

# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

August 2001 • Vol. 9, Issue 8

## Employee of the Month

### Big or Small...All Projects Valued by IS&C's Bev Thomas

Bev Thomas, a Program Analyst 1 for the Development Center of the Information Services and Communications Division, has been selected as the Department's **Employee of the Month** for August.

A 35-year employee of state government, Bev is responsible for maintaining the Department of Education's Stanford Testing results and the Education Writing Assessment jobs.

Bev also maintains the com-

puter programs for the State Capitol Telephone Directory.

According to one of her co-workers, "Bev takes on new assignments, big or small, with a cheerful can-do attitude." Another co-worker adds, "She is very conscientious, friendly to all and has quite a knack for working with customers to ensure that they are pleased with the work she has delivered."

In her spare time, Bev enjoys watching football. She claims to be a BIG West Virginia University fan. Bev also enjoys spending time with her two dogs, Peanut and Patti Jo.

Please join Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton and all of Bev's friends and co-workers at her **Employee of the Month** presentation at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, August 1st at IS&C's Kanawha City Office.



**BEV THOMAS**  
August Employee  
of the Month

## Under Construction

### Renovation Begins on the Governor's Mansion



Scaffolding has been erected at the Governor's Mansion in preparation of the repairs to be made on the main columns.

The General Services Division recently began restoring the Governor's Mansion to its original beauty.

Acting Director David Pentz of the General Services Division was charged to oversee this project by Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton. "We have several significant problems," Pentz said. "So we put this project as top priority. It (the building) was literally falling apart when we first inspected it."

The first phase involves the restoration of the porch. Bill Pauley, Acting Deputy Direc-

tor, explains that the goal is to return the structure of the porch to its original grandeur. "We're going to restore what they call a balustrade (a banister) to this porch, which was removed at some time," Pauley explains.

Among the challenges facing General Services staff are rotted column bases, broken tile on the porch, and inadequate lighting.

General Services is unsure of the extent of the repairs needed

**Governor's Mansion**  
Continued on Page 5

## Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- ◆ Safety in the Workplace
- ◆ Division of Personnel Creates Online Calculation of Leave
- ◆ **PEIA Days** Bring Answers to Questions about Program
- ◆ State Ends Fiscal Year with \$25 Million Surplus
- ◆ People Talk

# Safety at the Workplace...

## Measures Taken to Ensure Employee Protection

### Chuck Starcher Speaks Out...

#### Workplace Violence

"The number one problem in the workplace now is domestic violence."

#### Capitol Police

"We are a full-ability police force. We have the authority to arrest and to investigate crimes."

#### Workplace Crime Prevention

"Don't leave money out...If you leave your office for any amount of time, lock [valuables] up."

#### Safety Outside

"Leaving the building in the evening, just be smart...Be aware of your surroundings."

By Carrie McComas  
Communication Intern

Homicide, burglary, domestic abuse and accidents...We live in a dangerous world, and unfortunately, the workplace is no exception.

For this reason, Chuck Starcher, Director of the Division of Protective Services, said he believes it is extremely important that state government takes extensive precautions to make our workplace safe.

"After this year, we will have spent \$3 million," Starcher said, adding that the amount of money spent on safety at the Capitol Complex shows that others are also concerned. "Much of the expense is to increase the safety of the people that work here, visit here, and do business here."

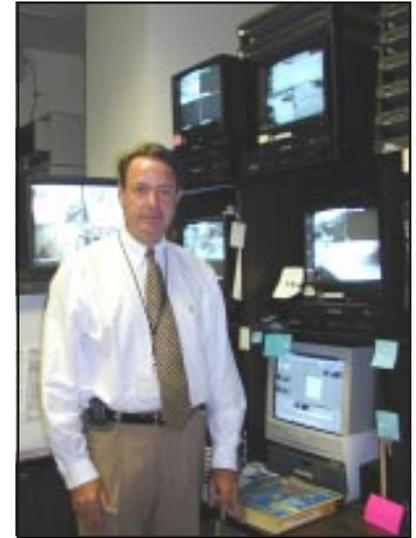
**What has the money been used for?** The list includes card systems, electronic door locks, reinforced doors, metal detec-

tors, and security services. "We have installed many security cameras," Starcher said. "We can just about cover the outside of the entire complex now."

