



ORS ink. A publication of "ORS Incorporated," a service-based organization taking a business approach to delivering quality and value to the NIH community.

POINT OF VIEW

The Power and Importance of Communication

I'm pleased that we are once again publishing an ORS employee newsletter. The intent of this newsletter is to keep you informed by providing current, important, and useful information about our organization, its policies, activities, and employees. This column is a way for me to stay in touch with more than 1300 individuals that make up this large and multi-faceted organization.

I thought it would be appropriate then, for communication to be the Point of View topic for this first issue of ORS ink.

Accurate, meaningful, and timely internal and external communications are vital for every organization. Together with quality service and products, quality communications can enhance the effectiveness and reputation of an organization. On the other hand poor communications can leave a long lasting, negative impression. All organizations require effective communication to carry out, monitor, and if necessary, correct the activities that allow them to survive and prosper.

Open and accurate information builds trust, whether it's between co-workers, the employee and their supervisor or the service provider and the customer. The larger the organization, the greater the potential for communications to become garbled or distorted. In an organization of over 1300 employees, it is important that I and every ORS manager and supervisor keep the lines of communication open, and keep employees informed so they can keep our customers informed. We all have an important role in the communication pipeline.

Finally, informed ORS employees can attain success for themselves and for the entire organization. Effective communication is a critical tool for success, but it takes all of us to make it so. ●

1998 IN REVIEW

ORS Town Meeting: It's a Wrap

One could envision a director saying, "Lights! camera! action!" on November 5, as more than 500 employees filled the Natcher Auditorium to the sound of upbeat music. Typically, a Town Meeting gives the staff information about an organization's plans and objectives. The goal of the '98 Town Meeting was to be both informative and entertaining.

ted by employees in advance and gave others an opportunity to ask additional questions.

A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of awards under the new ORS Service Excellence Awards Program. A total of 25 crystal awards and 54 honorable mention certificates were presented to proud employees in two categories: customer service and teamwork.

As they exited, attendees were asked to complete an

Steve Ficca and NIH Library Service Excellence award recipients.



The action began with a slide show featuring ORS's many programs and multi-talented employees, reminding us and educating us about our fellow employees and the diversity of jobs they perform within ORS. Dilbert added some humor through a series of slides about the work day that we could all relate to, followed by a video explaining the fast-changing work environment of the 90's and beyond.

When Steve Ficca took center stage he summarized the year's accomplishments and gave us a preview of our organization in the future, describing it as "ORS Incorporated." He then expanded on questions submit-

opinion poll to provide feedback about the meeting. Results indicated that 24% thought the event was outstanding, 65% thought it was good, and 10% thought it was poor. Comments ranged from "upbeat with great format and good music" to "Dilbert was great; we need to laugh at ourselves" to "get rid of all the filler." The diversity of comments proved once again that you can't please all of the people all the time. There's always room for improvement and we'll keep trying!

ORS Exhibits at the NIH Research Festival

If you walked through the lobby of the Natcher Building ▶ 2



COMING ATTRactions

The ABCs of the New Process for Centrally Furnished Services

The NIH has now officially approved a new process for accounting and management of centrally furnished services. Since ORS provides the largest proportion of central services to the NIH, the success of this new process will depend in large part on the way ORS does business in responding to this new system and the customer expectations that go along with it. The next issue of ORS Ink will feature an article explaining (in plain English) the basics of the New Process for Centrally Furnished Services and the challenges that the ORS must meet in order to comply with the implementation set for FY 2001. As you all know, over the past three years, we have been developing a similar process for ORS, the ORS Business Model, which is built on activity-based accounting principles. The NIH Process is fundamentally based on the ORS model which will give us a good head start in implementing the NIH New Process. In January, the ORS senior managers met for a two-day planning session to develop a strategic plan that clearly maps out our next steps toward successfully meeting the challenge of implementing the New Process. In our next issue we will describe how the ORS model has merged with the NIH New Process to form one new system, the plans underway in ORS to implement it, and how it will effect you, the ORS employee, and your work unit. This is a tremendous opportunity for ORS to demonstrate its commitment to improving NIH research support services. It is also an opportunity for ORS employees at all levels to show their commitment to ORS's goals and vision for the future. ●

