



INTERAGENCY CONNECTION

215 Dean A. McGee, Suite 153, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

<http://www.oklahoma.feb.gov/>

(405) 231-4167

Chair's Corner



Clean Air Alerts:

In Oklahoma, the weather is always a challenge. We have gotten through the tornado season; although not unscathed. Much information

was distributed regarding recovery centers for individuals affected by the May tornadoes and storms. The next challenge will be the heat of summer and with that change, we have threats of Ozone alerts for areas surrounding our three largest cities: Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Lawton. Our FEB issues "Clean Air Alerts" to federal agency leaders when conditions warrant.

This notification will occur when forecasted weather conditions indicate a risk of violating the Environmental Protection Agency's standard of air pollution in the Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Lawton areas. Using advanced computerized information, a team of meteorologists, health department professionals and regional government representatives monitor Oklahoma weather conditions and distribute alert day notices to their partners when weather conditions are expected to aggravate pollution levels.

The Federal Executive Board partners with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality to receive notification the day before weather conditions are expected to aggravate pollution levels. The FEB, in turn, will send an email to federal leaders in Oklahoma,

encouraging they notify employees in an effort to make a positive impact. Watch for Clean Air Alerts from the FEB and please encourage employees to follow the appropriate actions so that we can make a difference!

National FEB Conference: The National FEB Conference will be held in Washington, DC later this month. We will be discussing operational issues including requirements of the FEB Authorization Act of 2009, FEB office succession planning, and the future of FEBs in 3 to 5 years.

We will also have plenary sessions to hear from a number of high-level department and agency officials on their priorities for Fiscal Year 2011, to learn more about a growing national threat – cyber security, and receive an update on legislative activity affecting federal employees, along with other topics.

I look forward to sharing up-to-date information received from the conference in future newsletter articles!

Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable summer!

Samuel D. Jarvis, Chairman

| <i>Inside Story</i> | <i>Pg</i> | <i>Inside Story</i> | <i>Pg</i> |
|-----------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| Virtual Cookbook | 2 | COOP Practitioner | 8 |
| Spotlighting Agencies | 4 | IRS & your TSP | 9 |
| Negative Feedback | 5 | Email dos & don'ts | 10 |
| Cyber Bullies | 6 | Supervisory Training | 11 |
| Upcoming Events | 7 | Calendar of Events | 12 |



Virtual Cookbook on FedsGetFit Website

A healthy recipe challenge was part of the FedsGetFit (FGF) wellness initiative. The challenge was launched during National Nutrition Month on Monday, March 22, 2010 by a panel of celebrity judges: award winning nutritionist and book author, Chef Robyn Webb; and a local caterer and Top Chef finalist, Chef Carla Hall; and WHUR radio show host Darryl Haley.

This Virtual Cookbook includes recipes that were selected as winners of the FedsGetFit Healthy Recipe Challenge. On April 21, 2010 a cook-off was held for the top 5 entries in **Washington, DC**. Here are the winners and their recipes.

| Location | Recipe | Submitted By |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Washington DC | Roasted Tomato Curry Coconut Soup with Shrimp and Peas | Melissa A. Knoll (Food Star, 1st Place) |
| | Caliente Fruit Ceviche-Salsa and Spicy Pita Crisps | Alexandra Ritchie (1st Runner Up) |
| | Crantastic Choco Chews | Marcie Ann Stone (2nd Runner Up) |
| | Indian Kabobs | Sapna Savannah Lulla (Honorable Mention) |
| | Quinoa Sunshine Salad with Asian Dressing | Tobey J. Zimmer (Honorable Mention) |

The following locations did not have a cook-off, but the following recipes were selected by the panel of judges as honorable mention (interesting that all are in FEB areas).

