

August 1999, Issue 14

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The Art of Getting Around:

Updates for drivers and riders

Convent Drive

Since Convent Drive was closed between Center and South Drive on June 1, the campus shuttle schedule and stops have been affected. ORS had originally planned to solve this problem by reopening the closed section in early August and additionally creating a bypass near the Convent/Center intersection. We determined that this would create more problems than it would solve, both in circulation and in safety, at this very congested intersection. Therefore, throughout the summer months when traffic volumes are at their lowest, one portion of Convent Drive will be open and another section closed at the intersection.

Unfortunately, this decision will create an added impact to the users of the ACRF garage who enter from the west B1 ramp. They will be able to enter and leave from the south only. A new advisory will be prepared with a map and details. The situation will be reevaluated in August to see if the work can be finished before the traffic peaks again in September. Traffic will be monitored during this period to determine if there are any negative impacts to Convent Drive, Lincoln Street and Old Georgetown Road.

More Parking Available

A portion of the parking lot on Convent Drive was opened in early June. Additional sections were opened at the end of July.

New Shuttle Stop: 6700B Rockledge

The newest stop on the Rockledge route is the leased facility at 6700B Rockledge Drive. Any new or changed schedules are available on the web.

Information

the latest information on **road closures**:

DES Construction Advisories at

<http://des.od.nih.gov/scripts/advisory>,

or via link from the **shuttle information** page at

<http://www.nih.gov/od/ors/shuttle/shuttle.htm>

or Stella Serras-Fiotes
6-5077 or e-mail serrasfs@ors.od.nih.gov

A Sure-FIRE Safety System

After three years of extensive research and testing, the Fire Prevention Section (FPS) of the Division of Public Safety, working with the Division of Engineering Services, has introduced a new state-of-the-art fire alarm system to the Clinical Center.

More than 4,000 new devices were individually tested before the old system was dismantled and the new system was activated. To verify and ensure proper operation and activation sequences, the FPS completed extensive testing by simulating alarm conditions. This system includes smoke detectors, manual pull stations, sprinkler system water flow switches, audiovisual alarms, and overhead speakers. It can be activated both manually and automatically.

There is no comparison between the old and new systems. This new system simultaneously--verbally--instructs occupants on what to do and where to go; pin points, for the NIH Fire Department, the exact location of the alarm and the specific type of device initiating the alarm; and indicates the affected and potentially affected area(s)/zone (s). Evacuation by zone is not only practical, but a necessity in a building as large as the Clinical Center.

"The system even monitors itself to make sure that all of its components are working!" stated J.P. McCabe, Chief, FPS. "It is also electronically supervised to prevent tampering. If something is beginning to malfunction, a trouble signal is transmitted to the NIH Fire Department; the person on duty calls the Electric Shop and a response is initiated immediately."

Currently the FPS is in the process of informing/training all Clinical Center occupants on the features of the new system. If you have not received training and have not been contacted to schedule it, please call the number below.

Information
Fire Prevention Section 6-0487

The Y2K Millennium Bug:

Is it 2000 or 1900?

The Y2K problem threatens to disrupt computer operations as we enter the new millennium. Whether you think this will be a non-event, a series of inconveniences, or the end of the world, ORS has an obligation to the NIH to prepare for its *potential* impact on our computers.

ORS is responsible for the operation of more than 200 NIH-owned and leased facilities, far and near. In addition to the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of these facilities, ORS is responsible for Y2K planning.

The Y2K building and facilities focus has been narrowed to ten systems with the greatest potential risk to proper operation of NIH facilities in the new millennium. They include fire alarm/protection; uninterruptable power supply systems that operate during electrical outages; heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (and any equipment that contributes to a safe working environment); systems that monitor environmental conditions in research space; lighting; security; electrical distribution systems; and monitoring systems for freezer storage requirements for research.

Eight of the ten building systems have already been certified to be "Y2K Compliant" by the equipment manufacturers and/or vendors. "Compliance" means that the system either does not use date and time functions to process information, or the system does not contain microprocessors or embedded chips. The two remaining systems are being replaced and will be certified very soon.

We are now entering the testing phase of over 1,000 building systems to make sure they perform required date and time functions without detrimental impact to ongoing research. Each system and its components, microprocessors and embedded chips will be tested against approximately thirteen dates considered in the industry to be Y2K-sensitive. Test results will be used to create action plans to correct malfunctions or develop alternative strategies.

For further protection and security, ORS is working with the Center for Information Technology and DHHS in developing contingency plans to address a myriad of potential issues which could surface as we enter and operate in the new millennium. Our plans will identify key personnel who will be part of Day One Teams that will manage and resolve issues. The plan will provide strategies to deal with possible power outages, water shortages, fuel storage and supply requirements, loss of communication systems, and other essential services that support NIH's mission.

