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All-Staff Meeting uses game show antics to talk business

The 2013 Spring All-Staff Meeting gave ORS staff important information and lots of laughs by playing popular TV game shows.



Fred Covert, the meeting's energetic emcee, kicked off the meeting by sounding his famous tornado alarm. (Yes, he does this with his own voice. He doesn't even use a microphone!) With everyone's attention, he gave a warm welcome and outlined the meeting's agenda. Then we got down to business.

First on the agenda, we welcomed new staff with a game of WHEEL ... OF ... FORTUNE! "Ladies and gentlemen, your hosts, Chad Sajackeppala and Vanna Zaban," Fred announced as **Chad Seppala** and **Heather Zaban** made their entrance.

Calendar

May

Public school employees board meeting	9
Mother's Day	12
Central Perk Cleaning	16
Memorial Day	27

- On the Horizon**
- Tigers Game - June 5

- Central Perk cleaning
- June 10
- Father's day
- June 16
- Judges board meeting
- June 20
- State employees board meeting
- June 27
- Independence Day
- July 4

- Quick Links**
- [ORS Member Website](#)
 - [ORS Employer Website](#)

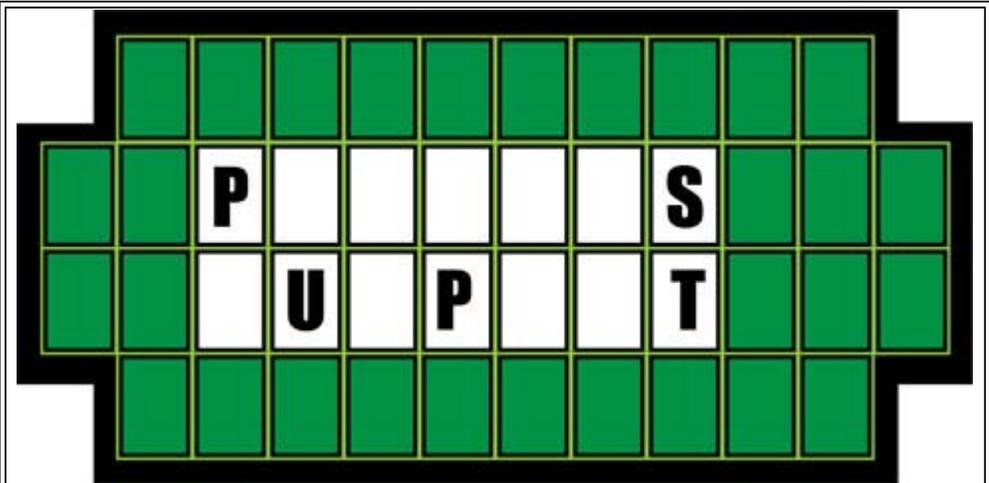
Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (<i>EPC, BPOs, and BPLs</i>)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CE	Customer Education
CS	Customer Service
DB	Defined Benefit
DC	Defined Contribution
DTMB	Department of Technology, Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Phil, Laurie H, Laurie M, Kerrie, and Anthony</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school employees</i>)
PRO	Preretirement



Chad Sajackeppala and Vanna Zaban

BPLs from each process were contestants in the lightning round, and won their chance to introduce their new staff. There was no new staff in Princes Suspect ... or, Process Support.



Tim McCormick is being investigated for having insider knowledge of the puzzles.

Next, **Phil Stoddard** congratulated **Brenda Prast** for 35 years of service and presented her with a framed certificate. He acknowledged her personal triumphs, her devotion to her family, and her dedicated service to ORS. Congratulations, Brenda!

"And now, live from ORS Studio A, here on the ground floor of the beautiful General Office Building in the thriving metropolis of Dimondale, Michigan, THIS ... IS ... JEOPARDY!" Fred continued.

	Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
UAT	User Acceptance Testing



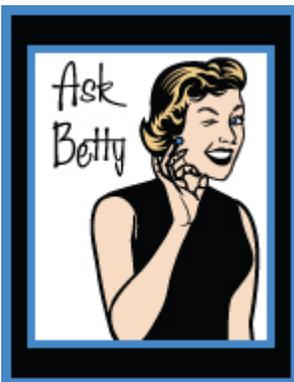
- Innovate and Improve Customer Service
- Best In Class Business Practices
- Instill Confidence in Staff Through Quality Communication
- Engage Top Talent to Realize Potential
- Continuously Renewed Business-Driven Technology
- Build Business Capacity Through Education and Development
- Proactive Policy Development and Legislative Strategy



Sweaterpants are all the rage now, thanks to Johnny Moore.

