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**On with the show!**

The Spring 2006 All Staff meeting provided staff with an understanding of the recent ORS realignment, where we were and where we are headed, and the status of the Vision ORS project.

“Miss Millennium,” **Lisa Schmidt**, kept us entertained as the ORS Variety Show host. Miss M. first introduced **Chris DeRose**, who welcomed new and returning staff and then gave a realignment update, discussing why changes were needed and upcoming changes we can look forward to.

According to Chris, once the pension payroll system was implemented last year, ORS needed to assess where we were, where we are going, and the next steps. To find answers, the BLA started with our experiences. They studied the budget, balanced scorecard, PIRs, and more to determine our weak spots. The “threats,” as Chris called them, were concerns about supporting our new technology and being able to use this new technology to its fullest.

Once that was determined, leaders looked at the constants: our consistent view of our vision, being process based, investing in staff and leadership, getting the tools we need to do our jobs, and being ready for change.

It was determined our next steps would be to complete the project and identify member self-service requirements, implement the knowledge library that will provide consistent information, complete a redesign of our forms, process reengineer, and support our technology through AST.

“My best guess is that in five years this organization will be the most resilient, best customer service-based organization around,” Chris said.



[Click here to view more photos from the 2006 Spring All Staff meeting.](#)

**Calendar**

**May**

Mother's Day	14
State Employees Board Meeting	18
Memorial Day	29

**June**

Public School Employees Board Meeting	8
ORS Tiger Baseball Game	13
Blood Drive	21
State Employees Board Meeting	29

**On the Horizon**

- ORS Golf Outing August 15
- ORS Picnic August 22

**Let's Do the Time Warp Again**

A trip through the Time Warp showed us the history of ORS and the different stages of the Vision Project. Our narrator for the journey was **Joy Bartell**, and we were treated to memories from ORS long-timers. The first to take the stage was **Mike Goodman**, acting as **Bill Motz**. “Bill” gave us a glance at office life in 1981 when ORS was the Bureau of Retirement and banking machines and ledger cards were

- Fall All-Staff Meeting  
October 24

**Quick Links**

- [Email the LookOut staff](#)
- [LookOut Archives](#)
- [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
EMPAC	Employee Activities Committee
EPC	Executive Process Council <i>(Chris, Laurie, Phil, and Tim)</i>
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PS	Process Support

used for payroll. **Dick Pennington**, played by **Doug Murray**, brought us to 1985, where he was manually sorting, counting, and processing code sheets for monthly payroll. **Lois Musbach**, as herself, reminisced about 1986 and moving from downtown to the General Office Building. **Anne Watros**, played by **Angela Bryan**, reminded us that in 1987 we had five different retirement systems all operating independently of each other with their own staff. And **Michele Childs**, as herself, talked about life with microfiche and one computer shared by eight staff. **James Walsh** played **Chuck Simpson** and brought us to 1989 when he performed service credit calculations with a calculator, pencil, and eraser! In 1997, **Chris DeRose**, played by **Jim Wolfe**, inspired ORS with a vision to become an innovative, flexible, customer-focused organization with a proven record of success.

**Gordon Hicks** then recreated for us, verbally and visually, the steps to achieve the vision of fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service. In a nutshell, there are seven steps to the Vision ORS Project:

- Step One: Create a “New Foundation” for success.
- Step Two: “As Is” assessment, identified current practices.
- Step Three: Reviewed other systems that were “Best in Class.”
- Step Four: “To Be” staff identified how information from the “As Is” and “Best in Class.” would improve ORS people, processes, and technology.
- Step Five: Detail design.
- Step Six: Build.
- Step Seven: Implement.

Gordon also explained that in February of 2002 our “steps” gave birth to project “stages,” and lead to the introduction of Siebel and Clarety in Stage One. This gave us enhancements to Siebel and Clarety and brought us indexing features and an electronic workflow. He then explained Stage Three and its five components, or dots, which include web reporting, screen pops, NICE call monitoring, self-service, and barcoding.

***Vision ORS Update***

**Anthony Estell** presented an update of the Vision ORS Project since the last All Staff meeting in November. Our recent realignment created the Tools and Technology Team, or T3, made up of Anthony, **Karen Buckwalter**, **Steve Crippen**, **Meg Leonard**, and **Laurie Mitchell**. The goal of the team is to complete the Vision project.

