

# Information Please

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## For What It's Worth!

By Steve Keto, Associate Vice Chancellor for RMIS

As you read this article, you should be aware that the University CIO Study is officially underway under the leadership of two external consultants who have extensive CIO experience at major research universities.

The study will be fairly intense as the Provost and Chief Financial Officer requested that the committee submit its recommendation by this coming summer. The national search for a CIO will begin this summer with the intent of having the person on board by early 2008. The transition or

reorganization, if you will, of the IT organizations will then occur over the following 12 months (after January 1, 2008). It is important to remember that the purpose of this study, the hiring of a CIO, and any resulting reorganization are all focused on having a single unified direction for IT services at NC State University.

At our RMIS staff luncheon on April 19, we will discuss two important planning directions that the RMIS leadership has developed: a Strategic Plan and a Compact Plan. The RMIS directors and I will discuss these plans with

you and solicit your input into both documents that are located on the Division home page ([http://www.ncs.ncsu.edu/rmis/data/rmis\\_planning\\_compact\\_plans.html](http://www.ncs.ncsu.edu/rmis/data/rmis_planning_compact_plans.html)) and linked from your department sites.

Both documents are intended to be "living" documents that will be reviewed and adjusted as time, requirements, customer demands, technology, and resources change in the coming months

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Melba Brierley and her husband, Paul, experienced last December the trip of a lifetime to Antarctica and Chile. Above (and on Page 2) are Melba's photos of Antarctica.

## Brierley explores beauty of Antarctica

By Verna Little, Enterprise Application and Database Services

Experiencing Antarctica in the spring was a trip of a lifetime for Melba Brierley of Enterprise Application and Database Services (EADS).

Melba and her husband, Paul, visited Antarctica in December 2006, which is springtime in the Earth's southernmost continent. "It has been on our dream

list for some time, but we never thought we would get there," said Melba. (But) after some research and some luck, my husband found a trip on a small ship that visited Antarctica and Chile."

Melba said the appeal of the small ship was

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## Howell, Kearns recognized

Two Resource Management and Information Systems employees were recently nominated for the 2007 Finance and Business Awards for Excellence.

During a reception held April 5 in Talley Student Center, **Leo Howell** of Enterprise Technology Services and Support (ETSS); **Teresa Kearns** of the University Budget Office; and **Joy Martin**, formerly of the University Budget Office, were among 37 Division employees who were nominated for the award. The five criteria for which permanent NC State SPA or EPA non-faculty employee were nominated include outstanding service, innovations, public service, safety/heroism and human relations.

Five Division employees were selected to receive this award and will now vie for the University Awards for Excellence on May 21.

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## Director's Corner by Greg Sparks, director of Communication Technologies

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The last time I had an opportunity to present a "Director's Corner", I had only been in ComTech a few months and I stated that there seemed to be a never-ending supply of new technologies, a constant demand by customers for enhanced services, and a dedicated staff poised to tackle the many challenges associated with these opportunities. The past 33 months have shown that, if anything, I underestimated reality in each of these areas. I'm lucky to direct an exceptional team of professionals dedicated to providing technology services with a focus on the customer and I'll take this opportunity to highlight a few of the more significant projects we've focused on recently.

The first project is arguably the most important and certainly the least obvious on the surface. Last summer, we brought to conclusion more than 12 months of planning and testing by implementing upgrades across our entire campus backbone. This entailed hardware and software upgrades in each of our main distribution frames resulting in a more stable and feature-rich network. Related to this, we have made significant strides in upgrading building-level equipment to achieve consistent code revisions and common configurations across the 1,400+ switches in the network.

These upgrades have played a significant role in providing a stable infrastructure to deliver new services such as IP Telephony. Over the past two years we have architected a plan to utilize our data network as the transport layer for our voice applications (including "plain ole phone calls"). In January of this year, we completed the pilot phase of this project, which ultimately entailed

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the limited number of passengers and the excursions in Antarctica. The ship, classified as an icebreaker, could travel into narrow channels and close to shore.

After about 15 hours of flights and one and one-half days at sea, they finally saw Antarctica. "It was spectacular," said Melba. There were vast expanses of snow covered mountains, glaciers, icebergs, rocky shorelines, and penguins everywhere, she said. Pristine, rugged landscapes extended in all directions as far as one could see.

According to Melba, a team of nine experienced scientists led the excursions and gave talks each day. Each scientist had spent several years at research bases in Antarctica and other parts of the world. The focus of the trip was to learn about the region and to experience its natural beauty, she said. Small boats, similar to Zodiacs, were used for excursions and held up to eight passengers plus a scientist. Melba said they went out on excursions once or twice daily.

