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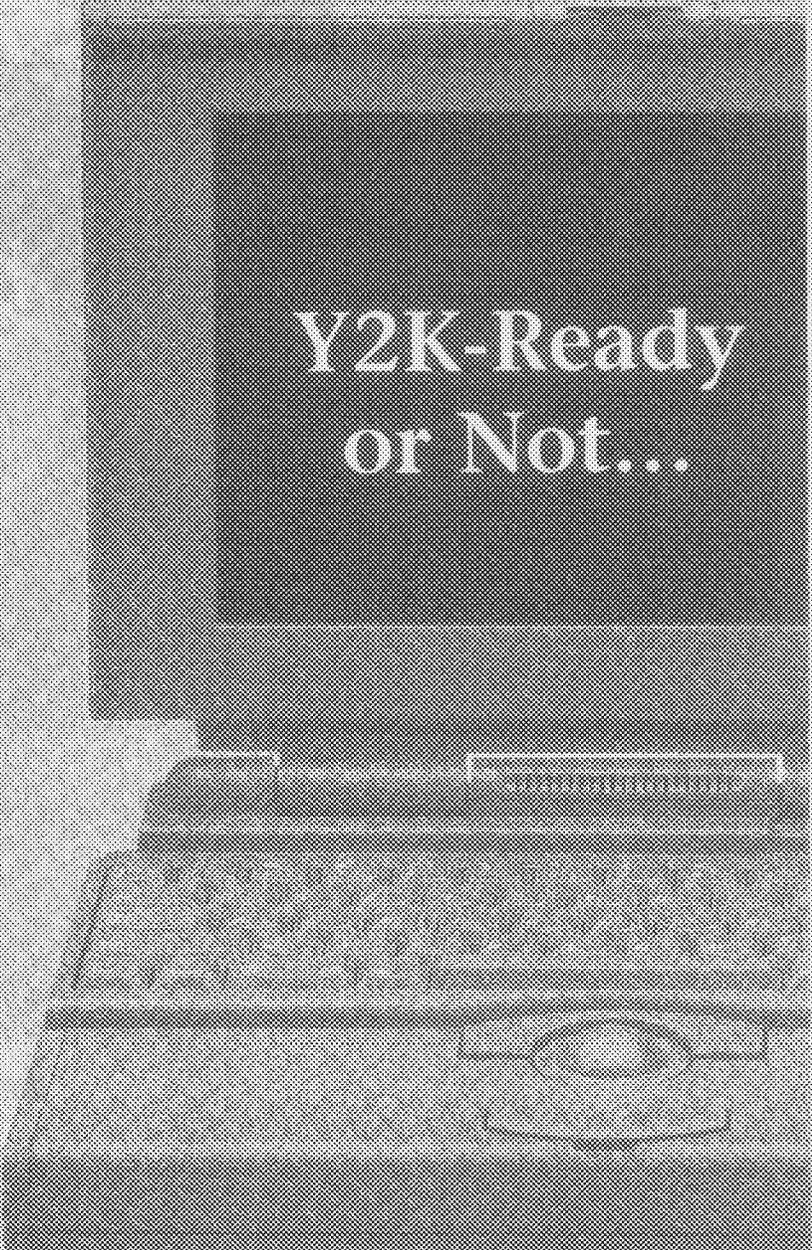
Y2K-Ready or Not...

Reasonable Accommodations

by Kelly M. Buchheit
Office of Equal Employment Opportunity

The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is the law that prohibits discrimination against qualified disabled persons in employment. It also prohibits discrimination in providing government services, transportation, public accommodations, and telecommunications.

This law covers all State and local government agencies, employment agencies, labor organizations, labor-management committees, and all employers with 15 or more employees. This means that an employer cannot refuse to hire a disabled person who can perform the essential functions of a job with or without reasonable accommodation.

A reasonable accommodation is any change or adjustment to a job or work environment that permits a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the job application process, to perform the essential functions of a job, or to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by an employee without a disability. Reasonable accommodations may include: providing or modifying equipment or devices, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, or providing readers and interpreters.

Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants or employees unless the employer can prove that the accommodation creates undue hardship.

It is a common belief that most reasonable accommodations are expensive. However, job accommodations are usually not expensive and can reduce workers' compensation and other insurance costs. According to the Job Accommodation Network of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities:

❖31 percent of accommodations cost nothing,
❖50 percent cost less than $50,
❖69 percent cost less than $500, and
❖88 percent cost less than $1,000.

Examples of job accommodations and associated costs include:

❖changing a desk layout from the right to the left side for a data entry operator with a shoulder injury (cost $0),
❖supplying a telephone amplifier for a computer programmer who is hard of hearing (cost $56),
❖providing a special chair for a district sales agent to alleviate pain caused by a back injury (cost $400),
❖using an articulating keyboard tray to alleviate strain of repetitive motion and carpal tunnel syndrome (cost $150),
❖supplying an antiglare computer screen for a person with an eye disorder—glare on screen causes fatigue (cost $9),
❖providing a revolving file holder for a clerk whose hand use is limited and is unable to access files located across the desk (cost $85),
❖providing a telephone headset for an employee with cerebral palsy (cost $50),
❖providing a deaf technician with a light indicator to notify him when a timer goes off (cost $27), and

❖changing an employee's schedule to allow for necessary rest breaks during the day (cost $0).

NSA's Disability Affairs Program ensures that, when possible, reasonable accommodations are provided to employees with disabilities enabling them to be a productive part of the Agency's work force.

Disability Awareness Month Events

October 6 and 7, Sign Language Workshops, 9:00–10:00 a.m., OPS 2B, Room 2B4118-1 (register via the EEO HomePage)

October 14, Keynote Address, "It's Not the Disability, It's the Ability," Dana Bowman, 2:00–3:00 p.m. (register via the EEO HomePage)

Ongoing, Gallaudet University Art Show, OPS 1, 2nd floor hallway and 1st floor display cases

Information derived from the Job Accommodation Network and the President's Council on Employing People with Disabilities Websites.
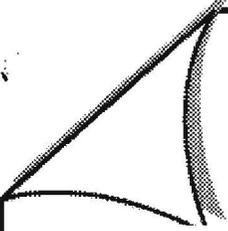
DIRNSA'S DESK

Combined Federal Campaign

September marked the start of the 1999 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) season at the National Security Agency/Central Security Service. Thank you to all the CFC keyworkers, coordinators, and canvassers who administer this important fundraising program. You provide an important service to your community.