All of these recipes are available at: www.fedsgetfit.gov/RecipeChallenge/Recipes.aspx

| Location | Recipe | Submitted By |
|----------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Atlanta | Chicken with Cantaloupe and Cucumbers | Linda Hoener |

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| Atlanta (contd) | Chili | Sidney M. Crews, Jr. |
| | Flab-u-less Breakfast Omelet | Jennifer Lindsey |
| | Shrimp Soup | Versey Crawford |
| Baltimore | Berry Oatmeal Pancake | Leslie Welsh Flaherty |
| | Brian's Buffalo and Guac Bomb | Brian Patrick Kinlein |
| | Sushi Fresh Party Bites | Heather Holland |
| | Walnut Meringues | Cynthia Peles |
| Boston | Asian Delight | Edward White |
| | Bean and Corn Salad | Carolyn Federoff |
| | Chicken Linguine Alfredo | Carlyn P. Jones |
| | Cranberry and Almond Chicken Linguini | Christine Macedo |
| | Buffalo | Vanilla crepes with creamy yogurt filling and fresh berries |
| Chicago | Buffalo Stew | Joyce A Grant |
| | Chai-cago Chocolate Crust with Tofu Berry Mousse | Matthew J Wagner |
| Cincinnati | Spaghetti Squash with Pumpkin Seed Pesto Sauce | Martha Wisner-Partin |
| Dallas-Ft. Worth | Hearty Wholesome Chili | Jennifer L. Mollenshott |
| Denver | Bison Meatloaf Muffins | Erin Corinne Vanadore |
| | People's Garden Pizza | Cara L. Olson |
| | Tropical Muesli | Catherine Blumenstine |
| Detroit | Curried Corn Soup with Lobster and Basil | Jennifer L Willis |
| | Peanut Butter Banana Muffins | Cheryl Farley |



| | | |
|---------------|---|-------------------------|
| Honolulu | Ceviche Mixta | Indira Manring |
| | Easy and Healthy Bread Pudding | Karen Mokihana Tydingco |
| | Guava BBQ Glazed Turkey Bake | Robert O'Conner |
| Houston | Healthy Spicy Meatloaf | Daniel N. Price |
| Kansas City | Baked Pasta with Marinara and Roasted Vegetables | Jennifer Reisinger |
| | Chewy Whole Wheat Chocolate Chip Cookies | Robert Mercer |
| Los Angeles | Banana Bread Muffins | Kelly Reason-Williams |
| | Berry Tart | Susanne Berry |
| | Chicken Vermouth with Sauteed Artichoke Hearts | Donald P. Delaney |
| | Energizing Drink | Santa Murillo |
| | Parseekhemo | Hoshang Bhada |
| | Quick and Easy Healthy Hummus | Gary Niklason |
| Minnesota | Berry Crisp (With Vegan Options) | Valerie L. Ferris |
| | Blueberry Muffin Tops | John David Lambeth |
| New York City | Chicken Breast Stuffed with Wild Rice with Garlic Sauce | Paul S. Sheremeta |
| | Healthy Mashed Potatoes with Creamy Mushrooms | Svetlana Levina |
| | Pumpkin Ziti | Diane C Gibbs |
| | Turkey Bean Chili | Barbara Teran-Jairala |
| Oklahoma | Greek Harvest Salad | Karen Mae Burgos |
| Oregon | Fruit and Cereal cookies | Judith A Mixan |
| | Karen's Zucchini Bread | Karen C. Sherrill |

| | | |
|---------------|--|-------------------------|
| | Portland 'Cream' Pie | Suzanne Morozov |
| | Pumpkin Oatmeal Pancakes with Sugar Free Syrup | Jennifer Trimble |
| Philadelphia | Barley-Vegetable Sauté | Kerri Hansen |
| | Chicken, Swiss Chard Almandine | Donna M. Scheel |
| | Mango Strawberry Salsa | Meaghan Messner |
| | Scallop Ceviche Salad | Kara Markley |
| Pittsburgh | Summer Garden Pasta | Devon Mulhall |
| San Antonio | Cocoa Goji Truffles | Vicki Beaudoin |
| | Fish Tostadas | Sergio Sepulveda |
| | Veggie Chili | Raecene Randall |
| San Francisco | Garden Party Muffins | Allison Dorsey |
| Seattle | "OMG" Tasty Bran Muffins | Julianne Crosby |
| | Chicken Tabouleh Salad with Feta Cheese | Lauren Koellermeier |
| | Ginger Squash Soup | Carolyn Schwab |
| | Rustic Chickpea Kale Soup | Becky M. Sands |
| | Vegan Tortilla Chip Menudo | Chris Kuhel |
| South Florida | Bruschetta Turkey Burgers | Cari Chiscon |
| | Chicken Salad Shells | Kimberly Ann Corwin |
| | Seared Mahi-Mahi with Capers Sauce | Amanda Rios |
| | South West Chicken | Cynthia (Cindy) Chapman |
| | Spanish Gazpacho Ole' | Marlene A. Ulisky |

All of these recipes are available at: www.fedsggetfit.gov/RecipeChallenge/Recipes.aspx



Spotlighting Information in Public Service

Did You Know...

