the different retirement plans. I recently came across the new CitiStreet Advisor Service. You may have received some information about the new service in an e-mail message and in your most recent CitiStreet statement.

Well, if you are anything like me, I generally postpone researching anything financial as I tend to be intimidated by it very easily. However, with my new assignment here at ORS, I was intrigued and decided to check it out.

Navigating from the ORS state employees web site, I used the quick link to the CitiStreet homepage. I logged in using my social security number and PIN (personal identification number), which I obtained from CitiStreet when I first started. I then selected the Investment Advice from the Options menu and simply followed the step-by-step instructions at my own pace. I was amazed at how easy it was.

After I entered some of my personal information it helped me decide on a desired income and age for retirement. It then used my CitiStreet account data (balance, rate of withholding, investment funds etc.) to give me a complete assessment of my account. It even told me how much money I need to contribute and if I should be investing aggressively or conservatively to reach my goals. One of the neatest aspects of the program was when I decided to edit my personal information to include my wife's financial information it provided a new financial forecast.

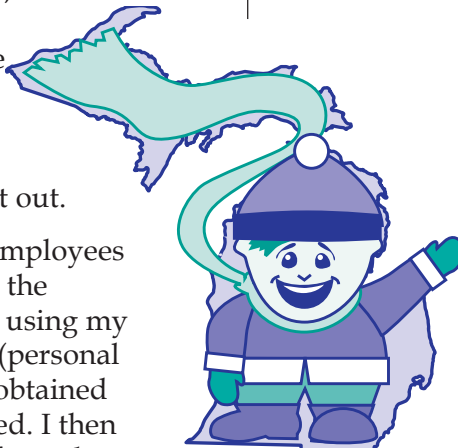
The service was quick and simple. Within 15 to 20 minutes of playing with it, I received my forecast. I spent another 40 minutes navigating through the web site and investigating all the offerings of the site. I found the investor education tab especially beneficial.

In a nutshell, the CitiStreet Advisor gave me a complete assessment of my account and my current deferrals. The service helped me set personal retirement goals and then recommended savings and investment adjustments to help me reach them.

Another great function of the service is that it is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To log on, make sure you have your PIN from CitiStreet. If you've lost or don't remember your PIN, you can request a PIN reminder on the login page. When you have a minute, make sure you

check it out at <https://stateofmi.csplans.com>.

For more information, I recommend that you check the newsletter that accompanied your quarterly statement from CitiStreet.

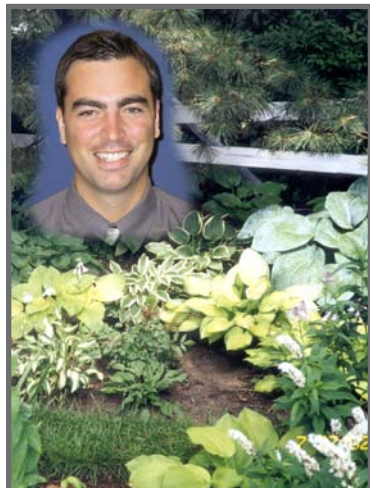


Mr. Mac.

**Mark your calendar for the  
14th Annual ORS Golf Outing  
on Wednesday, August 20.**



## Gardening *continued from page 1*



**Ben Louagie** emphasizes the need for soil sampling. Kits are available at stores such as Home Depot or you can take a soil sample to your local Extension Office. Both options are reasonably priced and start at about \$5.

her belt as a master gardener. She says that she learned everything from her mother, who was the ultimate gardener. Instead of being born with a silver spoon, Sylvia was born with a trowel in her hand. In 1981, determined to learn the "correct way," she enrolled in the Master Gardener Program. To complete her community service, Sylvia volunteered at the Ingham County Horticulture Extension Office where she answered questions and shared literature with visitors. She continues to volunteer at the Botanical Gardens at Michigan State University, but her pride and joy is her own backyard. When asked what her favorite plant is, she responded that she loves them all, but her favorite tends to be whatever is in blossom.

Ben is fairly new to Master Gardener Program. He enrolled in the program in the year 2000 to

classroom setting with a curriculum encompassing plant science, flower gardening, soils for plant growth, lawn care, and pest management. Upon completing the coursework, participants are required to volunteer at least 40 hours in their community. The program is offered through your local Cooperative Extension Office.

Sylvia has more than 20 years under



**Bill Motz** recommends aerating your lawn every other year for better water saturation. He also suggests mowing your lawn at the second highest setting during the summer months to reduce lawn stress and to control weeds.

help him get back into the classroom frame-of-mind before starting his business graduate studies. He decided on the Master Gardener Program since he had always enjoyed gardening and lawn care and at one time wanted to be a farmer. After completing his coursework, he volunteered at Burcham Hills Retirement Center in Okemos where he worked in the various gardens. As far as a masterpiece, Ben said he is creating one. He recently moved into his new house and has lots of plans for the yard and flowerbeds. One of his favorite plants that he will be using is hosta.

For a scenic walk, both Ben and Sylvia recommend strolling through the gardens at MSU.

As for our landscaper, Bill was first introduced to interior horticulture in 1986. Bill taught himself the art of interior horticulture and landscaping when his father-in-law connected him with his first customer. What started as a means for supplemental income grew into a passion and a business. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Bill worked on various interior building projects

downtown such as the Atrium Office center (formerly the Michigan Theater), the Grand Tower, and the Washington Square Building. In 1997, he started landscaping homes and office buildings. He prefers smaller landscape projects now, but still maintains some interior horticulture projects from the late 1980s. After 17 years in the business, Bill's pride and joy is his backyard.

