



# Look Out

August 23, 2002

Volume 6, Issue 17

**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

### August

Pension Pay Date ..... 23rd  
DMB Employee  
Recognition Party ... 28th  
State Employees  
Board Meeting ..... 29th

### September

Labor Day Holiday ..... 2nd  
ORS-ITSD Golf Outing &  
Duffer's Banquet ..... 4th  
Public School Employees  
Board Meeting ..... 5th  
ORS Wellness Day ..... 12th  
ORS Retiree  
Celebration ..... 17th

## DMB works toward becoming more "Consultative-based"

Last week the DMB (Department of Management and Budget) Director's Office announced that the department would begin working towards becoming more of a consultative-based organization.

ORS Director **Chris DeRose**, who serves on the DMB Board of Directors, had this to say regarding the announcement. "We have been spending a great deal of time planning for the future. The recent reorganization and the loss of staff to the early retirement are driving our planning efforts.

"ORS already has a clear plan for meeting customer needs. We call it Vision ORS because it is a plan to meet our vision of 'Fast, easy access to complete and accurate information and exceptional service.' We have successfully been implementing the plan that will be complete with the realization of new technology over the next 18 months. In many respects we already are a consultative-based organization because we have asked our customers what they need and we are working

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## Revised Business Process Model

Included with this issue you'll find a newly revised Business Process Model. Remembering what each process encompasses can be daunting at times. To help you remember, we've included a brief summary of what each process includes in the following paragraphs.

Currently ORS has two divisions under director **Chris DeRose**. Operations is directed by **Phil Stoddard**, and Customer Service

is directed by **Laurie Hill**. Together they oversee our six process groups: Employer Reporting; Customer Accounts; Benefit Management; Customer Education; Process Support; and Finance.

Another area of Retirement Services is Plan Design and Deployment. Its staff members assist the directors in various capacities. For example, they may take the

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## Joyce Buchanan retires with more than 20 years of service

Joyce Buchanan has worked for the state for more than 20 years, of which seven have been at ORS. Prior to coming to ORS, she worked for the Michigan Employment Security Commission (MESC) and for the State Police. Currently at ORS, Joyce works in Process Support. Joyce's most memorable event in state government was when she oversaw the purchase and installation of furnishings and supplies for three State Police Posts; all at the same time, on budget and on time.



Upon retiring, Joyce is planning on teaching or tutoring part-time. "I started out working in adult education and would like to get back into that on some level," she said. She's also planning a trip to Italy next May where she'll visit friends who live close to the Adriatic Sea. Her post-travel plans include delving into her six Rubbermaid tubs and four drawers full of cross-stitch projects and working in her garden.

Joyce leaves us with this: "Working for the state has been a great experience. I have met a lot of wonderful people and learned to do a lot of things I had never thought or heard of when I first started my career. It is amazing how technology has

changed how we do our work. When I first started, we were still using manual typewriters in a lot of places. In spite of what you may hear on the TV or radio or read in the newspapers, the people I have had the pleasure of working with are the most dedicated and hard working folks I have ever met.

"It is going to be hard picking up the slack and managing all of the changes that are fast approaching ORS, over and above the loss of staff members. One thing that has helped me a lot over the years is to remember some of my Dad's words of wisdom. 'It doesn't matter what you are assigned to do, it all pays the same and it all needs to be done. So, you might as well roll up your sleeves and dig in!' I will miss seeing all of the friends I have made at ORS on a regular basis, but I hope to be able to stop in once in awhile. I know that you will be continuing your high standards of work (especially since if our checks don't come on time, we know who to call and visit!) and will be successful with the installation of ORS' new computer system."

Joyce's last day with ORS is Friday, September 27. Congratulations Joyce! We wish you a happy retirement and happy stitching!

## Events to remember

### DMB Employee Recognition & Celebration

Date: Wednesday, August 28

Time: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

### SECC (State Employees' Combined Campaign) – United Way drive – begins in September

### Group Insurance Open Enrollment

Your Group Insurance Open Enrollment Form must be returned directly to DMB's HR Office or entered online via your HRMN self service account by September 6, 2002.

### Labor Day

Monday, September 2  
Have a great holiday!



