



September 5, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 18

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

September

Employee Open
Enrollment Ends 6th
State Employees
Board Meeting 11th
U of M Day 12th
DMB Celebration 16th
MSU Day 19th
Post-Game Celebration .. 25th

October

School Employees
Board Meeting 9th
State Police
Board Meeting 16th
Mini Wellness Day 16th

Final sprint for Summer Rush team

On July 1 the number of public school employee applications reached 4,629 – an increase of 15 percent from 2002! A plan was developed to complete the applications. A dedicated team from throughout the office worked relentlessly through July and August to put members on payroll. As of September 4, in spite of computer viruses, power outages, and system snags, the team has processed 76 percent of the applications.

When asked what was the best thing that happened during Summer Rush, **Patty Wethy** of Benefits Management said: “The willingness and teamwork from the entire office was phenomenal. We really appreciated the borrowed

staff from other processes. It has been a great experience to see how we all pulled together to accomplish the goal. Everyone has been so willing to help each other – it has been wonderful!”

“This is an example of ORS at our best,” said **Lila Christiansen**, Business Process Leader for Benefits Management. “The Benefits Management team was supported directly and indirectly by the entire office.”

Though the season is not completely wrapped up, the remaining applications that can be processed are expected to be included in the September payroll.

Hot off the Press ...

As the new life stages publications for state employees begin to roll off the printing presses, ORS staff are busy gearing up.

- **Josie McCloud** is reviewing the publications to prepare training for staff who interact directly with our customers. Customer Accounts staff, in turn, are doing their best to learn how to use the books and how to direct customers to the information that they need.

- The Outreach team has developed a new presentation for state employees attending preretirement seminars. The content, style, and structure of the presentations closely follow the third book in the series, *Retirement Readiness: A Two-Year Countdown*. The first orientation session is scheduled for Tuesday, September 9, in Lansing, with sessions every few weeks through the end of the year.

continued on next page

Hot off the press ... continued from page 1

- All ORS staff are eagerly anticipating the sneak previews of the books and the preretirement orientation for retiring members. If you haven't scheduled your session, coordinate your time with your supervisor, and be sure to sign up soon.

Monday, September 8
Conf. Room B 1 - 3 pm

Friday, September 12
Conf. Room B 9 - 11 am

Thursday, September 18
Conf. Room A 1 - 3 pm
- Communication staff are readying the publications for the ORS member website. Members will find the new publications from the What's New page as well as from the Publications and Forms page. They'll be able to click on a table of contents link and jump directly to that section; hyperlink to relevant web sites such as CitiStreet and Employee Benefits Division; and link to forms and related information within the ORS website. They can also search for terms and print

any or all of the book on their home printers. The booklets will be posted to the website the week of September 8.

- Process Support staff will soon be placing the new booklets into retirement packets for state employees and in the reception area for walk-in customers to see. At that time, we'll be pulling back and recycling all of the old versions of the *Guidelines*.

As soon we take delivery of the booklets, everyone on staff will get a copy. We encourage you to read each one, and then send your comments to the Communications team. We need your feedback – and that of our customers – to continue improving our customer education products.

Vision & Values Volunteers



Congratulations – and a big thank-you – to the ORS staff who will be assisting Governor Granholm with her Vision & Values initiative. **Faye Young, Mary Picken, Kim Gilbert, and Rosemary Baker** (shown left to right above) will be serving as “table facilitators” at upcoming small group exercises to be held throughout state government. We'll be learning more about these sessions at the DMB employee celebration on the 16th.

Thanks also to **Pam Kenney**, who is part of the Vision & Values Pilot Group. With these folks on board, the Governor's effort to make the State of Michigan a “great place to do great work” has a great chance of accomplishing great things!



Published by:

State of Michigan
Department of Management
& Budget
Office of Retirement Services
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Lansing, MI 48909-7671

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Edited by the Customer Education
Communications Staff

SPOTLIGHT on "Coach Travis"

We all know him as our End User Computer (EUC) coordinator who assists with our computer, security, passwords, and so forth, but did you know **David Travis** has a history as a semipro football player, a Hall-of-Famer, and a coach?

David began his football career at Sexton High School in Lansing as a defensive end in the late 1970s and went on to play for Olivet College where he made history as the first freshman to start. He moved on after two years to Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, where he played semipro football for the Texas Lone Stars. He led the Lone Stars to the Texas State Semipro Championship in 1983 and 1984.

During his stay with the Lone Stars, David tried out for several pro teams and made it through tryouts to the Pittsburgh Steelers' preseason mini-camp in 1983. In 1984 David suffered a knee injury, which resulted in his retirement. David's love for football stayed strong. But during tryouts for the Lansing Crusaders in 1991 he again



Coach Travis in action.

injured his knee, requiring him to hang his pads up for good. However, he stayed connected with the game as WJIM's producer for the Jack Robbins Tailgate Show for the MSU Spartans until he decided to try a new avenue — coaching.



Coach calling the plays.

Out of the last ten years, David has coached high school football for seven. Today he is head coach of the Waverly High School freshmen team with four assistant coaches. As he enters the new season, David says, "My job is to teach the players about discipline, respect, honor of their school colors, and pride in their ability to overcome obstacles. It's my responsibility to encourage them to be a better player and person in and out of the classroom."