Starcher describes the Capitol Complex as a small city, with similar problems. To counteract such crimes, the Division of Protective Services has taken great measures to keep state workers safe. "Our Division was very instrumental in the design of the security system in the Diamond Building," Starcher said. "I would like for everything to be like the Diamond." Unfortunately, Starcher added, the Capitol Complex is a very public area, so it is impossible to secure it in a similar way.

Therefore, Protective Services has used other means to reduce the threat of workplace crime at the Capitol Complex. "The Senate now has electronic door locks," assured Starcher, who is planning to have the same security for the House of Representatives.

Starcher's focus goes beyond electronic improvements. Protective Services of-



**Chuck Starcher, Director of Protective Services Division, is pictured at the "command center" with surveillance screens. There are 60 cameras in service on the Capitol grounds with approximately 80 cameras soon to be installed.**

fers to escort employees to their cars, or other locations, if they feel unsafe at any time. In addition, security guards also have the power to arrest on campus.

Starcher said he hopes to offer seminars to state employees soon on safety. **For more details, please call 558-9911 or 558-5715.** Starcher states that while the Capitol Complex is a safe place to work, there is always a potential for problems. "That's why we're here," Starcher said. "We want to make sure nothing serious happens."

## BUSINESS

### R I E F S

#### Fastest Growing Occupations

The U.S. Labor Department predicts that the fastest-growing occupations through the year 2008 will be database administrators, computer engineers, systems analysts, teachers, librarians and counselors. Health care workers of all kinds will be needed to take care of aging baby boomers, who will be able to afford the best care and attention.

Right now, the need for nurses is critical. To encourage entering the profession, employers offer more flexible hours and less overtime. There are Web alternatives to expensive classes and more scholarships.

#### **General Statistics in the U.S.**

Each workday, there are...

- ✓ 16,400 threats
- ✓ 723 workers attacked
- ✓ 43,800 harassed workers

Approximately 960,000 women experience domestic violence at work.

Homicide was the leading cause of workplace death last year in the United States.

## MILESTONES

### Honoring our Employees' Service Years

Our Department values its employees and the knowledge and dedication they share in their agencies.

Congratulations to those employees who are celebrating their service year anniversaries this month:

#### **5 YEARS**

Dawna Skaggs  
(Finance Division)

#### **10 YEARS**

Regina Tucker  
(PEIA)

#### **15 YEARS**

Tammy Goad  
(Leasing Office)

Carlos Neccuzi  
(IS&C Division)

#### **20 YEARS**

Curt Curtiss  
(Purchasing Division)

Sharon Pruettt  
(CPRB)

Diane Tittle  
(PEIA)

### Public Service Recognition Week Planned

Public Service Recognition Week has been scheduled for September 24-28, in honor of all public employees. The official ceremony to kick off the week will be held on September 24 on the North Capitol steps.

More details will be reported in the next issue of **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes**.

## PEIA Days: Visiting West Virginia Communities to Explain Services

**PEIA Days will be coming to a community near you soon!**

According to a recent announcement by Governor Bob Wise, the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) will conduct a series of events across the state to answer members' questions about PEIA, gather information about what services members value most and determine how customer service might be improved.

"PEIA Days is another example of my commitment to make government more customer friendly," Gov. Wise said. "These events give members a chance to voice their opinions and concerns."

With the first event conducted on July 12 in

Beckley, each event will begin with focus groups where members will have a chance to meet face-to-face with customer service representatives. It will conclude with a public listening session where questions will be answered by PEIA administrators in a town hall meeting format.

"We want to hear firsthand from the people whose opinions matter most. This is a great opportunity for members to share their views with us and help our organization serve them better," said PEIA Director Tom Susman.

If you have questions regarding PEIA Days or are interested in participating in the scheduled focus groups, please call toll-free 1-888-680-7342.



Searching is half the fun: life is much more manageable when thought of as a scavenger hunt as opposed to a surprise party.

