

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

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Employee of the Month

FARS' Linda Lyter Personifies Customer Service

Linda Lyter, an Accounting Technician III for the Financial Accounting and Reporting Section of the Finance Division, has been selected as the Department's **Employee of the Month** for February.

Linda has worked in state government for five years. Her responsibilities include processing expenditure transactions in WVFIMS and serving as the payroll administrator for approximately 30 state li-

censing boards. She also is the liaison between the licensing boards and central organizations.

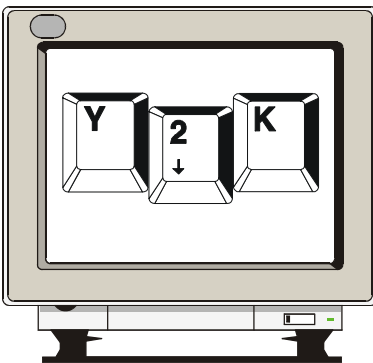
According to one of her co-workers, "Linda is a dedicated individual who personifies the term *customer service*. She has a great working relationship with us as well as our customers and strives to meet the expectations of all." Another co-worker adds, "Linda is very pleasant to work with. Her personality is up-beat and she works very hard to ensure all is done well."

In her spare time, Linda enjoys reading, hiking, gardening and spending time with her family.

Please join Cabinet Secretary Joseph Markus at a special **Employee of the Month** presentation at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 1 at the FARS office in South Charleston.



LINDA LYTER
February Employee
of the Month



It's Year 2000...Did We Survive the Y2K Dilemma?

were encouraged to prepare their systems for the big event.

As a result of this preparation, most state employees experienced few or no problems when they arrived in their offices on January 3, 2000. It was business as usual. But were there any catastrophes behind the scenes? Apparently not.

"We experienced no major problems, only a few minor flaws which may have taken five minutes to two hours to fix," Slater said. "Code breaks occur; that's just part of our business. But in these cases, we took a closer look to determine if the problems were Y2K-related. I was pleased that the problems have

Since IS&C Director Mike Slater officially took over as the state's Y2K Coordinator in December of 1997, he has followed the familiar Boy Scout motto... "Always Be Prepared." All state agencies

not been serious."

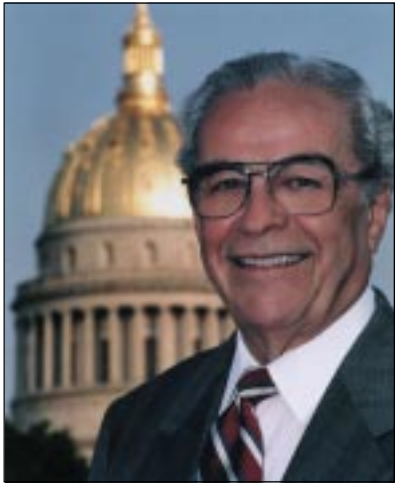
What's the bottom line? The Y2K Bug did not have a chance to attack due to years of preparing the state's hardware and software for when the clocks struck midnight on December 31, 1999. Beginning in 1995, some state agencies began preparing for the turn of the century, while the majority began identifying potential problem areas in 1997 when IS&C representatives

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Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- ♦ Governor Underwood Delivers the State of State Address
- ♦ Employee of the Month Committee Members List
- ♦ Women's Day at the Legislature Set for February
- ♦ What it Takes to Change a Legislative Rule
- ♦ People Talk

Governor Underwood Highlights Vital Issues in State of the State Address



In a speech that highlighted several achievements during his Administration and included more bold proposals for the new century, Governor Cecil Underwood assured the citizens of West Virginia that the state is moving in a positive direction. "The state of the state is

we are on our feet and ready, willing and able to do the work of the 21st century, starting now," he claimed.

Governor Underwood delivered his eighth **State of the State Address** to a joint session of West Virginia's 74th Legislature and to citizens watching the speech throughout the state on public television and via a first-ever live video and audio feed on the Internet.

