

A monthly newsletter published  
by the Office of the Mayor  
for City of Memphis Employees

February 2005

## Letter from the Mayor

### HOW EFFICIENT IS CITY OF MEMPHIS GOVERNMENT?

In the midst of the media frenzy concerning the budget shortfall, staff compensation and other fiscal matters, City of Memphis government's fiscal image has been diminished. In 2003, American City & County Magazine, a national publication, recognized Memphis as one of the best managed cities in America by naming me the 2003 Municipal Leader of the Year. Today, many public officials, business leaders and Memphis residents doubt this administration's fiscal management abilities.

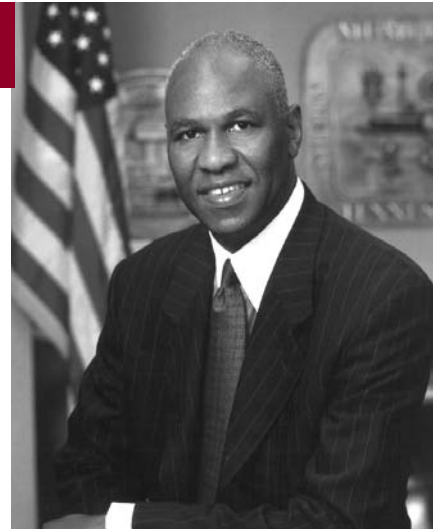
Someone once said "Image is everything." Although I don't agree with this philosophy, I do feel that image is important. Our reputation as a fiscally sound organization—a reputation I am extremely proud of—is under attack. Therefore, last month, I made my plans to have a private sector organization conduct an efficiency study of City of Memphis government known to the Memphis City Council. The idea was well received.

An efficiency study analyzes how well an organization does business. City government's numerous business processes will be placed under the microscope to determine what we do well and where we need to trim the fat. Such a study is not unprecedented. Shelby County government underwent an efficiency study in 2004 at a cost of about \$550,000. The firm that conducted Shelby County government's study, along with others for several other major cities in the United States, has been selected to conduct City government's study for \$650,000 (City government's cost is higher than the County's because the City has more divisions). Although the budget is very tight, City government will reap dividends from this investment thanks to the invaluable information that will be produced.

There is no better time to perform this study. City of Memphis government officials and leaders in the private sector are in the midst of a strategic planning process aimed at developing opportunities for both parties to pool intellectual and financial resources to help Memphis overcome such challenges as poorly performing public schools, poverty, population loss, urban sprawl and much more. Another key goal of this strategic planning is enhanced economic development. Achieving this goal will produce a business climate that nurtures minority businesses, ensuring that Memphis will have jobs for its educated workforce.

This ongoing strategic planning process is an excellent method for bringing the brightest minds in government and business to the table in an effort to ensure Memphis' future is bright. The efficiency study will be an ideal component in this visionary effort.

Should the Council approve funding, results from the efficiency study would be available this summer.



*Mayor Willie W. Herenton*

# Letter from the Human Resources Director



*Human Resources Director  
Dr. Lorene Essex*

## NEW BENEFITS FOR A NEW YEAR

Ensuring that City of Memphis employees are properly compensated and receive the best benefits the City's fiscal health allows are principal tenets of the Human Resources Division.

In keeping with these fundamental goals, on Jan. 1, 2005, City of Memphis implemented a three percent pay increase for all regular, non-union full-time employees who have completed their initial probation (union employees should refer to their Memorandum of Understanding for eligibility information).

In addition to the pay increase, a new "Personal Days" policy is in effect. All employees eligible for the pay increase also may take two paid days off work per calendar year (union employees should refer to their Memorandum of Understanding for eligibility information). These paid days are in addition to vacation days and earned bonus days and must be used during the calendar year. Unused personal leave days cannot be carried over to the next calendar year, nor are employees compensated for unused personal days.

Due to the City of Memphis' attractive compensation and benefits packages, City of Memphis employs some of the best and brightest minds in municipal government-related fields. To ensure this trend continues, the Human Resources Division is revising pay plans in accordance with the City's current fiscal position to attract the best job applicants possible and to ensure internal and external pay equity among current employees.