FEDERAL PRISON INDUSTRIES, INC.

It is the mission of Federal Prison Industries, Inc. (FPI) to employ and provide job skills training to the greatest practicable number of inmates confined within the Federal Bureau of Prisons; contribute to the safety and security of our Nation's federal correctional facilities by keeping inmates constructively occupied; provide market-quality products and services; operate in a self-sustaining manner; and minimize FPI's impact on private business and labor.

Federal Prison Industries is also known as UNICOR. UNICOR offers a vast array of diverse products and services to customers within the Federal Government and beyond, in more than 80 different Federal Supply Classes. Their commitment to green manufacturing, quality measurement processes, and business relationships with leading American companies has defined UNICOR as a dependable leader from which customers may purchase with full confidence.

As a self-sustaining, government corporation, UNICOR represents an invaluable investment in developing the human potential, leading to lasting, residual benefits.

UNICOR offers a one-stop shopping environment where procurement professionals can take advantage of a wide range of products and services. And online purchasing through www.unicor.gov available 24/7 makes it easier, faster, and more convenient to get the job done. In addition to the diverse offerings on their website, they also manufacture custom products to customers' unique specifications, and have done so for the Department of Defense, Homeland Security, and Transportation, among others. UNICOR has also created custom design solutions and prototypes for the US Postal Service.

CAR ALLOWANCE REBATE SYSTEM (CARS)

Designated as a government-wide shared service provider, Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center's Enterprise Services Center (ESC) offers a wide variety of information technology and financial management products and services to not only the FAA but every operating administration with the Department of Transportation. They also provide services to other departments and agencies across the federal community. The organization's mission is to improve economies and efficiencies associated with business functions across the Government, ultimately providing a better service at a lower cost to the taxpayer.

In 2009 a stimulus program was signed into law to stimulate the economy by providing incentives to purchase or lease new vehicles and aid the environment by ensuring the new vehicles were more fuel-efficient than the trade in. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an organization with only 650 employees was tasked with managing the program. NHTSA leveraged their existing relationship with ESC to develop and deploy software a software application within a 30-day period allotted by Congress. The software, used by car dealers and consumers, was activated on 7-24-2009. Deploying this secure, nationwide transactional system in a one-month time frame was an unprecedented Government achievement.

The Nation's overwhelming response to the program was grossly underestimated with the original \$1B allotment being exhausted in only a few days. NHTSA was understaffed to meet the demand of processing payments within 10 days of receipt. Congress enacted an additional \$2B just 12 days after the program began, resulting in a total of 690,000 trade-in vehicles. NHTSA expanded its relationship with ESC to support over 10,000 paid volunteers and contractors, including 1800 Federal employees at the Aeronautical Center.

During this program, the Aeronautical Center employees processed over 300,000 vouchers and the ESC help desk answered over 45,000 trouble calls for software support and CARS questions.



Positive ways to give negative feedback

In a May 3 column of the *Federal Times*, Lily Whiteman explained how to give negative feedback and correct otherwise diligent staffers in a humane, respectful way. Here are some additional tips she offers:

Remember your purpose. Your negative feedback should be designed to provide constructive feedback that will help your staffers increase their contributions to your office—not to embarrass or demean or “gotcha” them.

Watch your voice. When you criticize or make suggestions to subordinates, your tone should be as calm, tactful and respectful as when you speak to your superiors.

Don’t pry into personal matters. Don’t relate your staffer’s mistakes to his personal problems if he does not bring them up himself. For example, avoid saying things like, “I heard you recently went through a breakup. Is that why you have been slacking off?”

Don’t be personally offensive. When possible, focus on your staffer’s work and results, not on your staffer himself. For example, rather than saying, “You are always so careless on your reports,” say, “In the future, it would be helpful if your reports went through more quality controls” or “There is something we need to change in our procedure; these reports should go through more quality controls.”