The Governor outlined several areas where his Administration is managing changes into the 21st century:

- ♦ to a new economy with a continuing emphasis on economic diversification;
- ♦ to strengthen families and provide more security for children through the *Governor's Children First for West Virginia's Future* and *Operation Safe Schools* initiatives;
- ♦ to a leading edge public school system with investments in education technology;

- ♦ to a state that is state-of-the-art through a growing emphasis on technology;
- ♦ to sustainable development, balancing economic activity and environmental protection;
- ♦ to a world-class transportation system with aggressive investments in highway construction;
- ♦ to an older population with new strategies to meet the needs of senior citizens;
- ♦ to a more diverse population and work force; and,
- ♦ to better, not bigger government, with several proposals to streamline state government.

The third year of pay raises for teachers, school service personnel and state employees for a three-year total pay hike of \$2,268 was also proposed by the Governor. He outlined other plans affecting education, technology and the state's economy.

Noting that West Virginia has had a net employment gain of 26,000 jobs during the last three years with the lowest unemployment in more than two decades, Governor Underwood outlined plans to foster continued economic growth and broader diversification of the state economy. "We are managing change to a new economy, one less concentrated in manufacturing and mining and more focused on services and high technology," the Governor said.

Personnel Offers Class Schedule to Agencies

The Division of Personnel has released the 2000 Winter/Spring program schedule for classes offered by the Organization and Human Resource Development Section.

The purpose of these training classes is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of state government. Classes are offered throughout the state addressing over 50 different topics targeting subordinates and managers.

These classes include Assertiveness: The Third Way; Delegating for Results; Managing and the Law; Preventing Sexual Harassment: A Shared Responsibility; Quality Customer Service; Running Effective Meetings; and Total Quality Supervision.

According to the Division of Personnel, "state employees must assume their own career development, which may mean assessing their skill levels and selecting classes designed to enhance and improve those skills."

It is also recommended that managers perform similar self-assessments for themselves as well as their subordinates.

Most state employees may attend these classes free of charge; however, registration is required. For additional information or to register for classes, please contact Clinton Hoffman of Personnel at 558-3950 (ext. 508).

The state of the state is we are on our feet and ready, willing and able to do the work of the 21st century, starting now.

Cecil H. Underwood
Governor
State of West Virginia

Y2K Dilemma

Continued from Page 1

visited each agency to help them determine critical applications which could be affected. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to gather more data regarding various state systems.

"After this survey was conducted, 59 critical applica-

There are plenty of 'what ifs' we can address. If the state of West Virginia had not done what it did to prepare, computer systems may not be running today.

tions were identified," Slater said. "Each month, we monitored the status of these systems and published an update on our website for two primary interest groups: the public/media and our state legislators."

Agencies were instructed to correct all of the critical applications by December, 1998, in order to provide sufficient time to test the applications for problems created by Y2K modifications. According to Slater, by November 19, 1999, all critical applications, which had grown to 61, were reported as corrected, tested and in production.

Was the Y2K problem extremely technical? According to Slater, the basics of the problem was simple. "It required changing computer programs with a date field from two digits to four [instead of 00, the date should read 2000]; however, the large volume of the systems affected is what created the major problem."

Initially causing an uproar of fear in both the business world and with the general public, the concern over the Y2K Bug gradually declined in 1999, which Slater attributes to a proactive effort to inform the public.

Was the problem real? Definitely. "There are plenty of 'what ifs' we can address," he said. "If the state of West Virginia had not

done what it did to prepare, computer systems may not be running today. For example, the entire financial system that the state uses would not be operating, which could have shut down state government."

The total cost of the state's Y2K effort is estimated at \$37 million; however, Slater explains that most of that amount would have been spent in any case to update antiquated hardware and software. As a result, state agencies received the benefit of being Y2K compliant and acquiring new, more efficient hardware and software to conduct state business.

When asked what other information should be shared with Department employees, Slater simply stated, "I'm just glad it is over"... though he added that it actually is not over yet. "At the end of this month, next quarter or even at the end of the fiscal year, we expect some minor glitches, but after January 31st, I predict that the Y2K issue will virtually disappear," he said. Slater and his staff may then be able to give a final sigh of relief.

Questions on the Employee of the Month Program?

