



Darlene Green
COMPTROLLER

CompTimes

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO AUDIT

December 2007
Volume II Issue 6

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Monthly
Reminder:
Use or lose your
compensatory
time before Jan. 1

From the comptroller's desk

Holiday season brings joy to us all

Like most St. Louisans, I cannot help but feel a renewed sense of joy this time of year. The holiday season means many



different things to our diverse population. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah or something else, the holiday season brings us all closer together.

It is difficult these days to put all the holiday distractions aside and focus on why this time of year is so special. I truly hope you all get a chance to be with your families and share with each other all the love, hope and spirituality this season brings.

As we move towards the end of another year, I want to thank each and every one of you for everything you do to make this office the best in city government. Your hard work, sacrifices and dedication help

keep our city moving. Citizens regularly compliment you on your professionalism. Keep up the great work.

The comptroller's office is a team. Many of us have worked together for years, if not decades. Others are new to our team this year and have been welcomed with open arms by us all. It is this culture of togetherness that makes our office special, and for that, I thank you.

I know many of you have not had the chance to meet all our new hires yet. Next month, you will get that chance at our sixth annual retreat. I urge the seasoned employees to take the initiative and introduce yourselves to our new workers and make them feel welcome.

Next year is sure to offer our office a new set of opportunities and challenges. If we continue to work together, we will remain successful in 2008.

I wish you a joyous and safe holiday season and the very best in the new year.

Comptroller's November employee of the month



Congratulations to **Gloria Carreathers** for earning the November Employee of the Month Award. Carreathers, a clerk typist I in records retention, was nominated for her dedication to her job and a "cheerful, helpful and willing attitude" even though she is retiring at the end of the year.

Carreathers has spent more than 39 years working for the city, 29 years of that with the comptroller's office.

The entire office thanks Gloria for her service to the city of St. Louis and wishes her all the best in her well deserved retirement.

Office News



Spotlight on success

Asset Management

This month's spotlight is on the comptroller's asset management section. Within this section lies the city's telecommunications, real estate, municipal garage, records retention and travel management functions.

The leader of this diverse group of government functions is asset manager Jim Garavaglia. Since 1991, he has been a constant in this ever-changing section.

"Technology has been the driving force for most of the section's change. Telecommunications, real estate and records retention all have seen huge changes in how they operate because of technological innovation," explained Garavaglia.

As for the future, Garavaglia sees change will continue to be the only

constant in his section.

Technological innovation

It was not all that long ago when computers did not rule the workplace. Real estate records had to be looked up by hand in the assessor's and recorder's offices. City records were kept in file cabinets and boxes. And communications meant just telephones.

Today, computer technology has transformed these section functions. According to Garavaglia it has all been positive, but it has also created more work in some cases.

Ray Gant, telecommunications manager, said he and his crew have seen an increase in their workload because of technology.

"As technology changes, we get more work because we have to keep up with all the changes," said Gant.

Not too long ago, Gant worried just about phone lines. Today, there are the city's 7,000 phone lines, but there is also much more. Data cable, computerized voice messaging systems and wireless Internet access all fall under Gant's responsibility.

"It's tough to keep up with all the changes, but we work hard to make sure all the departments get exactly what they need," added Gant.

For the real estate section, its manager, Roland Comfort, experienced just the opposite. He said computer technology has made his job easier because many documents he

see *Spotlight* page 4

Ruth Brown Retirement Photos

Ruth called the *CompTimes* to thank everyone in the comptroller's office for their kindness and helpfulness over the years. Enjoy your retirement, Ruth.



Interactive CT

Who's who office pet quiz (round two)

Here we go again. Simply match the pet with the comptroller's office employee. There will be more pets each month as they come in to the *CompTimes*.

Just like last month, there is no prize for this one, just the enjoyment of trying to put your co-workers faces on the bodies of their pets.

See the answer key on page 4.



Test your knowledge with the Trivia Challenge

This month:
SPORTS TRIVIA



Congratulations to Sharon Caldwell for correctly answering the November movie trivia questions.

1. What two players are tied behind Ty Cobb in total career runs?
2. What disorder did Muhammad Ali develop after his career?
3. What NFL team is known as the "ain'ts" when on a losing streak?
4. Who was the only college football player to win the Heisman Trophy twice?
5. Who was the first golfer to win more than \$1 million in official earnings in a single year?
6. Who hit the first Cardinals home run in their new ballpark in 2006?
7. What was the first sport in which women were invited to compete at the Olympics?
8. How many games did the St. Louis Blues win in their three Stanley Cup finals appearances in 1968, 1969, and 1970?
9. How many touchdowns did Marshall Faulk score in 2000 to set an NFL record for touchdowns in a season?