I also commend all of you who currently give to charity, and I encourage you to continue giving. Many of you who support charitable organizations find the CFC to be an excellent and convenient way to contribute. NSA employees have contributed more than $1 million every year since 1987, and we are the largest supporter in the Central Maryland region, contributing 26 percent of the region's total contributions.

Although NSA employees have supported the CFC continuously over the past 34 years, I feel compelled to write to those of you who are not currently supporting a charity, or who may not be aware of the value and convenience of the CFC program. The CFC is comprised of more than 2,300 different charitable organizations, and your contribution to these organizations is likely to provide a direct benefit to you, your loved ones, your neighbors, and coworkers. In addition to the variety of charities available through the program, the CFC allows you to donate to the organization of your choice through an easy, private, and flexible process right here at NSA.

Three out of every five people in the Central Maryland region will need the assistance provided by CFC charities at least once. When you make a donation, you actually contribute to a type of "insurance" plan for yourself, your family, and others in your community. If you or a family member suffer from conditions like Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, Down's syndrome, or breast cancer, then you would likely benefit from the services provided by several CFC agencies—and these are just a few examples. Even if you are very fortunate and never need such assistance, your giving will be greatly appreciated by those you help. This year's theme, "To Offer Help...is to Offer Hope!" is a wonderful way to express the great impact that you can make through a contribution this season.

Through the CFC process, you can pledge easily and privately online via the CFC Web application on the NSA Net, or you can complete a hardcopy application furnished by your CFC canvasser. Either way, you have the flexibility to choose the organizations you wish to support, and can determine the amount and frequency of your contributions. Even if you can only make a small one-time donation, your support will be greatly appreciated.

I encourage you to reflect upon the benefits and value of the CFC charities, and I urge you to join us in leaving a footprint of hope in 1999, as we step forward to offer help for the new millennium.

Michael V. Hayden

Open Season on Health Benefits

Once again, it is time for Federal employees to sort through stacks of brochures in search of the best health benefits plan to meet their needs. This year's Open Season will run from November 8 through December 13, 1999, with an effective date of January 2, 2000.

During the annual Open Season, employees may enroll in a plan, change plans, or change from one option to another within the same plan. Employees may not be covered under two Federal health plans at the same time. However, employees may cancel their health benefits coverage or change from family to self-only at any time throughout the year–these are not considered Open Season changes.

REPORTING ON FRAUD, WASTE, AND INEFFICIENCY

The Secretary of Defense has solicited the cooperation and support of all DOD personnel in reducing fraud, waste, and inefficiency in DOD. All personnel should be alert to opportunities for improved economies and efficiencies in NSA operations. Recommendations should be made through appropriate management channels.

To report suspected instances of fraud, waste, and inefficiency within NSA, call either the NSA Inspector General (IG) at 301-688-6666 or the DOD Hotline at 1-800-424-9098. The Hotline operates from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each workday and is staffed by personnel from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service. The identity of all callers will be fully protected.

Personnel using the outside telephone or contacting the DOD Hotline are reminded of security requirements; they should discuss only unclassified information. Classified conversations should be held only over the secure phone with the NSA IG's office or with the IG's representative in person in OPS 2B, Room 2B8076. Shift personnel or others wishing to leave a message with the NSA IG may do so by calling on the secure phone and leaving a recorded message.

When contemplating retirement, it is important to know that individuals must be covered under a Federal health plan (either as the enrollee or as a dependent) for the 5 consecutive years of service immediately preceding retirement. This is required to continue coverage as an annuitant. Therefore, this Open Season might be the time to consider starting an enrollment. Employees who were enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program as of October 1, 1996, may be eligible for a waiver of this requirement. Contact an Integrated Personnel Activity (IPA) for more information.

Submit Forms Early

The IPAs and the NSA Customer Service Centers (NSA CSC) will accept enrollment or change forms. Forms may also be submitted to the Health Benefits Office (HBO) located in SAB 1, room CN01. The earlier a form is submitted, the sooner an identification card from the new plan will be received. Under normal circumstances, enrollees receive an identification card within 6 to 8 weeks after the effective date. Unfortunately, this time frame can double during the Open Season due to the enormous volume of Federal participants with the health carriers. Submitting forms during the first part of the Open Season may eliminate having to pay for covered medical expenses out of pocket until membership is established with the carrier. This frequently occurs if the identification card is not received by the effective date. It may not be possible for all employees to make a decision during the first week or two of the Open Season. If forms

are submitted during the last few days, make every possible effort to hand-carry them to either an IPA or to the HBO in SAB 1, room S1CN03.

In deciding which plan is best, the following information is provided for consideration:

Fee-for-Service Plans (i.e. Blue Cross/Blue Shield, GEHA) offer the greatest freedom of choice in selecting doctors and hospitals. In addition, these plans provide coverage if employees or family members travel extensively and want protection when away from home or for children attending college out of town or out of state. Usually, fee-for-service plans provide a higher level of benefits for long-term treatment requiring physical therapy and outpatient mental-health services. However, these plans also have the greatest out-of-pocket expenses because of deductibles and copayments on some services. Many fee-for-service plans require annual membership dues to enroll. This cost is in addition to the biweekly premium.

Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) or Pre-paid Plans (i.e. Aetna US Health Care, Kaiser Permanente) are better suited for those who want health care with few out-of-pocket cost for physicals, office visits, and immunizations. There are no deductibles. HMOs provide preventive care for members of all ages at little or no charge other than the biweekly premium and the copayments. Medical records are in a central location and all medical needs are coordinated by a primary physician at the medical center. All referrals to specialist physicians must also be coordinated with, and approved by, the appropriate individual in the organization.

Point of Service (POS) Plans (i.e. Free State, Prudential) offer a managed care product that provides members with the option of using a selected network of providers. These plans are a combination of a fee-for-service and HMO plan. If interested in a POS plan, review the plan brochure for more details, because not all services can be obtained out of the network.