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Director: Chris DeRose

Editors: Rosemary Baker

Robert Glennon

Connie Morse

Angela Schrauben

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## *Doug Davidson retires with more than 33 years of service*



**Doug Davidson** has worked for the state for more than 33 years. The past 11 of them have been with ORS. In the first 19 years he worked at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Secretary of State, and taught Vocational Agriculture for seven years. Currently at ORS, Doug works in the

Outreach program providing services to our members in the West Michigan area.

Doug's most memorable experience was doing MIP (Member Investment Plan) Window meetings around West Michigan in 1991 with, then ORS Director, **Tom Shaefer**. He was impressed that the office director believed in what they were doing so much that he was out on the road doing it too, similar to what we saw during the Early Out.

For the immediate future Doug plans to stay put in the West Michigan area. His long-range plans include moving back to the Upper Peninsula to his hometown of Felch. He hopes to find similar employment in travel, public speaking, or some type of customer service.

Doug says, "Remember the golden rule. Give the kind of service you would like to receive if you were in that person's circumstance. Whether internal or external, everyone you meet is a customer.

"My entire 11 years at ORS has been wonderful. I've worked with and for many good people. As a retiree, I look forward to future great things from ORS."

Doug's last day with ORS is Monday, September 30.

We wish you well Doug! It's been wonderful having you here at ORS!



## *Celine Harr retires with more than 23 years of service*



**Celine Harr** has worked for the state for more than 23 years, 17 of which have been at ORS. Before coming to ORS, she worked for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Treasury. Currently she works in the Benefit Management process here at ORS. Her post-retirement plans include spending time with her family and friends, traveling, sewing, quilting, and doing a whole lot of gardening.

When asked what parting words of wisdom she'd like to leave us with she said, "Stay geared for change! A lot of things have taken place here in the past few years."

Celine's last day with ORS is Thursday, September 26. We wish you well Celine. You will be missed!

### *Quotes on change*

The most powerful agent of growth and transformation is something much more basic than any technique: a change of heart. — **John Welwood**

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself. — **Leo Tolstoy**

Some people change when they see the light, others when they feel the heat. — **Caroline Schoeder**

Nothing is easy to the unwilling. — **Thomas Fuller**

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain. — **Maya Angelou**

## Thank you EMPAC for a great picnic!



### Process Model...

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lead on special projects, serve as liaison with the Attorney General's office on legal issues, oversee the defined contribution and deferred compensation plans, provide input to legislators, and interface with external suppliers, such as insurance providers. They also research and review business cases for new initiatives.

**Employer Reporting** interacts with the various employers — state agencies, county court systems and public schools — to collect pension contribution information and gather wage and service data used to determine pension benefits.

**Customer Accounts** responds to customer inquiries; handling most of the incoming phone calls, service credit issues, such as years of service evaluations, service credit billings and pur-

chases; e-mail inquiries, and correspondence; along with face-to face counseling with walk-in members.

**Benefit Management** reviews and processes all of the applications for retirement and insurance benefits, plus determines eligibility for death benefits and domestic relations orders. These employees are responsible for putting pending retirees on payroll.

**Customer Education** keeps information flowing between the organization and members, employers, staff, and other interested parties. Customer Education staff also maintain the web site, forms, published materials, and provide seminars and speakers as part of the customer education/outreach program.

**Process Support** helps keep the office functioning smoothly by handling incoming and outgoing

mail; maintaining records; ordering, housing and distributing supplies; publishing and maintaining internal policies and procedures; facilitating requests for equipment and temporary staffing needs; and coordinating space, safety, training, and security issues for staff.

**Finance activities are led by Financial Services since the restructuring of DMB. We work closely with these partners to ensure accurate and timely data is used in preparing the Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports (CAFRs) for all four defined benefit systems, the 457 and 401(k) deferred compensation system, and the defined contribution system; prepares monthly ORS financial reports and ad hoc analysis to assist management with business decisions; collects and deposits all employer and member contributions of approximately \$2 billion per year; and pays ORS' vendors.**

## Comings and goings in ORS



**Jamie Schoen** joined ORS on Monday, August 12. She comes to us from Account Temps and will be working in the Plan Design

and Deployment area, focusing on health care issues.

Welcome **Linda West!** Linda arrived at ORS on August 12. Linda comes to us on temporary assignment. She will be working



with Plan Design and Deployment on special projects through October.

**Laura Garza**, originally an Early Out temp, began working in Process Support on August 19.

**Ben Taylor**, who worked with Blue Cross, and **Jeff Morris**, a temporary worker left on ORS on August 9, to further their careers.