For more information about compensation, call the Compensation/Records Administration Service Center at 576-6569. For more information about the "Personal Days" policy, contact the Human Resources Division's administrative office at 576-6571 or refer to the City's personnel policy manual.

Have a great year!

## DIVISION NEWS

### LAW DIVISION

#### The true meaning of Christmas

During the Christmas season, the Law Division adopted a family from Ida B. Wells Academy, its adopted school. They chose the family of Wells eighth-grader Jeremy Cahill. Additionally, the division chose Jeremy as its Christmas Angel.

Division employees collected more than \$500.00 to purchase all of the gifts on Jeremy's Christmas list. City Attorney Sara Hall chipped in with such a generous donation that the division also was able to

purchase major appliances for the Cahill home.

The highlight of the division's annual Christmas party came when Jeremy was presented with the items on his Christmas list.

"He was so thrilled with the gifts," said event coordinator Markell Newson who works as the On-the-Job Injury (OJI) coordinator in the Law Division. "He may have gotten the Converse basketball shoes he wanted, along with a lot of other things, but we received so much more," Newson said. "The appreciation in his eyes showed us the true meaning of Christmas."

Hats off to City Attorney Hall for her leadership in the division employees' efforts to help the Cahill family have a Merry Christmas indeed.



*Christmas Angel Jeremy Cahill hugs his mother as Markell Newson and Law Division employees look on.*

# DIVISION NEWS

## PARKS

### Pink Palace turns 75

The Memphis Pink Palace Museum will celebrate its 75th Anniversary this year with a year-long commemoration featuring special exhibits, events, programs and new initiatives.



*Pink Palace Museum*

Over the years, the Pink Palace has been the keeper of Mid-South history. Generations of visitors and school children have passed through its doors to experience the cultural and natural history of Memphis and the Mid-South, learn about the universe and nature, and more recently, journey to exotic places in the IMAX® Theater.

In celebration of 75 years, the Pink Palace Family of Museums will present an exhibit about the Museum's history, a special planetarium show, exhibits on the region's African-American history, related programs at Lichterman Nature Center and its Historic Properties, and will seal a time capsule at the Pink Palace.

The 75th Anniversary exhibit opens in the original Pink Palace Museum in March and will include artifacts, panels and historical photos related to the museum's history.

As part of an initiative to improve representation of African-Americans in the museum, the Pink Palace will add artifacts and exhibits about Mid-South African-American history, including three temporary exhibits that focus on African-Americans. In April the Pink Palace will offer an exhibit on the pioneering Memphis radio station, WDIA. In August "Integration of Public Buildings in Memphis in the 1960s" will be exhibited. In December "Firsts Among African-American Political Figures" will focus on the Mid-South's historical black leaders. The Museum also is a full partner in the Pink Palace Family of Museums Presents the Davis Brothers' Black History Challenge hosted by local WDIA radio personality James Davis. The finals will be held at Lichterman Nature Center in March.

The story of the Pink Palace began nearly 85 years ago when Piggly Wiggly founder Clarence Saunders, announced he would build a "real Southern showplace" on Central Avenue. In 1922, Memphians driving out to see Saunders' dream home nicknamed it the "Pink Palace" due to its unusual pink marble quarried from Tate, Georgia. Saunders never lived in his palace, going bankrupt after an epic battle with Wall Street brokers in 1923. His loss became Memphis' gain when a Louisville real

estate company acquired the property and then donated it to the city. The city finished the building, installed the gorgeous marble lobby and made plans for the museum which opened March 8, 1930.

## PUBLIC WORKS

### Congratulations!

Kudos to Environmental Engineering administrator Paul Patterson! The Tennessee Chapter of the Solid Waste Management Association of North America (SWANA) awarded him the Distinguished Service Award in December.

Patterson was presented the award at a recent joint conference and banquet of the Tennessee chapters of SWANA and the American Public Works Association. Patterson was recognized for his outstanding contributions to the field of solid waste management and his service within the Tennessee SWANA chapter.

*Congratulations Paul!*



*Paul Patterson (left) receives Distinguished Service Award from Tennessee SWANA chapter president Pete Reed of Clarksville, TN.*

# I N S I D E INNOVATIONS!

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## MEMPHIS ANIMAL SERVICES: UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Last fall Public Services division director Keenon McCloy fielded complaints from animal rights advocates regarding the conditions at the Memphis Animal Shelter. Media calls soon followed, along with news stories on local television about what some advocates described as inhumane conditions at the shelter.