Do you have a question about the **Employee of the Month** program? A group of Department employees which has the tough task of choosing one individual each month for this award is available to answer your questions.

Although the nomination form is available online at <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/eom>, you may also contact any of the committee members for a copy of the form. The Year 2000 **Employee of the Month** committee members are listed below:

Finance Debbie Pierson

IS&C Bev Thomas

Purchasing Dan Miller

PEIA Marie Terry

CPRB Erlene Davis

Personnel Gloria Brown

General Services

Robert Kilpatrick



BUSINESS

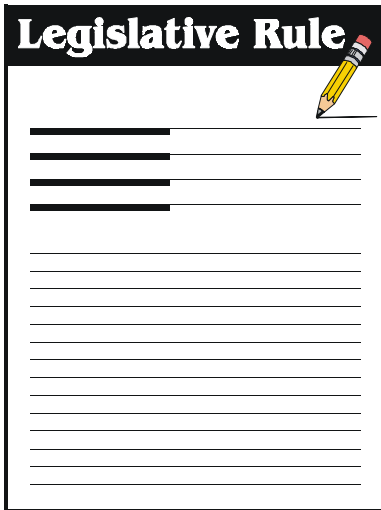
R I E F S

Having Trouble Keeping Awake?

The holidays are exhausting. If you find yourself feeling sluggish while trying to get back into the routine of work, here are some ways to keep your energies up and your eyelids open throughout the workday:

- ◆ **Keep breakfast light with low-sugar cereals and low-fat milk.** Mom was right about that first meal of the day.
- ◆ **Drink coffee.** But keep it to one or two cups.
- ◆ **Eat a light, high-protein lunch.** A meal over 1,000 calories will make you sleepy.
- ◆ **Snack throughout the day.** But stay away from sweets when you snack.
- ◆ **Drink water.** Even when you are not thirsty, your body needs H₂O.

Legislative Rulemaking Process Ensures Need and Accuracy



Policies change. Processes change... Nothing is constant.

"No problem, let's just change the procedure"...Unfortunately, it may not be that easy when following the Legislative Rulemaking process.

Some employees may not realize that many state policies and regulations are required to be officially filed with the

Secretary of State and the Legislative Rulemaking Review committee, and this process can be quite complex and time-consuming.

Many agencies have a legislative rule outlining their operation or particular programs. Here's a brief look at the steps necessary in filing a new rule or amending or revoking an existing rule.

CHANGE

Consider how hard it is to change yourself and you'll understand what little chance you have of trying to change others.

*Jacob Braude
Writer*

Recognition of need

An agency recognizes the need for filing a new rule, amending an existing rule or revoking an existing rule or part of a rule, based on such factors as a change in state or federal statute, judicial order, request by interested groups or citizens, or agency investigation of a problem.

Drafting

An agency seeks information on content from numerous sources. During this stage, many problems, interests and conflicts can be dealt with to prevent greater problems from arising in the future.

Review of Draft

When an agency files a draft

of a proposed rule with the Secretary of State and Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee, it must have prior *written* approval of the Cabinet Secretary, agency head, board or commission.

The Proposed Rule

The final draft of the proposed rule must follow the format set by the Secretary of State's rule 153CSR6 "Standard Size and Format for Rules and Related Documents Filed in the Secretary of State's Office."

Public Hearing and/or Comment Period

The agency files its proposed rule with the Secretary of State for a public hearing and/or comment period. The conduct of the public hearing is under the discretion of the agency and the procedure that best ensures the receipt of comments. All comments should be reviewed to determine possible changes in the proposed rule.

Agency Approval of Proposed Rule and Filing

Before the agency files the approved rule with the Secretary of State and Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee, the agency must have *written* approval by the Cabinet Secretary, agency head, board or commission who administers the agency. The agency must first file all documents with the Secretary of State's office. The agency is then required to file with the Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee.

Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee Review

The Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee places the proposed rule on its agenda

for discussion.

Complying with LRMRC Recommendations

If the Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee authorizes the agency to promulgate the legislative rule as originally filed, no other documents are required to be filed with the Secretary of State's Office. But if the agency or the committee decides to make changes to the proposed rule, the agency consults with committee staff on the preparation of such modifications.