Use gentle phrasing. Phrase your criticism with considerate, nonconfrontational language that will allow otherwise dependable staffers to save face. For example, suppose your assistant is usually diligent and efficient, but you know he is resistant to admitting mistakes. When you must correct him, you could allow him to save face by saying, “X happened, perhaps you could take care of it,” or “I just wanted to tell you that X is the person to consult on these matters instead of Y.”

Give rationales. Explain why it is important for your staffer to correct his approach and follow your instructions, if such rationales are not self-evident.

Explain expectations. Clearly define needed improvements.

Use the sandwich method. If possible, position

your criticism between compliments. Your opening compliment will ingratiate your staffer to you and thereby make him more receptive to your criticism, and your closing salvo will leave him in an enthusiastic mood, rather than a resentful one. For example, suppose your staffer is consistently finishing quarterly reports late, and you want to tell him to start meeting deadlines. You could phrase your feedback like this: “Jim, the quality of your quarterly reports is excellent; they are complete and reader-friendly. But the reports have come in late every month. The deadlines are important because they are congressionally mandated, and so late reports give our agency a black eye. Please make a special effort to finish the reports on time in the future. Do you need any additional support or trouble-shooting help to do so?” Then, after the staffer answers your question and pledges to meet deadlines, you could end the conversation by saying, “I know that you will keep up the high quality of your reports, and I look forward to reading your next one.”

By contrast, if your corrections are delivered without or before positive statements, you will probably alienate your staffer. This principle was recently demonstrated by a manager who started his discussion with a wayward staffer with criticism and then ended it with positive feedback. The manager took this approach because he assumed that his staffer would prefer to clear the air of negativity before discussing his achievements. “I was wrong,” the manager says. “My staffer was obviously offended by my criticism and ended up tuning out before I even got to the good stuff.”

Allow rebuttals. Give your staffers opportunities to respond to your criticisms or suggestions, and keep an open mind to their viewpoints.

No gossiping. If possible, don’t discuss your staffer’s mistakes and how angry they made you with other staffers.

Reward good behavior. When your staffer corrects his approach, compliment his improvement.

Be fair. Throughout each rating period, compliment your staffers at least as freely and enthusiastically as you give them negative feedback.



Dealing with Cyber Bullies



Bullies are now taking advantage of technology to intimidate and harass their victims. Dealing with cyber bullying can be difficult, but there are steps you can take.

What is cyber bullying?

Cyber bullying refers to the new, and growing, practice of using technology to harass, or bully, someone else. Bullies used to be restricted to methods such as physical intimidation, postal mail, or the telephone. Now, developments in electronic media offer forums such as email, instant messaging, web pages, and digital photos to add to the arsenal. Computers, cell phones, and PDAs are new tools that can be applied to an old practice.

Forms of cyber bullying can range in severity from cruel or embarrassing rumors to threats, harassment, or stalking. It can affect any age group; however, teenagers and young adults are common victims, and cyber bullying is a growing problem in schools.

Why has cyber bullying become such a problem?

The relative anonymity of the internet is appealing for bullies because it enhances the intimidation and makes tracing the activity more difficult. Some bullies also find it easier to be more vicious because there is no personal contact. Unfortunately, the internet and email can also increase the visibility of the activity. Information or pictures posted online or forwarded in mass emailings can reach a larger audience faster than more traditional methods, causing more damage to the victims. And because of the amount of personal information available online, bullies may be able to arbitrarily choose their victims.

Cyber bullying may also indicate a tendency toward more serious behavior. While bullying has always been an unfortunate reality, most bullies grow out of it. Cyber bullying has not existed long enough to have solid research, but there is evidence that it may be an early warning for more violent behavior.

How can you protect yourself?

- Be careful where you post personal information -
By limiting the number of people who have access to your contact information or details about your

interests, habits, or employment, you reduce your exposure to bullies that you do not know. This may limit your risk of becoming a victim and may make it easier to identify the bully if you are victimized.

- Avoid escalating the situation - Responding with hostility is likely to provoke a bully and escalate the situation. Depending on the circumstances, consider ignoring the issue. Often, bullies thrive on the reaction of their victims. Other options include subtle actions. For example, if you are receiving unwanted email messages, consider changing your email address. If the bully does not have access to the new address, the problem may stop. If you continue to get messages at your new account, you may have a stronger case for legal action.