Anthony described some of the features of Stage 3.2, which replaced the old payroll system. We now have daily payroll, which means a retiree going on payroll late doesn’t have to wait an additional month for a pension payment. The pension recipient data provides a history of transactions and payments made to a retiree. Last but not least, many tasks have become more automated, bringing faster and more efficient services to customers.

What remains? The completion of 3.2 will bring additional functionality, and Stage 3.3, the final phase of the Vision project, will bring bar-coding, sending forms prefilled with member information, and web self-service requirements.

“The next nine to twelve months are going to be very exciting times for Vision ORS,” Anthony said.

***That’s a wrap***

The EPC addressed a number of questions submitted by staff prior to the meeting. Those questions and answers, in addition to any new questions submitted in the survey, will be published in the next issue of the *LookOut*.



T&T Tools and Technology

Chris DeRose wrapped things up with a recap of the meeting and thanked EMPAC for refreshments, CED for audio and visual support, and the planning team for making the meeting happen.

[Click here to see the All Staff survey results.](#)



Planning team from left to right: **John Davidson, Christina Bishai, Zach Wight, Angela Bryan, Erica Waltmire, Brandi Branson, and Mary Weaver.**

## And the winners are...

The winners of the first ever ORS Excellence Awards were presented at the All Staff meeting by Chris DeRose, Anthony Estell, Laurie Hill, Phil Stoddard, and Kathy Tober.

The awards were given to:

- **Alice Semevolos** for Every Day Hero
- **Judy McLean** for Customer Service
- **Pam Kenney** for Living the Values
- **Kerrie Vanden Bosch** for Leadership
- **Jon Seeger** for Innovator

Congratulations to each of the five ORS Excellence Award winners! This year's winners will automatically be nominated for DMB's annual Employee Excellence Awards. Watch for more information about each of our winners in upcoming editions of the *LookOut*.



This years winners are pictured from left to right, **Judy McLean, Pam Kenney, Jon Seeger, Alice Semevolos, and Kerrie Vanden Bosch.**

## You're on a selection committee...

...and you are reviewing nominations for employee excellence. Which one are you more likely to award?

“George is a real everyday hero because he is a hard worker and is always willing to go the extra mile. He is dependable, trustworthy, considerate, and never complains no matter what you ask him. George does the hard work, not the glory work, and never calls attention to himself. Everyone likes him.”

**OR**

“At our last staff meeting, we were told about some boring backlog work that needed doing. When our supervisor asked for volunteers, most of us said we were too busy. Even though he's as swamped as the rest of us, George said, “I'll do it.” And he did it, on time, while keeping his regular work up. I see George cleaning up the coffee pot at night. I see him picking up litter on the sidewalk. He fills the printer before it runs out of toner. When I came back from vacation last winter, I found he had worked on a bunch of my cases—without asking or telling anyone. It would be easy to take him for granted, but believe me, our business would sink fast without our everyday hero, George Jones.”

**The lesson?** *Tell a story.* Stories have more persuasive power than lists of adverbs and adjectives. And the image you paint with your story will be remembered after the reviewer has read through dozens or maybe hundreds of nominations. On top of that, stories are easier to write!

Remember, Customer Education and Development staff will help you shape your

nomination for the DMB Employee Excellence Awards on Tuesday, May 16, from 7:30-noon; and Wednesday, May 17, from noon-5:30. Both workshops will be in Conference Room T. Please check with your supervisor if you'd like to use this service. Nominations are due June 9.

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## ***It's time for Spring cleaning!***

Feeling like your office is out of control with clutter and dust? Wear your jeans and grab your dust cloth for ORS's annual Spring Cleaning Day on Thursday, May 18! Work with your supervisor to determine a block of time (maximum of two hours) to clean your office and common area. Supplies and trash bins will be distributed around the office for your convenience.




