

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

February 2001 • Vol. 9, Issue 2

Meet Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton!

Past Government Experiences Prove Helpful in New Role

With an impressive list of credentials, Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton is certainly no stranger to government policy and operations. He has held key positions at both the municipal and state government levels by serving most recently as City Manager for the city of Charleston and previously overseeing the Health Care Review Authority as its executive director.

Burton plans to utilize these experiences in this new posi-

tion. "Many of the problems that I saw at the city of Charleston are similar to those of the state. We were able to take a look at those problems and resolve them," Burton said. "On the state level, the problems will just be much bigger, more costly and will deal with larger issues."

Prior to his *official* first day

Greg Burton

Continued on Page 3



Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton describes his managerial style as letting people do their jobs, without micromanagement.

Employee of the Month

Finance's Eric Wagner Leaves Positive Impression



ERIC WAGNER
February Employee
of the Month

Eric Wagner, a Budget Analyst for the Budget Section of the Finance Division, is the Department's **Employee of the Month** for February.

A three-year veteran of state government, Eric is responsible for reviewing agencies' budget requests and expenditure schedules. He provides support in budget hearings, tracks federal funds and troubleshoots computer problems in the Budget Office.

According to one of his co-workers, "Eric makes quite an impression on the many fiscal officers of other agencies within and outside of our Department. He reflects positively on the Budget Section and our Depart-

ment as a whole." Another co-worker sums it up, "Eric is dedicated, hard working and an extraordinarily nice person."

In Eric's spare time, he enjoys playing sports and, most importantly, spending time with his wife and daughter.

Please join Cabinet Secretary Greg Burton at the **Employee of the Month** presentation at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, February 2 in the lower east wing entrance to the main Capitol Building.

Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- What Does It Take to "Survive" in the Workplace?
- FARS Produces Award-Winning Financial Report
- IS&C Lowers CPU Rates
- A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Presentation...
- Administrative Notes

Computers and Coffee Top the List of Survival Tools Employees Rate as Crucial

Top Ten Tools for Survival

1. **Computer**
(E-mail)
2. **Coffee**
3. **Co-workers and Staff**
4. **Telephone**
5. **Sense of Humor**
6. **Paper and pencil**
7. **Calendar or Planner**
8. **Personal Items**
(Pictures, radio, plants, etc.)
9. **Stapler**
10. **Chair**

Editor's Note: With the popularity of the "Survivor" television series, a question comes to mind: **What do you need to survive in the office environment?** Although our employees are not required to tackle strategic races, eat bugs or get voted out of the office, there are some items that can help ease the daily routine at work. Let's see what our employees found as indispensable!

What do you need to survive at work? According to an electronic survey of our Department employees, nearly 60 percent stated that they could not survive without a computer. "I could live without a phone, but don't take away my personal computer ... Work would be impossible these days without a computer,"

said IS&C's Kristy James.

Many focused on using electronic mail, while others referred to the ease of word processing, spreadsheets and other forms of electronic computing. "Over 50 percent of my communication is via e-mail," said IS&C's Helen Wilson. "It's quicker for me than the telephone because you don't end up playing telephone tag." For the record, seven percent said pencil and paper are the *true* necessities.

The second most demanded survival tool was coffee. A hot cup of java and e-mail will satisfy most of our employees. "I could not survive at work without these four things: coffee, cream, sugar and the coffee maker," jokes IS&C's Joe Perks. "Ev-

everything else is optional."

As the song goes, "People, people who need people, are the luckiest people in the world." The third most requested survival tool are your staff and co-workers, those individuals who make your job easier.

Although we occasionally complain about the annoying ring of the telephone, a large percentage of our employees indicated they could not live without it.



Survival Tools
Continued on Page 5

New Grievance Procedural Rules Now in Effect

The West Virginia Education and State Employees Grievance Board implemented its new procedural rules, effective December 1, 2000. These rules apply to both grievances pending on that date and to those filed thereafter.

The new Procedural Rules, which can be accessed at the Board's website at <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/grievanc/grievanc.htm>, were required to conform to amendments made in state laws since 1996. The Board also strived to make its regulations easier to understand and its procedures easier to follow.

According to Grievance Board Executive Director Ron Wright, the number of grievances dropped last year. "The number of grievances filed with the Grievance Board declined significantly in calendar year 2000 to the lowest number since 1988. The number dropped from 550 in 1999 to 409 in 2000 for a decline of about 26 percent," he said. The Board handles grievances brought by state employees, county board of education employees, and higher education employees. "Grievances were down in all three major categories of employment."

Some of the reasons for this decline include the number of decisions made (4,400), which create a precedent used in making personnel decisions; the use of mediation in resolving grievances outside of the hearing process; the publishing of decisions on the Board's website; and employers im-

proving their efforts in preventing or resolving grievances.

