

# comment

A monthly publication for CompuServe employees

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## Employee discovery policy formalized

CompuServe employees have from time to time developed creative applications of technical skills to our computer services. These developments have been considered "Employee Discoveries" with the employees being rewarded for their efforts.

We felt it would be informative and perhaps would encourage employees in the future to outline our policy and to explain how employee discoveries are rewarded.

Employees can earn an extra \$150, \$500 or up to \$5,000 for creative application of technical skills to our computer services which qualify as employee discoveries.

This program is designed to reward those employees who are recognized as the sole inventor of a new concept or device.

All developments and discoveries made by such employees are the sole property of CompuServe and we must retain all such related rights as outlined in the non-disclosure agreement signed by all employees at the time of their employment with CompuServe.

A special development committee named by Jeff Wilkins and consisting of Judy Scheck, Sandy Trevor and Dave Swaddling evaluates all employee discoveries.

When it is determined by the development committee that you are the sole inventor of a specific technological development that contributes significantly to the profitability or efficiency of our business, you will be awarded \$150.00.

If your development is determined by the committee to result in increased profits in excess of \$1,000, you will be awarded an additional \$500.

The committee may also determine that additional awards up to \$5,000 may be made. It is the sole judgment of the committee as to which developments warrant the additional money.

When you have a development you feel might qualify, contact Judy Scheck, manager, human resources. She will arrange for a session with the development committee so you can make a presentation to them.

"We want to encourage the inventiveness of employees to help us increase our competitive edge. Your reward will be commensurate with the contribution the development makes to the company," says Judy.

## Mining industry agreement signed

CompuServe has signed a marketing affiliate agreement with Compudyne Incorporated, a Denver-based computer service organization whose primary business is providing computer time sharing and consulting services to Colorado mining companies.

"The agreement will allow CompuServe to market its many computerized mining programs in the expanding Denver mining market," says Bob Massey, vice president national accounts.

Judith K. Ingles, president of Compudyne, has several years experience in providing computer and consulting services to mining companies.

The Compudyne staff has access to local interactive graphics equipment including a Tektronix 4051 and Houston Instruments' DP8 plotter.

A CompuStation 11 communications processor will be installed in Denver to provide local dial up capabilities into the nationwide CompuServe communications network.

-Rich Baker

## Customer Assistance answered 12,000 calls in '78

"You never know what to expect when you come into the office in the morning. It can be a very quiet day with 20 rather routine requests, or you can receive 30 highly technical questions," says Diane Barbour, customer assistance representative.

Last year more than 12,000 customers or employees on the other end of the line received a solution to their problem or an answer to their question.

The customer assistance department (CAD) receives an average of 250 calls per week covering a variety of questions the user might have about operations, communications, programming, system bugs or applications.

Although CAD does not provide detailed programming or debugging assistance, it does answer programming-related

questions and reports system bugs.

CAD staffers include Diane Barbour, Margaret Borden, Audrey Harris, and as backup, Duane White, who devotes the rest of his time to programming.

"The scope of the users' knowledge of computers is far reaching. It ranges from those who adhere to the manual as if following a recipe in a cookbook to those who 'speak in FORTRAN,'" says Diane.

Some of the more unique and often humorous incidents involve individuals calling CAD inquiring about their programs only to find out they don't use our system; a customer upset about being charged for "free storage" (the system had typed out the amount of blocks containing files and those which were "free" or unused); trying to explain a

procedure to an individual who doesn't know what a file is or who has no conception of our service.

"Although some of the inquiries are humorous to us, we gain valuable insight as to our level of communication with our users. For instance, in the example above, we decided 'unused' was a better way to describe the free blocks," says Doug Kruest, software controls supervisor.

The CAD staff records a great deal of information on each call to eliminate recalling the user when following up on a problem.

"We track what problems were reported and how CAD responded. Weekly reports are sent to the branches, since we provide direct support to customers," says Doug.

It's easy to understand why Diane and other CAD staffers find themselves answering their home phones with 'Customer Assistance, can I help you?'