Submission of Legislative Rule to Legislature

The Legislative Rulemaking Review Committee drafts a *Bill of Authorization*, including a copy of the proposed legislative rule to be introduced prior to the 20th day of the Session.

Legislative Session

Bills of Authorization are treated like other bills and go through the usual enactment process.

Effective and Filing Date

The effective date may be established by the Legislature or the agency following passage of the *Bill of Authorization*.

Proofreading

The final rule, as produced by the Secretary of State, shall be sent to the agency for review and proofing. The agency has 10 working days to review the final rule and return any corrections for confirmation.

Creating or amending a legislative rule requires detailed precision to ensure that the information is necessary and is properly submitted.

This *behind the scenes* look at this legislative process offers a better understanding of the guidelines by which we perform our jobs.

Women's Day at Legislature

The West Virginia Women's Commission extends an open invitation to join women and girls from across West Virginia at the 23rd annual Women's Day at the Legislature on February 15 at the State Cultural Center.

The day will include speakers from the League of Women Voters, Small Business Development Center and the American Heart Association. Workshops on diversity, grant writing, tobacco awareness issues and physical fitness will be offered. In addition, a performance of *Women in Perspective - Past, Present and Future* will be offered by the Weirton Women's Club and students from West Virginia's schools.

Health screenings will be available and assessments for blood pressure, non-fasting cholesterol (\$7 per person), body fat analysis, and heart attack/stroke risk assessments will also be offered.

According to Donna Hammond, Program Manager of the West Virginia Women's Commission, there will be opportunities to watch the Legislature in session and to visit with particular legislators (by appointment only). A reception hosted by First Lady Hovah Underwood will be held at the Governor's Mansion.

For more information or to register, contact the West Virginia Women's Commission at 350 Capitol Street, Room 721, Charleston, WV 25301 or call the office at (304) 558-0070.

Online Registers Offer Employers a Preview of Potential Candidates

By Lee Ann Carnahan
Grievance Board

The Division of Personnel developed a Register Review System last May which has proved beneficial to many state agencies. This on-line tracking system maintains applicant information and eligible certification. It is updated daily, but does not replace the official Division of Personnel certification process.

This system offers agencies an opportunity to preview job candidates before requesting a Certified List. *Why would an agency wish to preview this list?* For a number of reasons, including to determine if the classification has any eligible candidates.

According to Personnel's Marie Edwards, another benefit of this process relates to recruiting. "Agencies can

look ahead at names on a register, because positions that are not continuously tested may return with few to no names. Also, if a position is 'hard to hire' and no names are present on a preliminary report, the agency may request Personnel to announce the title to establish a register," she said.

Once an agency decides to formally hire for a position and requests an official list, the vacancy must first be posted and the Division of Personnel contacted. Access to the Register Review System, which is for review purpose only, is authorized to those who currently use the Job Vacancy Posting System.

Established procedures must be followed when submitting a formal request for an official list of eligible candidates. For more details, contact Personnel at 558-3950, ext. 502.



Our Benefits...

What's in it for **YOU**?

State employees receive a variety of benefits as part of their employment package. Periodically, we will take a brief look at these valuable incentives:

Retirement Contributions are Deferred

All employee contributions to state pension plans are tax deferred. For example, if your annual salary is \$15,000, \$675 (4.5% of \$15,000) is contributed to the retirement system on a tax-deferred basis. Your annual taxable income is therefore reduced to \$14,325 and your annual income taxes are based on the reduced amount. When you withdraw funds or at the time of retirement, you will only pay federal and state income taxes on the contributions which were deferred. Upon retirement, you will most likely be in a lower income tax bracket and your taxes will be reduced.

