



DHSR EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



June 2009

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Written by: Jeff Horton



By now, everyone has probably gotten an idea of how bad the state's budget crisis is, which will likely to continue into the next two years. Cuts are being made everywhere in state government as the Governor and budget staff try to find money to finish out the current state budget year, which ends June 30th, and the legislature and Governor are trying to put together a budget to get us through the next two-year budget cycle that begins July 1st. Although tough budget times are trying and stressful, I believe we will make it through these times albeit a bit tattered and bruised, but in the process hopefully we will learn to do things more efficiently as a result. Efficiency in government is usually a good thing since it gives the taxpayers more for their money and oftentimes results in better service to our customers.

The Greek author and philosopher Plato, who lived from 427 BC – 347 BC coined the phrase "Necessity, who is the mother of invention." In our day-to-day work, necessity will force us to review and/or modify the way we do business to get through these tough budget times. In fact, some sections within DHSR have already been working on ways to do things better. For example, the sections that perform licensure and certification work (Acute and Home Care, Adult Care, Mental Health, Nursing Homes and Construction) are in the process of sending deficiency statements out electronically versus mailing them. Just this one small change will get reports to providers quicker and also result in less paper, envelopes and postage. Other folks are using conference calls more than usual as opposed to face-to-face meetings and all sorts of documents are being scanned and filed electronically as opposed to printing them out.



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If you have ideas, which could save time, money, provide better customer service, etc., I strongly encourage you to mention these things to your supervisor to explore the possibilities of making positive changes. Your ideas may or not work out but we will never know unless they are explored. The best resource in DHSR is our people, doing their jobs professionally, day-in and day-out and your ideas and dedication will help get us through these tough budget times.

Thank you for all you do to serve the citizens of North Carolina!

OEMS REMEMBERS SHARON ODOM

Submitted by: Jessica Trembly, OEMS

Sharon...what's in a name? According to meaning-of-names.com, in Hebrew it means from the Plain of Sharon in the Holy Land, but in OEMS it has a very different meaning. To us, it means vibrant, full of life, and a great love for cats. To us, Sharon isn't just a name, it's a beautiful soul.

Sharon Odom began working for the Office of Emergency Medical Services in April of 2000. Sadly, we lost her this past December after a very brave battle with lung cancer. Although her time with us was much too brief, Sharon most assuredly gave us some great memories!

Nine years ago not many were familiar with the vast capabilities of the World Wide Web, but Sharon sure was! Her first supervisors, Ed Seagroves and Ottis Ritter, deemed Sharon the "Internet Queen". Sharon was a research-aholic, of sorts, and whenever an opportunity arose, she delighted in using the resources provided by the internet. If anyone had a question, Sharon could find the answer!

Sharon also had answers for the OEMS ladies when it came to the latest fashions. Each year our office hosts an educational conference in Greensboro called Emergency Medicine Today (we loving refer to it as EM Today), and each year Sharon made sure the ladies of OEMS looked their best! While the education staff was holding planning meetings and the communications staff was taking inventory of equipment for the conference, Sharon was busy arranging magazine clippings on a foam board for display in the office. Sharon diligently worked to find the best examples of the latest fashions and usually held a lunchtime meeting to discuss what to wear and what not to wear for that particular year. Much fun was had during these lunch sessions.

Speaking of fashion, Sharon managed to fashion her own jewelry business called Down to Earth Designs.

Sharon was a life long student and loved learning new things. Soon after she began reading beading magazines, Sharon became proficient in jewelry making. Again, the OEMS ladies reaped the benefits of Sharon's talents. Just ask any one of the ladies if she has a piece of Sharon's jewelry and chances are she'll say, "Yes". Sharon's passion for jewelry-

making never subsided. Even after the tiring affects of chemotherapy and radiation, she continued to do the delicate bead work. Sharon took time to make and donated a beautiful necklace to the Division's Combined Campaign even though she was in the midst of her battle. That's just the kind of lady Sharon was!

