



April 18, 2003

Volume 7, Issue 8

## Measuring the effects of change

**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.

With the implementation of Vision Stage 2, the Change Management Team spent time with every process to understand and document how the new tools were affecting work and how staff felt about it. Linda Reznick, with the assistance of Kathy Manning (Covansys) and Ed Jacobson (Jacobson & Assoc.) conducted six separate meetings during which staff identified six overall topics that needed attention. They are: training, scanning and indexing, BPO shadows, face-to-face dialog between management and staff, a phone call escalation process, and summer rush planning.

When this information was presented to the Business Leadership Assembly on Thursday, April 3, 2003, they immediately addressed the issues by creating action plans for training, scanning and indexing, summer rush planning, and face-to-face dialog. The BPO shadowing was an issue previously recognized by the Business Leadership Assembly and was addressed before April 3. The phone escalation process is being created and you will see a policy/procedure on this topic in the near future.

*See Effects on page 3*

## ORS Calendar

### April

*Public School Employees Board Meeting* ..... 17<sup>th</sup>  
*Earth Day* ..... 22<sup>nd</sup>  
*All Staff Meeting* ..... 23<sup>rd</sup>  
*Bring Your Child to Work* ..... 24<sup>th</sup>

### May

*American Red Cross Blood Drive* ..... 7<sup>th</sup>  
*State Employees Board Meeting* ..... 15<sup>th</sup>  
*Judges Board Meeting* ..... 20<sup>th</sup>  
*Memorial Day* ..... 26<sup>th</sup>

## When life gives you lemons....

If you are an ORS staff member, when life brings you lemons, you find a way to celebrate. That is exactly what Customer Accounts did. They hosted a Lemon Fest complete with lemonade, lemon cookies, lemon pies, lemon bars and more to express their appreciation for their co-workers, specifically Mailroom and Records, Claims, Insurance, and Death Processing. Customer Accounts staff contributed all of the food and hosted four parties in total over two days, April 1 and 2. The lemon theme was sparked by Maureen Carden who observed that the many changes around ORS have left most staff feeling a little overwhelmed. "I want them to know



*Sue DeBor enjoys the lemon festivities hosted by Customer Accounts.*

that we care and that we appreciate all of the support they give us on the phones. They help us enormously. We are all in this together," Maureen said.

## Tie a yellow ribbon

The war in Iraq has brought on a fresh round of people tying yellow ribbons on trees to show support for United States military troops.

This fairly well known tradition has a relatively short life span. According to American Family Traditions at [www.americanfamilytraditions.com](http://www.americanfamilytraditions.com),

displaying a yellow ribbon is a sign of loyalty to signify you are waiting for the safe return of family, friends, or loved ones.

There is some controversy as to where the idea for the yellow ribbon actually came from. Popular belief is that the idea sprang from the 1973 number one hit song "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree" by Tony Orlando and Dawn. Many music historians, however, note that the song closely mirrors a Civil War song that references a yellow ribbon tied around a tree.

The Library of Congress gives credit for the tradition to Penne Laingen who tied a yellow ribbon to her oak tree in 1979 when her husband, Bruce, was held hostage in Iran for 444 days. She attributed the idea to

the Tony Orlando song.

Regardless of how the tradition started, it is just one of many ways to show support for our military troops. The Department of Defense has tightened down on mailing care packages to military members for security reasons.

However, there are web sites such as [www.messages@estripes.com](http://www.messages@estripes.com) and [www.OperationDearAbby.net](http://www.OperationDearAbby.net) that you can visit to send e-mail messages.

If you are interested in doing more, visit either the American Legion web site at [www.legion.org/support/links.htm](http://www.legion.org/support/links.htm) or the Department of Defense website at [www.defendamerica.mil/support\\_troops.html](http://www.defendamerica.mil/support_troops.html). Both sites have comprehensive lists of organizations you can visit to donate groceries to military families, provide a foster home for pets of service members, make a financial contribution toward care packages being sent by the USO (United Service Organization), or locations to donate blood.



Photo from [www.friends-of-toad.com](http://www.friends-of-toad.com)

## 6W2W kickoff

Wonder why everyone is eating carrots and apples? To get their fruit and vegetable points for Six Weeks to Wellness!

The kickoff for Six Weeks to Wellness was Monday, April 14.