**David Homerding's** last day with ORS was August 14.

**Marsha Lenneman, Jocelyn Bos, and Lauren Wynalda's** last day with ORS was August

16. **Marsha and Jocelyn** returned to Central Michigan University to further their education. Lauren will be attending Western Michigan University.

**Ryan Weltzer's** last day with ORS was August 21.

**Matt Bechler's** last day with ORS was August 21. Matt worked in the Customer Information Center (CIC), and will be pursuing a master's degree in education at Aquinas College.

**Steve Miller's** last day with ORS is today, August 23.

### DMB...

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toward delivering it. So we will continue to work our plan to ensure we are successful. You probably won't notice big changes in ORS beyond what is already planned."

#### What exactly does "consulting" mean?

Consulting means to understand and analyze customer needs, then use expertise and trade knowledge to provide a solution that benefits the customer. DMB "consulting" includes accountability for final delivery of the outcome to the customer, regardless of what resources are used to produce the outcome.

#### Why are we changing?

To be successful in the future we must meet our customers' needs today and tomorrow. It is critical



to accept that we can no longer do business as before. We must plan for the change. DMB will no longer have the resources (hands) to provide the best value to our customers through completing all the tasks associated with a given service/solution; rather we must identify the solution, determine the best way to deliver it given resource constraints, and ensure successful outcome (service delivery) for our customers.

If we were to continue operating as we are, our customers would experience diminished services because they either wouldn't get the product on time or at the highest quality. Eventually, our customers would find other ways to get their service needs met.

Our expertise at DMB is second to none. The success of our department will depend upon our ability to use our knowledge and experience to provide solutions for our customers (i.e. become a consultative-based agency).

Keep an eye out for more answers to your questions in future editions of the *LookOut* and in Chris' weekly emails. As more information becomes available we'll share it here.

## Sounding Out

*Sounding Out is a way for ORS staff to air ideas, viewpoints, gripes, praises, and/or concerns. Email your valued opinion (300 words or less, if possible!) to ORS LookOut.*

### Hooray! For the Early Out team of temps!!! *By Lila Christiansen*



*Lila Christiansen*

Shortly after the announcement that an Early Out was coming it was determined that we would need to hire a

team of temporary employees (temps) to help process all of the applications.

We began training the first group of 20 temps on Monday, March 25, 2002. The second group of 20 came on Wednesday of the same week.

They had one week to learn the process, and thanks to **Anthony Estell, Andy Oser, and Tim Simpson**, we had some awesome tools to use to prepare the estimates. We began processing applications and figuring pension estimates on April 1, the first day to apply for the Early Out.

Throughout the month of April we received over 8,500 applications. More than 4,000 were received in the last 10 days that members could apply. The average turnaround time for processing

estimates was just two days. The number of applications processed in one day was 680. All of the estimates had to be sent to the members prior to May 15.

After the initial push for estimates, we reduced our staff to approximately 25. We are now down to 12 temporary staff.

Retirees with July 1 effective dates numbered 2,008. About 97 percent of them were on payroll within 60 days. Again, the Early Out temps were processing about 200 payroll

very successful project are:

**Olivia Bennett, Rachel Campbell, David Cripe, Janice Edwards, Susan Flowers, Kathy Holcomb, Jacob Johnson, Lyle Marquart, Steve Miller, Mary Morris, Angelo Rodriquez, and Tracy Weldon.** Each of them is part of the original 40 temps that we hired. They like us! They like us!!!

Now that our big push is complete they are assisting in CIC, insurance, and other areas

of ORS as well as helping with correspondence and requests for new estimates and changed effective dates. They have all worked very hard, are very professional, and are an interesting and fun group of people to work with each day. We have all worked very well together, become a team, and had some fun to boot.



*Front row (left to right): Mary Morris, Lyle Marquart, Olivia Bennett, Susan Flowers, Janice Edwards, and Rachel Campbell. Back row: Steve Miller, David Cripe, Jacob Johnson, Angelo Rodriquez, Tracy Weldon, and Kathy Holcomb.*

files per day with just 12 remaining staff.

The remaining 12 Early Out temps that have held us together and helped make this a

Both **Tim Droste** and I are very grateful to be working with such a fun and talented

group of people. Thanks for all your help Early Out temps! We like you! We like you!!!