In addition to her passion for jewelry making, Sharon had a deep love for cats. Many knew Sharon only as "The Cat Lady". She helped other staff at the Council Building ensure that the feral cats that live on Dix Campus had cozy homes and full bellies. Sharon even spent enough time with the untamed cats that she was successful in petting one of them! Sharon also had a number of cats that she cared for at home and she loved to share with staff members the adventures of her kitties. Sharon's love and compassion for these animals was inspirational.

Another love of Sharon's life was fun! Sharon was all about not taking life too seriously and doing the things that make you happy. Occasionally, for those OEMS staff members who paid close attention, a glimpse of Sharon riding through the office on a hand truck pushed by staff members (who shall remain anonymous) could be seen.

The Office of EMS has shared many moments with our dear Sharon. When we remember Sharon we have to smile—she could always make us laugh. Perhaps that's what the name Sharon means in OEMS...laughter.



A TRIBUTE TO MARY HELEN BRINCEFIELD

Submitted by: Tanya Rupp, CON

Mary Helen Brincefield. To say that name out loud, anywhere near DHHS, is to open the flood gates of memories of a vibrant, loving, happy person. To say that name silently within your own heart is to call to mind the gentle and selfless soul that she was to everyone whom she touched.

Mary Helen Brincefield came to work in the Division of Social Services as a Data Entry Specialist on October 11, 1982, and was promoted to Information Technology Technician in just two years. On June 1, 1989 she was hired as the Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Certificate of Need (CON), and served in that capacity until her retirement in December of 2008. Mary Helen was THE presence at CON; a tiny person in physical stature, but one of the biggest human beings ever to grace our lives. You could walk down the slope to the CON offices, and *feel* that Mary Helen was there. You could hear her laughter and see her smile no matter how far away your office was. The very air itself had energy wherever Mary Helen was. In Mary Helen's office was a bulletin board absolutely overflowing with photographs – photographs of nearly every person with whom she had worked during her tenure with the state, and she loved to tell stories about each one. She hung each one of those pictures with genuine love and pride. Every person coming through the doors of CON was a person whom Mary Helen touched. She knew what those of us blessed enough to work with her needed before we had a chance to ask – from a pencil or other office supply, to a hug and a counseling session. Mary Helen was a devoted mother to her real children, who are successful adults with whom she spoke on a daily basis, and to her “CON children,” for whom she was the office counselor. Mary Helen tirelessly assisted everyone, including 5 to 10 project analysts at a time, attorneys, paralegals, Division staff, newspaper staff and countless others she interacted with to make the CON office operate, seemingly without stress or effort. Those of us working behind her were often frazzled, bedraggled, and wondering what to do next. But Mary Helen met every deadline, be it statutory or administrative, with grace and ease.

Mary Helen rarely thought of herself or her own needs; she devoted her life to the service of others, just by the person she was. Mary Helen was a rare mixture of straightforwardness and honesty, with whom you always knew where you stood. You could trust Mary Helen with your business and professional needs and dreams, and you could trust her with your personal needs as well. She could tease any of us into seeing the funny side of our own human nature. She never tired of reaching out to others and living every day to help someone who needs it. Children coming to CON soon learned that one special drawer had candy in it; if mom slightly disapproved, Mary Helen would sneak it to the children, manage to tell mom she did it, AND get mom to laugh approvingly, just because of the joy Mary Helen brought to life. Mary Helen was thought of as the “happy” lady of CON, the humble heart, the helping hand, the gracious assistant and

devoted wife and mother. Former Division Director, Bob Fitzgerald, described Mary Helen as the Division Mascot, because of the positive and radiant energy she exuded, and because of the professionalism and sense of responsibility with which she honored CON.