**Jimmy Buffet**

## What Are We Talking About?

Studies show that we are talking with our bosses and co-workers not only around the watercooler, but in the hallways and outside of our offices. But what are we saying? According to an OfficeTeam report:



**39 percent** of information conversations are work-related

**9 percent** are office gossip

**7 percent** are about investments and mergers

**6 percent** are about sports

**5 percent** are about politics

**17 percent** are about other topics, such as humor, hobbies, families, vacations, and personal problems.

- adapted from **Business Psychology News**

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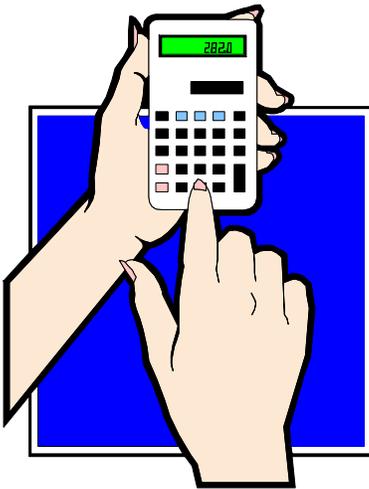
**Bob Wise**  
Governor

**Gregory A. Burton**  
Cabinet Secretary

**Diane Holley**  
Public Information Officer/Editor

#### Special Thanks

Mike Campbell  
Carrie McComas  
Kaye Parks  
Donna Prunty



Division of Personnel is utilizing online calculators to gain information for agency personnel offices and for employees.

### Employees Helping One Another

The Donation Leave Program allows state employees to offer annual leave to another state employee who has expired all annual and sick leave. The annual leave is converted into sick leave for the employee in need.

For more details on this program, visit the Division of Personnel's website at [www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empcom/cover.htm](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empcom/cover.htm).

## Calculate THIS!

# Division of Personnel Offers Online Help in Calculating Employment Benefits

By Mike Campbell  
Division of Personnel

The Division of Personnel recently expanded its website ([www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel)) to include interactive forms which can assist

state agency personnel offices and employees in performing certain cumbersome payroll related computations.

One such calculator can be used to quickly determine Workers' Compensation/Sick Leave reimbursement, or "buy back" amounts.

**West Virginia Code** and the Division of Personnel policy prohibits employees from receiving payment for sick leave and for Workers' Compensation Temporary Total Disability (TTD) benefits for the same period. Employees who elect to receive TTD have the option of utilizing paid sick leave until the initial benefit check is received. However, the employee must reimburse the state the net value of any sick leave used. Unfortunately, the computation of the reimbursable amount can be just a bit tedious.

With the on-line Sick Leave Buy-Back calculator, the user agency can simply enter the basic pay information, deductions, and the number of buy-back days on a simple form, and instantly compute the reimbursement amount and the agency credit for each de-

duction. Complete instructions and links to the formal policy are provided on screen.

Another form available on the Division of Personnel website can greatly facilitate the computation of Pro-Rata Annual Increment payments.

**West Virginia Code** and Personnel policy require that separating employees be paid the annual increment on a pro rata basis for the portion of service rendered during the current fiscal year of employment. The on-line increment calculator will quickly compute these partial increment payments. It includes a feature by which any unused annual leave is converted to the equivalent increment tenure. Similar to the Sick Leave buy back procedure, a user simply enters information on a screen form, and clicks "Compute".

Both the Sick Leave Buy-Back and the Pro-Rata Increment calculators are available in the Employee Information and Payroll Audit section of the Division of Personnel website at [www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empinfo/default.htm](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empinfo/default.htm).

Other calculators are also available which may be of interest to agency personnel staff and employees. The **Links and Reference** section of the Division of Personnel website includes a **Typing Speed Estimator** (just for fun) and an **Accrued Leave Calculator**. The leave calculator can be used by employees to determine how much leave must be used to avoid exceeding the maximum carry-forward amount.

The Division of Personnel always welcomes suggestions to its website. **HAPPY COMPUTING!**

## Educational Reimbursement Policy Assists Employees in Reaching Goals

### Are you thinking of going back to school?

The Educational Expense Reimbursement/Leave Program (EERL) enables agencies to reimburse employees for employment-related educational expenses and/or grant educational leave dependent on the availability of funding. The key is *prior departmental approval*.

Each agency or department has established its own program based on specified eligibility requirements, application procedures and reimbursement/leave guidelines. Eligibility is limited to full-time permanent employees.

For more details, please refer to the EERL policy at the Division of Personnel's website ([www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel](http://www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel)) or contact its office at (304) 558-3950, ext. 504.