"Sometimes we explored icebergs and glaciers, and sometimes we hiked around penguin colonies and hillsides," Melba said. "Hiking uphill through the snow into a strong wind was tiring, but the views were well worth the effort," she said. "The penguins were a lot of fun to watch and were, surprisingly, unafraid of people. The icebergs were carved by wind and water into fantastic shapes. Some were larger than our ship. We visited two research stations and saw two others."

According to Melba, temperatures ranged between 30 and 45 degrees during the day and the weather changed quickly. "Each day we saw sun, clouds, rain, sleet, and snow – always with strong winds," she said.

After a week in Antarctica, they sailed around Cape Horn and on to the Chilean fjords, another beautiful region of mountains and glaciers. On an inland excursion, Melba said, they traveled to the Torres del Paine National Park located in the southern Andes mountain chain in the Patagonia region. Approximately 615,000 acres in size, the park is about a three and one-half hour drive from the nearest town. Mountain peaks were over 13,000 feet and the lakes were beautiful sapphire and emerald in color, she said.

"We feel very fortunate to have visited such a unique and wonderful place as Antarctica," said Melba. "It was a special trip and we both agreed that it was our best trip ever."

Employed with the University for 27 years, Melba is an applications development manager of Student Administration Systems.



## Awards/Honors/Presentations

The following Resource Management and Information Systems employees recently received Service Awards:

### 5 Years of Service

Cheryl Cleveland	EADS
Kelly Harrelson	EADS
Delecia Council	EADS
Lee Hargis	ComTech
James Lanter	EADS
Alison Pelphrey	ETSS
Paul King	ETSS
Jason Myatt	ETSS
Katrina Robeck	EADS
Amanda Sullivan	Budget Office

### 10 Years of Service

Brian Brezina	ETSS
Mildred Brown	EADS
Evan Cherry	EADS
Rolf Grandstaff	EADS
Qi Liu	EADS
Elizabeth Parker	EADS
Ron Reed	EADS
Barbara Runyan	EADS

### 15 Years of Service

Bruce Kluckman	EADS
Amy Tawes	ETSS
Alex Vu	EADS
Lifeng Wang	EADS

### 20 Years of Service

Sherwood Bryan	EADS
Tanja Davidson	EADS
Ann Harris	ETSS
Nathan Maynard	ETSS

### 25 Years of Service

Henry Chen	EADS
Tom Holden	EADS
Sam Weinstein	EADS

### 30 Years of Service

Mary Harrison	EADS
Craig McQueen	EADS

**Stephen Owens** of the RMIS - Organizational Resilience Unit; and **Craig Zimmer** of Enterprise Technology Services and Support (ETSS) recently received the Project Management Professional Certification.

## Farewells

**Douglas Skinner**, formerly of EADS, retired February 28 with 23 years of service.

## New Births

Congratulations to **Delecia Council** of Enterprise Application and Database Services (EADS) and Richard Council on the birth of their son, Brody Wray, on January 3, 2007.

Congratulations to **Henry Vail** of ETSS and Kerry Vail on the birth of their daughter, Andromeda Katriona (Andi), on December 27, 2006.

## New Employees

EADS welcomes **George "Mitchell" Nipper** as a business and technology applications specialist.

ETSS welcomes **Danny Davis** as Solutions Center manager; and **Victor Orlikowski** as an operations and systems analyst in DES.

## Promotions/Appointments

**Jennifer Coltrane** of the Budget Office was recently promoted to manager of Systems Data and Reporting and **Barbara Moses** of the Budget Office was recently promoted to associate director.

**Bert Stoner** of ETSS was recently promoted to an operations and systems specialist and **Franklin Finch** of ETSS was recently promoted to ETSS Help Desk manager.

## Transfer

**Joy Martin**, formerly of the University Budget Office, transferred to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to serve as director of Finance and Business.

## Birthdays

The following RMIS employees will be celebrating their birthdays in the coming months:

### May

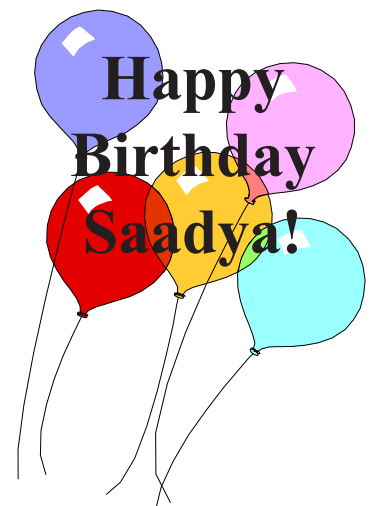
03	Saadya Russell
13	Brian Ott
28	Robert Boemermann
28	Pat Gaddy
31	Greg Sparks

### June

01	Nic Bonanno
19	Mariela Montero
20	June Bowles
25	Lee Pipkin
29	Todd Kerstetter
30	Mardecia Bell

### July

04	Mike Frechette
11	Teresa Kearns
13	Lori Thompson
18	Thelma Buffaloe
23	Amy Tawes
26	James Glover
27	William Coleman



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and years. Your continuing input and suggestions for improvements are encouraged.