## Employees attend recognition dinner

Thirty four individuals, including president Jeff Wilkins, have been with CompuServe for five years or longer. These employees were honored at a special dinner held at Scioto Country Club on Jan. 17, 1979.

Listed below are the names and employment dates of those attending the dinner.

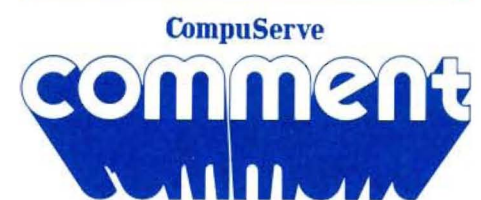
Larry Shelley, Nov., 1969

Jeff Wilkins, Jan., 1970  
Ron Citterberg, March, 1970  
Doug Chinnock, March, 1970  
Lynne Gard, June, 1970  
Steve Wilhite, June, 1970  
Jim Smith, Sept., 1970  
Nanu Desai, Oct., 1970  
John Gerlach, Nov., 1970

Bridget Dygert, Aug., 1971  
Jim Boardman, Sept., 1971  
Sandy Trevor, Sept., 1971  
Dave Stebel, Nov., 1971

Pam Melhorn, Jan., 1972  
Teri Cramlet, May, 1972  
Bill Kuehnle, June, 1972  
Terry Graves, Sept., 1972  
Dan Piskur, Oct., 1972  
Rich Dygert, Nov., 1972

Rick Kuhn, Jan., 1973  
Bill Wisse, Jan., 1973  
Paul Lambert, Jan., 1973  
Bill Martin, Feb., 1973  
Roger Wells, Feb., 1973  
Len Kaiser, Feb., 1973  
Rich Johnson, June, 1973  
Flo Shama, Aug., 1973  
Jim Ross, Oct., 1973  
Linda Thoires, Oct., 1973  
Ollie Floehr, Nov., 1973  
Benny Jones, Nov., 1973  
Russ Ranshaw, Nov., 1973  
Bil Lyons, Nov., 1973  
George Minot, Nov., 1973



COMMENT is a monthly employee newsletter under the direction of the human resources and corporate communications departments.

Editor: Donna O'Brien

Send articles or ideas to the attention of the editor.

CompuServe provides equal opportunity employment and does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, religion, color, sex, national origin, handicap or veterans status.

## the inside story

### Why a President's Conference?

As the time for the 1978 President's Conference draws near, I think it is appropriate to reflect upon past conferences and discuss the program's purposes and objectives.

The concept originated in 1970 as an incentive designed to motivate to the highest possible level our small and struggling sales force. We selected our highest sales performer to attend an incentive travel program along with our sister company at that time, Golden United Life. We sent one person and spouse, and Golden United sent more than 100 couples.

We learned from that experience that in addition to the obvious incentive and recognition benefits, there were others as well. The relaxed and casual atmosphere provided opportunity for people to become much better acquainted, resulting in better communications when they were back on the job.

The trip also provided the opportunity to recognize the spouses' contribution to CompuServe's success which is an important part of our philosophy. The knowledge gained from that first event encouraged us to expand the program in later years as performance and budget would allow.

In 1971 we again accompanied Golden United to take advantage of group buying power and increased our contingency to five couples. Two of the participants, Ron Citterberg and Jim Smith, are still with our company and carry important responsibilities. The other three were all with the company for more than six years and played important roles in our growth.

I believe this confirms my conviction that this form of

recognition stimulates commitment, builds rapport and benefits our organization tremendously.

In subsequent years we have been able to expand the program to include more people each year. In 1973 we returned to Hawaii with 14 CompuServe couples. In 1974 after a tremendous surge of company growth and productivity we held two conferences, one in Acapulco and one in St. Thomas. A total of 27 couples attended the programs.

In 1975 the general recession hit the U.S. economy as well as CompuServe, and a smaller group travelled to that ever-popular island state of Hawaii.

In 1976 we modified the program so that the qualifications period for marketing personnel coincided with our incentive compensation program, Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

Our selection program for attendees from departments in the company outside of marketing remained the same. We chose people based upon their manager's recommendations, length of service, contributions and commitment.