Happy New Year!?!

Information
Division of Engineering Services' Y2K Home Page
<http://des.od.nih.gov/Y2K>

Safety Links' Success

The success of the IC Safety Committees reflects a management approach that empowers an employee with the responsibility and the mechanism to make their worksite a safer place. IC Safety Committees provide a focus for safety and health issues and they work to increase the safety culture at NIH.

The Occupational Safety and Health Branch (OSHB) of our Division of Safety provides the tools, expertise, and guidance to support the IC Safety Committees, coordinating the committees as well as the individuals designated to be Safety Links.

Each Institute has a Safety Committee, with the Committee Chair serving as the principal safety contact for the Institute. In many ICs, Safety Links have been appointed as additional points of contact to develop and distribute safety related ideas and information.

The NIH enjoys a unique safety partnership that exists between ORS safety experts and the researchers at the bench, craftsmen in the shops and administrators in the office. The connection has been made more effective through the IC Safety Committees, and with individual Safety Links at the grassroots.

The mascot that serves as a visual program identification for the IC Safety Program is a figure called Link, symbolizing the many "links" it takes to go from organization to organization to make NIH a safer place to work. Link looks like a person comprised of links of a chain, with a safety ring for the body and a yellow hard hat. Link was developed by the Safety Links.

Two examples of Safety Links at work:

On the Internet, an employee read about a tragic fire in a university lab. Reading the description of the accident, the NIH employee realized that the cause involved a technique widely used at NIH. The information was communicated to their IC Safety Committee, which then developed a recommendation for new procedures to avoid a similar fire in NIH labs.

Dr. Hess of NHGRI noted that a major duty of an IC Safety Committee is to perform an annual safety survey of their IC. Recently a survey resulted in procedural changes for the cold storage of flammable liquids. He also noted with pride that the NHGRI Safety Committee had developed their own web page.

Information
www.nih.gov/od/ors/ds/safetylinks/index.htm

or

**IC Safety Committees coordinator,
Ros Rutledge-Burns 6-2346**

DSS Awards Interpreting Contract:

Services now widely available

The new NIH-wide Interpreting Services contract was awarded to Sign Language Associates (SLA) by our Division of Support Services (DSS). A broad range of interpreting services are now available to all NIH employees, visitors and patients.

Since 1988, the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) has provided interpreting services to the NIH community through a variety of means. Under this new contract, these services are all provided to the NIH centrally (including those ICs with programs located in Baltimore) through the Special Program Services Office (SPSO) located within DSS. SPSO is monitoring quality, assisting in scheduling, and acting as the point of contact for the provision of all interpreting services to the NIH.

SLA provides many types of interpreting (sign language, tactile, oral, etc.) for the following purposes:

- general meetings;
- campus-wide activities;
- special programs;
- scientific conferences and lectures;
- one-on-one meetings between

supervisors and employees *and*

doctors and patients;

- and other ongoing requirements.

A consumer manual, which is available now, has been produced to give instructions on how to obtain interpreting services. If there are any questions regarding these new services, or if you would like to receive a manual, please contact Tim Tosten, the Project Officer.

Information
Tim Tosten, Special Projects Manager
Phone: 2-8180 Fax: 2-1364
TTY: 5-1908

WANTED: Vanpool Riders

Annapolis to NIH

Hours 7:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Annapolis--Davidsonville--Bowie--NIH/Bethesda

Contact: Tommy Beall 2-2606

Woodbridge to NIH

Hours 7:15 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Woodbridge--Lorton--NIH/Bethesda

Contact: Paula Lee 2-3441

Call about other openings!

**Information
Employee Transportation Services Office 2-RIDE**

More Mail for Your Money:

The right choice can save you \$\$\$

Selecting the right mail class can result in significant savings for NIH mail customers. Answers to these two key questions determine the class:

What am I mailing? *and*
When does it really have to arrive?

Our Mail and Courier Services Branch (MCSB) saves NIH thousands of dollars a year by making sure they know and use every available option offered by the U.S. Postal Service. Since the MCSB staff are experts on postage savings, you don't have to know all the details. You can help by considering when the item really needs to arrive. That is not as easy as it sounds in this world where everything is moving faster and faster, thanks to the Internet.

Here are some facts about mail that may help you when you are making delivery decisions:

Special Standard: for books, other publications and sound recordings mailed *to academic and nonprofit organizations*; packages must weigh more than 13 ounces; delivery time cannot be urgent. Transit time is *slightly slower* than First Class and Priority Mail, but the *cost is significantly less*.

Parcel Post: no restriction on recipient status; primarily for items that weigh 1-70 pounds; delivery is not urgent. Again, delivery time is only slightly slower, and the savings are significant.