- Document the activity - Keep a record of any online activity (emails, web pages, instant messages, etc.), including relevant dates and times. In addition to archiving an electronic version, consider printing a copy.

- Report cyber bullying to the appropriate authorities - If you are being harassed or threatened, report the activity to the local authorities. Law enforcement agencies have different policies, but your local police department or FBI branch are good starting points. Unfortunately, there is a distinction between free speech and punishable offenses, but the legal implications should be decided by the law enforcement officials and the prosecutors. Depending on the activity, it may also be appropriate to report it to school officials who may have separate policies for dealing with activity that involves students.

Protect your children by teaching them good online habits (see Keeping Children Safe Online for more information). Keep lines of communication open with your children so that they feel comfortable telling you if they are being victimized online. Reduce their risk of becoming cyber bullies by setting guidelines for and monitoring their use of the internet and other electronic media (cell phones, PDAs, etc.).

Author: Mindi McDowell; Produced 2006 by US-CERT, a government organization



UPCOMING EVENTS

July 2010

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| July 4, 2010 | Independence Day |  |
| July 14, 2010 07:30 a.m. | Mayors Committee on Disability Concerns POC: Diana Hubbard, 405-297-4544 | |
| July 15, 2010 All Day | Leadership FEB Federal Aviation Administration POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167 | |
| July 15, 2010 5:00 p.m. | Federal Employees Care Council TBD POC: Tom Burton, 405-954-0625 | |
| July 21, 2010 10:00 a.m. | Interagency Training Council TBD POC: Carol Smith, 405-425-4499 | |
| July 21-23, 2010 All Day | National FEB Conference Fairmont Hotel, Washington, DC POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167 | |
| July 28, 2010 2:00 p.m. | Emergency Preparedness Council OK Dept of Ag, Food & Forestry POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167 | |
| July 30, 2010 12:00 noon | Naturalization US District Court, 200 NW 4 th St, OKC POC: FEB Office, 405-231-4167 | |

INSPIRATION CORNER

A decision, a true decision, means quite simply to close off all other options. And that is not an easy thing to do, because to move away from where you are at the moment...may mean leaving something behind you. -David Taylor

I am a man of fixed and unbending principles, the first is to be flexible at all times. -Everett Dirksen

An effective organization has a purpose that is shared by all its members and to which they will willingly commit their efforts. People working together can do almost anything. -James L. Hayes

Your Federal Executive Board

“Federal Executive Boards (FEBs) are generally responsible for improving coordination among federal activities and programs in...areas outside of Washington, D.C...FEBs support and promote national initiatives of the President and the administration and respond to the local needs of the federal agencies and the community.” (GAO-04-384)

We applaud the efforts of the Oklahoma FEB Executive Policy Council members who ensure information is provided to direct our activities and efforts:

- Jim Akagi, US Drug Enforcement Administration
- Adrian Andrews, Special Agent in Charge, US Secret Service
- Laura Culberson, Director of Staff, Tinker AFB
- Larry Flener, Representative for the District Director, US Postal Service
- Dottie Overal, Director, Small Business Administration
- Lindy Ritz, Director, FAA Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
- Betty Tippeconnie, Superintendent, BIA-Concho Agency
- David Wood, Director, VA Medical Center

This newsletter is published monthly as a cost-effective tool for communicating events and issues of importance to the federal community in Oklahoma. If you have news of interest, please fax to the FEB Office at (405) 231-4165 or email to LeAnnJenkins@gsa.gov no later than the 15th of each month.

Officers:

Chair: **Sam Jarvis**
Director, VA Regional Office
Muskogee

Vice-Chair: **Jon Worthington**
Administrator, Southwestern Power Administration, Tulsa

Ex Officio: **Kevin McNeely**
US Department of Housing and Urban Development
Mike Roach, U.S. Marshal
US Marshals Service
Western District of Oklahoma

Staff:

Director: LeAnn Jenkins
Assistant: Julie Murray



Continuity of Operations (COOP) Excellent Series I Practitioners Certification



FEMA

In an effort to further support Continuity of Operations efforts of the federal agencies in Oklahoma, the Federal Executive Board is providing information on a FEMA developed certification program available to employees completing specific COOP training. There are two levels of COOP certification available and some of the required training is available through independent study, online.