Be aware that HMO plans reserve the right to terminate any physician, or to disapprove any referral, any time. However, individuals may not change from their health plan anytime. If your primary care physician is terminated from the HMO plan, another physician within the same HMO plan will be provided. Individuals may not change plans until the next qualifying event (usually the next Open Season).

Membership in an HMO may require residence within a specific geographic location, which is different for each plan. Individuals travelling outside the plan's designated service area will only be covered for an emergency or life-threatening situation. Payment of medical benefits for out-of-the-area services will be delayed because of additional approvals required by the plan.

Read the Brochures

To make a responsible decision regarding which health plan is best, take the time to read the new brochures. Even if individuals do not plan to make an Open Season change, it is important to review the new 2000 brochures for current plans because premiums and coverage may change.

The 2000 Enrollment Information Comparison Guides will be distributed throughout the Agency when the shipment is received. The comparison guide and individual plan brochures (for plans that provide an electronic form) will also be available on the NSA WEBWORLD. The Retirement and Insurance HomePage is located at www.s.nsa/retirement/index.html, and the OPM Web is located on the Internet at http://www.opm.gov/insure. NSA does not receive a copy for each employee. Use the guide as a tool to narrow choices. Brochures may be obtained from an IPA, NSA CSC, HBO, or electronically at the above address. For additional assistance, contact an IPA or the HBO at 963-4524(s) or 410-854-6063.

DS Award for Excellence

The Support Services Directorate (DS) is soliciting nominations for the second annual DS Award for Excellence (DSAFE). It is time to start thinking about all the Support Services personnel who provided exceptional service throughout FY99, and write a nomination today!

The DSAFE is the highest honorary award that a DS individual or DS-led team may be awarded. The award recognizes DS teams and individuals who excel in customer focus, knowledge sharing and teaming, and who make outstanding contributions to DS corporate goals. DS-led teams that include members from other Key Components are also eligible. Awardees will be recognized at a ceremony in April 2000.

Submissions will be accepted from October 1 through November 15. For additional information regarding this award, visit the DSAFE Website at http://www.s.nsa/excellence or visit the nearest Customer Service Center or Integrated Personnel Activity/ Human Resource Center. Questions may also be sent via E-mail to the DSAFE alias, dsafe.

Thrift Savings Plan Rates Through August 1999			
Months	C	F	G
1994	1.33%	(2.96%)	7.22%
1995	37.41%	18.31%	7.03%
1996	22.85%	3.66%	6.76%
1997	33.17%	9.60%	6.77%
1998	28.44%	8.70%	5.74%
1998			
September	6.33	2.36	.44
October	8.19	(.52)	.41
November	6.04	.56	.42
December	5.76	.30	.43
1999			
January	4.19	.71	.42
February	(3.09)	(1.74)	.38
March	3.99	.54	.47
April	3.86	.29	.46
May	(2.36)	(.89)	.47
June	5.54	(.33)	.49
July	(3.14)	(.43)	.52
August	(.50)	(.05)	(.53)
Last 12 Months	39.72%	.75%	5.59%

Percentages in ( ) are negative.

ANSWERS TO THE OCTOBER PUZZLE

Cohen Says Department of Defense Ready for Y2K

American Forces Information Service

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen declared the Department of Defense (DOD) ready to face the final challenges of the Year 2000 computer problem.

During the 6-year period from FY96 through FY01, DOD expects to spend approximately $3.7 billion for Y2K fixes.

The so-called millennium bug, or Y2K problem, refers to the inability of many computers to process certain dates, especially those ending with the digits "00."

The DOD has undertaken an enormous effort to ensure Y2K readiness. DOD is responsible for $1/3$ of all mission critical computer systems in the Federal government and $1/2$ of all Federal computer systems.

In a press conference at the Pentagon earlier this year, Cohen noted the Department's current progress: more than 92 percent of DOD's 2,107 mission critical systems are fully Y2K compliant; 94 percent of 4,749 non-mission critical systems are fixed and implemented; and more than 99 percent of 637 installations are compliant.

In approximately 6 percent of cases, systems are not yet "completed" since a known fix has yet to be installed at many locations. Completion of these systems has been affected by operational deployment schedules, such as for carrier battle groups when the fix will be made upon return to home port. Consequently, more than 99 percent of the Department's mission critical systems will be fixed, tested, and installed by the end of September

1999, and the remainder by the end of the year.

This progress follows a large-scale effort to handle Y2K as a military readiness issue, not just as a computer programmer function. In August 1998, Secretary Cohen reviewed Y2K compliance in the Department and found it had gotten off to a slow start. To speed the process, he directed DOD's leadership to treat the Y2K issue as a major threat to military readiness. The unified military commands were asked to ensure Y2K testing was included in joint warfighting and operational readiness exercises. The Services and Defense Agencies were instructed to fix their systems, certify interfaces, and ensure vendors were held responsible for Y2K compliance of products. Finally, officials on the Secretary's staff were told to ensure functioning of specific business processes, including financial transactions, health activities, and supply lines.

These initiatives have accelerated Y2K fixes, testing, and implementation. Y2K has led to the largest testing effort in the Department's history. Examples range from a massive end-to-end test of logistics supply channels to systems tests within the U.S. European Command during operations in Kosovo.

Y2K Readiness Essential

"Last year I told the Department's military and civilian leaders that Y2K compliance was a readiness issue that would determine whether we could carry out our most important missions. The Department has made

great progress in the past year. All of this progress has been possible through the incredibly hard work and outstanding leadership of DOD employees throughout the Department. With 3 months to go before the turn of the year, we can rest assured the DOD will be well-positioned to handle its national security responsibilities before, on, and after January 1, 2000," Cohen said.

All levels of the DOD are preparing for operations during the Y2K transition period from September 1, 1999, through the leap year date, February 29, 2000, to March 31, 2000. In particular, the Air Force is conducting "Guam Watch," tracking the progress of computer results as the January 1, 2000, date moves around the world. DOD officials are also working with the President's Council on Y2K Conversion to share information with a Federal information coordination center. This way the Federal government will have a complete understanding of the impacts of Y2K throughout the United States and globally.