KUDOS & COMPLIMENTS

Many ORS employees receive compliments about the work they perform. Here's a sample of what our satisfied customers are saying: "I would like to extend my thanks for the tremendous job Ron Poole does with the training center at Stonestreet. I work for the Design and Construction Branch and have given and received a lot of training at Stonestreet. This facility is something that benefits all employees and enables us to gain knowledge to help us in our everyday tasks. Kim McGregor has also been helpful on CCR operational issues. ●

SANTA BRINGS HOLIDAY CHEER TO THE CLINICAL CENTER

Tom Rufty (alias Santa Claus), Chief of the NIH Police, had an opportunity to delight patients once again during the Holiday season. Riding to the CC in one of the Emergency Management Branch's fire engines, he delivered gifts to both child and adult patients in various units of the hospital. Logistics were handled by O.W. "Jim" Sweat, Division of Public Safety director, who dispatched his staff to organize and deliver the 500+ gifts to patients in hospital rooms, children in the new play area on the 14th floor, and in the Children's Inn. The pre-Christmas toy drive was organized by Lt. Lawrence Brown and Sonja Young.

Many of the children wrote touching thank you letters to the police and fire personnel for their generosity. Rufty said he volunteered this year to play Santa since he was "the oldest and fattest guy." Besides, it was also a chance to do something that showed the community that the police and fire personnel do more than write tickets and respond to emergencies! ●



1 ◀ **REVIEW** October 6-9, you might have seen the large, 8' x 10' ORS exhibit on display. It was designed to illustrate the many ways ORS supports scientists and other NIH employees who work to fulfill the NIH research mission.

ORS had a strong showing in the three-day poster session. Fifteen posters featured the Bioengineering and Physical Science Program, as well as the Divisions of Engineering Services, Safety, and Intramural Research Services on a wide variety of subjects. Topics included the new Vaccine Research Center, Laboratory Animal Embryo Cryopreservation, Occupational Medical Surveillance Programs, the Shared Resources Database, and the Virtual (NIH) Library. Several ORS service areas were also represented with booths at the vendor exhibit under the tent. We generated considerable interest in and educated many visitors about our organization.

Employee Appreciation Day

On June 30, over 600 ORS employees and their families spent a fun-filled afternoon on the Navy picnic grounds. The ORS Employee Appreciation Day provided an ideal opportunity to socialize with co-workers in a relaxed atmosphere.

Hearty appetites were delighted with the variety of food and drinks, groups of people enjoyed playing outdoor sports, and a lively DJ filled the air with music and games for children and adults. One highlight of the event was the bake-off. First-place prize winners walked away with gift certificates from Williams Sonoma but the real winners were the folks who consumed the goodies! ●

NIH CONVERTS TO MAIL CLUSTERING

Our Mail Services Branch is constantly seeking methods to streamline mail delivery and get it to you promptly and cost-effectively. Mail clustering seems to be the answer. It was one of several recommendations proposed in an efficiency study of the MSB completed by the Logistics Management Institute, and it was endorsed during the Porter/Arthur Andersen study.

The cluster delivery system will replace the costly, labor-intensive door-to-door delivery system, enabling the MSB to focus on other productivity improvements. On-campus conversion began with Building 31 on Tuesday, January 19. Other buildings scheduled for conversion soon are 2, 12, 13, 36, 49, and the new Neuroscience Center at 6001 Executive Blvd. Most off-campus buildings and Natcher already successfully use the mail cluster system, as will all new NIH facilities as they are built. For more information on Mail Clustering, contact your Administrative Officer, Mail Manager, or the Mail Services Branch Customer Service Team at 6-3586 or www.nih.gov/od/ors/dss/mail/category.htm ●



YOU NEED TO KNOW

Important and useful information about ORS policies, procedures, and practices.

Comings and Goings

We are in the process of recruiting for the Director, Division of Intramural Research Services (DIRS). The director is responsible for managing a centralized program of intramural research services that include scientific equipment and instrumentation, veterinary resources, medical arts and photography, and library services.

