

The University of Mississippi

Staff Council

A Message from the President

Fall is just around the corner, trees are showing off their splendor and air conditioning makes way for heating. During this time of transition the days can be warm, the nights cool. Sometimes one day is cool and the next warm. Is this how people can be... sometimes? Sometimes our coworkers are warm and friendly; sometimes they are cool and distant. How do we cope with this? Mother nature has provided the answers throughout the years. When the day is warm, a cool breeze helps make things better, when the day is cool, the sunshine and bright colors help brighten the day. Should we not behave the same way? Next time a coworker is cool to you, smile and offer warm words of encouragement. What a way to brighten someone's day. If a person gets hot and bothered, offer a cool breeze, a calming word and an irresistible smile to help change their day. Someone here at Ole Miss brightens my day every day. Thanks!

Minutes of the Meeting, October 2, 2002

Union 404 A&B

PRESENT: James Akey, Brenda Brannan, Rachel Bost, Joni Camp, Nina Cheshier, Judy Fos, Earlene Foster, Mary Harrington, Shellie Harrison, Melissa Hudson, Regina Jordan, Buddy Kahler, Cathy Laswell, Shannon Lovejoy, Steven Maples, Renee Moore, Conny Parham, Hilarie Pryor, Amelia Rodgers, Dave Sagaser, Tony Seaman, Doug Stuart, Karen Tuttle, Rosa Vance, Amanda Wood

EXCUSED: Joey Brent, Dennis Bullard, Matthew Demming, Jean Pinion, Linda Sallis, Jeannette Wells

UNEXCUSED: Dino Johnson, Sam Johnson, Michele Mize, Mark Shows

2:25 p.m. President Tony Seaman welcomed our guest speaker, Mr. Whitman Smith, Director of Orientation. Mr. Whitman Smith worked for the city board for two years before joining the University of Mississippi. Today, Mr. Whitman will address the United Way Campaign.

MR. WHITMAN SMITH:

“This year, the University of Mississippi will be involved with the United Way Campaign. The Theme this year will be ‘United Way Road Blocks’. Two years ago, our goal was \$80,000. This year, we want to reach a goal of \$90,000. We need volunteers to help reach that goal on Friday, November 1, 2002. There will be eight people assigned to a designated area asking for donations to help the United Way reach their goal. We are asking the students and coaches to get involved, as well as the Chancellor.”

The times and locations are as follows:

- 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
- 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

- Sorority Row and Grove Loop
- Grove Loop and University Avenue
- Kincannon and Rebel Drive
- Womens Complex
- Phi Delta 3-way stop

We will need 8 people at each location for each time block.

“Every year the University and Whirlpool have competitions to see who can raise the most money. The first year, a

couple of hundred dollars was raised. The second year, \$500 was raised. We would like to keep this tradition going. If you would like to volunteer or would like more information, please contact Jennifer Taylor at 915-7992.”

President Tony Seaman thanked Mr. Whitman for his time and information.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: There was one correction for the September Minutes.

”Johnny Williams, Karen Jones and the Facilities Planning Group have contacted a group of design engineers who know about traffic and parking. They have asked them to come study our situation, and to make some suggestions...”

CORRECTION:

“Johnny Williams, Terron Jones and the Facilities Planning Group have contacted a group of design engineers who know about the traffic and parking...”

TREASURER’S REPORT: Approved with no corrections.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Tony Seaman thanked President-Elect Joni Camp for conducting the September meeting in his absence.
- Past-President Buddy Kahler represented the Ole Miss Staff Council at the MASCO meeting that was held at the Mississippi University for Women. At the meeting, the new installation of officers was conducted. There were not enough representatives to create a quorum. However, the University of Mississippi was represented. The representatives discussed ideas on how the MASCO electives can help change to better serve Staff Councils and their constituents.
- The date for the Staff Fall Meeting has been changed to November 27, 2002 at 9:00 a.m. in Fulton Chapel.
- Open cafeteria enrollment will be held October 15 at 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. through October 18 at 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the office of Human Resources.