This portion was hosted by Michael Trebekman (**Mike Goodman**). The contestants were **Johnny Moore**, **Chanda Donnan**, and **Sara Hoppes**. The Jeopardy categories included "Celebrities," which focused on the ORS dress code, "DTMB Goals," and "Hack Attack," which focused on the security awareness training from Security Mentor. Sara won Final Jeopardy, but was promptly disqualified for failing to adhere to the ORS appearance guidelines - she was wearing flip-flops. Vanna quickly escorted her off stage.

Jeopardy was followed by a commercial for the Time Life Ultimate Love Song Collection featuring the smooth voices of **Ben Southwell** and **Jeanne Fox**. [Click here](#) to check out the unique ad.





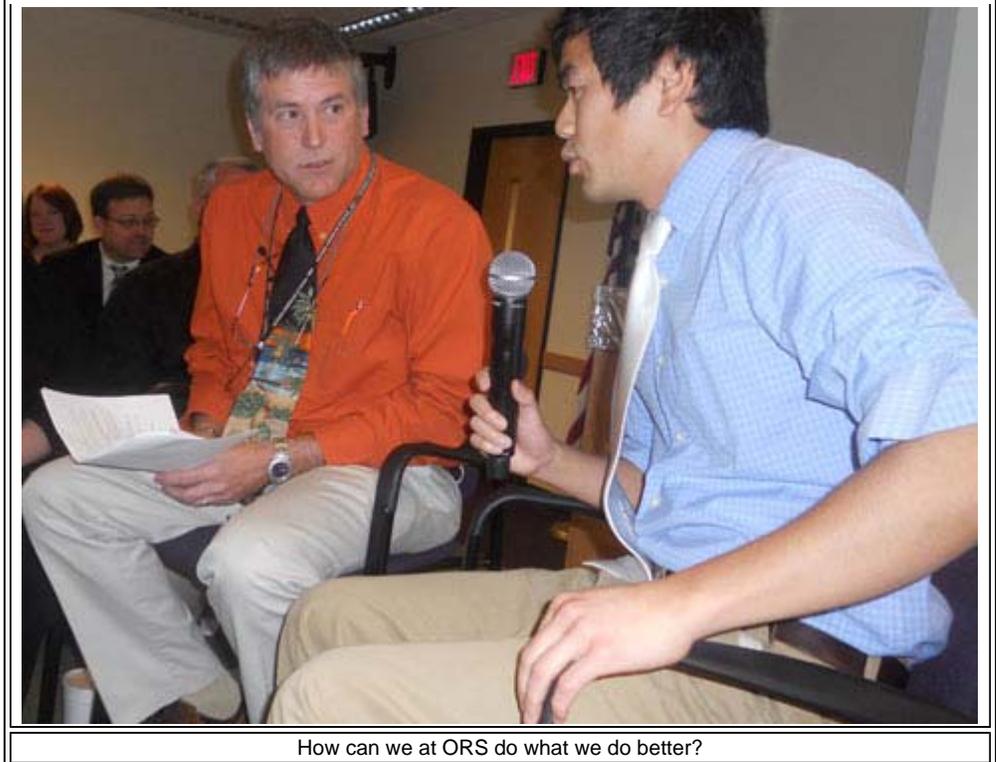
We're not sure about the goats, either.

The Town Hall question and answer session followed. During this portion of the meeting, Phil and other EPC members fielded questions asked by ORS staff. Phil, **Laurie Hill** and **Laurie Mitchell** also answered questions submitted confidentially before the meeting. Topics this year ranged from growth opportunities and employee retention to system issues and potential office moves. [Click here](#) for the list of questions asked and their answers.

"My door is literally almost always open," Phil said as he concluded the Town Hall. "I'm always willing to answer all your questions."

But the million dollar question for this meeting had yet to be asked. Fred brought up the next contestant, **Joe Osentoski**, for his chance to be a millionaire: "How can we at ORS do what we do better?" After struggling to find an answer, Joe used a lifeline and asked the audience.





Staff broke into eight different groups to brainstorm answers to this question. Representatives from CE facilitated the groups and took notes. The ideas generated during the brainstorm session will be used by the BPOs and BPLs during Strategic Planning sessions, which begin in May, and the Business Planning for 2013-14, which the BLA begins in June.

To conclude the meeting, Fred thanked staff for attending and invited them to fill out the All-Staff Meeting Survey. He also thanked the All-Staff Planning team and everyone else who made the meeting possible. And finally, Fred closed with the famous words of former ORS employee, David Travis: "Have a great ORS day!"