The Department has procedures in place to handle its duties in the event an unforeseen circumstance does occur. Backup or contingency plans are being developed at all levels of the Department—from individual systems to those supporting warfighting tasks. The Joint Chiefs of Staff is conducting the Chairman's Contingency Assessments: these assume failure of key warfighting systems so that alternate "workarounds" can be studied and the viability of contingency plans assessed. Unified commanders are assessing the status of host nation support to U.S. stations overseas and developing contingency plans to deal with impacts on military operations and service-member families.

Y2K at NSA–What Employees Need to Know

NSA has made a significant effort to ensure that its systems are Y2K compliant. All NSA systems will be Y2K compliant by December 31, 1999. Noncompliant systems will be decommissioned.

Event Personnel

Each Key Component has identified employees designated as "Y2K event personnel." These individuals have been notified in writing of their assignment and responsibilities during the Y2K event.

All Y2K event personnel are expected to be onsite or on call during the Y2K event period to augment normal 24-hour watch operations. The Y2K event period will begin December 31, 1999 at 1200 Greenwich mean time and will end when determined by the Director or Deputy Director, NSA/CSS.

Only personnel assigned to normal 24-hour watch operations or designated as Y2K event personnel will be permitted to report to duty during the Y2K event. Other personnel are not authorized to report to duty unless specifically called in. A liberal leave policy will be in effect the week of January 3 for non-Y2K event personnel.

The Department of Defense has exempted all NSA employees who are working on the Y2K problem from the biweekly limitation on overtime; comp time; and night, Sunday, and holiday pay. The biweekly pay cap does not apply to Wage Grade employees.

Facilities Services is working closely with BG&E to ensure that electricity is available to NSA buildings. There is a contingency plan to provide backup electrical power via generators to selected areas of the NSA campus. BG&E has accomplished all necessary Y2K compliance programs and will man the substations that are most critical to NSA. Manning these stations will ensure rapid recovery during an electrical outage.

The generators will be tested in November. During the test, the electrical demands of NSA's critical buildings will be evaluated and an electrical load-shedding plan will be incorporated. This will require occupants to turn off all nonmission-essential equipment.

Holiday Leave

The Agency will be as flexible as possible for all employees during the New Year's holiday. However, should there be a demand for emergency personnel during the millennium weekend, management has the authority to require emergency personnel to report for work regardless of the employee's holiday plans.

Under emergency circumstances such as the Y2K transition, employees can be directed to forego scheduled vacations or leave for the duration of the emergency.

If leave is canceled, the government is not obligated to reimburse individuals for money lost. It is important, then, that employees coordinate all of their leave plans up to and through the millennium weekend with their office as soon as possible.

Health and Life Insurance

Federal employees, retirees, and their families can be confident that their Federal health and life insurance programs, their retirement system, and other Office of Personnel Management (OPM) services are ready for the year 2000. Being ready means making sure that not one annuity check is missed or is late. If local systems fail (those that OPM does not have any control over) they will find an alternative way to deliver.

Medical Center and EAS

There will be a medical response team (physician, nurse, and medical technician) at the Headquarters Medical Center during their normal business hours December 31, 1999. For the remainder of the weekend, there will be a team on call at all times. During the week of January 3, 2000 the Medical Center will be open during its normal hours, 6:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m., and there will be a team on call during the evening and night hours.

The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) will have two mental health professionals on call at all times from December 31, 1999, through January 2, 2000. As always, there will be one mental health professional on call at all times the first full week of January.

Agency Services

The Rite Aid, barbershop, Civilian Welfare Fund, and SHAPE Centers will be open during their normal business hours if the building in which they are located is open. The cafeterias are dependent on adequate power to be fully operational. It is possible that service could be limited, but there will be no way to know until January 1, 2000. Contingency plans will be in place to operate at levels that will not use power that is needed for mission purposes.

For additional information regarding Y2K issues, refer to the Y2K Millenium HomePage at http://millennium.q.nsa/. –sda

Y2K—What You Can Do To Be Prepared

News headlines and Internet postings in recent months run the gamut with so-called experts predicting that the Y2K bug will cause problems ranging from a "minor inconvenience" to a "major world catastrophe." The simple truth is—no one is exactly sure what will happen. Conventional wisdom holds that there may be some disruption in services, but there will not be a catastrophic collapse of all electronic systems, mass chaos or panic, and that manufacturing systems will be fixed in a short time.

This much is known—State and local government agencies, utilities, hospitals, and other organizations that provide essential services have been hard at work to identify and correct problems before they occur. State and local emergency management officials are also working to identify resources and develop contingency plans in case major problems occur.

■There is no reason to hoard food or supplies, but families should prepare in the same way they would for a significant winter storm. Keeping a 3- to 7-day store of supplies in suburban and urban areas and more for rural areas, is a guideline.

■Check with manufacturers of essential computer-controlled equipment in your home including fire and security alarm systems, programmable thermostats, appliances, home electronics, garage door openers, and any other electronic equipment in which an "embedded electronic chip" may control its operation.

■Prepare a home emergency supply kit that could also be kept on hand for winter storms, hurricanes, and other hazards. It should include nonperishable foods and stored water.

■If oil heat is used, plan to fill the tank before the end of the year.

■Have prescription medicines filled.

■Keep copies of important records in a safe place in the home. Include copies of wills, marriage licenses, mortgage records, canceled checks, bank and investment statements, insurance information, and credit card statements.

■If medical devices are used in the home (oxygen, blood sugar monitors, etc.), have the equipment checked or contact the manufacturer to ensure Y2K compliance.

■In case of a power failure, plan to use alternate cooking devices in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Don't use open flames or charcoal grills indoors.

■Have extra blankets, coats, hats, and gloves to keep warm. Do not plan to use gas-fueled appliances, like an oven as an alternative source of heat. The same is true for wood-burning or liquid-fueled heating devices that are not designed to be used in a residential structure. Camp stoves and heaters should only be used outdoors in a well-ventilated area. If an alternative heating device is purchased, make sure that it is approved for use indoors and is listed with the Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

■Have plenty of flashlights and extra batteries on hand. Do not use candles for emergency lighting.

■Examine all smoke alarms now. If smoke alarms are hardwired into the home's electrical system (most new alarms are), check to see if they have battery backups.

■If planning to use a portable generator, connect the item to be powered directly to the generator; do not connect the generator to the home's electrical system. Also, be sure to keep a generator in a well-ventilated area—either outside or in a garage with the door open. Don't put a generator in the basement or anywhere inside the home.