# State Ends Year with \$25 Million Surplus

Governor Bob Wise recently announced that state government ended its financial year June 30 with an estimated \$25 million surplus in the general revenue fund.

"It wasn't easy to sign a 3 percent budget cut on my first day in office," Wise said. "But the spending reductions that were implemented in January of 2001 forced agencies to tighten their budgets and

work more efficiently."

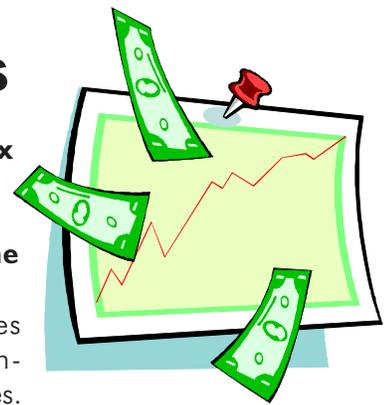
About \$2,718,380,000 was collected in the General Revenue fund, about \$1 million over the official revenue estimate of \$2,717,350,000. That \$1 million, combined with the \$24 million spending reduction, resulted in a general revenue surplus of approximately \$25 million.

Revenue collections for the following taxes were higher than

estimated: **Severance tax** (\$19.2 million); **Personal Income tax** (\$17.2 million); **Interest income** (\$10.4 million).

Higher energy prices contributed to the increase in severance taxes. Steady gains in employment and wage income caused withholding taxes to grow by 5.7 percent. Higher interest rates in the first six months of the year contributed to increased interest income.

The administration sets the official revenue estimates during the budget process preceding the beginning of each fiscal year. Spending within the state's general revenue fund budget is limited to the total amount of those projected collections for the year. When the actual revenue collections exceed the official estimates for a year, half of the surplus is automatically set aside for the state's Rainy Day Fund and the other half is allocated at the discretion of the State Legislature.



Governor Wise projects that \$12.5 million will be deposited into the Rainy Day Fund after all final bills are paid on July 31, 2001. House Bill 302 appropriated \$4,799,000 of any surplus for the 2001 fiscal year. An additional \$7,689,000 is expected to be available for appropriation by the Legislature.

## Governor's Mansion Continued from Page 1

at the Governor's Mansion. Once the preservation begins, the staff will have a better knowledge of the tasks to be completed. "There are things you can't see at first," Pentz explains. "We're prepared for the unknown."

Due to the volume of the work, the General Services Division has enlisted the help of an architectural firm, N/Visions; a restoration specialist, George Soltis; and Wiseman Construction Company...all West Virginia businesses.

This project differs from other Capitol Complex projects because it is a residence. "I appreciate all of the cooperation we've received from Governor (Bob) Wise and the First Lady while working on the mansion," Pentz said. "It can be very difficult trying to raise a family in this situation, but they understand that we're trying to preserve part of the state's history. It's a win-win situation."

Phase I is estimated to take 8-10 weeks to complete, after which General Services will embark on Phase II, which includes painting the entire exterior of the structure.

**Why this restoration is so important?** "We want to preserve the mansion, make it look nice not only for the Governor and his family, but also for the people of West Virginia," Pentz said. "With the ground floor being public space, we're doing these repairs for all West Virginians. We hope that future generations will have the opportunity and privilege to visit this state landmark."

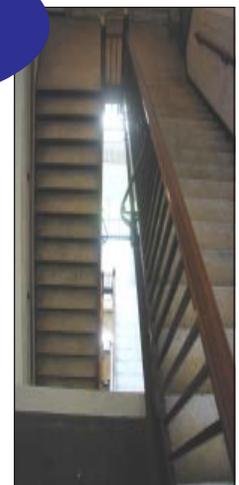


**General Services Acting Director David Pentz (l) and Acting Deputy Director Bill Pauley display areas that need to be repaired at the Governor's Mansion.**

## Where is This?

**Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes** is beginning a new monthly series which will display a picture of an object located at the State Capitol Complex...your mission is to find out where it is.

The answer to this month's mystery picture can be found on page 6 of this issue of the newsletter.



## A Message From... Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton

### Let Us Know What You Think!

The Department of Administration recently distributed an Employee Survey to find out your opinions and attitudes toward various aspects of your job.

Some of the questions related to work environment, communication, resources, wages, benefits, recognition and job expectations.