First Class and Priority: for those times when your domestic mailings *must* reach their destinations within two to three days; the choice between the two depends upon the weight of the item. Please identify these mailings properly so they will be processed correctly by MCSB. Write, type, or stamp "FIRST CLASS" above the address line of the envelope or small parcel.

We do not want to nag, but we need to stress:

*Unnecessary use of
First Class and Priority Mail
wastes your money.*

Get the service you need at a price that makes sense. The MCSB staff is available to help you make the right choices. Please call them with any questions, about this specific subject or any other mail or delivery service.

Information
MCSB 6-3586 or
e-mail MCSBCS@mail.nih.gov



OBER Advisories
from OBER United Travel,
our Travel Management Center

Travel Updates



Time-Saving Tip
Fax your Travel Order to
OBER's Executive Plaza-South
Office:

20015

No Order, No Ticket!

Without having the Travel Order (TO) in hand, OBER United Travel absolutely cannot issue tickets. The GSA rules are *very* strict. Not having your TO to OBER in time can negatively affect your trip by causing a delay or possibly even a cancellation. OBER agents have been trying to keep our travelers from missing their trips by calling when the TO has not arrived in time, but that is not their responsibility. *And*, it takes them away from answering NIH travelers' calls.

How Can You Help?

Please prepare and submit your TO to OBER as early as possible, no less than two weeks before your travel date. This time frame allows OBER to provide quality, error free service. However, should you experience a genuine emergency—an unusually short-notice trip—OBER will do everything within their power to assist you.

Logistics

OBER's objective is to issue each ticket and have it at the most convenient location for you, EPS or Building 10, when you need it. Tickets are generally issued ten days prior to departure. Pickup and delivery by NIH couriers or mail personnel must also be taken into consideration.

Again, a ticket cannot be issued if the TO has not been received. Each traveler is responsible for getting the TO to OBER at least two weeks prior to travel, if not earlier, to avoid problems.

The Head Office = the Best Service

OBER does most of its ticketing at its head office in Chevy Chase. There they have the cream of the crop: seasoned travel experts who have literally `been there, done that.'

OBER's goal is to give each traveler 100% accuracy and arrangements that achieve the following:

- arrangements that reflect *exactly* what you want;
- your travel and schedule needs are met;
- money is saved with the best fares;
- the hassle of travel is minimized;
- errors are anticipated and avoided; and
- real travel difficulties are eliminated.

When IS My Plane Leaving?

A ticketing issue

Airlines are making more than 100,000 schedule changes *a day*. Therefore, OBER will issue most tickets reasonably close to individuals' travel dates so the tickets will be printed with the correct times. This way, the chances of a change in schedule is minimized, but it is not eliminated. Travelers should call the airline 24 hours before departure to be sure that there have not been changes. It seems like an unnecessary step, however, it is better to make that call than be surprised at the airport.

If you will be away—or for some other reason need your ticket early, let OBER know and they will accommodate your schedule.

Luggage: Know Your Limit

Have you ever gotten to the airport a bit later than you wanted to, run to the plane, and boarded to find that there is no room in nearby overheads for your carry-on bags? It is not unusual for the overheads to get filled long before the majority of passengers have boarded.

Many travelers bring too many oversized pieces of carry-on luggage with them. Airlines have been aware of this problem for a long while, and are beginning to change carry-on policies. The stricter regulations please some consumers and anger others.

All airlines are trying to regulate carry-ons. Most airlines allow each passenger to carry on two bags. Included in the 'bags' category—in addition to suitcases and garment bags—are briefcases, camera bags, computers, and large purses or totes. Reasonably-sized, normal handbags (25 linear inches, according to one airline) are not considered carry-on luggage.

Most major airlines such as United, Delta, American, and US Airways have signs posted that warn passengers of the restrictions.

If you are traveling and are unsure of your airline's rules, go to their web site for the details, or call and ask. Many airline web sites have very exact descriptions of what is allowed.

Information: the Internet
one example-- www.united.com

Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping:

Keeping NIH Beautiful, Season after Season

An NIH Champion of Another Kind: Arbor Day award won

On an April Sunday, in celebration of Arbor Day, Janyce Hedetniemi, Director of the Office of Community Liaison and Lynn Mueller, Chief of the Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping Section (GMLS) were presented with a certificate from the Montgomery County Forestry Board for a 1999 Montgomery County Champion Tree.

The champion tree, largest of its kind in the county, is a Japanese sawleaf zelkova located off the southwest corner of Building 1. It and several others were planted by GMLS in 1972 to replace dying red oaks, which were the original trees that were planted when Building 1 was completed in 1939. The tree is a little over 33 inches in diameter and 99 inches in circumference. It is 54 feet tall and has a crown spread of 82 feet. There is a nearby commemorative plaque as well.