(Taken from the brochure "Howard County Year 2000–Y2Know, Y2Care About Y2K")

Flu Vaccines

The effects of influenza are felt throughout the workplace—through absenteeism, productivity loss, overtime, and increased health service use. The best method to protect against influenza is to receive an annual flu immunization. The Agency's immunization program will begin in late October. The schedule will be sent to all employees via E-mail as soon as the vaccine arrives. The influenza vaccine is safe and effective.

Major reasons not to receive the influenza immunization include: allergy to chicken eggs, previous serious reaction to flu vaccine (very rare), active neurological disorder, allergy to the preservative Thimerosol, or acute infection (delay immunization). Pregnant women should receive the immunization from their health care provider. Nursing mothers should get written permission from their physician. The flu vaccine is an inactivated viral vaccine. Influenza vaccine can prevent symptoms of flu infection by approximately 90 percent. It takes about 2 weeks after receiving the vaccine to develop an immunity.

To Offer Help...Is To Offer Hope!

by Lisa M. Anderson, Program Manager

The mission of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is to support and to promote philanthropy through a program that is employee-focused, cost-efficient, and effective in providing every Federal employee the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all. Its tradition of community commitment through the selfless effort of Federal employees is rooted in the charitable campaigns of the 1960's.

NSA has a strong commitment to the CFC and the community of Central Maryland. Last year was the 12th consecutive year that NSA contributed more than $1 million. This tradition has become well known and well respected throughout the region. In addition to giving more than 26 percent of the CFC of Central Maryland's total contributions, NSA also leads the way in our community with 310 Leadership Society members (those who contribute $1,000 or more).

The 1999 CFC began in September. All Federal employees have the right to contribute or not to contribute to the CFC. Through your designation, you ensure that your donation goes to meet those needs that you feel are most important. Employees may choose from any of the 2,400 agencies that have been approved for inclusion this year by the Local Federal Coordinating Committee. There is something for everyone—the CFC Resource Guide is extremely comprehensive and offers information about all of the participating agencies.

There are several methods to contribute to the CFC. You can give a one-time cash or check donation or use payroll deduction. Payroll deduction lets you help all year and is key to substantial giving by allowing you to spread the cost of your contribution through the entire year.

Last year, the Agency collected several personal stories from employees about their experiences with CFC agencies. The following is one of those received.

Marilyn's Story

Seventeen years ago, my contribution to the CFC was an impersonal, charitable payroll deduction to those organizations with which I had only a peripheral relationship. That changed dramatically when my son was born with Down's syndrome. My former spouse (also an Agency employee) and I were exposed to and received support from a number of CFC-supported organizations, both on the local and national level.

On the local level, we became involved with the Howard County Association for Retarded Citizens and its subordinate organizations, Parents of Children with Down's Syndrome, eventually serving in leadership positions in both organizations.

These organizations provided us with parental support, respite services, information, guidance and assistance in finding and receiving educational, recreational, and medical services, and served as an advocate for both our needs as parents and our son's needs. Further, CFC-supported national organizations such as the Down's Syndrome Congress and the National Down's Syndrome Society have provided us with yet another advocate for our son.

As my son grew, he became involved in sports and the Special Olympics, another CFC-supported organization that provides year-round sports training for those individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. These programs have provided fantastic means for my son and others to strive to succeed in the same ways their siblings and friends do, thereby increasing their self-esteem.

Within 3 years of my son's birth, I turned again to a CFC-supported organization, the local chapter of the American Heart Association, when my father suffered a heart attack while visiting us in Maryland. With just a phone call, the local chapter provided me with a wealth of information on dealing with a family member who has had a heart attack, nutritional information, exercise programs, and support group information in both my area and for the area in New Jersey where my father lives.

In recent years, I've received assistance from yet another CFC-supported organization, the Alzheimer's Association. This organization has provided our family with information that has enabled us to understand my mother's illness and make decisions regarding her future.

All of these organizations continue to be a great source of programs, information, and support for which I am very grateful. Most are provided at no cost or minimal cost to my family, thanks to funds provided to those organizations through the CFC and the United Way.

For additional information regarding the CFC, visit its Website at http://www.fanx.s.nsa/cfc/ or contact the program manager, Lisa M. Anderson, at lmande1@nsa or 963-6801(s).

NSA Promotes Education Among Baltimore City's Youth

Earlier this year, NSA's Mathematics Education Partnership Program (MEPP) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) offices formed a partnership with the Baltimore City Police Athletic League (PAL). In conjunction with this partnership, NSA invited PAL students to tour the National Cryptologic Museum during the summer months. These tours were initiated to help students better appreciate how math, science, and technology impact cryptology and contribute to the protection of American communications.

On July 6, the Agency welcomed the first PAL group to visit the Museum. Approximately 200 students formed the largest group to ever visit the museum at one time. During their 3-hour tour, the students watched World War II cryptology videos and were shown how to break codes by Agency mathematicians.

Other guests visiting the museum that day included Baltimore City Police Commissioner Thomas Frazier; Col. Alvin Winkler, PAL Executive Director; and officers from the Baltimore City Police Department. Mr. George Cotter, NSA Chief Scientist, welcomed the visitors and Mr. Jack Ingram, the museum's curator, gave an indepth tour of the museum exhibits. Following the tour, Commissioner Frazier briefly spoke to the children regarding the importance of becoming familiar with and understanding how computers work. Dur-

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...students watched World War II cryptology videos and were shown how to break codes....

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ing his speech, he thanked the NSA staff for having the vision to establish

Mr. Earnest Green, Director, EEO; Mr. Jack Ingram, Museum Curator; Baltimore City Police Commissioner Thomas Frazier; Mr. George Cotter, NSA Chief Scientist; Col. Alvin Winkler, PAL Executive Director, and members of the Baltimore City PAL.

the NSA/PAL partnership. He also complimented NSA volunteers saying, "these are some of the smartest computer science people in the world."

The MEPP

The MEPP is an outreach program that promotes mathematics and science education for students ranging from elementary- to graduate-school level. Supported by many Agency volunteers, MEPP participants teach students computer skills, how to use the Internet, hardware and software repair, math, and science. MEPP members also provide community and police volunteers with the skills needed to tutor math, science, and computer classes.