First item of business was to vote for the best team name. Three Sheep and a Shepard walked away with the honors, team members are Clarissa Sheler, Kim Gilbert, Joan Schneider and Chris DeRose.



Heidi Schiller and Joan Schneider at one of the 6W2W kickoff meetings.



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

Printed by authority of 1984 P.A. 431  
Total number of copies printed: 235  
Total cost: \$91.65 Cost per copy: \$0.39

## The last to go

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Carla Price will be the last of the ORS retirees' to take advantage of the Early Out retirement incentive.

Carla began her state career 25 years ago at the Department of Treasury in Code and Registration. Her remaining 24 years have been with ORS.

Carla started her career with ORS part-time by typing letters for the director of the Public School Employees Retirement System. From there, her position changed to a calculations clerk. Carla spent time as a retirement counselor and then accepted her position in Member Entity Reporting and Auditing, now known as Employer Reporting.



Longtime co-worker Michele Childs said, "Carla has touched the lives of many former and current staff. Those who left before her had the chance to watch her grow up. Those who are staying have had the chance to let her see our growth and maturing. She has accepted challenges, adapted to many changes, moved 'up the ladder,' and lead and directed groups to get the job done whatever that job may be."

Carla has earned the praises of many of her co-workers who were asked what they would remember most about her. The list included: integrity, knowledgeable, incredibly hard worker, compassionate, caring, sense of humor, the best, supportive, encouraging, a great listener, calm, not easily angered, kind, a terrific boss, daring, willing to do out of the ordinary, funny, happy, unforgivably cheery, loves her family, family oriented, proud of her grandkids, and one of the world's best grandmas.

Her co-workers know her well. Carla said that her retirement plans include spending time with her two adult children and their families that include her three grandsons and granddaughter. Other plans include completing some at-home projects and traveling with her husband and seeing more

of the United States.

Carla also said that, as of now, she does not have plans to work after retirement. "When I get bored, I might find something part-time." She also plans to continue with her gardening, she concentrates mostly on flowers and tomato plants. "Hopefully, by the end of this month, I'll be able to get out in the garden," Carla said.

Carla holds the respect of many and will be missed by many, Michele said. "We are glad to have worked with, and in some cases, for you. We are happy for your successes and your retirement. Thank you from the

bottom of our hearts."

Michele also added that what she will remember most about Carla is her smile.

---

## Effects

*Continued from page 1*

Results you will see yet this month:

- Cheat sheets on up to five transactions in each process to assist with using the Clarety and Siebel applications while procedures are being written.
- An imaging open house for staff to learn more about the process along with a written description of how scanning and indexing are prioritized.
- Some shifting of resources to reduce backlogs faster.
- Business leaders visiting regularly scheduled staff meetings and being more available for interaction with staff.
- Summer rush planning involving benefit management, customer accounts, employer reporting, and process support staff.

Your BPL has copies of all the complete action plans if you would like more details.



The EMPAC Basket Auction and Book Sale on Thursday, April 10, netted \$420.65 to be used for EMPAC activities. Left: Amanda Huhn scans the books for sale. Top: EMPAC member Jaime Abednego hands Dick Pennington the Television Snack Basket he won with a \$20.00 bid.

## Competency-based training

Employees in ORS (and throughout DMB) actively participate in their personal and professional growth. Through Competency-based Training (CBT) and an Individual Development Plan (IDP), employees are provided many opportunities to advance skills, learn new methods and tools, and become the kind of career employee and person they strive to be.

DMB implemented CBT as part of the department's commitment to be a "learning organization where employees are actively involved in shaping their work environment, and given the responsibility, authority and opportunity to be creative and practice new skills," according to Organizational Services.

As an organization, DMB is committed to each theme's success with training and growth of employees. That commitment is demonstrated by the importance training has on the DMB Balanced Scorecard. Each theme calculates a ratio of the

*See Competency-based training on page 6*

## Help save electricity

Have you remembered to turn off your computer every night? How about turning off your overhead lights, bathroom lights, breakroom lights? What about turning off the printers?

According to time management specialist and author Maria Gracia, it takes 21 days to form a habit.

So, if you are having a hard time remembering to turn off your computer, lights, or printer, here are some suggestions:

- Write yourself a reminder on a post-it note where you will see it everyday.
- Give yourself five minutes before you leave to take time to turn off the items you are responsible for.
- Keep on your schedule for 21 days. If you miss a day, start over and schedule another 21-day goal.
- At the end of 21 days of repetition, turning things off before you leave should be something you do without a second thought!