When asked to relate what knowing Mary Helen meant to those of us in CON, the responses, though varying, all had one common denominator that comes from 1 Corinthians 13:4-8: *“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never fails.”*

Mary Helen retired from CON on December 12, 2008, with the hope of being a full-time grandma to her first grandchild. Mary Helen was diagnosed with lung cancer on December 24, 2008 and, sadly for all of us, who are left behind, passed away on March 29, 2009. Not only did Mary Helen Brincefield personify love itself, but managed, through her presence alone, to show that love to every person she met. Whether within the silence of your own heart or with the rest of the Division of Health and Human Services, to say the name “Mary Helen Brincefield” is to bring forth energetic, abounding joy and selfless service.



WORDS OF ADVICE FROM INFORMATION SYSTEMS



Submitted by: Joan Byrd



REMEMBER!

**Email is our most efficient way of communication.
It is critical that you READ your email on a daily basis,
several times a day.**

- Can't log in to Email, NCID, Beacon, or the Network? Information Systems asks that anyone having problems with Email, NCID, Beacon, or the Network contact them at dhsr.infosystems@lists.ncmail.net or call 919.855.3845.
- Are you seeing new and different Popup Screens? If you get ANY type of popup screen on your PC, make a note of what it says and then shut down the PC immediately by holding down the power button. Contact Information Systems for assistance. We cannot emphasize this enough considering the rash of infected machines we have had recently.
- Keep your data safe and secure. Is your computer locked? Lock it when you leave it! If you will be away from your PC for more than 10 minutes, you should lock it by pressing CTRL ALT DELETE and selecting Lock Workstation.
- Do you have a message asking you to update Internet Explorer to Version 8? DON'T DO IT!!! Internet Explorer 8 is not supported by BEACON. If you have updated IE by accident, please contact Information Systems for assistance.
- Enjoy listening to the radio or watching videos at work? This is another DON'T DO IT!!! These types of activities take up network bandwidth and cause everything to slow down due to the congestion. Think of it as bumper to bumper traffic jams on the interstate.
- Getting a message to install Windows Genuine Advantage Validation Tool? This is a valid Windows update so you should allow this to install. If you are still unsure when you see this message, please contact Information Systems at 919.855.3845. Typically the office is staffed from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Future Happenings:

DHSR Moving to Outlook

DHSR's email system will be moving from NCMail to Microsoft Outlook in the next few months, however at the present time we do not have a definite date for the conversion. Outlook requires Microsoft Office 2003 so those with a Dell GX270 desktop will more than likely need to have their Microsoft Office software updated from 2002 to 2003. We are working with PC Coordinators to accomplish this update. The actual conversion will be done by DIRM contractors.

LANDesk Management Suite

Information Systems will be using LANDesk Management Suite to push out software and updates and to remote control PC's. Some of you already have the agent installed on your PC. If you have an icon in the lower right taskbar that looks like a remote control with a person, then you have the LANDesk agent installed. If you point to it you should see "LANDesk Remote Control". If you do not have this new icon, there is no reason for concern. We are still pushing it out and will get to you in the near future.

PERSONNEL NEWS



Changes to the State Health Plan for the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 Benefit Years

Senate Bill 287 (State Health Plan / Good Health Initiatives) was signed into law by Governor Perdue on April 23, 2009. This bill includes the State Health Plan **benefit changes** and **rate increases** for the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 benefit years. All **enrollment** changes, **benefit** changes and **rate** changes will become effective July 1, 2009 with the exception of the routine vision benefit. Routine vision benefits will no longer be covered beginning January 1, 2010.

It is likely that *not all members* will receive their ID card by July 1, 2009. However, the ID number does not change, so providers and pharmacies will accept members' current ID cards. Therefore, members should continue to use their current ID cards until they receive their new ID card.

DEPENDENT ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

Dependent coverage is an important part of any health plan coverage. An audit of dependent eligibility will be conducted in late fall / early winter, as provided for in Senate Bill 287, to ensure that only eligible dependents are covered under the State Health Plan. On May 1, 2009, a letter was mailed to all members with dependent coverage notifying them of the upcoming audit. The letter included information on who is eligible for dependent coverage on the State Health Plan.