Police Athletic League

The PAL provides many educational programs in its 27 youth centers, located throughout the city. Its purpose is to offer young people a balance of knowledge, ideas, and strengths that will enable them to make good life decisions. PAL also provides a safe haven for young people to learn and have fun, while interacting with dedicated police officers.

The Partnership

The NSA/PAL partnership provides PAL youth with some of the Nation's best mathematicians, scientists, and computer experts who have agreed to volunteer at the PAL centers. To date, more than 50 Agency employees have volunteered to tutor, mentor, and teach PAL youth. These employees will teach math, science, computer literacy, use of the Web, business administration, and arts and crafts.

For additional information regarding the MEPP program, call 963-5511(s) or 301-688-6436. The NSA PAL volunteer coordinator is Monique Mitchener, 968-7771(s).

—sda

Action Line

Have a question or thought to express? Use Action Line! Opinions expressed in letters do not necessarily represent official viewpoints or the views of the *Newsletter* Staff.

CENSORED

Dear Action Line,

As an Information Systems Security Organization (DI) employee, I am a bit curious why Agency-all E-mails seem to be filtered and "judiciously" dispensed to those in DI via ISSO InfoLine. Several times, I have been informed by my wife, who is a Technology and Systems Organization (DT) employee, of Agency-all E-mails that I have never seen. Is there some reason for these E-mails not being forwarded without intervention and filtering?

—In the Dark

Dear In the Dark,

Thank you for your question about the ISSO InfoLine. This initiative began approximately 4 years ago when it became clear that the large volume of "mass" E-mailings was having a detrimental effect on the ISSO's mail servers and delaying time-sensitive, operational E-mails.

Many people were complaining about the large number of administrative announcements and "junk" messages addressed to "ISSO-all" or "Agency-all" being received that filled employees E-mail inboxes everyday. This was forcing busy people to waste time sifting through low priority items to find work-related, time-sensitive messages. In response to this problem, a way was sought to organize the information in a manageable format that put the control back in the individual's hands.

The ISSO InfoLine organizes messages to the work force in a selectable list. This list appears every morning on all ISSO workstations. The first message in the list opens automatically and is usually a message with a topic of interest to most of the ISSO work force. The Deputy Director for Information Systems Security Organization (DDI) often uses this feature to communicate topics of importance. The other messages are either Agency-all and ISSO-all messages that have "trapped out" for retransmission on InfoLine or messages submitted directly to InfoLine. The ISSO InfoLine is rerun around noon whenever a message of wide interest has been added or submitted that morning. The only other criteria for submission of a message to the ISSO InfoLine is that the topic be work related and of interest to at least two

groups within the ISSO. No other "censorship" takes place. It should be noted that any Agency-all or ISSO-all messages of an emergency nature are forwarded via E-mail upon receipt and posted on the ISSO InfoLine. A problem exists when Agency-all messages go out during the work day–Agency mail servers sometimes get backed up, creating significant time delays before the ISSO even receives the original message. This is generally why people in another Key Component may get an ISSO message before someone in the ISSO.

One exception to the normal InfoLine process involves messages from the senior operations officer (SOO) and the operations support officer (OSO). Those messages go directly via E-mail to the ISSO's work force since they are generally time-sensitive and they may be sent out after normal duty hours when no one is available to retransmit them on InfoLine

In summary, the ISSO InfoLine is not an attempt to censor E-mail (except E-mail that is clearly of an unofficial and inappropriate nature for government resources). It is a tool that improves the operation of Agency networks. It also helps to organize the information the work force receives to allow them to use their valuable time more efficiently. The majority of feedback regarding InfoLine has been favorable.

—Michael R. Ware, DI CIO

PUT ON THE BRAKES

Dear Action Line,

I would like to express a major concern about excessive speed and disregard for posted traffic-control signs at NSA. In my travels this morning, I observed a BMW traveling parallel to me while traversing the parking lot in front of Gatehouse 2. I noticed it because its speed, nearly 25–30 mph, was well over the nominal level for safety. As the car approached the end of the parking lot and the STOP markings before the Jersey barriers, the driver proceeded to turn as if the STOP markings were not even there! Then, as he reached the STOP sign, that was also disregarded. I was aghast! I wondered if there was a valid reason to be in that much of a hurry. When I observed this individual park in a numbered space and then nonchalantly stroll into the HQS Bldg. without a care in the world, I felt it was appropriate to write to "Action Line."

It is unconscionable that anyone would act with such total disregard for safety! This letter will hopefully bring a wake-up call to anyone who feels they can disregard the speed limits and traffic signs within the compound, simply because they believe they are "above it all."

—Totally Aghast

Club Notes

Celtic Forum meets the last Tuesday of every month. Anyone interested in the culture, art, languages, or heritage of the Celtic lands (Brittany, Cornwall, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) or peoples is welcome to attend. For further information, contact Karen Davis (kmdavis@nsa), 301-688-7884.

Ceramics Crafters will hold its annual Halloween sale October 19, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. inside the OPS 2A entrance, next to the stairway. For additional club information, write to the Ceramics Crafters Club, c/o the CWF Club Mail Facility.

Comic Book/Science-Fiction Memorabilia Collectors Club meets the first Friday of every month. The club provides a forum for people interested in comic books, science fiction, games, and other fandom. A second meeting for family members is held on the third Saturday of each month at the Provinces Library. For further information, contact Ann White (abwhit1@nsa).

Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual Employees (GLOBE), Alan Turing Chapter, will hold its October general meeting in the conference room in Building 9914, the Colony Seven complex. To check for GLOBE meeting dates and times, subscribe to ESS 116, read the Club News on ENLIGHTEN, or send an E-mail to GLOBE@nsa.

Hispanic Forum meets monthly and offers a wide array of activities throughout the year. For more information subscribe to ESS 1252 or contact Ivette Collazo (imcolla@nsa).

Parkway Coin and Stamp Club will hold its monthly stamp meeting Thursday, October 14 at noon. The monthly coin meeting will be Thursday, October 28 at noon. Meeting locations will be displayed in the showcase opposite the OPS 1 Cafeteria entrance during the respective week of each meeting. For stamp club information, contact Grover Hinds at 301-688-4598. For coin club information, contact Mitch Ross at 301-688-8428.