Although the number of grievances filed declined, the number of employees who participated in grievances appears to have increased over last year, Wright said. "This can occur because a large group of named employees may file a grievance making the same claim or allegation. Grievances of this nature are counted as one case," he said.

The Grievance Board administers the grievance procedures at Level Four and has jurisdiction regarding procedural matters at Levels Two and Three of the grievance process.

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

is published by the Department of Administration

Bob Wise
Governor

Gregory A. Burton
Cabinet Secretary

Diane Holley
Public Information Officer/Editor

Special Thanks

Kaye Parks
Chris Sforza
Ron Wright

Annual Report Offers a Glance of the State's Financial Status

To add to the list of acronyms used in state government, let's talk about the **CAFR**, the comprehensive annual financial report. Prepared annually by the Finance Division's Financial Accounting and Reporting Section, the CAFR presents the financial condition of the state on a fiscal year basis from July 1 through June 30 of each year.

The report is prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and is audited by independent Certified Public Accountants each fiscal year. According to FARS' Becky Hayes, the CAFR is organized into three sections: introductory, financial and statistical. This report is valuable for auditing and budgetary purposes.

Who is the targeted audience for the CAFR? This report is available to the public on FARS' website at www.state.wv.us/admin/finance/fars or at their office. Other primary beneficiaries include legislators, state agencies and bond rating services.

The CAFR is submitted annually to the Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) for consideration in the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting program. The state first submitted its CAFR for review for fiscal year 1995. Since that year, the state has been honored with the receipt of the prestigious Certificate of Achievement



Pictured is the FARS staff, who are responsible for producing the state's CAFR: (l-r, back row) Finance Director Bryan Michaels, Dawna Skaggs, Becky Hayes, Connie Byrne, Al Hugar, Shan Ferrell; (l-r, front row) Joan Chapman, Linda Lyter, Chris Sforza, Jane Shinn, Donna Skaggs and Terry Harless.

each consecutive year.

"I am proud of the CAFR that the FARS Section produces and feel the state should be equally proud. For the past five years, the state's CAFR has received national recognition, which signifies the quality of work performed by the FARS staff," State Comptroller Bryan Michaels said.

In 1999, a change was issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) in Statement No. 34 with the objective of enhancing the understandability and usefulness of this document by requiring state and local governments to create financial statements similar to the private sector.

This requirement will become effective for the state of West Virginia for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002. Michaels and the FARS staff are currently examining issues relating to this statement by using a committee approach.

The preparation of the CAFR takes a group effort, according to FARS' Chris Sforza. "The success of the CAFR relies heavily on the cooperation we receive from state agencies," Sforza said. "It is this team effort that gives West Virginia the key to producing award-winning CAFR's."

Secretary Greg Burton Continued from Page 1

on the job, Burton spent several days meeting with each division and agency director to discuss current issues, future plans and learning about the programs and services offered by the Department.

His goal was to gain a better understanding of existing concerns and to develop a priority list in addressing these issues.

Burton best describes his managerial style as what he is not ... a micro-manager. "My view has always been that people are here to do a job. I try to stay out of micromanaging, but I do want to be informed," he said. "I in-

tend to let people do their jobs. I will be there to offer support and the necessary resources for them to complete the task at hand."

Good news does travel...

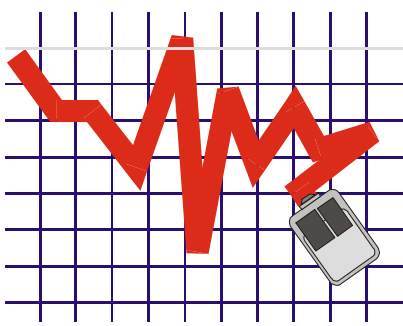
Burton indicated that he has already heard positive comments about our Department employees. "I'm looking forward to working at the Department. It will be exciting and challenging," he said. "There are many things that are needed to be done and I'm ready to get started."

I intend to let people do their jobs. I will be there to offer support and the necessary resources for them to complete the task at hand.

**Greg Burton
Cabinet Secretary**

Whenever you're in a conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude.

Timothy Bentley



IS&C Division Maintains Efficiency of Services While Lowering CPU Rates

IS&C is in the business of providing services to state agencies at the lowest cost, while improving efficiency. That is our primary goal.

Mike Slater
IS&C Director

During a time when prices continue to escalate, the Information Services and Communications Division announced a reduction in CPU rates, effective January 1, 2001.

According to IS&C Director Mike Slater, the reduction stems from the increased production capacity on the state's enterprise server. "IS&C is in the business of providing services to state agencies at the lowest cost, while improving efficiency," Slater explains. "That is our

primary goal."

In December of 1998, IS&C replaced the state's mainframe computer with an enterprise server which physically required less space, but offered expanded capabilities. In September of 2000, an upgrade was purchased which increased the capabilities an additional 20 percent.