CONCERNS:

- One staff member voiced his concern on the memo that was sent out to all staff by Human Resources concerning the dental insurance change. Comp Dent will no longer be a provider for the University of Mississippi. This will be addressed at the next meeting when more information is provided.

RESPONSE

Due to the time sensitivity of the above concern, the Staff Council Executive Committee met with Human Resources on Monday, October 7th to discuss the changes in dental plans and other insurance changes. Clay Jones explained how HR has searched diligently to offer the best insurance options for all employees. This includes all forms of elective insurances, not just dental. We did focus on the dental issue and Clay explained that Comp Dent was no longer a viable option for the Oxford participating dentist to keep. Clay met with this dentist several times to plead our case on behalf of the approximate 450 members. He was able to convince the dentist LAST year to stay with the plan, but this year the dentist was not to be convinced. It was indicated that it was just not in the best interests of his patients or practice to continue with Comp Dent and while he wrestled with the decision, it was with regret and concern for his patients that he was forced to drop participation with Comp Dent. The dentist has agreed to participate in the Delta Dental plan.

Clay and his team searched long and hard for alternatives but no dental plans with lower premiums than Delta Dental are available. HR, led by Clay and his team, exhausted new ways to provide insurance options at the lowest possible premiums. They helped pioneer a program to join with Mississippi State University and Delta Dental to increase the amount of participants, thus allowing us to get a better group rate. Without this joint venture, premiums would be

significantly higher than the current costs. We must acknowledge and thank Clay and his staff for all their hard work.

The conclusion was that current participants who use the dentists in Water Valley and Batesville can sign up for individual plans from Comp Dent. (See memo you have from HR). Another option is to sign up with Delta Dental during the normal open enrollment period, October 15-18. Yet another option would be to put flexible spending dollars into the Cafeteria Plan for preventative dental care based on your current dental needs. For example, assume your dental health is pretty good and you only require preventative dental care. You need cleanings two times a year; therefore, you could put \$63.00 (the approximate amount an Oxford dentist charges for a cleaning) for each prospective visit into this account. (Be sure to take into consideration the number of family members who would have their teeth cleaned and how many visits each would make in one year.) This money would be in the pre-taxed account and payroll deducted. You would then get your dental cleaning, pay the bill of \$63.00, submit a claim for the \$63.00 (form available at HR or on the Web) and the money would be reimbursed in your next paycheck (not taxed).

EXAMPLE: Employee and spouse need cleanings two times a year. Put \$252.00 ($\$63 * 4$) into the flexible spending account to cover cleanings for a year. Submit a claim for reimbursement as services are provided.

If you sign up for Delta Dental, annual premiums would be \$661.56 with a \$50.00 deductible per person per year. If you choose the flexible spending option, you would save \$509.56 per year. **BUT!! NOTE!!** You would have no major dental coverage for fillings, crowns and other expensive procedures. If you have a need for dental work, you need insurance. If you are healthy, perhaps you just need maintenance.

The Executive Committee hopes you find this information useful in making a difficult decision. We are indebted to Clay Jones and HR for providing the best possible services and communicating openly with us about all the options.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Rosa Vance wanted to inform that the Sensitivity and Respect Committee are conducting a workshop headed by Dr. Billy Barrios and Susanna Dakin with the Counseling Center. The theme is “The Way of the Heart”. Each member on the committee will branch out and conduct a workshop. Topics include:
 - Quieting the Mind, Awakening the Heart
 - Equality Practice
 - Basic Friendliness and Compassion
 - Transforming Anger, Relieving Suffering
 - Compassionate Communication
 - Deep Knowing, Making Requests
 - Creating True Community
- Amanda Wood presented a report on the Traffic and Parking Committee’s September meeting. At the meeting, they discussed the reconsideration of the proposal for motorized vehicles on campus. Bill McCartney was the guest speaker. Mr. McCartney voiced some concerns and solutions to the Committee. The Traffic and Parking Committee recommended hiring consultants to help the University’s parking situation. They also recommended that Mr. McCartney’s suggestions be passed on to them for study.

2:55 p.m. Meeting was adjourned.

/s/Tony Seaman, President
/s/Joni Camp, President-Elect
/s/Amanda Wood, Secretary

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