Submit your answers to John Farrell at farrellj@stlouiscity.com. The first to reply with the correct answers wins a cool prize!

Office News Cont.

Pet Trivia answer key

1. **Peter** is **Maria Randazzo's** rabbit. He is 3 years old and loves to eat pancakes, raisins and parsley.
2. **Sophie** is **Roland Comfort's** one year old yorkie. She has tons of energy and causes lots of trouble.
3. **Chloe** is **John Farrell's** 12 year old farm cat. One of her many nicknames is, of course, Princess.

4. **Jerry** is also **John Farrell's** cat. Like Chloe, he is just a farm cat who is a grumpy 13 years old.
5. **Devlin** is **Ron Hick's** 10 year old cocker spaniel. He is a former show dog who loves his "Kong" and his master, not necessarily in that order.

November Trivia Quiz Answers

1. The Terminator
2. Robert De Niro
3. Tom Hanks
4. American Grafitti
5. Katherine Hepburn
6. Paul Lukas for "Watch on the Rhine"
7. Malcom X

Spotlight on Asset Management from page 2

uses on a regular basis are now accessible on his computer.

"Our ability to access deeds online has made a huge difference in how we get the job done. We enter in all the information and it appears right there on the screen," explained Comfort.

Another benefit from computer technology is the recorder of deeds scanned in all real estate deeds dating back to the early 1990's. This makes nearly 20 years of records available instantly.

Using this online information also saves time when comparing property values.

"When we are selling surplus city property, we can use the Internet to compare similar sales and prices. The financial information we need is all on the deeds of trust available online," said Comfort.

Falling in between these two examples is records retention. Technology has not greatly affected the amount of work they do. Instead, it has simply changed what they do.

"In the past, we archived vouchers on microfilm. Today, we use computers to scan vouchers into a huge database. What we do is pretty much the same, just the way we do it has changed," said Jeannie Head, clerk typist I.

Head also said the advantage of archiving vouchers in a database opposed to microfilm is the ability to quickly search and find a voucher.

Moving forward

Computer technology is not the only factor driving the asset management section. Additions to the city-owned property inventory also keep Garavaglia and his team busy.

There are three things on the horizon that have their attention: the opening of the Gateway Transportation Center, the possibility of redeveloping the Municipal Courts Building and the move into the Abram building.

"All three of these projects are huge and have taken years to get to this point," said Garavaglia. "Particularly, occupying the Abram building and the transportation center opening will be ongoing concerns for this office."

The comptroller's office is responsible for operating the transportation center and for installing all the communications equipment in the Abram building during the renovation. This is in addition to finding a developer to bring new life to the Muni Courts building.

2007 Holiday Party



Thanks to the 2007 Holiday Celebration Committee for putting on such a great party. (Top) **Alfred Tabron, Shania Woodhouse, Ben Helton, Eileen Gassel,** (Bottom) **Antionette Thomas and Marty Deiters.**



**2007 Employee of the Year
Tim Donovan, accountant II**



News & Notes

As the comptroller's office turns...

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Created and published
by the City of St. Louis
Comptroller's Office

Charity Drive

Special thanks to **Gary Finch** and **Marsha Veal** for conducting the annual charity drive. Our employees raised \$6,007 this year. Thank you to everyone who donated.

New Hires

Jamalia Lott, Accountant II in Accounts Payable; **Michael-Michelle Gainey**, Auditor I; and **Desu Ganet**, Auditor I. Welcome aboard.

December Birthdays

YUDORA MASON	8
MARTY DEITERS	16
SHARON HOLLOMAN	16
MARSHA VEAL	17
RAY GANT	19
SHELBY HAYWOOD	23
MARLON PEPPER	29

Service Anniversary

Barbara Coleman	5
Gary Finch	5

Congratulations

Comptroller **Darlene Green** received a political leadership award from the *St. Louis Metro Sentinel Journal* earlier this month. At the same event, **LaTawnia Wilder**, fiscal officer at the airport, was honored as a special achiever.

Promotions

Anissa Blalock was promoted to accountant II in accounts payable from accountant I in finance and development. Congratulations, Anissa.

Our condolences

The entire comptroller's office extends their heartfelt condolences to **Jim Garavaglia** and his family on the death of his grandmother.

Happy B-Day



Charlotte Schwartz's mother, **Pauline Nichols**, celebrated her 96th birthday recently with a ride on TopGun. Schwartz also was blessed with her fifth great grandchild, **Karissa Hall**, last month.