We also began to add a strong educational component to the conference which was held in the spring of 1977 at the Dorado Beach Hotel in Puerto Rico.

As most people know, our 1977 President's Conference was held in Maui, Hawaii. It was a tremendous success and met all of our goals for the program. We recognized our top performers from the marketing force as well as highly productive and dedicated people from other parts of the company. We put everyone together in a relaxed atmosphere and conducted a series of programs designed to provide direction and enhance the skills of the participants.

Everyone benefitted from the experience and returned home renewed and excited about the future. It was indeed the best of all

our conferences and provided a challenge for all our future events.

This issue contains the list of our attendees for the Acapulco Conference scheduled for March 6-12. I'm confident it will fulfill all our expectations and provide many treasured memories to our people and lasting benefits for our company.

My congratulations to those selected and my encouragement to those participating in "The Extra Mile" campaign for this year's program.

Jeff Wilkins

### How President Conference attendees were selected

*ED. Note: There has been some comment in previous years concerning the President's Conference home office personnel selections, that the selection process has been somewhat secretive or mysterious. Comment, therefore, interviewed Jeff Wilkins concerning the process for this year.*

"In the early years of our company, I knew what everyone was doing. Now, since our size makes it impossible for me to be familiar with each individual job, I cannot spot potential candidates and have played more of a screening role in the last couple of years. I make the final decisions on who from corporate headquarters attends the President's Conference based on a list of recommended potential candidates.

"This year, I requested that the recommendations come from each operating manager from marketing, computer technology and administration.

"Their recommendations were based on individuals within various areas whose performance has had a major impact during the

## for your benefit

### Get the most from your health insurance

We are introducing a new column in *Comment* to highlight various aspects of benefits available to CompuServe employees.

We will also answer the most-asked questions concerning such benefits.

The subject of this issue covers our health insurance plan. Here are several aspects of our plan of which you may not be aware.

If you have dependent coverage, you need only satisfy two deductibles during the calendar year. If you have 3, 4 or 10 dependents, you only have to reach \$200 before major medical is effective.

Any bills which are not covered by the basic plan, (ie., office visits, prescriptions,) should be collected during the year and submitted to apply toward your \$100 deductible. You can send these bills to Prudential Insurance Company as they are received or accumulate and forward them when they total \$100. The major medical will start covering 80 per cent of such charges thereafter until the end of the calendar year.

When you know in advance that you will have a hospital stay, obtain forms from Julia Micha, employment coordinator. This will facilitate your admittance and speed the payment of your bill.

As long as the doctor itemizes your bill, there is no need to forward the insurance form to him/her. Fill out your portion of the form and attach the itemized bill then forward them to Prudential.

To reduce processing time and to increase confidentiality, call the insurance company directly to check on any item and to mail your claim forms. The number to contact the Prudential office is: (216) 253-4367. You should ask for Beverly Bellman or state that you need to discuss a claim for CompuServe.

The address for mailing claim forms is: Prudential Group Claim Office, 440 Grant Street, Akron, Ohio 44311, Att: Beverly Bellman.

Listed below are the most-asked questions concerning insurance coverage.

#### Does it cover wisdom teeth extractions?

Yes, if they are impacted.

fbDoes it cover outpatient surgery?

Yes.

#### If there are two doctors involved in surgery, are both services covered?

Yes.

#### Are vasectomies covered?

Yes.

A few helpful hints concerning the hospitalization coverage:

If you want to add a dependent at any time other than initially, you must apply for the coverage and provide evidence of insurability.

Always carry your I.D. card. This is recognized in emergency rooms and will greatly facilitate your admittance. If you have any questions concerning the group hospitalization coverage, please refer to your booklet.

Contact Julia Micha if you need a new card or have any questions concerning coverage.

### Wanted campaign update

The "Wanted" employee referral hiring campaign is going great guns and has resulted in the hiring of an associate account representative in the Dallas branch.

Judy Feld, account executive in Dallas, convinced Bruce MacNaughton of the opportunities available at CompuServe and arranged for an interview.

Bruce completed the interview cycle and was hired. When all requirements are met, Judy will collect a check for \$1,000.