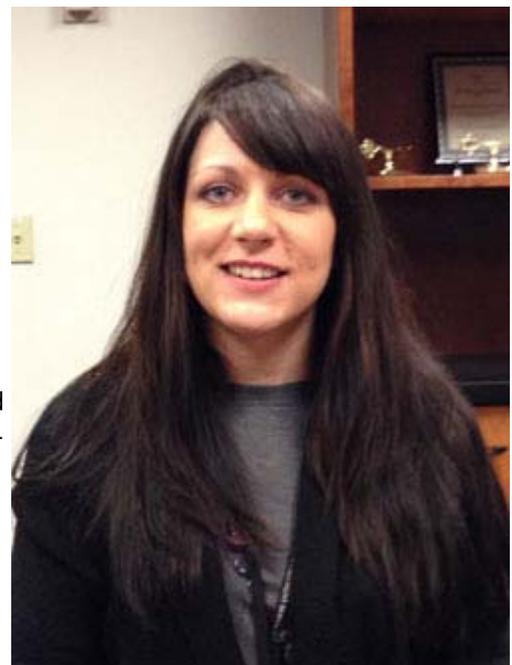
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Angella Miller steps into new role

Until September 20, 2013, **Angella Miller** will be working on a special project developing a comprehensive program to ensure ORS plans, policies, and processes are compliant with regulations, audit standards, and contract management, while Tim McCormick covers her role as BPL of BPD. We wanted to ask Angie about her new gig.

LookOut: How long have you been with the State and with ORS?

Angie Miller: I started with the State and ORS in July of last year, and I'm the BPL for BPD. Sometime around last fall, they added Compliance into the process and it became Benefit Plan Design and Compliance. About that time John Donovan moved over to Financial Services, so I took over his role as audit liaison.



LO: So what exactly does the audit liaison do?

AM: The audit liaison works with the Office of Internal Audit or the Office of the Auditor General on the business side, so when they come in and do an audit, I'm their point of contact to help direct them to the different parts of the business. I basically work with them and point them to the appropriate people.

LO: What can we do to help the process along, as far as our own particular piece of our job? Is there something everybody can do to help whenever we're in the process of being audited?

AM: If information is requested of you, it would be most helpful if everybody handled it timely. The auditors spend a lot of time waiting on information, because we're all very busy. I think everybody does a really good job of that.

LO: My understanding is there's another Business Process Reengineering part that's happening. Can you explain a little bit about that?

AM: Yes, We're working with Financial Services, Internal Audit, and the Office of Financial Management all together on a project to create a process for the CAFRs (Comprehensive Annual Financial Review) and the financial statements (401(k) and 457) to make certain they're completed on time. We've lacked a clear process up to now, and this analysis is going to reduce the effort and improve the timeliness of our financial reporting.

LO: So this is just so that we actually collect or gather all the information that we need for the CAFR and make sure that we get the reports completed in a timely fashion?

AM: That's correct; and to ensure that they're error free. Financial Management and Financial Services are involved because it really affects all of us. We all have a piece in getting those done timely and accurately, so we want it to be more of a smooth process as opposed to somewhat of a fire drill.

LO: Thanks for taking the time to talk with us!

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New staff attend ING trainings

Employees new to ORS since August 2011 are attending ING training sessions to learn more about their State of Michigan 401(k) and 457 Plans.

Each new employee will be attending three sessions:

- **401(k)/457 Plans Overview** – This session explains how the Defined Contribution (DC) plan and Personal Healthcare Fund works, the differences between the 401(k) and 457 plans, investment options, how to complete transactions, and more.
- **Basic and Advanced Investing** – This session is designed as an extension of the 401(k)/457 Plan Overview. It gives a clear understanding of basic and advanced investment concepts and terminology, including types of risk and establishing an investment strategy.
- **ING Advisory Service Interactive Training** – This session provides information on the ING Advisor



Service – what it is and what it provides you with, how to access and use the service online, and how to implement advice received.

"We've received wonderful feedback from employees indicating they didn't really understand everything when they first hired on; they were too overwhelmed with information coming at them," **Heidi Schiller**, ING Assistant Vice President and Investment Advisor, said. "But having these courses at this point has proved really helpful."

If you aren't already taking one of these courses and you're interested in learning more about your State of Michigan 401(k) and 457 Plans, you can sign up for in-person seminars and webinars through the Civil Service Commission.