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is Published by the Department of Administration

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Governor

Joseph Markus
Cabinet Secretary

Diane Holley
Public Information Officer/Editor

Special Thanks
Lee Ann Carnahan
Donna Hammonds
Kaye Parks
Annagayle Stevens

Reminders for Good Listening

Good listening skills are vital for all employees. Here are suggestions to help improve your listening power:

- 1) **Be neutral.** When you enter into a conversation, it is important that you do so with an open mind. This lets you concentrate on what another person is saying.
- 2) **Pay attention to emotions.** Listen to what is being said, but be attuned to how a person feels about what they are talking about.
- 3) **Respect a person's point of view.** To demonstrate respect, you need to take the other person seriously and respond by confirming what he or she has told you. You may not agree, but demonstrating that you understand goes a long way in letting the other person know they are being heard.

W-2 Forms Issued by January 31

The law required that all state employees be issued their W-2 form by January 31. This form documents information regarding each employee's compensation and withholdings for the year.

This information is necessary to complete state and federal income tax forms. If you do not receive your W-2 by January 31, please contact one of the following employees of the Payroll Office:

Connie Maxwell 558-9173
 Lisa Sword..... 558-3467
 Georgia Armes..... 558-3438
 Kaye Parks..... 558-3482

Please note: Do not call concerning this form until after January 31.

Welcome...to our new employees: **Heather Connolly** (Office of the Secretary); **Aaron Riley** (IS&C); **Charles McMinn** (IS&C); **Aaron Riley** (IS&C).

Best Wishes...to **Chris Rush** (Finance) who transferred to General Services. Also, good luck goes out to **John Brown** (IS&C) and **Lori Mitchell** (General Services) who both recently resigned from the Department of Administration.

PEOPLE TALK

What an Achievement!...Congratulations to Jared Wells, son of Personnel's Jim Wells, who was selected to receive his Eagle Scout award. This prestigious recognition from the Boy Scouts of America is the result of many years of hard work!

Baby News...Sleepless nights are in store for BRIM's Melody Duke and her husband Michael, who welcomed the arrival of their daughter Brittany Ann on December 1. Brittany weighed 8 lbs. 9 oz. and has a brother named Brandon. Not only did Melody become a mom again, but she also became an aunt. Her sister, IS&C's Kristy James, became a mommy for the first time! Kristy and her husband Russ welcomed Tyler Russell on November 18. He weighed 7 lb. 9 oz. *Congratulations to the new mommies!*

Wedding Bells...BRIM's Chuck Mozingo exchanged wedding vows with Martha Jane Spalding of Marshall University on November 6 at Glenwood Estate in Charleston. *Best wishes to the happy couple!*

Now, This is Time Management!...Dwana Walker, daughter of Personnel's Bonnie Walker, made the Dean's List at WV State College last semester (3.29 GPA), is a star on the volleyball team, and works a full-time job. *Way to go, Dwana!*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY... in February

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>2 Tammy Goad Leasing
Diane Holley..... Purchasing</p> <p>3 Jo Ann Dunlap Purchasing
Wiladean Fisher..... Purchasing</p> <p>4 Lorie Humphrey IS&C</p> <p>5 Sharon Lester CPRB
Debbie Watkins Purchasing</p> <p>7 Emily Cramer IS&C
Marsha Holliday Personnel
Diana Lunsford CPRB
Allison Stotts Purchasing</p> <p>8 Ken Frye Purchasing
Roger Roe..... Purchasing
Mike Slater IS&C</p> <p>9 Lori Mitchell.. General Services
Terry Watson General Services</p> <p>13 Debbie Pierson Finance
Valerie Rist.... Grievance Board</p> <p>14 John Patton... General Services</p> <p>15 Derrick Cannon IS&C</p> | <p>15 Marie Edwards Personnel</p> <p>16 Neil Bowman .. General Services</p> <p>17 James Bateman Personnel</p> <p>19 Ron DuKate Purchasing
Tara Facemire Personnel
Veta Russe PEIA</p> <p>20 Harold Loy General Services
David Nearhoof IS&C
Stephen White . Public Defenders</p> <p>22 Rick Pickens IS&C</p> <p>24 Fayette Bowen PEIA
Robert Sayre IS&C
Mike Tompa CPRB</p> <p>25 Myra Woolwine CPRB</p> <p>26 Donna Madden . Grievance Board</p> <p>27 Barbara Haddad IS&C
Tim Phillips IS&C</p> <p>28 Don Hill General Services</p> |
|--|--|