In order to make positive improvements in our Department, it is important to determine the levels of satisfaction in these various areas. Thank you for your cooperation.

A private consultant has been asked to tabulate the responses and provide us with an analysis. We hope to share the results with you in a future issue of **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes**.

### Where is This?

Answer from Page 5

Does the stairwell in the picture on page 5 look familiar? It is located in the west wing of the main Capitol Building. The stairs lead to the roof of the Capitol Building, with a door opening near the base of the dome. It is one of the less traveled staircases.

**Are you enjoying this feature in the newsletter?** Special thanks to Finance's Diana Schwab who came up with the idea. If you would like to offer your comments or suggestions concerning **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes**, contact Editor Diane Holley at (304) 558-0661 (e-mail: [dholley@gwmail.state.wv.us](mailto:dholley@gwmail.state.wv.us)).

**Welcome to the Department! ... Karen Byrd** and **Chester Popham** (Purchasing), **Brenda Brooks** and **Tracy Ketter** (Personnel), **Tammy Patton** and **Regina Williams** (CPRB), **Bill Gillespie** (Leasing), and **Thomas Booth** (Public Defender Services).

**A Job Well Done!...** Congratulations to **Pat Abbott** of PEIA who was recently promoted from an Accounting Technician II to an Accounting Technicia IV.

**Best Wishes...** to **Harold Matthews** (General Services), **Lorena Dotson** (CPRB), **Perry Dotson** (Personnel) and **Irene Jones** (Personnel), who have retired from state government. We also give our best to those who have recently resigned: **Walter Hammack** (Purchasing); **Angela O'Neal** (Personnel); and **Frank Unger** (General Services).

### PEOPLE TALK

**Why Wait?...** The West Virginia Public Employees Credit Union is offering bigger and better vacation loans. They have increased the amount you can borrow to \$2,000 and a reduced rate as low as 9.99% APR. The amount is re-paid over 15 months at \$142.40 per month. For more details, call WPECU at 558-0566. Don't wait too long, this deal ends August 31, 2001!

**Until you value yourself, you will not value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it...**

M. Scott Peck

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY... in August

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>3</b> Nancy Price ..... Purchasing<br>Jack Rogers .... Public Defender                          | <b>18</b> Beverly Toler ..... Purchasing  |
| <b>4</b> Sabrina Snead ..... IS&C<br>Marvin Vititoe ..... Purchasing<br>Jim Wells ..... Personnel  | <b>19</b> Annie Anderson ..... IS&C<br>Dale Newhouse ... Gen. Services<br>Tammy Scruggs ..... Finance<br>Dave Tinchler ..... Purchasing |
| <b>6</b> Sheila Straley ..... Finance  | <b>20</b> Robert Fisher ..... BRIM  |
| <b>8</b> Kellie Carper .... Public Defender<br>Robin Chambers ..... IS&C                           | <b>21</b> Cindy Dillon ..... Finance<br>Tim Miller ..... Purchasing   |
| <b>9</b> Dave Gilbert ..... Purchasing<br>Melissa King ..... CPRB                                  | <b>22</b> Kevin Henson ..... IS&C<br>Martha Phillips .. Gen. Services<br>Dreighton Rosier ..... CPRB                                    |
| <b>10</b> Larry Meninger ..... IS&C<br>Ed Mullins ..... IS&C                                       | <b>25</b> Tammy Patton ..... CPRB<br>Bonnie Walker .... Personnel   |
| <b>12</b> Ed Nelson ..... IS&C   | <b>26</b> Sheila Coughlin.. Public Defender<br>Janis Reynolds .... Grievance  |
| <b>13</b> Darrell Stephenson .... Gen. Services  | <b>29</b> Anne Coleman ..... CPRB<br>Mary Cummings ..... IS&C   |
| <b>14</b> Marta Dean ..... IS&C  | <b>30</b> Joanna Smith ..... PEIA<br>Nancy Stark ..... IS&C<br>Claudia White ..... CPRB   |
| <b>15</b> Mairlyn Padon ..... IS&C   | <b>31</b> Sharon Carte ..... WV CHIP  |
| <b>16</b> Susan Cupit ..... Finance<br>Frank Drobot ..... Sec. Office<br>Joyce Larrabee ..... IS&C |   |