Individuals completing the pre-requisites can apply for certification:

1. The FEMA Emergency Management Institute will issue all certificates
2. Send certificate requests and supporting information to LeAnn Jenkins, LeAnn.Jenkins@gsa.gov or fax to 405-231-4165
3. Please include your name, organization (spelled out), work address, email address and phone number
4. Expect to wait up to six weeks to receive your certificate

Submission for Certification Consideration

| | |
|------------------|---------|
| Name: | Agency: |
| Agency Address: | |
| Mailing Address: | |
| Phone: | Email: |

Submit copies of training completion for each of the following courses, along with this registration form to the Federal Executive Board (info below). *No certificates have been issued for the Determined Accord exercise; provide date and location of attendance for verification.*

| | COURSE TITLE | Completed |
|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS 546 or IS 546a: COOP Awareness Course, | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS 547 or IS 547a: Introduction to COOP, | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS-242 or equivalent E/L course: Effective Communication | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | E/L/G 548: COOP Manager's T-t-T Course <u>or</u> E/G/L 549: Continuity of Operations (COOP) Program Manager Course <u>or</u> University of Maryland Preparing the States Continuity Courses <u>or</u> MGT 331 University of Maryland Preparing the States Continuity Course | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | E/L 550: COOP Planner's T-t-T Workshop or IS 550: Continuity Planner's Workshop | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS 100: Intro to Incident Command System (ICS) or ICS 100: Intro to Incident Command System or ICS 200: Incident Command System for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS 230 or equivalent E/L course: Principles of Emergency Management or IS 230a: Fundamentals of Emergency Management | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS 700a: Intro to National Incident Management System (NIMS) or IS 700 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | IS 800-B: A National Response Framework (NRF), An Introduction | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | E 136 or IS 139: Exercise Development Course/Exercise Design Course/ <u>or</u> COOP Exercise Design/ Development T-t-T Course, | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Complete attendance in continuity exercise Determined Accord (Pandemic Preparedness) or IS 520: Intro to Continuity of Operations Planning for Pandemic Influenzas and IS 522: Pandemic Influenza Exercise Course (both independent study courses are required) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | NARA/CoSA Vital Records Training (optional recommended) | |

Successful completion of the above criteria will make you eligible to become a certified Professional Continuity Practitioner

Submit registration and copies of training certificates by fax to: 405-231-4165 (Attn: LeAnn Jenkins)



IRS may get Access to TSP—Target: Tax-delinquent feds, military members

by Stephen Losey, taken from Federal Times article Vol. 46, No. 10 dtd May 24, 2010

A new Justice Department ruling apparently paves the way for the IRS to seize funds from the Thrift Savings Plan accounts of tax-delinquent federal employees, retirees and military service members.

Justice’s Office of Legal Counsel on May 3 ruled that the Internal Revenue Code allowing garnishments should trump the 1986 law that created TSP and protected its accounts from being levied.

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board, which governs TSP, until now has resisted IRS efforts to seize participants’ retirement savings. But Executive Director Gregory Long said at the board’s May 17 meeting that Justice’s decision gives IRS the upper hand in its push to seize TSP accounts in the same way it can seize private-sector 401(k) accounts. IRS can already seize federal employees’ wages to repay tax debts under the Federal Payment Levy Program.

“This is a fight we are likely eventually going to lose,” Long said. If the board does not comply with the ruling, IRS will likely sue the board, he said. IRS did not respond to requests for comment.

Congress likely would have to change the Federal Employees Retirement System Act that governs TSP to allow IRS levies.

Bruce Fernandez, a spokesman for the House Oversight and Government Reform subcommittee on the federal workforce, Postal Service and District of Columbia, said last week the subcommittee had just become aware of the TSP issue and is studying it, and could not yet say how lawmakers will respond.

If Congress does not change the law and the conflicting IRS and TSP laws remain, it will likely result in a lawsuit.

Long and others are concerned this move could lead to other claimants garnishing employees’ TSP funds. Long told the board he wants any change to the Federal Employees’ Retirement System Act to

specifically limit new garnishments to IRS.