This enhanced advancement offered more CPU cycles to state agencies, lowering the overall cost required to operate the servers. "For the end user, the CPU costs have been re-

duced and the efficiency has improved with on-demand processing," Slater adds.

IS&C, which receives no legislative revenue appropriations, monitors the CPU cycles used and adjusts rates each January and July. As revenue increases, CPU rates decrease. The reductions are listed below:

Day Rate (Batch)
from .18 to .16/CPU second (11% reduction)

Night Rate (Batch)
from .05 to .04/CPU second (20% reduction)

Teleprocessing
from .16 to .15/CPU second (6% reduction)

Slater said IS&C encourages agencies to process large batch jobs at night time when the demand of the server is less, thus, reducing the cost to the lowest rate.

"As the volume of CPU cycles increase, revenue increases," Slater said. "We can then offer our services at lower rates to our end users."

Protect Yourself!...

From the Hazards of Winter



Valentine's Day Goes High-Tech

Times have changed! Valentine's Day has been hit with the same high-tech bus that drove through the rest of our lives.

A quick search of the web for this special occasion turns up sites where you can send a free electronic postcard, visit a 'love and learn' page for romantic advice, dedicate a URL to a loved one, visit a chat room to talk with other romantics, and a site that will even write your love letter FOR you!

One of the strangest sites offers to send "a virtual romantic meal" to your valentine.

When you work or play in the cold weather, your body uses 60 percent of its fuel just to keep itself warm, causing you to tire more quickly. As you get tired, you are more prone to the dangers of winter weather, such as hypothermia, frostbite and poor awareness. Here's ways to protect yourself:

- * **Acclimate to the cold.** Give your body a chance to get used to the cold.
- * **Take enough breaks.** If working, take turns with a co-worker to warm up.
- * **Wear Layers.** The Occupational Safety and Health Administration recommends that workers wear three specific layers of clothing to stave off the cold and wet.
- * **Get extra protection for hands and head.**

Your mother was right to make you wear a hat in the winter. It helps to retain 40 percent of body heat that would otherwise escape from your head.

- * **Insulate your feet.** In addition to wearing warm wool socks, use insulating muffs around your ankles and over the top of your shoes.

Did You Know?... Frostbite literally is your tissue freezing. Ice crystals form between cells and cause the affected area to turn white and cold.

When your body's core temperature lowers even 3.6 degrees, you can experience symptoms like lethargy, shivering, mental confusion and decreased motor function. In short, protect your body and stay warm this winter!

OFFICETIPS

Have you discovered a shortcut in performing an office task? Do you have advice in getting a job done quicker and more efficiently? Tell us about it!

Work Ethics

If you have to conduct personal business during the workday, save it for lunchtime. Keep in mind, all toll calls should be made on a credit card or calling card.

Though, several others expressed their preference to get rid of their telephone.

Being able to laugh and to have a sense of humor to deal with the stress of everyday life is what many of our employees attribute as their *lifesavers*. "Even in the most stressful situations, we should be able to laugh with each other and at ourselves," said BRIM's Carla Savage.

Great examples of our employees' humor could be found in the responses to this survey, including these suggested survival tools: medication, indoor plumbing, electricity, Caller ID, oxygen and Grievance's Cricket Powell's response, "a piece of wood to bite on when things get unbearable."

Finishing off our top ten survival tools are paper and pencil, a calendar or planner, personal items (such as pictures, plants and radios), a stapler, and a chair. With all of these items, our employees may not be able to tackle the Outback, but they can surely survive a day at the office.

Values Shape Human Progress

No empowerment is so effective as self-empowerment. In this world, the optimists have it, not because they are always right, but because they are positive. Even when wrong, they are positive and that is the way of achievement.

David Landes
Harvard Historian

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Presentation.... **Employee Ceremonies Often Include Humor by Co-Workers and Honoree**

Humor often takes front stage at the **Employee of the Month** presentation ceremonies, at which employees are recognized for their high level of performance, dedication and competency.

During the presentation for General Services' Anthony Thaxton, he offered his note of gratitude in the form of a song, titled "**Get a Job**," in which the amateur songwriter told the humorous tale of his 22 years of state government. Needless to say, he received a standing ovation.

Personnel's Mark Isabella offered his response to being selected **Employee of the Month** similar to that of a *stand-up comedian*, leaving friends and co-workers laughing all the way back to their offices.

And, let us not forget the presentation for CPRB's Pat Powers, who handles refunds to retirement recipients. Co-worker Teresa Robertson led the "*Top 10 Reasons People Needed their Refunds... Yesterday*." Below are a few of the humorous excuses:

- Jimmy calls in for a withdrawal form on December 24. *'Mrs. Powers, I really need you to hurry my withdrawal through. I need to do my Christmas shopping for my family... do you think that I can have my check tomorrow so I can get Johnny that Playstation 2 or I'll be sleeping on the couch!'*
- Can you hurry up and process this refund? I just

hit a 10 point buck with my Chevy truck down the holler and need to have this road kill gutted for dinner.