Benefit Changes:

- The **90/10 Plus plan will no longer be offered**. The employee will **automatically** be moved to the 80/20 Standard Plan, along with any dependents they currently have covered on their plan. If an employee has not enrolled in another plan, they will remain on their current plan or will be automatically moved to the 80/20 plan if they are currently enrolled on the 90/10
- Plus plan. Employees who are moved to the 80/20 plan will no longer have to pay for employee only coverage. Deductibles, copays and coinsurance maximums will increase, effective July 1, 2009. Please refer to the Benefit Changes Chart for details.
- **As of January 1, 2010**, routine vision exams will no longer be covered. During the NCFLEX annual enrollment, you may enroll in the Superior Vision Plan with an effective date of January 1, 2010.
- **Prescription Drugs**
 - The prescription drug number of days supply for one copayment will change from 34 days to **30** days, effective July 1, 2009.
 - The copay for generic drugs will remain \$10.
 - The copay for diabetic supplies will remain \$10 for preferred brand and \$25 for non-preferred brand.
 - Prescription drug copays for preferred brand (without a generic available), and non-preferred brand will each increase by \$5, effective July 1, 2009.
 - Beginning July 1, 2009, a 25% coinsurance will be charged for specialty prescription drugs up to \$100 for each 30-day supply. Members currently taking a specialty medication will receive additional information in the mail.
 - The preferred brand copay tier (with generic available) will be eliminated effective July 1, 2009.

Please note: Beginning July 1, 2009, if a generic equivalent is available and a member chooses to have the brand name drug, or their doctor prescribes "Dispense as Written" (DAW), they will be required to pay the difference between the actual cost of the brand name drug and the amount the Plan would have paid for the generic equivalent, in addition to the generic copayment.

Rates:

- On July 1, 2009 there will be an 8.9% increase on all coverage tiers.
- On July 1, 2010 there will be another 8.9% increase on all coverage tiers.

Have Any Questions?

If you have any health benefits or pharmacy questions, please see contact information below:

State Health Plan Web site:

www.shpnc.org

Customer Services for **plan** questions:

1-888-234-2416

Medco Customer Services for **pharmacy** questions:

1-800-336-5933.

NEW DHSR EMPLOYEES

New DHSR employees since the last newsletter are listed below:

Nursing Home Licensure & Certification
 Jo Ellen Asbell
 Jill Atkinson
 Marie Juris
 Pattie Kline
 Matokia Brown
 Judy Barillari
 Amy Hughes
 Jacqueline Hightower

Black Mountain
 Stephanie Terry
 Stephanie McDowell
 Linda Melvin

Medical Facilities Planning
 N/A

Acute and Home Care Licensure & Certification
 N/A

Construction
 Lori Bickler
 Gregory Cates
 Barbara Moseley
 Stephen Strapec
 Larry Beals

Adult Care Licensure
 Kimberly Grant
 Nancy Yox -
 Welcome back!
 Ashlye Thorpe

Asheville
 Angela Rowland

Lexington
 Jill Davis
 Robin Phillips

Certificate of Need
 Gebrette Miles
 Paula Quirin

Health Care Personnel Registry
 Jeanne Goss
 Nancy Gregory

Mental Health L&C
 Donna Haynes

Lexington
 Cynthia Haynes
 Teresa Brady

Jails and Detention
 Chris Brackett

Division Office
 Susan Smith

Complaint Intake Unit
 N/A

OEMS
 Shelley Carraway

Retirees

- Harold W. Williams, FSCI, MHL Clinton, effective 1/1/09
- Mary Helen Brincefield, Admin Asst I, CON, effective 1/1/09
- Ron Loftin, CON Project Analyst, CON, effective 1/1/09
- Martha Womble, Adult Care Licensure, effective 3/1/09
- Ed Taylor, Construction, effective 5/1/09
- Jamel Taborn, Nursing Home Licensure, effective 5/1/09



PROMOTIONS WITHIN THE DIVISION

There have been promotions within the division since the November 2008 edition of the *DHSR Employee Newsletter* which we would like to highlight. We would like to congratulate you all and wish you the best in your new positions!