Dan Adcock, legislative director for National Active and Retired Federal Employees, agreed with Long. “There are other sources of income

available for garnishments of other debts” beside taxes, Adcock said. “Retirement savings should be protected against that type of garnishment [for debts] like parking tickets.”

If TSP accounts are opened up to IRS,

Adcock wants to make sure federal employees are given the same due process and appeal rights as private-sector workers, he said.

“Our only concern is if feds and retirees are unfairly singled out for enforcement other workers aren’t subject to,” Adcock said. “As long as there’s equity, we would have no objection. It’s our position that if federal employees and retirees have tax liabilities, they should pay them and be fully compliant.”

One civilian Army employee, who asked not to be named, said he is concerned by IRS’ drive to levy TSP accounts. He said IRS took too much out of his wages last year to pay his overdue taxes, and said he’s still waiting for the agency to repay the balance.

The prospect of the IRS improperly seizing his TSP funds—and losing out on the investment earnings he otherwise would have received from that money—scares him.

“Take my paycheck—take the whole thing if you want to,” he said. “But don’t mess around with my retirement account. It creates too many complications, and you could lose your investment opportunity.”

According to IRS statistics released in December, 97,200 federal employees and almost 56,200 active-duty military service members were behind on their taxes, as were 41,000 civilian retirees and 81,900 military retirees. Long said he was unsure how many TSP participants were behind on their

More than a quarter-million federal civilian workers, military employees and retirees owed about \$3 billion in back taxes as of 2008:

| Category | # owing taxes | Amt owed | Delinquency rates |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Retired military | 81,905 | \$1,343.5 M | 3.79% |
| Civilian employees | 97,200 | \$962.1 M | 3.36% |
| Retired civilians | 41,013 | \$435.6 M | 2.19% |
| Reserve/Guard | 29,069 | \$198.5 M | 2.26% |
| Active-duty military | 27,111 | \$102.5 M | 1.88% |

Source: IRS



IRS may get Access to TSP (cont'd)

taxes.

The more than 276,000 tax-delinquent feds and service members owe IRS a combined \$3 billion.

Some lawmakers have sought to make an issue out of tax-delinquent federal employees. Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, introduced a bill in March that would fire federal employees who are seriously behind on their taxes. Democratic lawmakers say Chaffetz's bill is unnecessary and overly punitive since IRS can seize employees' salaries to repay taxes. The bill appears unlikely to go anywhere, but Chaffetz said last week at a hearing on federal hiring that he wants to revisit the issue soon.

The board will next consult with the Employee Thrift Advisory Council, a panel of union and management representatives that advises the board, on the Justice ruling, and then talk to Congress about possible changes. The board will not recommend any particular course of action to Congress.

One board member, Thomas Fink, held out hope that lawmakers may choose to exempt TSP accounts from garnishment.

"It's not a slam dunk" that Congress will side with IRS, Fink said. "It's going to irritate some participants, which are their constituents."

TSP accounts can already be garnished to pay for child support, alimony and to pay restitution or other costs related to a child abuse judgment. An employee who is convicted of a national security offense can also have his matching contributions, agency automatic contributions and any money earned from those contributions confiscated; in this case, employees' own contributions and related earnings cannot be seized.

Pat Niehaus, president of the Federal Managers Association, said most tax-delinquent feds quickly repay their debts and don't carry them over for several years.

"Given how much of an individual's retirement is based on TSP, I hate to see (garnishment)," Niehaus said. "But we all know we owe taxes, and it's not like there's any surprises there."

Remembering the Dos and Don'ts of E-mail

When crafting e-mails, remember the rules of good writing. Actually, it wouldn't hurt to be even *more* diligent when crafting e-mails. The tendency to type and send without proofreading has left many people with egg on their faces. Keep in mind these other dos and don'ts:

Don't get creative. E-mail programs come with so many creative fonts. What's the harm in finding one to fit your personality? No harm at all—unless it's so obscure that your recipient's system converts it to gibberish. For business purposes, it's better to stick to common fonts, such as Arial or Times—and to type in dark, easy-to-see colors.