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## ***Active Survey shows positive results***

The results of the 2005 Active Member Survey have been reviewed and show some positive results. In its second year, we were able to compare the results with last year's to see if anything has changed. The following are highlights of improvements noted:

- Overall satisfaction improved by 8.6 percent from the 2004 survey to 86 percent. Each system showed an increase in satisfaction; state employees showed the greatest gain with a satisfaction increase of 14.2 percent over the 2004 score, to nearly 90 percent.
- More respondents indicated they were aware of printed publications regarding their benefits. Overall, the score rose by 24 percent. State employees indicated the largest increase in awareness. Their awareness grew by 37 percent.
- Nearly 25 percent more public school respondents gave the ORS publications a positive rating.
- Over 11 percent more respondents indicated they would use ORS publications to find out general information about their pension plan.
- About 9 percent more respondents indicated they would be very likely to use the ORS website when seeking general information about their pension plan.
- Nearly 8 percent more respondents rated the ORS website as good. Over 24 percent more public school respondents gave the ORS website a positive rating. So what does that mean to ORS?

The results give ORS an idea of what is working as well as where we may want to investigate ways to improve. It also recognizes how hard ORS staff work to serve our customers. Even during trying times ORS staff provided good service to our members—and they noticed.

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## ***Comings & Goings***



**Duane Gladstone**



**Cynthia Hedden**



**Lori Hickman**



**Brooke Miller**



Julie Myszak



Joe Osentoski



Leza Rebera



Jane Thom

BPD welcomes **Duane Gladstone**. Duane spent 23 years in the manufacturing industry and decided to go back to school at Lansing Community College where he has completed his certification in Medical Insurance Billing. He is currently taking courses for a degree in Medical Office Administration and is taking additional courses in administrative and business fields to make him employable in many fields. Duane also supports himself with side jobs, making and selling rustic wood creations at various venues in Michigan.

**Cynthia Hedden**, an analyst for the Vision ORS Project Team, obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Telecommunications from Michigan State University and went on to spend five years with Treasury's Office of Scholarships & Grants, Michigan Education Trust. She later joined Pearson Educational Measurements where she scored scholastic aptitude tests for various states. Currently Cynthia enjoys spending free time hunting the elusive morel mushroom and also enjoys any trivia challenge, poker, golfing, and spending time at Crystal Lake.

**Lori Hickman**, BPL for the CSC, obtained an undergraduate degree in Computer Science from Chicago State University and masters in Computer Resources from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. Her first professional position was with Federal Express as a Project Engineer. After receiving her Masters Degree she accepted a position with Edward Jones as the Peoplesoft Benefits team leader. Lori is married with three children, ages 20, 22 and 24, and enjoys traveling and home decorating.

**Brooke Miller**, a new member of the CSC, is from Metamora, Michigan and went to Central Michigan University. After graduating from CMU she lived in Little Rock, AR for about four years and recently moved back to Michigan with her fiancé when he accepted a job in Lansing. Brooke is getting married in December and enjoys water and snow skiing, and dancing.

The CSC welcomed **Julie Myszak** to the Application Processing section. Julie has experience in manufacturing of adhesive, tooling and aerospace products and in the life and annuity insurance industry. Although her job has moved out of the state of Michigan a few times she was happy to serve as a product manager, marketing research analyst, and customer service representative. Outside of the office she enjoys the outdoors, riding horses, Lake Michigan, writing, and being involved in her son's motocross races and football games.

**Joe Osentoski**, a 2004 graduate of Michigan State University, recently joined BPD. He majored in finance and economics at MSU and previously worked for PensionTrend, Inc. (they do the same thing as CitiStreet but on a smaller scale). On a personal note, Joe commented that he enjoys pretty much anything, especially anything sports related.

Most recently, working as a contractor at MDOT, **Leza Rebera** spent her time in the Project Management Office and for the Senate in its Session Staff. Leza joins BPD with extensive experience in call centers, project management and marketing analysis. When she's not at work she enjoys time with her three kids (nine year-old twins and a seven year-old), running and reading (not simultaneously - smirk), and dabbles with her experience as an Ace-Certified Personal Trainer.

The CSC is glad to have help from their newest student assistant, **Jane Thom**. Jane is from the Lansing area and is currently attending Lansing Community College with plans to transfer to Michigan State University next year where she will major in business.

In addition to our new hires, ORS welcomes back returning employees **Laura Garza** and **Jodi Scott**.

***Across Process Moves***

Where'd they go? **Julie Andretz** and **Charles Leik**, former UA Testers, and **Beth Taylor**, Office of Financial Services, have moved to CSC. Best to luck to each of them in their new positions!

**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.

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Thanks for reading!!



**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.