Floyd Cogley, from Human Services Planner/Evaluator to HS Planning Supervisor III

Gordon Washburn, from Engineering Technician to Engineer

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

General reminders for building and electrical safety in the workplace:

- No coffee pots, microwave ovens, refrigerators are allowed unless pre- approved in accordance with Division Directive 34. Please call the Construction Section if you have questions.
- Keep the area in front of electrical panels a minimum of 36 inches clear in front of the panel. The 36” clearance is from floor to ceiling. (OSHA)
- Do not leave microwave ovens in operation without direct visual supervision. Be careful about the surface tension effect from microwaving that can allow a superheated liquid to explode after the surface tension is disturbed.
- Extension cords are not allowed except for temporary presentations or temporary attended use. Extension cords are not to be used in lieu of permanent wiring systems. Do not use ground pin “cheater” devices to plug a grounded cord into an ungrounded (2 slot) receptacle outlet.
- NO candles or any other items with an open flame even during direct supervision are allowed.
- NO portable electric heaters are allowed.

ALARMED RESPONSE

By Sam Cravotta



Are you confused when you hear 1 short ring of the fire alarm in the Council building?

Do you know what to do and where to go?

Even new employees who have seen the Emergency Information Sheet are sometimes confused when they hear 1 short ring of the alarm. Every Monday, the Council Building generator is tested. If the fire alarm is not shut off during the generator testing, it will occasionally ring. When you hear 1 short ring, it is appropriate to take no action.

Fire or Drill Signal - Continuous ring of alarm. **Response** - Evacuate the building immediately without using the elevators.

Bomb Threat Signal - Continuous ring of alarm. **Response** - Evacuate the building immediately without using the elevators.

Tornado Sighting Signal - 3 short rings of alarm. **Response** - Close office doors and go to pre-determined area.

Do not take the elevator.

On Dix Campus (from the steam plant whistle) -

Three (3) 4-Second Blasts indicates a Tornado Warning.

Six(6) 1-Second Blasts indicates Tornado Watch Conditions are right for a Tornado.

One(1) 1-minute blast indicates all clear.



Recipe

Homemade Ice Cream

June is bustin' out all over - and when you think of summer in the South, you gotta' be thinking of homemade ice cream. What if we, as someone says – “kick it up a notch” and go with another Southern staple, Banana Pudding - and do it simultaneously! Talk about the best of both worlds! I have a friend in Texas whose father was a minister and his father was heard many times to say “You know- there’s just something spiritual about eating Banana Pudding. I know some of you are starting to feel faint just trying to imagine how good this ice cream is going to be – me included.

Tammy Kitchen entered this recipe in the “WKDK Ice Cream Churn Off” in 2007 and took third place. First place was Lemon Meringue Pie Ice Cream and second was Coffee Ice Cream. I think you see why I went with Banana Pudding. The recipe makes “about” four quarts but Tammy reminds us if we are good at fractions, we can make more.

You'll Need the Following:

- ½ cups milk (“Vend-a-moo milk” recommended)**
 - 2 cups sugar**
 - 1 teaspoon salt**
 - 2 cups cream – fresh dairy cream if you can find it**
 - 1½ teaspoon vanilla extract – not imitation**
 - 3 cups whipped cream or cool whip**
 - 1 small box vanilla pudding**
 - 1 banana sliced in small pieces**
 - 1 ½ cups Nilla wafers – crushed extra Nilla wafers for topping**
- Instructions to your ice cream freezer**

Let's Put It Together!