Johnny Robbins was selected as Chief, Scientific Equipment and Instrumentation Branch (SEIB).

Lem Canady was appointed as the new Director of the Medical Arts and Photography Branch (MAPB).

ORS will begin recruiting for a new Director for the Office of Quality Development in early 1999, to replace Arturo Giron who left ORS to accept a position with the Peace Corps in Tonga.

After a long (40 year!) Government career, Bernie Mathews, ORS's EEO Officer retired in January. We're pleased to announce that June Johnson has been appointed as the new ORS EEO Officer.

Also planning to venture into retirement on April 1 is Joan Topalian, ORS's Executive Officer. Joan has spent her entire 34 year career here at NIH, and the last 10 with ORS as its very first EO. A farewell reception is being planned for March 31, 2-5 p.m. in Wilson Hall.

Center for Career Resources

The Center for Career Resources is now a component of the ORS Human Resources Branch. Located at the North Stonestreet facility, the CCR not only provides in-house training classes but also offers other career enhancement services designed to strengthen job skills. Skills assessments retraining is also available for employees whose jobs may be contracted out. Learn more about the CCR by calling 2-1082 or check out its web site: www.nih.gov/od/ors/od/oqd/career.htm.

CCR FY99 Course Offerings:

- *Time Management*
- *Stress Management*
- *Building Trust in Organizations*
- *The Power of Understanding*
- *Writing Advantage*
- *Presentation Advantage*
- *7 Habits for Employees*
- *Intro to Computers*
- *Intro to Windows 95*
- *WordPerfect*
- *MS Word*
- *Access, Excel, and Power Point*

FEGLI Open Season

The Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Open Season will run from April 24-June 30, 1999. Elections made during this 1999 open enrollment period will be effective on the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after April 23, 2000. A FEGLI Open Enrollment Hotline is now operational - call 202-606-0163. For further information, please contact your Servicing Personnel Assistant in the ORS Human Resources Branch.

Changes to the FEGLI Program

As a result of a new public law, several changes were made to the FEGLI Program. One change allows foster children to be covered under Option C (Family Option), similar to the coverage for foster children now permitted under the Federal Employees' Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. Another change allows for direct payment of premiums when an employee's pay is insufficient to make FEGLI withholdings. These changes are in effect now. For further information, contact your Servicing Personnel Assistant in the ORS Human Resources Branch.

Designations of Beneficiary Forms

If something happened to you, do you know who would receive your Thrift Savings, retirement, life insurance, or unpaid compensation benefits? Have you had a change in marital or family status? It is important to periodically review the forms you have on file to ensure that your beneficiary designations are current and accurate. The ORS Human Resources Branch can help you sort out your death benefits information. Call 402-1528 to make an appointment to meet with your Servicing Personnel Assistant.

Reasonable Accommodation During Inclement Weather

"Inclement weather advisory for today... extreme winter conditions exist....Federal employees are under unscheduled leave policy..." Sound familiar? It is the time

of year when extreme weather conditions might make it difficult for employees to get to work. Some physically challenged employees might have an especially hard time. Those employees and their supervisors should discuss accommodations that will make it possible for the employee to report for duty under adverse weather conditions.

Accommodations might include an escort from the parking lot into the building, or just a clear, well-sanded incline into the workplace. Once identified, a written agreement stating the needs should be drafted and submitted to the ORS Human Resources Branch. Questions about this issue can be directed to Jaime Arreguin-Avila at 2-8722.

The ORS Information Line: 4-6677

ORS has a confidential telephone line available to all ORS employees who wish to comment or express concerns about workplace issues. All calls are treated confidentially and all concerns are addressed. ●

ORS READIES FOR Y2K

An incredible amount of planning and hard work have been the key ingredients to preparing ORS ADP systems for the computer challenge of the new millennium - the year 2000. Linda Alger, Chief of the Information Technology Branch, is supervising coordinators from each ORS division who are testing hardware and software in all our facilities for Year 2000 compliance. Auditors from all areas in ORS are testing and assessing the hardware and commercial software on about 1,400 computers throughout ORS. Patient and animal care areas are considered high priorities and will receive outside audits for compliance.