Lynn plans to submit several other nominations for other outstanding trees on campus for the next Arbor Day Champion Tree ceremony in 2001. Anyone who thinks they have or knows off an exceptionally large tree for a particular species call the Forestry Board at 301-854-6060 and request a nominating form.

GMLS Provides Flower Power:

Heavens need to supply rain!

Our Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping Section (GMLS) has been busy planting thousands of beautiful annual flowers throughout the campus. GMLS chose pink geraniums to adorn the base of each of the elms they planted last fall along Center Drive from the Natcher Building to South Drive. They should provide excellent color through the summer, as should the perennials that they have planted. The perennials include Black-eyed Susans, Purple Cone Flowers and Shasta Daisies.

GMLS planted the annuals after they finished installing an unusually high number of replacement and new trees to compensate for all the trees that were lost due to CRC and Building 40 construction. In 1999 alone--so far--GMLS has planted 287 trees. This number does not include contractor-installed trees or the work it has taken to dig holes and nurture the hundreds of flowering shrubs that have also been installed. Now, like everyone else in the area, we need several good soaking rains to help keep it all flourishing!

America's Favorite Tree

Returns to NIH

In fashion, styles go in and out of favor, but if you wait long enough, it seems that everything returns to popularity. This is what is happening to one of America's favorite trees, the American elm. But its demise was not due to boredom with its look, it was due to Dutch Elm Disease.

The American elm was nearly wiped off the face of the earth over the past 60 years due to the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease. Now, there are new varieties of the elm that have been developed to be disease-resistant by the nonprofit Elm Research Institute, the US Department of agriculture, and other organizations. Thousands of trees have been tested over the past 30 years. New varieties such as Valley Forge, New Harmony, Washington, Nassau, and Liberty are being grown and marketed by select nurseries.

Last fall, our Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping Section (GMLS) purchased 23 of the Nassau variety and planted them across the campus, with the greatest concentration along Center Drive between the Natcher Building and South Drive. As long ago as 1994, they had planted a Liberty Elm in the memory of Arthur Ashe to commemorate World AIDS Day. You can see that flourishing tree if you look around the Building 31 patio.

At one time, the NIH campus had several hundred of these majestic umbrella-shaped trees. The 1998 census recorded 18 elms on our 300-acre campus. Our commitment to elms will not only add back one of America's most important and attractive street trees to our landscape, it will also add to the diversification of native species on campus. In addition to Nassau and Liberty, GMLS is planting other varieties as they are available. A special elm planting took place in the Natcher Building courtyard during an Arbor Day recognition event on April 7.



Information
Lynn Mueller 6-4817
 e-mail muellerl@ors.od.nih.gov



ORS Puts Locksmith Services On-line

In an effort to improve locksmith services, the Division of Public Safety formed a committee that included intramural and extramural representatives. The result? On-line locksmith services developed by the Center for Information Technology. An added benefit is the elimination of data entry for 1,000 key requests per month! The following services, and more, are available through the Administrative Data Base System:

- keys: new and lost, for doors, file cabinets, desks...and door key returns
- door key reassignments and cylinder changes
- emergency locksmith services (please follow up with a phone call)

Employees requiring locksmith services should contact their AO for specific instructions and information. Paper

copies of Form 2138 are no longer accepted.

Information: Locksmith Section 6-3507 or www-dw.cit.nih.gov/dbaslock.htm

Commuting Blues?

The North Bethesda Transportation Center Wants to Help

In addition to the parking and transportation services we provide at NIH, a great variety of additional services are available through the North Bethesda Transportation Center, which exists to reduce area traffic. Their projects involve pedestrian and bicycle transportation, bus stop upgrades and safety, and incentives for people who take public transit or vanpools or bicycles to work. Plans include high-tech transit information centers, a multi-modal convenience pass, and an emergency ride home program for van and carpoolers that may be of particular interest to the NIH commuter community.

Information: North Bethesda Transportation Center (301) 770-8108

Mission:

Communications

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform and communicate with the entire NIH community about ORS projects, policy changes and initiatives that are of immediate practical interest, along with some items that might be filed away for future use. The Office of Research Services directly affects you and the place where you spend your whole day—your office, your building, your entire organization. Therefore, your satisfaction is our utmost concern. Please let us hear your ideas and comments.

News: to Use!

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Question of the month!

When a community is as large as NIH, it is helpful to know more about each other. If you would like to share your story, please fax or e-mail as instructed below. Answer in the space below or feel free to use a separate sheet, addressed "News to Use Question."

How did you come to NIH, and what keeps you here?

[Fax your comments](#) to Mr. Ficca's office: 2-0604

or send e-mail to [DSS Customer Service](#)