In a 4 quart or larger bowl, pour milk, sugar, salt, cream and vanilla.
 Blend with a mixer until it is “frothy.”
 Add whipped cream and vanilla pudding and “keep on frothing.”
 Add the banana pieces.
 Mix well and then pour into the ice cream freezer. Careful now, we don't want to loose even the smallest taste.
 Let it freeze for approximately fifteen to twenty minutes, until it starts to look a little thicker.
 Add the Nilla wafers and finish the freezing process, if you can wait.
 Find some festive serving dishes and Par-tee!!

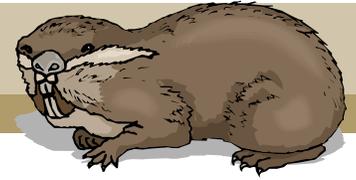
Hint-Wouldn't some sliced bananas on top make for a fantastic presentation or just stick a whole Nilla wafer into the surface or for the kids - place some banana fruit candies on top.

Don't forget about your “poor” co-workers. You could put this mix in the office fridge in the morning and have them talking about their delicious afternoon break for a long time. Enjoy and good luck! Everyone have a great summer!!!!

For those of you who enjoy trivia, go to <http://www.makeicecream.com/hisoficecrea.html> . You'll find everything you could possibly want to know about this favorite treat.



NO BADGERS, JUST BADGES



Submitted by: Wayne Denning

In Mel Brooks' *Blazing Saddles*, Harvey Korman was trying to deputize all the lawmen he could. When he got to the local Mexican gunslingers and they were to be deputized they delivered one of the most famed motion picture quotes ever delivered. It lives right up there with "Frankly my dear, I don't give" and "Go ahead, make my day." The quote? "We don't need no stinkin' badges."

Well, 'gringos,' that is not the case around the Division of Health Service Regulation. Beginning March 31, 2009, Jeff Horton reminds all DHSR employees working in or visiting buildings on campus of the fact it is now a requirement to wear the officially authorized and issued DHSR picture identification badge. Doing so will facilitate being able to identify visitors and assist in directing them where they need to go. This of course will promote security and help guard against the occasional office theft that has unfortunately occurred from time to time. He also reminds you to contact him or Jesse Goodman should you have questions.

CUSTOMER SERVICE FROM WITHIN DIVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE REGULATION

Submitted by: Rita Horton

The Complaint Intake Unit recently conducted a survey of Facility Survey Consultants in the Mental Health, Nursing Home and Acute and Home Care Licensure and Certification Sections in addition to the local Departments of Social Services to evaluate the quality of complaint intake information gathered by our Unit. The survey was used to evaluate the quality of the intake information obtained Intake Consultants as well as how Intake Consultants respond to any inquiries by Facility Survey Consultants or Department of Social Services' staff.

The survey was conducted electronically with NC SurveyMax, and there was an excellent overall 60% response rate. A **BIG THANK YOU** to all of those Facility Survey Consultants who took the time to complete our survey.

The Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section Facility Survey Consultants receive the blue ribbon for their tremendous effort to complete the survey. The response rate was 96% for the Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section. The Acute and Home Care Licensure and Certification Section and the local departments of social services each had a 58% response rate and the Nursing Home Licensure and Certification Section had a 36% response rate.

We were also pleased with the overall results of the survey. Overall, positive responses were received for 75% of the questions, negative responses were received for 9% of the questions and no opinion was received for 17% of the questions. In addition to rating our intake information, respondents had the opportunity to share suggestions and recommendations. Complaint Intake Unit staff are currently in the process of evaluating all the responses including the suggestions and recommendations in order to address the needs of our DHSR internal customers.



DHSR Newsletter Committee

- Jeff Horton, Division Office
- Ruth Jolaoso, NH Lic & Cert
- Wendy Williams, Adult Care Lic
- Doris Kester, Personnel
- Sheri Wilder, NH Lic & Cert
- Lou Morton, Complaint Intake Unit
- Joan Byrd, Information Systems
- Rebecca Barefoot, Info Systems
- Doug Barrick, Adult Care Lic
- Sam Cravotta, Construction
- Wayne Denning, MH Lic & Cert