The campaign has generated 15 referrals so far, nine of which have been for specific available positions. Two referrals are pending further consideration.

We urge you to check the "Wanted" posters on the home office bulletin boards and InfoPlex mes.sages

Employees should match the qualifications of the individual they are referring to those listed for the available positions.

The campaign continues until the end of February, and those applicants who were referred during the three months who are

still in the interview cycle at the end of the campaign will still be eligible.

Talk to your friends and acquaintances who you feel would make good CompuServe employees. Send Judy Scheck and/or your branch manager a memo introducing the candidate, and you may collect \$100 or \$1,000 if he or she is hired and meet campaign requirements.

Your name can be posted on the "Reward" list in future issues of *Comment*.

## around the network

The following employees observed employment anniversaries during January.

9 years

Jeff Wilkins, executive

7 years

Pam Davis Melhorn, marketing education

6 years

Bill Wisse, mining industry  
Paul Lambert, operations

5 years

Joe Porfeli, national accounts  
Gale Leonard, operations

4 years

Jim McCarty, DATACOMM  
Dennis Murray, St. Louis

Mary Farmer, custodial services  
Dennis Chan, Los Angeles

3 years

Harry Gard, Executive  
Bonnie Hunt, Plexus  
Sydney Stratman, St. Louis

2 years

Marv Modeen, Engineering  
Dennis Meyer, Chicago  
Randall Vaughan, Indianapolis  
Ty Wait, Systems  
Clark Woodford, Plexus

1 year

Brian Canter, DATACOMM  
Jeff Miller, operations  
Judith Meloche, Los Angeles  
Bernard Pluth, St. Louis

Susan Meates, Corporate Information Systems

### *New Employees*

Linda Barrentine, systems programmer, systems  
Patty Crowder, PBX operator I, engineering  
Philip Hunt, applications programmer I, corp. info. sys.  
Tina Kolgaklis, marketing trainee, Atlanta  
Angie Ledford, CT clerk, R&D

### *Promotions*

Dennis Chan, account representative II, Los Angeles  
Nanu Desai, account manager, large accounts, Dayton  
Whit Crowley, account executive I, Memphis

## Disabled adults receive interviewing assistance

"I found the experience to be very rewarding. The obstacles a severely mentally disabled individual must overcome to get a job are overwhelming. Many of their problems are situations we take for granted," says Julia Micha, employment coordinator.

These were Julia's impressions after completing two interviewing classes for the ARCraft Workshop last month. The sessions she conducted were part of a 12-week workshop to prepare mentally disabled adults at ARCraft to interview for job positions and to help them interact socially on the job.

The classes began with the proper way to shake hands at the outset of the interview and progressed to interfacing with the interviewer and answering various types of questions.

Julia conducted mock interviews, first between one of the counselors and herself, then with members of the class. These

interviews were taped and discussed by the class. The tapes will be used throughout the workshop to reinforce procedures and ideas covered in Julia's session.

The first class consisted of individuals who had never held a competitive job. The second group had held jobs but were unable to perform satisfactorily. Julia answered many of their questions on how to remedy the problems they had encountered on the job.

"We take for granted activities such as getting off a bus at the proper stop, getting across an icy parking lot or eating in front of others, but these are very real obstacles to an individual who is mentally and socially disabled," says Julia.

Some of the 17 individuals participating in the classes will be ready to embark on a job hunt after completing the workshop, while others will continue to receive training until they are ready to handle requirements to hold a job.

They will apply for jobs in laundries, cafeterias and for clerical and janitorial positions.

The sessions conducted by Julia will enable the individuals to talk with the interviewer rather than having the counselor speak for them on an interview.

The workshop is a comprehensive training program covering proper clothing, grooming, transportation, adapting to the work environment as well as how to determine correct wages.

"One of the ultimate objectives of this program is to have the disabled individuals earn wages so they can progress from institutional life into group homes, a more satisfying arrangement for society as well as for the individuals," says Julia.

If the program is as successful as indicated so far, Julia will conduct sessions for future workshops.

RICHARD DYGERT  
SYSTEMS