Single People in Activities Recreational and Cultural (SPARC) events for October include dining out; Sunday brunch at Clarks Bayside Inn; the Maryland Renaissance Festival; a "bike and hike" outing to Great Falls; a singles Halloween dance; a Halloween potluck dinner party; a weekend trip to Ohiopyle, PA; a monthly activities planning meeting; and weekly happy hours and trivia at Hurricanes. For more information, subscribe to ESS 1444 or contact Sally Biggerstaff at 972-2270(s) or 301-688-0146.

Socially Oriented Bikers Motorcycle Club will meet Wednesday, October 6 and November 3 at 5:00 p.m. at Perry's in Odenton. Meetings are scheduled for the first Wednesday of each month. Upcoming rides include Harpers Ferry scheduled for October 9. Also, lunch rides are held the third Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. For further information contact the club treasurer, Ron at 301-688-1051 or members, Kent at 301-688-0905 and Brenda at 301-688-4292.

Mark Your Calendar

October 21 College Financial Planning Seminar
Need help with college tuition? Stop by the R&E Auditorium, 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., to learn about financial planning. A speaker from the Maryland Prepaid College Trust, a financial aid specialist, and a certified financial planner are scheduled to present information regarding the process.

For details or to register, contact the GEBA office at 301-688-7912 or via E-mail at geba@gega.com.

October 27-29 Cryptologic History Symposium
The 1999 Symposium on Cryptologic History, sponsored by the Center for Cryptologic History, will be held in the Friedman Auditorium.

All sessions will be unclassified. The Wednesday and Thursday sessions will run from approximately 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The Friday session will run from 8:30 a.m.-noon.

This year's symposium will take a retrospective look at a century of signals intelligence and information systems security. It will also provide fresh insights into the uses of cryptology in World War II and in counterespionage activities, such as VENONA and ISCOT. Other presentations will include selected topics in cryptology and the Cold War, and a panel discussion on the current declassification process.

For information regarding the symposium's topics and speakers, contact the Center for Cryptologic History at 972-2893(s) or 301-688-2336.

Awards

EXCEPTIONAL CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD

James C. Newton

MERITORIOUS CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD

Cornelius J. Doherty

Paul C. Greenwald

David W. Lawrence

Sandra Stanar-Johnson

Lost and Found

It is time for the NSA Customer Service Centers (CSCs) to dispose of found property that has been held for more than 90 days. The CSCs are holding a variety of items including money, jewelry, and clothing. If employees have lost anything since June 1, stop by an NSA CSC.

Found something? A CSC representative will be glad to take it and try to match it with its rightful owner. NSA CSC locations and telephone numbers are: FANX III, room B1A13, 968-7444(s), 410-854-7444; OPS 1, Room 1W082, 963-6922(s), 301-688-5943; and R&E, Room R1C074, 961-7444(s), 301-688-2444.

Retirements

39 Years
Kenneth A. Williams

37 Years
Laurence P. Coghlan III

35 Years
Helen J. Collins

Paul Derthick's Headline Puzzle ....by Larry Gray

The following are headlines from recent daily newspapers. Each of the five is a different letter-for-letter substitution. All five are derived from the same mixed alphabet at different settings against itself.

1. FNEIGAMWP LIQRCD WI GSIPN DMQ RC ANQTJSRGMC-GICWAISSNF PNCMWN
2. ODZLOP ZBLHT LIIHBFPO ZMDZLKA BW BMEOELQTJQU OEBKA
3. ARLD-ZPLDGI QWGSHSAGA CMAUG LHUP ISZI-GUWI MCAI YLP PLQXA
4. UMBNSCRUIO ORGWIA IONA URNBNA MW SNDD EMPIC WNCCRP GSMPPRG
5. OQHHVIM AEYMYRZ DAVMN EOVLLJAC DZ RIHHVXA GJVNBK YG EILVKIJ

Answer will appear next month.

Answer to September Puzzle:
1. EUROPEAN AEROSPACE GIANTS CLOSE TO MERGER AGREEMENT
2. DICE ARE READY TO ROLL SOON IN MOTOR CITY CASINO
3. ASTROS PLAY ON DESPITE TRYING, INJURY-PLAGUED SEASON
4. MOLECULAR CIRCUITS HOLD PROMISE FOR ULTRAFAST COMPUTERS
5. SURVEYS SHOW CONSUMERS, PHYSICIANS IMPATIENT WITH HMOS
Setting: SHEET *Key:* PAINTER *Hat:* LANYARD

It's Academic

Hidden below are 19 words associated with college academics. The words read in any direction and any letter may be used more than once.

Raymond F. Alsop, a former equipment specialist in the Support Services Organization, died August 3 of a stroke. He was 66.

Prior to joining the Agency, Mr. Alsop served with the U.S. Army. He attended the University of Colorado and graduated from the Washington School of Engineering and Design. Mr. Alsop retired in 1980 with 26 years of Federal service.

Mr. Alsop resided in Newtown, VA. He was a member of Jerusalem Baptist Church and active in local government.

His wife, Myrtle; and three daughters, Pamela Green, Angela Thompson, and Sherrin Alsop survive Mr. Alsop.

J. Wesley Bevan, a former signal conversion technician in the Operations Organization, died August 18 of cancer. He was 93.

Prior to joining the Agency, Mr. Bevan served with the Navy Department. He graduated from Cheyney University of Pennsylvania. Mr. Bevan retired in 1975 with 37 years of Federal service.

A native of Providence, RI, Mr. Bevan was a longtime resident of Washington, DC.

Mr. Bevan is survived by his wife, Edith; two daughters, Goldie Penn and Pamela Bernard; 3 granddaughters; two great-grandsons; and two great-great-grandchildren.

Ernest H. Biggerstaff, a former electronic engineer in the Technology and Systems Organization, died August 11. He was 70.

A resident of Annapolis, MD, Mr. Biggerstaff retired in 1980 with 28 years of Federal service. His interests included flying.

His wife, Mary; and two sons, Mark and Glenn survive Mr. Biggerstaff.

Robert L. Bullie, a former intelligence analyst in the Operations Organization, died July 27. He was 59.