Thanks Sylvia, Ben, and Bill for sharing your interests with us!

(Information obtained from the Michigan State University Extension Master Gardening Program <http://www.msue.msu.edu/mastergardener>.)

## Grubs?

What are these pesky little things that are destroying yards or local parks in Mid-Michigan? They are grubs – the larvae of Japanese beetles, June beetles, and chafers.

If you find that you are a victim of these creatures, it is important to treat your yard properly. The following information from the Department of Entomology at Michigan State University illustrates what works for grub control and when to apply it.

Take note of what you buy and beware of some products, such as Triazicide, which is marketed by Spectracide as a lawn grub control insecticide. The active ingredient is a synthetic



pyrethroid, which kills lots of different insects but does not kill grubs in the lawn. Spectracide has a site label for the product and it is legal to sell. For more information call your local Cooperative Extension Office.

If you prefer a more organic approach to grub control predatory nematodes - a living organism - are available for use in Canada and the United States as a biological control for white grubs. For more details about this read Arzeena Hamirs' article "Controlling Lawn Grubs Organically" at [www.gardenguides.com/articles/grubs.htm](http://www.gardenguides.com/articles/grubs.htm). Hamiris is an agronomist and garden writer for the *Organic Living Newsletter*.

Product	When it works	When it doesn't work	Comments
Diazinon *	Spring and Fall	Summer	May not be available
Sevin	Spring and Fall	Summer	Sevin works better than Dylox
Dylox	Spring and Fall	Summer	
GrubEx	Summer	Fall and Spring	
Bayer Advanced Lawn Season-Long Control	Summer	Fall and Spring	
*Diazinon is in short supply because it is no longer formulated for homeowner use.			

## Comings and Goings



Julie Colins

Monday, May 19 ORS welcomed:

**Julie Colins**, from Career Quest, is working in Employer Reporting where she processes quarterly reports.



Marsha Lenneman

**Marsha Lenneman** is working in Customer Accounts as a student assistant helping out in the call center and at the front desk. She is currently attending Central Michigan University.



Sarah Loubert

**Sarah Loubert** is also from Career Quest and is helping out with TDP

agreements in Employer Reporting.

Congratulations to **Cindy Adams** who recently accepted a supervisor position in Benefit Management.

ORS said good-bye to **Olivia Bennet** in Benefits Management on Friday, May 16, **Jan Edwards** of Employer Reporting on May 23, and **Sara VanderLind** of Employer Reporting on May 27. We wish them all well.

### Helping out

**Mary Barrett** of Process Support is temporarily helping out with processing applications during the Summer Rush in Benefit Management. Thanks Mary!

## One more thing

For those of you who are familiar with the cartoon, “Jackie Chan Adventures” shown on the WB Kids station Saturday mornings, you may recall Jackie’s uncle being famous for saying “One more thing!” He says this frequently throughout any particular episode.

Staff members, **Ann Beach**, **Fred Doll**, and **Ben Louagie** of Plan Design and Deployment, who are responsible for obtaining the scorecard data from each process seem to have a strong similarity to Jackie’s cartoon uncle. They often find themselves asking for “one more thing,” from each business process. Lately that one more thing is for the information to be presented differently than we have asked for in the past.

Anyone who occasionally looks at the posted scorecards, or who helps obtain the data needed, can see that how the scorecard data is reported has changed. The changes resulted from suggestions staff made.

What you may not see is the efforts of those staff, **Michelle Childs**, **Fred Covert**, **Anthony Estell**, **Deb Grescoble**, **Ray McIntosh**, **Connie Morse**, **Andy Oser**, **Tim Simpson**, and **Nonnie Struble**, who report and collect the data. Despite the recent changes in how data is reported and in what format, Plan Design and Deployment complete the scorecard on time. This goes to show that the scorecard is a living and evolving document that illustrates the dedication of our staff and what is needed to help ORS be successful. Thanks to all of you who collect and report the data.

If you have questions regarding where the numbers come from for your particular area, speak to your supervisor, manager or Business Process Owner.

One more thing! Be sure to check out the posted scorecards by a copy or fax machine near your work area.

## Going on vacation?

Memorial Day is the unofficial kickoff for summer, which means you may be away from the office for various reasons. When you are planning to be out of the office, remember to change your voice mail message and create a GroupWise vacation rule. The following steps will help you create a rule within GroupWise that will notify senders that you are out of the office for an extended period of time.

1. Select Tools | Rules from the menu bars.
2. Select New to begin creating the rule.
3. In the New rule window enter the name of the rule (e.g. Vacation Rule).
4. Click the “Define Conditions” button and select “To” from the drop down menu.
5. Enter your name in the next field.
6. The line above the selection boxes will read “Include entries where: ... To contains ‘YourName.’ Click OK.

8. Click “Add Action” and choose “Reply.”
9. Select “Reply to Sender.” This will eliminate replying to everyone who received the original message. Click OK.
10. Enter the message that you would like to send. For example, I am out of the office and will return on 7/1/2003.
12. Click OK. And then click the Save button.
13. The rule will start automatically. A check mark in the box next to the rule name means the rule is on.

To disable the rule, remove the checkmark. GroupWise has a feature that will allow you to automatically send yourself a copy of all e-mail messages you send. If you use this feature, make sure to deactivate it before you enable your vacation rule to avoid an endless loop of messages, which can cause a crash.