“After the shelter manager retired, I knew we needed to go in a new direction,” McCloy said.



*Phil Snyder*

McCloy then launched a nationwide search for the perfect candidate. “It turns out the person I was looking for was right under my nose,” McCloy said.

That person was Phil Snyder. “I called Phil to see if he knew anyone who would be great for the

position and soon realized he was the man for the job,” McCloy added.

### More than a shelter

After 90 days on the job, Phil Snyder, the new administrator of City of Memphis Animal Services, sighs when he thinks about the challenges ahead.

“My first priority is to make the most of the shelter we have now,” the 30-year animal services veteran said. “We must get the shelter in shape to make it more comfortable for the animals, employees and our customers.”

When it comes to animal care, Snyder is the in-house expert. As regional director for Humane Society of the United States for several years, he served as a consultant

to dozens of animal shelters throughout the country and to law enforcement agencies as well.

According to Snyder, Memphis Animal Services, formerly known as Memphis Animal Shelter, does more than round up stray dogs and cats. “We are a full service agency, which is why we changed the name,” he said.

In addition to housing homeless animals, the agency also facilitates pet adoptions, sells animal license tags, investigates animal abuse, and houses animals considered evidence in criminal prosecution cases involving complaints ranging from dog bites to illegal dog-fighting.

“There is a misconception about animal shelters and the people who work in them,” Snyder said. “Many people see us as dog catchers and dog killers,” he said.

Snyder says that people equate animal services with hatred for animals and that nothing is further from the truth. “Our role is to *protect* animals, despite the unpleasant, yet necessary task of euthanasia,” he said.

Although animal adoption and rescue has gained popularity in recent years, Snyder says it is not enough. “You can never adopt or rescue your way out of euthanasia,” he said. According to Snyder, prevention is the key. “Right now, animals are reproducing at a faster rate than humans,” he said. “If we do what we can to prevent the birth of stray animals, we can lessen the need for euthanasia.”

### An opportunity to succeed

Snyder hopes to implement a volunteer program that plays a vital role in outreach activities designed to educate the community about animal population control, animal cruelty prevention and more. “The challenge is to create programs that prevent animals from becoming another statistic at the shelter,” he said.

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## A Different Kind of Hero

by Andy Ashford

Webster's Dictionary defines a hero as "someone who is supremely noble or self-sacrificing." Perhaps you know someone who fits this description. Almost every day or week we read and hear (often through the local or national media) about these special individuals who bring honor to themselves.

But, sometimes, heroes rise from unlikely situations and are seldom recognized by anyone outside their immediate group of coworkers and family. Such was the case recently involving a group of Public Works employees and a broken sewer pipe. Yes, that's right, a broken sewer pipe.

During a routine inspection of sewer lines, Public Works personnel discovered that a major wastewater pipe had somehow shifted its position, allowing soil to intrude into the pipe, thus creating a depression directly above. While repairing sewer lines can be fairly routine for the Public Works Environmental Maintenance Department, this situation happened to involve an 84-inch diameter pipe in a location extremely close to the banks of the Wolf River near McLean Avenue in North Memphis. This particular pipeline happens to serve thousands of homes and businesses and is buried 15 feet deep in difficult terrain. To complicate matters further, rain was predicted to occur at anytime, which could cause the Wolf River to flood the subject area, preventing access to the pipe and causing more damage.

So, with no time to lose, Paul Patterson, Administrator of Environmental Engineering and Ken Martin, Administrator of Environmental Maintenance, began shifting operations to emergency status, mustering equipment and drawing upon personnel from Environmental Maintenance, Heavy Equipment, and Lift Stations to address the fragile situation. Directing the operation was Randle Mathis, a 50-year veteran of sewer maintenance challenges and the ideal person to have at the helm.

Mathis and his fellow employees immediately began to use bulldozers and excavators to expose the damaged pipe, while large metal "trench boxes" were staged in preparation to be later placed inside the giant hole to prevent soil from collapsing onto workers as they repaired the pipe. To keep the Wolf River's subterranean water from overwhelming workers in the excavated hole, large pumps ran continuously while a bank of portable lights gave illumination as darkness fell.