Do use file folders. If your mail isn't already filtered through a spam-blocker, get one. But spam-blockers won't filter out the dozens of newspaper articles, jokes, cartoons, and inspirational stories forwarded daily by your friends and colleagues. To make sure these don't inadvertently obscure important e-mails, create file folders and message rules that will automatically sort business correspondence and personal messages. That way you can check out the important stuff right away and read other messages at your leisure.

Don't go off half-cocked. If you receive an email that makes you angry, resist the temptation to shoot back a fiery retort. Give yourself time to settle down and think things through before you respond. Once you hit send, you can't take it back.

Do use appropriate language. It's okay to be somewhat informal when writing to colleagues, but use good judgment. An increasing number of organizations monitor emails for inappropriate language or sexual content. And even if you delete these messages, your company may still be able to access them—say, in a response to a subpoena. Don't write anything in a workplace email that you wouldn't want to be read in court.

Don't overuse the symbolism. The first goal of correspondence should be to communicate clearly. Don't assume your intended reader knows all the acronyms, expressions, and emoticons used to give email that extra flourish. And don't write in all capitals, all lowercase, or without punctuation. Whether it appears on the company letterhead or on someone's computer screen, your business correspondence should look professional.

Taken from Everyday Communication Techniques for the Workplace by Deborah S. Roberts, a publication of Ragan's Management Resources



Effective Qualities for Today's Supervisor (a leadership/supervisory development program)



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Date: | August 25-26, 2010 (or can choose either day) | |
| Time: | 8:00 a.m. Registration 8:30-4:00 Training | |
| Location: | Clarion Hotel & Convention Center, 737 S. Meridian, Oklahoma City | |
| Cost: | \$100.00 for one-day \$175 for both | |
| Instructor: | Larry Fisher is retired from the Oklahoma Office of Personnel Management and provides management and supervisory training for government organizations. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> August 25th, 2010 Using 3-D Leadership to Achieve Maximum Results: As we move more and more into a 2-dimensional world of computer monitors, Bluetooth technology, and the Blackberry's glow, we also move further and further from the world of real people, real situations, and real humans as leaders. This session will help you get back in touch with what really works in leadership. We examine four famous leaders as they applied the 3-D Leadership concepts to achieve organizational success. Face-to-Face Communications: In the world of Twitter, Blackberry, and email we may be losing the ability to get our message across during face-to-face situations. Review the basics of oral communications and practice both verbal and non-verbal communications tools. | <input type="checkbox"/> August 26th, 2010 Motivating a Workforce in Difficult Times: When budgets are being cut and resources reduced, workers tend to hunder down and hide. Supervisors and managers have an opportunity here to help workers find the motivation needed to perform at their highest level. As the old saying goes, this could be their finest hour. Humor-Enriched Supervisor: The best organizations use humor to make the workplace challenging and exciting. This session describes how this can be done in most organizations. We will develop a humor perspective, learn to develop joy in adversity, and practice humaerobics. Be prepared to laugh during the day without ever hearing the instructor tell any jokes. | |

I have marked which day I wish to attend at the \$100 rate.

I have marked both days and understand that I receive the discounted rate of \$175.

Registration

Name _____ Agency _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Method of payment: Cash Government Voucher Credit Card

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Mail registration to: | Federal Executive Board 215 Dean A. McGee, Ste 153 Oklahoma City, OK 73102 |
| Or fax to: | 405-231-4165 |

Cancellation Policy: Understanding that unforeseen circumstances may preclude an individual from attending, refunds and cancellations will be permitted through August 18, 2010. However, after that date, registrations must be honored by the individual or agency involved. If you are unable to attend, substitute attendees are authorized and encouraged!



| SUN | MON | TUES | WED | THUR | FRI | SAT |
|------------------------------|-----------|------|----------------------|--|----------------------|-----|
| | July 2010 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 <i>Independence Day</i> | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 Leadership FEB 5:00 FECC | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 10:00 ITC | National FEB Conference-Washington, DC | | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 2:00 Emgy Prep | 29 | 30 Naturalization | 31 |

OKLAHOMA FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD
 215 DEAN A. MCGEE AVENUE, STE 153
 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73102-3422
 OFFICIAL BUSINESS ONLY

We wish to thank the FAA Media Solutions Division for their monthly assistance in the duplication and distribution of this newsletter.