## Strategic planning and you

*In the last Lookout, we learned how strategic planning guides us to get back on track when things aren't working well. We also learned about our strategic plan logo. In this issue, we will learn more about what strategic planning means for you.*

Because most of us don't work with strategic planning directly, it's hard to see the benefits. We tend to be more focused on "today" or "now," and rightfully so. We have a lot of work to do! Jenkin Lloyd Jones once remarked, "The vision of things to be done may come a long time before the way of doing them becomes clear..." We can definitely see this today at ORS. We have the long range vision, but while working daily with the tools it can be difficult to see clearly just how everything will work out in the long run, especially with some of our current challenges. ***Strategic planning for the long run pulls us through and keeps us on track.***

### Why should you think about strategic planning?

Because your knowledge and experiences shape ORS' future. Time and again the insights you have provided to your managers and on surveys have improved the way we do things. You are a fountain of information and knowledge. Just like investing for retirement, the decisions you make and the feedback you provide affect ORS' short-term and long-term health. Looking only at the short term may seem to make things better now, but may complicate matters or produce less than desired results later. With our heads up – looking past the piles on our desks – we see a better picture of what the future holds.

### How can you help with strategic planning?

- Communicate openly and often with your supervisor, BPL and BPO.
- Anticipate the questions your suggestion might raise and be ready with answers or to explain how to get the answer.
- Don't worry about thinking big or small – from small acorns grow strong oaks.

- Discuss your ideas with other staff. Sometimes talking an idea through helps you see where you need to refine your thoughts, and your co-workers can help with the finishing touches.



- Ask yourself where your idea fits with ORS' long-range goals and how it will help achieve them.
- Try to identify what resources may be needed and ask yourself if it is reasonable.

- Identify estimated timelines for accomplishment.
- Think about ways to measure success.
- Don't quit trying, the greatest leaders in history had to restate their case more than once. Your idea may be exactly what ORS needs, at a later date. The stealth airplane design was thought of long before the technology to make it happen was developed.

## Reminder

***Make sure you attend the All Staff Meeting on April 23rd from 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. The All Staff Meeting Committee has worked hard to make the meeting both informative and entertaining. Don't miss it!***

## Competency-based training

Continued from page 4

amount of training planned (as reported on your IDP), versus the amount that actually happened. We can PLAN to train, but unless we actually follow through, it does us no good. Every time you attend a training class and complete an evaluation, ORS comes closer to achieving 100% of the training we set out to provide at the beginning of the year.



A crucial part of the CBT/IDP process is filling out a Training Evaluation Form. The form shows that you have completed a particular training class, allows you to rate the class, and, helps to track

the completion levels of the IDP's to be reported back to both ORS and DMB Balanced Scorecard (BSC). A Training Evaluation Form should be completed each time you take a Civil Service class as well as any other formal or informal training you receive.

The CBT form has an area for training related to work competencies (the IDP) and it also has an area for personal growth. This area is called the Individual Growth Plan. Only the training related to work competencies is tracked for the BSC. However, you should fill out an evaluation form for all training you receive. This training can then be referenced at a later date to show your skills for potential advancement. The Training Evaluation Form can be found at [G:\Pol\\_Proc\zattachments\Training Evaluation Forms.pdf](G:\Pol_Proc\zattachments\Training Evaluation Forms.pdf).

Formal and informal training can be accessed in a number of ways. Here are some suggestions.

- Civil Service classes

- E-Learning
- In-house CDs
- Videos
- Job shadowing
- QuicKnowledge

An introductory meeting for QuicKnowledge, an online learning tool, is being offered on April 21, 2003. If you have any questions, please contact Ann Schneider.

## Comings & Goings

The Application Support Team has joined ORS to provide support for our computer applications. The team is learning our new Vision ORS applications and developing procedures for them. The team will also provide support for our remaining legacy applications (CPP and CPPUP until they are decommissioned.) They are part of Department of Information Technology (DIT), but are now members of the ORS team as well!



Members of the Application Support Team: back row, Mike Gallihugh, Robert Kubish, Tim Lott. Front row, Amita Das, Marc Olenzek, Sejin Chung, and Rose Dudash.