Aside from the funny moments, the **Employee of the Month** presentations also brings out its share of sincere and humble feelings by the recipients. At most presentations, the honored employees are compelled to extend their appreciation to their co-workers and the team spirit that lives within the workplace.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the **Employee of the Month** presentations each month to support our Department employees. Posters are available at all worksites with date and location information...you never know what you may miss!



CPRB's Terasa Robertson reads a humorous 'top ten' list at her co-worker Pat Powers' Employee of the Month presentation.

BUSINESS

R I E F S

Employers Wanting Young Moms

Companies are doing all they can to bring mothers of preschool children into the work force. Flexible hours and job sharing make working outside the home attractive to many.

About two-thirds of moms with preschool kids are working, compared to half in 1990 and 42 percent in 1980.

One employer quoted in **Wall Street Journal** says the trade-off if a mom has to leave work for something child-related is loyalty. Once they find a good job, they are unlikely to leave anytime soon.

MILESTONES

Honoring our Employees' Service Years

The Department of Administration is pleased to begin including in each issue of **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes** "milestone" anniversary dates for our tenured employees.

Each month, we will list in five-year increments the employees who are celebrating their years of service with the state of West Virginia. We value our employees and the knowledge and dedication they share with their respective agencies and divisions.

Congratulations to our employees who are celebrating their service year anniversaries during the month of February:

5 YEARS

Sharon Waggy

(Consolidated Public Retirement Board))

15 YEARS

Jim Sims

(Consolidated Public Retirement Board))

25 YEARS

Cathie Fowlkes

(Finance Division)

35 YEARS

Roselie Price

(Information Services and Communications Division)

Beverly Thomas

(Information Services and Communications Division)

A successful person is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at him.

David Brinkley
Television News Reporter

Welcome to the Department! ... Robert Miller (BRIM), **Joshua Halstead** and **Stephanie Turner** (IS&C), **Shelia Gray** (Purchasing), **Tanya Ferguson** and **Angela Lowe** (CRPB), and **Carleen Wilkerson** (Personnel).

Best Wishes...to Jack Buckalew (Secretary's Office) who recently retired from state government. Our thoughts are also extended to **Melanie Silman** (Personnel) who recently resigned from the Department.

Movin' Around...The following employees recently transferred within the Department of Administration: **Karen Copeland** (from PEIA to CRPB) and **Jim Adkins** (from PEIA to CPRB).

Standard Mileage Rate Increases...The State Travel Management Office announced that effective January 1, 2001, the state will join the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in increasing the standard mileage rate for business use of an automobile from 32.5 cents per mile to 34.5 cents per mile.

February Celebrations...The month of February has many holidays and special occasions, including Abraham Lincoln's birthday (state holiday) on February 12, Valentine's Day on February 14 and George Washington's birthday (state holiday) on February 22. Let's not forget about Pay-A-Compliment Day on February 6!

WV Public Employees Credit Union...Visit the credit union at its website at www.wvpecu.org to find out more about the great IRA and Certificate rates as well as the new automobile loan rates! If you are interested in becoming a member of the WVPECU, check with the payroll office or call (304) 558-0566.

Use what talents you possess. The woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best...

Henry VanDyke

HAPPY BIRTHDAY...in February

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2 Tammy Goad Finance
Diane Holley Purchasing | 15 Marie Edwards .. Personnel |
| 3 Jo Ann Dunlap Purchasing
Willadean Fisher Purchasing | 16 Neil Bowman.. General Services |
| 4 Lorie Humphrey IS&C | 17 Jim Bateman Personnel
Victoria Sutton CPRB |
| 5 Sharon Lester CPRB
Debbie Watkins Purchasing | 18 Billy Tincher ... General Services |
| 7 Marsha Holliday Personnel
Diana Lunsford CPRB | 19 Ron DuKate Purchasing
Veta Russe PEIA |
| 8 Ken Frye Purchasing
Roger Roe Purchasing
Mike Slater IS&C | 20 Harold Loy General Services |
| 9 Terry Watson General Services | 22 Rick Pickens IS&C |
| 13 Debbie Pierson Finance
Valerie Rist Grievance | 24 Fayette Bowen PEIA
Robert Sayre IS&C
Mike Tompa CPRB |
| 14 John Patton... General Services | 25 Myra Woolwine CPRB |
| 15 Derrick Cannon IS&C | 27 Barbara Haddad IS&C
Tim Phillips IS&C |
| | 28 Don Hill... General Services |