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ORS Presents at MSBO Conference

For more than 75 years, Michigan School Business Officials (MSBO) has been working to improve school leadership and management in Michigan, and ORS has been a presence at many of their conferences and training events. Last week was no exception, as a team of ORS representatives from ER and CE traveled to Grand Rapids' DeVos Place to participate in the MSBO Annual Conference and Exhibit Show.



Angie Schrauben and **Andy Kolp** gave a presentation on implementing the new reporting requirements resulting from the 2012 reform. Angie, **Steve Crippen**, and **Joe Osentoski** spoke on reconciling public school employer payments. And Andy, **Ava Smith**, and **Annette Ruiz** gave two presentations on using the Public School Employer Website. In between their sessions, all presenters joined **Mary Staley** and **LuAnn Kern** at the ORS booth in the exhibit hall to help answer reporting and basic retirement questions from conference attendees.

"ORS partners with several education administration organizations, but the partnership with MSBO is perhaps the most important," Angie explained. "Our participation in MSBO events helps us better understand employer and member needs, and helps put a face on our organization."

"School business officials are the ones who are involved on a daily level in the reporting requirements to ORS," Steve added. "We want to make sure they understand the rules and processes, so that our members, their employees, get the retirement benefits they earn."

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Customer Education to debut new workshop

Coming soon to an ISD or regional educational service agency near you: Picture Your Future: Advancing on Your Road to Retirement! CE's newest product, a workshop for members ten

Picture your future.....



years away from retirement, will complement existing materials which provide targeted information to customers based on where they are in their career.

For many years, the CE presentation team of **Ray Fleming**, **Fred Doll**, and **Joy Bartell** has successfully conducted PRIMs (public school Preretirement Information Meetings) to educate members 2 to 5 years away from retirement. Though surveys and evaluations tell us the seminars are valuable and customers increase their pension plan knowledge after they attend a PRIM, we know they'll be even better prepared if they think about retirement earlier in their career.

The new workshop gets members thinking about the nuts and bolts of their retirement earlier in their lives. While it emphasizes the value of the retirement system in their financial planning, it also reviews other factors they'll need to consider for a secure and healthy retirement.

During breakout sessions, participants will use personas – hypothetical public school members - to create a vision for life after retirement, develop a plan to make the vision a reality, identify the steps to achieve the vision, and risks and strategies to address them. The idea is that members will relate to the personas, think about their own circumstances, and take action sooner rather than later to learn about and prepare for retirement.

CE will debut two workshops by June 30, 2013, and plans to integrate more into the seminar schedule beginning in the 2014 season. Thanks to **Carolyn Parkinson**, **Allison Wardlaw**, and Joy Bartell for their input on this project.

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Bring Your Daughter or Son to Work Day a big hit

This year, ORS hosted 27 sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, grandsons, and granddaughters at the Bring Your Daughter or Son to Work Day event. After a special welcome from director **Phil Stoddard** and a quick photo op, the kids dove right in with a game of Bingo. After that, they took a guided tour of the office, followed by a popcorn break downstairs at Kristina Rae's.

They rounded off the day with a little bit of slime in Central Perk and a goodie bag donated by ING. Click here to view this year's gallery. If you'd like a copy of a picture, email **Danielle Fowler** with the file name of the picture you'd like.



[Click the picture to access the photo gallery.](#)

Big thanks to **Sara Hoppes** for planning the day, and **Candace Clay, Jennifer Carter, Randy Grundstrom, Nikki Bacigal,** and **Kayla Lintz** for their help during the event!

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business briefs

Connections survey ends May 3

On April 25, a survey was sent to a random selection of retirees to get their feedback about the *Connections* newsletter. In addition to the standard questions, the survey also asks retirees about the presentation of the financial information in the March issue. The survey will close on May 3, and the results will be available on the [Customer Education KL page](#) under **Surveys**.

Upgrades to State of Michigan 401(k) and 457 Plans website coming soon

To ensure the State of Michigan 401(k) and 457 Plans website accommodates all of our new member populations who participate in the plans, ORS is working closely with ING to make changes to the content and structure of the site.

Public school election window opens May 3

May 3 marks the beginning of an election window for a small group of public school employees to make their pension and healthcare elections under PA 300 of 2012. Employees who will be making their elections during this window were considered ineligible last fall, but were confirmed to have met eligibility requirements after a review. The window will remain open until Friday, July 26 at 5 p.m. EDT.

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comings + goings

Comings



AST welcomed their new manager **Patrick Villarreal** to the team on April 15. Patrick, a U of M graduate, spent some time in Detroit working in the auto industry and now lives in DeWitt with his wife and nearly three-year-old twin boys. He likes to spend time with his family in the lakes of northern Michigan and golf when time allows.