Standing in the muck of mud and foul water, crews wasted little time preparing and applying a concrete patch to seal the damaged pipe. Once the patch was dry, a concrete "saddle" was formed and poured around the pipe to provide additional security and reinforcement. Finally, the trench boxes were removed, the excavation hole was quickly backfilled with soil and it was time to leave.

As these self-sacrificing employees made their way up the slope and away from the job site, very few words were spoken as most surely felt the strain of having worked up to 32 hours straight. There were no television cameras, no newspaper reporters and no applauding audience waiting as the employees reached the roadway — only the sound of distant thunder as the rain approached. Yet these men were heroes... only no one knew.

*Thanks Environmental Maintenance!*



*Public Works employees who worked long hours to complete major pipe repair were (left to right) Leland Doan (worked 32 hrs), Curtis Mathews (24 hrs), Tom Wright (32 hrs) and Dwight Rayford (24 hrs).*

## INSIDE INNOVATIONS

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Snyder also wants the outreach programs to improve the image of animal services. “We provide an indispensable service to the community — we are responsible for the welfare of animals *and* humans.” Snyder says there is a proven link between animal cruelty and violence. He plans to partner with local social service and law enforcement agencies to fight violent crime. “Animal cruelty is one of the first indicators of a person’s potential to commit a violent act — violence is violence,” he said.

Snyder hopes the new state-of-the-art animal shelter to be constructed within the next couple of years also will help soften animal services’ image. “The new facility will provide an environment that promotes safety for our employees, comfort for the animals and a pet adoption-friendly atmosphere,” Snyder said.

However, he cautions that a new building is not a cure-all. “I have seen animal service agencies move into new buildings and six months later the facility looks like it is six years old — we must have the infrastructure in place to effectively operate and maintain the new facility,” he said.

In addition to training employees, recruiting volunteers and educating the community, Snyder plans to launch a Web site that features adoptable animals, establish a nonprofit organization to provide additional support for the agency, partner with local animal rescue agencies to promote adoption, and work with Memphis City Council members to review local animal protection ordinances.

Although many challenges are ahead, Snyder is optimistic. “It did not take me long to make up my mind to take this job because I was convinced City officials wanted an effective animal services program,” he said. “This job is more than a challenge; it is an opportunity to succeed.”

## YOU'RE AWESOME!

Congratulations to the following ...*Awesome* employees for providing outstanding customer service to their fellow employees and the residents of Memphis:

*Ora Applewhite*

*Diane Blankenbeckler*

*Felecia Boyd*

*Terri Brown*

*Karen Chunn*

*Walter Hanna\**

*Larry Hicks*

*Regenia Howard*

*Tasha King*

*Linda Mitchell\**

*Mike Moore*

*Henry Nakayama*

*Damon Owens*

*Lavern Partee\**

*Marilyn Pickens*

*Curtis Simmons*

*Valerie Snipes*

*Belinda Vinson*

*Tara Watkins\**

*Berlinda Williams*

\* Denotes two or more “...*Awesome*” notes received. List includes recipients who received electronic ...*Awesomes* December 16 – January 13, 2005.

“You’re Awesome” forms are available at the Quality and Professional Development Service Center (4225 Riverdale Road, Route #66) or from Quality coordinators/trainers and division directors. Also, employees can send electronic ...*Awesomes* via the City’s Intranet site.

# CQI CORNER

## Continuous Quality Improvement

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY

In the past, City of Memphis government recognized secretaries by hosting a conference for secretaries only. According to Quality and Professional Development (QPD) manager Berlinda Williams-Strong, it is important to recognize the contributions of all administrative support personnel and provide opportunities for growth and development.

“In keeping pace with changing job titles and the ever increasing job responsibilities of our administrative and clerical support staff, the Human Resources Division and Quality and Professional Development will recognize the entire clerical and administrative staff by presenting the first all-inclusive “Administrative Professionals Conference,” Williams-Strong said.

“To ensure this event is a success, we need volunteers,” she added. Employees are encouraged to contact QPD at 576-6424 to volunteer.