Football isn't the only thing David has excelled in. While attending Wiley College and playing semipro ball in the early 1980s, David also managed to participate in the men's track team as a shot-putter and DJ at the college radio station. In 1982 and 1983, he was named the National Athletic Intercollegiate Association (NAIA) Division II All-American Shot-putter! Just a year and a half ago, David was honored by being inducted in the NAIA Hall of Fame in Oletha, Kansas, as having one of the best shot put throws *ever* at 61 feet 2 ¾ inches.

Congratulations David! We wish you another successful football season!

"Be a thinker,
not a stinker"
is a favorite quote
of David's—heard
years ago from
one of the Dallas
Cowboy coaches.

Construction Update

STOP We're filling up the dumpster at the construction site for Fast Easy Access Road. We cheerfully dumped the LovSan virus in the dumpster, then added the backlogs for Insurance Correspondence, Benefit Management Correspondence, and Regular Refunds.

STOP One lane for traffic is now open at two construction sites: TDP Agreement Errors and Service Credit Evaluations. This great progress was accomplished by the work of the Emergency Road Crew, the staff in Employer Reporting, the staff in Customer Accounts and the Project Team who completed some critical Problem Incident Report (PIR) so work could start. Great team effort!

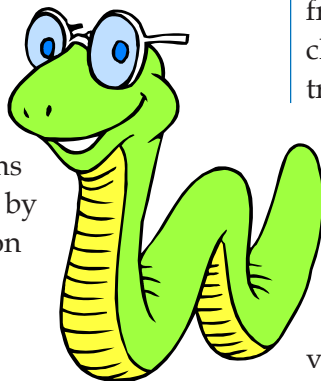


STOP While we can't open the TDP Payment Posting section of the Fast Easy Access Road just yet, the Emergency Road Crew has processed over 195,000 payments to date! The team is starting to wrap up this project and will quickly soon move on to Pension Adjustments.

STOP The Adopt-A-Vision Project currently has a stalled engine. Seems like the Project Team is working so hard that access to the system during off hours is at a premium! But like everything at ORS, we are working together to identify times that we will be able to conduct this part of the operation and will let you know when we get the engine revved and running.

ORS has worms?

On August 12, ORS was infected by computer viruses and worms that invaded technology systems around the world. The culprits – MSBlast and Welch worms – managed to infect our hard drives and servers. All computers systems were successfully disinfected by the Department of Information Technology (DIT) staff with antivirus patches from Microsoft. DIT continues to take the necessary steps to prevent worms and viruses from invading our computer systems. However, we can all help.



The most important key to safe computing is to never use software or open email or attachments from unknown sources (to delete an email, right-click on it and select delete or drag it to your trash). Viruses often use "Trojan Horses" to deliver chaos to computers. The software or email may appear and sound useful, but performs a hidden, deadly, and damaging action against the PC that could disrupt or even erase applications and files from your hard drive. Make sure you have the latest version of your antivirus and Windows software at home by visiting the software's website. Here at ORS, DIT ensures that the latest version is installed on your PC.

Spartans, Wolverines, and Fighting Irish

The date of this year's annual battle between MSU and U of M conflicts with our Halloween celebration. Fortunately, EMPAC has come up with another way to give this rivalry the attention it so deserves.

Huddle up and listen close. The teams play Notre Dame on consecutive weekends – U of M on September 13 and MSU on September 20. Will Notre Dame win both games? Will U of M win and MSU lose or vice versa? Or



will Notre Dame lose both games? You predict! EMPAC will gather staff predictions, and all those who pick correctly will be put in a raffle for lottery tickets.

But that's not all! There will be a post-game celebration on **Thursday, September 25**. If one of

our Michigan teams beats Notre Dame we'll have a sheet cake featuring that team's logo. If both



MSU and U of M beat Notre Dame the cake will be split with each logo on it. But if Notre Dame wins both games, you'll see Notre Dame's logo on the cake.

That's still not all! **Friday, September 12** is **U of M Day** and **Friday, September 19** is **MSU Day**. Dress in your favorite team duds on these days. If you don't like either team, support your own college on these days!

Look for an upcoming email from EMPAC stating where and when the sign-up sheet will be available for your predictions. Let's hope for the best (go team, go!) and let us eat cake!



Blood Drive a success!

Thanks to the 6 ORS folks who were among the 38 blood donors at the Secondary Complex on September 3. Since the goal for the day was to collect 35 pints of blood, we can all be pleased to be part of a successful effort.

If you weren't able to donate this time, watch for the posters and emails for the next blood drive scheduled for October 29. Even if you can't give blood, you may be able to help load and unload supplies, or help put up posters. Thanks to everyone who contributed.

Vouchers and invoices due

The state's fiscal year ends September 30. All travel vouchers must be submitted by Monday, October 6, for any travel done through September 30. Paperwork and questions should be directed to Becky Cain at DMB-Financial Services-Operations, 1st Floor GOB. Becky's phone number is 322-6959.

Comings & Goings



ORS welcomed **Dichondra Johnson (Geiger)** on August 27. **Dichondra** is working in Process Support. She has a bachelor of science degree from Eastern Michigan University in arts administration and marketing, and previously worked in community outreach and arts education at U of M's University Musical Society.

Stop by and wish **Steve Eckert** good luck! Steve's last day with ORS will be September 12, as he leaves for Raleigh, North Carolina. He will be working with a company called LataCon, which was started by some of his close friends. We'll miss you, Steve!