Ransom Johnson joined BPD, also on April 15, as a Healthcare Data Analyst. Originally from East Brunswick, NJ, Ransom graduated from the University of Maryland, spent two years stationed in Germany while in the Army, and now lives in Grand Ledge. When not at ORS, Ransom and his fiancée like to walk and play Frisbee with their two Australian Shepherd dogs.

	
	<p>On April 29, BPD greeted Craig Geiger as a Healthcare Administrator. Craig, an MSU graduate, lives in Portland and recently worked for United Healthcare as director of Sales and Business Development. Craig is an active cyclist and enjoys landscaping and spending time with his teenagers when not at ORS.</p>
	<p>BPD also celebrated the arrival of Kevin Kubacki on April 29. Kevin, a CPA, has worked as a federal contractor for HUD around the country, including some time in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina in 2008. Kevin has two brothers (one identical twin) and is an avid Tigers and MSU fan.</p>

ORS Purpose:
 We are an innovative retirement organization driven to empower our customers for a successful today and a secure tomorrow.

The *LookOut* is published by the Office of Retirement Services, Department of Technology, Management and Budget, State of Michigan

Director:
 Phil Stoddard
 Edited by Customer Education

On the Move

Andy Kolp's first day in Customer Service was April 29, but not quite! Andy will continue in his role in ER until June 17, helping with the hiring process for their audit analyst and with the reporting efforts needed to support July 1 application processing. Andy will also work on a few assignments to help him begin his transition to CS.

Going

AST wishes **John Roberts** the best. His last day is May 3.

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Six word stories

Legend has it that Ernest Hemingway was once challenged to write a story in six words. The result of his challenge is, "For sale: baby shoes, never worn." Hemingway may even have considered this his best work.

Inspired by Ernest Hemingway's famous challenge, here is a collection of ORS's own six word stories.



Rosemary Baker	Retirement means more visits with friends. April showers grow flowers, flood basements. Two rings, one wedding, happy life.
Candace Clay	Mom works Monday - Friday, all weekends.
Dominique Davis	Wanted: sad child needs new mom.

Mike Goodman	Honesty, integrity: live it, breathe it.
Sally Jimenez	I dream about ruling the world. Never touch yellow snow in Michigan. His clothes were torn and dirty.
Ryan Marr	Of importance: god, family, health, love. Smile, laugh, joy. Pass it on. Want change? Then do something different.
Carolyn Parkinson	So many forms. So little time.
Shannon Prawdzik	Morning mist, calm waters, enter swans.
Mark Sands	Guitar available immediately, no strings attached.
Lisa Schmidt	Richly blessed, highly favored. Praise god. Never married, without kids. No regrets.
Erika Slis	We're all stories, in the end.
Trista Stine	Memories make life worth living.
Heather Zaban	Parenting... life changing experiences, every day. Customer service, helping people, many ways. Open eyes, seeing beauty, all around. Closed mind... doesn't allow for individuality.

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Are you ready for Derby Day?

May 4 is the 139th running of the Kentucky Derby. Known as the "most exciting two minutes in sports," the Derby is an undeniable and beloved part of Americana. Take this little test to see how well you know your Derby lore. (No cheating, now!)



- Thanks to Dan Fogelberg, we all know that the red rose is the official flower of the Kentucky Derby. But how many roses are on lush blanket the winner receives?
 - 228
 - 412
 - 564
- Who was president during the first running of the Kentucky Derby?
- The Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes, and the Belmont Stakes make up what's known as Horse Racing's Triple Crown. Where are these races held?
- How long is the track used at the Kentucky Derby?
 - .75 miles
 - 1.25 mile
 - 2.0 miles
- How old are the horses that run the Derby?

6. How many horses will run in Saturday's race?
7. What famous person visited the Kentucky Derby in 2007?
8. Secretariat set a record at 1:59 minutes in 1973. How long did that record hold?
 - A. 16 years
 - B. 21 years
 - C. 39 years
9. What are the two main ingredients in the popular dessert, Derby Pie?
10. What classic 1944 horse movie starred Mickey Rooney and Elizabeth Taylor?

Answers: 1: C; 2: Ulysses S. Grant; 3: KD: Louisville, KY, P;: Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore, MD; BS: Elmont, NY. 4: 1.25 miles; 5: 3 year old thoroughbreds; 6: 20 horses; 7: Queen Elizabeth; 8: 39 years and still counting; 9: Chocolate and nuts; 10: National Velvet.

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Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to network resources, some of the links may not work if you're reading this outside of the organization.