The Administrative Professionals Conference will be held on **Tuesday, April 26, 2005**. More event information will be featured in next month’s issue of CITY PRIDE.

### QPD 2005 Core Curriculum Training Calendar



Quality and Professional Development presents the February and March 2005 Core Curriculum Training Calendar. The classes indicated as “new” are a direct result of the Phase II – Needs Assessment Training conducted in the spring of 2004. You asked for new training classes and here they are! Some classes are compliance-related due to state and federal law mandates. Please take full advantage of your free professional and personal development opportunities.

Contact Quality and Professional Development at (901) 576-6424 for additional information and registration forms. Registration forms also are available on the City’s Intranet page under “Training.” Fax completed registration forms to 576-6455 or send them through interoffice mail, Route 66.

#### FEBRUARY

8-11	Team Leadership 9-Step	.8am – 4:30pm
15	Employee Policies and Procedures	.8am – 4:30pm
17	Diversity Advantage 	.8am – 4:30pm
24	Better Business Writing I	.8am – 4:30pm

#### MARCH

1	Welcome to City Government	.8am – 4:30pm
4	Family Medical Leave Act/FMLA	.1pm – 4:00pm
8-9	Basic Supervision 	.8am – 4:30pm
11	HIV/AIDS Awareness 	.1pm – 3 pm
16	Delivering Exceptional Customer Service	.8am – 4:30pm
18	How to Prevent Sexual Harassment	.1pm – 4pm
22	Prioritizing Your Time	.8am – Noon
23	COMMUNICATION UPDATE	.Noon – 1pm

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

## PINK PALACE FAMILY OF MUSEUMS

Now through March 6 — *Wonders of a Winter Night at the Sharpe Planetarium*. With long nights and calm air, winter skies may be the most beautiful and popular among star gazers. *Wonders of a Winter Night* traces star portraits of mythical figures as ancient Greek heroes. The constellations of Orion the Hunter, Taurus the Bull, Gemini the Twins and Ursa Major the Great Bear, along with popular telescope targets like the Pleiades star cluster are featured in this program. Admission is \$4.25 for adults and \$3.75 for seniors and children (ages 3-12). Group rates are available. For showtimes, information, and reservations, call (901) 320-6362.

Now through March 26 — *Under African Skies Night at the Sharpe Planetarium*. Experience the varied cultures of the African continent through the sky lore of its people. Ancient legends from the Bushman tribes, the Zulu, Masai, Ashanti and others weaved a picture of the daily life and culture found in this diverse land. Through their poetry, the phases of the moon were explained. An effort to understand the characteristics of the stars, the Milky Way, and even the origin of shooting stars, was revealed in stories passed down through the ages. Admission is \$4.25 for adults and \$3.75 for seniors and children (ages 3-12). Group rates are available. For showtimes, information, and reservations, call (901) 320-6362.

Feb. 27— *Oscar Night® America at the Pink Palace Museum* from 6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. The red carpet has been rolled out. The gold statuettes are all lined up. The envelope, please! Join the Pink Palace for this one-of-a-kind gala black-tie celebration. This party is the only Oscar® party in Memphis officially sanctioned by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Those attending this black-tie affair will be entertained by a live broadcast of the 77th Annual Academy Awards ceremony from Hollywood. They also will have the opportunity to receive the same official programs and posters as attendees at the Academy Awards ceremony. There will be celebrity appearances, Oscar trivia games, door prizes, fantastic musical entertainment and much more. All proceeds from this special evening go to support The Ronald McDonald House and the Pink Palace Family of Museums.

Sponsorships for Oscar Night America 2004 begin at \$500. Single tickets to the black-tie gala are \$125. Call (901) 320-6362 for reservations or more information.



*City Pride* is a monthly newsletter published by the Office of the Mayor for City employees. Deadline for submissions is the first week of the month prior to the next issue.

Special thanks to the following contributors: Andy Ashford, Felecia Boyd, Dr. Lorene Essex, Dan Hope, Keenon McCloy, Markell Newson, Eric Sabatini, Phil Snyder, Berlinda Williams-Strong, and Glen Yaun.

Editor: Daphne J. Thomas

Comments, suggestions and submissions are welcome. Call Daphne at 576-6006.