Both the Strategic and Compact plans are focused on providing reliable, efficient, and effective administrative services to the NC State community. The difference between the two is that the Strategic Plan is directed inwardly to you, the RMIS staff, while the Compact Plan is outward facing to the University's senior management and our customers who are quickly becoming all of the students, faculty, and staff at NC State University.

A brief summary of the two plans might put them in context for you. The Strategic Plan has three parts:

**Part I** describes the general status of administrative information technology within RMIS – what are the departments and what might lie in store for us in the foreseeable future.

**Part II** defines each of our goals and the objectives and measurements for success. Five major goals have been identified by the RMIS leadership teams – directors, assistant directors, and managers – to include: 1) Customer Care; 2) Professional Growth; 3) Security and Control; 4) Operational Effectives; and 5) Strategic Initiatives.

**Part III** describes our technical directions and philosophies for meeting the goals during the next three years and touches on our directions in each of nine specific areas ranging from application delivery and development to cable television and security.

The Strategic Plan presents the general direction the division is taking in each of the five general goal areas and the technical decisions we will be following to achieve those goals. Hopefully, you will find that the work you do is helping the division move toward accomplishing our goals. Your role in the Strategic Plan is twofold: 1) to be working in the direction set forth in the plan; and 2) to be advising RMIS supervisors, managers, directors, and me when you think we are starting to either deviate from a direction set forth in the plan or when something is changing in our world

that would warrant a change in the plan. The Strategic Plan should be adhered to consistently, monitored for relevance to technology changes or customer priorities, and updated on an ongoing basis.

The Compact Plan is prepared for the 2007-2010 time-period. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive planning document but is used to advise the University's senior management of our major thrusts and priorities for this period. Similar to the Strategic Plan, it includes a recap of the services provided by the RMIS departments and offers a brief forecast of some of the external forces that will impact the division in the coming years: 1) PACE initiative; 2) virtualization; 3) regulatory changes; and 4) the CIO Scoping Study. Major goals for the Compact Plan period are to continue to accommodate technology infrastructure changes, improve security awareness and compliance, and implement the new Student Information System. The Plan goes on to highlight 10 significant action items, many of which will require an infusion of new resources to accomplish in a timely manner.

Please read these two plans carefully prior to the RMIS luncheon and do not be timid about asking questions of the directors and me during the luncheon. Remember, that every question asked to clarify a point, issue, or direction is a good question because, more than likely, one or more of your colleagues had the same question and was hesitant to ask it.

Finally, I would like to request your assistance in one particular facet of both plans – how do we measure how well we are doing? You will note that in the Strategic Plan, there are measurements noted following each objective of each goal and in the Compact Plan, there is a section for “Dashboard Measurements.” Both of these are trying to get to this same question and your suggestions and counsel are being sought. Plan to make your suggestions for measurements to your director or to me either prior to the luncheon or during the plan presentation part of the program.

Your input regarding any part of either plan is extremely important as both plans will be used by the CIO Scoping Committee as it shapes a unified future direction for IT services at NC State.

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almost 1,600 lines. We are now in the midst of scaling our environment by adding additional hardware and will begin an aggressive campaign this summer to convert almost 7,000 analog lines to IP Telephony over the subsequent 24 months.

Our wireless network has grown almost 10-fold in the past three years with most shared classrooms (known as 110 classrooms) having some level of coverage. Increasingly, it's rare to find a study lounge or other student congregation area that doesn't have a hotspot nearby. Significant funding from the Educational Technology Fee combined with operating funds from the continuing ComTech budget has allowed this project to move forward. However, we are physically less than half of the way to our goal of having ubiquitous wireless coverage across campus so wireless funding remains a high priority.

Lastly, we are in the early stages of investigating the next generation of video services known as IP-TV. Besides replacing our current cable television delivery to 8,000 students, this technology will allow for new uses of video as it simplifies the infrastructure needed for broadcasting and makes it possible to offer live video feeds from practically any location on campus. If you'd like additional information related to these projects, please don't hesitate to contact me or any ComTech staff member.