In addition to ORS computer systems audits, the Division of Public Safety, in conjunction with CIT, is also working on a NIH-wide operations contingency plan to ensure the provision of essential services in the event of computer failures.

General information and assistance with PCs, Macs, and software is available at a web-based ADP information clearinghouse at oirm.cit.nih.gov/it_clear. Information regarding medical and lab equipment can be found at oirm.cit.nih.gov/biomedical.

All this effort is to ensure we have the necessary information technology resources to perform our mission into the 21st century. If you have any questions about Y2K compliance, please contact Linda Alger at 6-1004. ●



ORS ON THE MOVE

BEIP Realignment

The Biomedical Engineering and Instrumentation Program (BEIP) was recently split into two separate components: the Bioengineering and Physical Science Program (BEPS) and the Scientific Equipment and Instrumentation Branch (SEIB). This separation enables each one to focus more effectively on its mission.

BEPS, now a component of the ORS OD where scientific and engineering staff collaborate with NIH intramural scientists and use engineering, mathematics, and the physical sciences to solve problems on scientific protocols. Dr. Cherie Fisk is the Acting Director of BEPS.

The Scientific Equipment and Instrumentation Branch, a component of the ORS Division of Intramural Research Services, provides scientific and clinical equipment and instrumentation services to the NIH community. Services include custom equipment design and fabrication; and the lease, sale, maintenance, and repair of scientific equipment, computer workstations and peripherals. Johnny Robbins was recently appointed Branch Chief of the new SEIB.

AFGE Local 2419 raised \$500 to benefit the children who are patients at the Clinical Center through the raffle they sponsored in conjunction with the DES Holiday Party. Good job!

New Services under ORS Umbrella: Shuttle Service, Travel Service and Interpreting Service

On October 1, 1998, the management of the NIH shuttle service contract was transferred to the Division of Engineering Services, with Stella Serras-Fiotes serving as Project Manager. The shuttle bus service is as much an integral component of the NIH Transportation Management Plan as the management of roadways and parking. Encouraging the use of public transportation, minimizing the number of cars on campus, and efficient planning of employee parking are all directly dependent on an efficient shuttle service to move people around the campus. With the transfer of the shuttle service to ORS, the entire scope of transportation and parking is more easily coordinated. We have and will continue to seek employee feedback to continually adjust and improve shuttle and other transportation services. Checkout the new Shuttle Service routes at web site www.nih.gov/od/ors/shuttle/shuttle.htm.

The ORS Division of Support Services has recently taken over management of the NIH Travel Management Contract with Ober United Travel, and interpreting services for the NIH deaf/hard of hearing community. Tim Tosten, DSS Special Projects Manager, is the Project Officer on both contracts. ●

NEW ORS AWARDS PROGRAM

In 1998, ORS introduced a new awards program: the ORS Service Excellence Awards Program. Steve Ficca developed this program to recognize individual employees or groups of employees who demonstrate a commitment to delivering quality services to both NIH and ORS customers. Different from other NIH or ORS award programs, this one encourages ORS employees to nominate their coworkers for extraordinary and innovative accomplishments and contributions. Review and approval by a nominated employee's supervisor, manager or Division Director is not required for the nomination to be considered. The intent of this program is that every eligible employee, regardless of grade or position, has the opportunity to be nominated and recognized for a service excellence award.

The first awards under the new program were presented at the '98 Town Meeting in two categories: Customer Service and Teamwork. More categories may be added this year. Twenty-five employees received awards and fifty-four received honorable mention certificates for their efforts. We plan to announce the date to submit nominations much earlier this year to give everyone ample time to think about who they'd like to nominate for this prestigious award. You can find details about this program on the ORS website: www.nih.gov/od/ors/od/oqd/servawd.htm. ●

ORS ink.

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Let us know what you think about this newsletter, your thoughts about a particular article, or what you'd like to see in future issues. ORS is your organization and your opinion counts!

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