Prior to joining the Agency, Mr. Bullie served with the U.S. Air Force. He graduated from the University of Maryland and the U.S. Naval War College. Mr. Bullie retired in 1997 with 39 years of Federal service.

A native of Jackson, MS, Mr. Bullie resided in Rockville, MD. He enjoyed fishing, brewing, and music.

His wife, Alice; a son, Robert; and a grandson, Denar, survive Mr. Bullie.

Joseph A. Cunningham, a former analyst and manager in the Operations Organization, died April 13 following a lengthy illness. He was 71.

Mr. Cunningham served with the U.S. Army prior to joining the Agency. He earned a bachelor's degree from Boston College and a degree in law from Georgetown University Law School. Mr. Cunningham retired in 1983 with 31 years of Federal service.

A native of Waltham, MA, Mr. Cunningham resided in Crofton, MD. He enjoyed reading and travel.

Mr. Cunningham is survived by his wife, Betty.

Ann B. Romberger, a former analyst in the Operations Organization, died August 13 of kidney failure. She was 73.

A native of New Jersey, Ms. Romberger resided in Glen Burnie, MD. She retired in 1985 with 30 years of Federal service. Ms. Romberger enjoyed reading, shopping, and listening to music.

Two daughters, Sandra Malar and Nancy Redelius; three grandchildren;

and two great-grandchildren survive Ms. Romberger.

John J. Sullivan, a former financial advisor in the Plans, Policy, and Programs Organization, died August 15. He was 71.

Prior to joining the Agency, Mr. Sullivan served with the U.S. Army. He retired in 1985 with 39 years of Federal service.

A native of New York City, NY, Mr. Sullivan resided in Glen Burnie, MD. Among his interests were woodworking, gourmet cooking, and volunteering at North Arundel Hospital.

Mr. Sullivan is survived by his wife, Elizabeth; a son Barry; a daughter, Joan; and two grandchildren.

Dennis R. Turner, a collection officer in the Operations Organization, died July 14 of cancer. He was 52.

Prior to joining the Agency in 1971, Mr. Turner served with the U.S. Marine Corp.

A native of Port Allegheny, PA, Mr. Turner resided in Marriotsville, MD. His wife, Dorothy; and two sons, Gregory and David survive Mr. Turner.

In Appreciation

On behalf of our entire family, my brother Jack and I would like to thank our friends and coworkers for their kindness and thoughtfulness following the death of our parents. The cards, flowers, plants, prayers, and other generous gifts were greatly appreciated and comforted us during this difficult time. Thank you all for your support.

—Jamie Russell

My family and I would like to offer our sincerest gratitude for the overwhelming support we received following the sudden deaths of my father and mother. The shock of losing both parents was traumatic; however, our coworkers at NSA/CSS Pacific took charge and got us off the island in a timely manner. The prayers, flowers, calls, memorials, personal notes, and hugs have certainly been appreciated and will always be remembered.

—Beverly Heyberger

I would like to express sincere appreciation to my NSA colleagues and friends for their expressions of sympathy and support following the death of my father. Your thoughtfulness during this difficult time was a great comfort to my family and me.

—Debora Plunkett

We would like to thank our friends and coworkers for their thoughts and prayers during our son Zachary's illness and at the time of his death. The support, friendship, and kindness will always be remembered.

—Joe and Kim Hebda

My sincere appreciation and thanks to my coworkers and friends for their prayers and support during my recent illness. Your cards, personal notes, and calls were the bright spots in my days of recuperation. Your thoughtfulness meant a great deal to me.

—Arlene Plitt
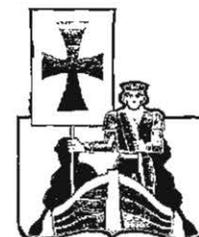
Leave Bank Enrollment

A voluntary Leave Bank Open Season will be held November 8 through December 3. Employees who are not Leave Bank members are invited to join; however, current members do not need to reapply. As a Leave Bank member, individuals are eligible to become leave recipients should a medical emergency or condition affect them or a family member, and they meet the applicant requirements. By contributing 4, 6, or 8 hours of annual leave (based on years of service), an employee will become a Leave Bank member for the 2000 leave year. Annual leave for Leave Bank dues will be deducted from annual leave accru-als during the first full pay period of the new leave year.

For faster service, membership may be requested via E-mail at rvbrist@nsa. Include full name, duty organization, social security number, and a request for membership for 2000. If preferred, the membership form, P2719, may be electronically accessed, completed, and E-mailed; or a hard copy may be faxed to 443-479-3325, the Leave Sharing Program Office. To be accepted, membership requests must be received by the close of business, December 3, 1999.

For additional information, refer to the Leave Bank Webpage at http://www.s.nsa/OHESS/s212/leave-bank.html or contact the Leave Sharing Program managers at 963-6086(s) or 301-688-8808.

Healthy and Drug Free

Join the Red Ribbon Week Campaign, October 23-31. Wear a red ribbon to show opposition to illegal drug and alcohol use and illegal tobacco use by minors, and support this year's theme, "Be Healthy and Drug Free."

Red Ribbon Week was created in response to the 1985 assassination of an onduty DEA agent, Enrique (Kiki) Camarena, by drug dealers in Mexico. Members of the National Family Partnership wore small, red satin badges in Camarena's memory and encouraged others to take a stand against drugs. This symbolic gesture quickly spread from community to community, making Camarena's murder a catalyst that called people to action—to make a visible commitment by wearing and displaying red ribbons to show national intolerance for illegal drug use.

NSA's nationally recognized Red Ribbon Week activities are conducted by Occupational Health, Environment, and Safety Services (OHESS), under the Pharmacy Services and the Drug Program Coordinator. To learn more about drugs, drug abuse and prevention, health effects, and available community treatment services visit the nearest local Mobile Health Clinic (MHC), refer to the medical information racks outside the OPS 1 OHESS Clinic, visit the Occupational Health on Wheels (OHOW) van, or talk to the pharmacist in the OHESS Pharmacy.

Red ribbons are available through the OHESS Pharmacy, the MHC, and OHOW. Wear a red ribbon—take the opportunity to show support for a drug-free workplace and society. For additional information, contact Dr. Marsha Alvarez, Chief Pharmacist and Drug Program Coordinator, OHESS, at 301-688-6128.