



# News you can use...

## Microsoft Exchange coming soon...

The CIO has announced that the Project Manager is currently evaluating contractors to assist our in-house staff to install Microsoft Exchange at the HQ node in the George Washington Carver Center. This will be the "first step" in the completion of the IT Consolidation Project. Some background for those of you not familiar with this important information technology initiative.... The IT Consolidation Project is the creation of a true ARS network that will greatly enable the continuation and sharing of research throughout ARS with our customers and partners. The scope of this project will touch every ARS em-

ployee and ARS contractor across the country in one form or another. The details... The IT Consolidation Project is based on a three-node data design and a two- node enterprise email design. The data design is configured to allow Internet access to any of the nodes if one of the functional nodes goes down due to failure or other mishap. Additionally, fire walls and routers have been configured with a "deny all" policy to keep out all unwanted traffic. The enterprise email system is configured so if one of the email nodes goes down, all ARS employees will still have access to sending and receiving their email

through the other node. Other features being engineered and built into this project are Microsoft SharePoint services that will allow for document collaboration with messaging. An ARS specific Intranet will have a myARS portal site for each employee to view updates, access applications, and see what is going on within ARS. These are exciting times for ARS as these technologies are great enablers to securely communicate and work with our customers, partners, and colleagues using the latest technologies available to the OCIO and ARS. Look for Exchange, it's coming soon!

## Sasser Worm wiggles its way onto our computers...

The skinny..... Once a computer has been infected, the W32.Sasser.Worm scans random IP addresses on the network (for it to connect to) on TCP port 445. If it connects successfully, it then attempts to exploit the "Microsoft Windows LSASS buffer overflow vulnerability." The infection that was on our networks can run on (but not

infect) Windows 95/98/Me computers. Although these operating systems cannot be infected, they can still be used to infect the vulnerable systems to which they are able to connect. In this case, the worm will waste a lot of resources so that programs cannot properly run. The OCIO formed technical teams from the Infrastructure, CyberSecu-

rity, and Customer Support Branches to effectively clean and patch all computer systems at ARS Headquarters. Steps have been put in place to ensure all users have current virus signature files, and a "Patchlink" server has been configured to apply patches to all computers as they are available from Microsoft.

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### Special points of interest:

- Did you know we have several new employees in the OCIO? See page 4 for details...
- Word tips see page 5.
- Find it on the web – go to page 4.
- GoLearn web based-training coming to your mailbox soon.

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## Informs replacement update...

ARS has been using the Novell InForms Designer and Filler software for electronic forms for eight years. This software provides the forms developer with the ability to design forms and link them to databases, and the end-user with the ability to fill-in, save, and print data, as well as retrieve records stored locally on their PC. Metastorm, the vendor for InForms, discontinued providing licensing and support of the product at the end of FY 2003. This software is no longer compatible with new PC operating systems. The Applications Development Branch of OCIO has been researching alternatives and evaluating products for a replacement for InForms. We identified two vendors with suitable options to meet our needs: Metastorm (e-Works) and FormSoft Group (FormFinder). Our plan is

to convert all existing InForms forms (432) into the Adobe Portable Document Format while continuing to provide basic intelligence in the forms, make the forms fillable in a web-enabled environment, and provide database save and retrieve capability via an ORACLE database.

To insure that the functional requirements of our users are met, we formed a Forms Users Group with representation from each ARS Area, AFM, NAL, and the serviced agencies (CSREES, ERS, and NASS) to assist in the final evaluation of two products. Each vendor created a proof-of-concept demo for the Forms Users Group using forms from our current library and showed the capabilities of their product via a Web cast. The Forms Users Group unanimously selected Form-

Finder for the Web because of its user friendliness and the overall professionalism demonstrated by the company's representatives. This software is a Web-based solution that provides easy end-user access to a centralized forms catalogue with data storage and basic routing of forms. The end user can complete forms using Adobe Acrobat Reader software. For the forms manager, it provides an easy-to-use point and click forms posting and database management tool. We will be replacing our InForms Designer software with Adobe Form Designer. We are now in the process of securing the funding to start the project. Stay tuned!



**The CIO has her eyes on you!!**

## Peer-to-Peer...

You might remember *Napster* from a couple of years ago. It became an overnight Internet sensation. Literally millions of people around the world used the service to share music, video, and other files. An overwhelming majority of that file sharing was illegal, violating copyright laws. After

copyright holders sued *Napster* and temporarily shut it down, many similar products popped up, with just a few examples being LimeWire, iMesh, gnutella, and KaZaA.

Over time, it turns out that many of the files shared through peer-to-peer services

have been infected with viruses, worms, and spyware (software that monitors your computer activity and saves such information as passwords and credit card numbers). In addition, the use of this software causes unnecessary and inappropriate bandwidth usage on our network.



## Peer-to-Peer continued...

USDA Guidance CS-010 expressly forbids the use of peer-to-peer software, saying that such software packages “ have no recognized business need and should not be loaded on...equipment used to conduct USDA Official Business.” As part of USDA ’s cybersecurity posture, our networks are scanned regularly to detect, among other things, the pres-

ence of hackers, viruses/ worms, and peer-to-peer software usage. ARS Policy and Procedure 253.4, “Use of Information Technology Resources,” lists the functions of peer-to-peer software in the category of “ Unacceptable Personal Use.” It ’s important to remember that these policies apply to *anyone* who uses ARS computing and network resources, including

employees, contractors, University collaborators, and visitors. **“ Limited Personal Use ” is no excuse.** So keep yourself and your computer clean...just say no to peer-to-peer software!

USDA Guidance on peer-to-peer Software – <http://www.usda.gov/da/IRD/CS-010.htm>

REE P&P on Use of Information Technology Resources - <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/>



## Scam E-mail...

Internet email is a common source of scams intended to lure unsuspecting victims into releasing personal financial information. The most recent type of scam is known as “phishing,” where tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of spam messages are sent to deceive people into disclosing their credit card numbers, bank account information, social security numbers, passwords, and other sensitive information. Often these messages will appear entirely legitimate, with messages that look identical to well-known Internet websites such as Amazon.com, eBay, and others. Other messages will indicate that your credit card has been

charged a certain amount for something you never ordered. These messages state that you need to update or validate your billing information and direct you to a “look-alike” web site.

For your protection, follow this guidance recommended by the Federal Trade Commission:

\* If you get an email that warns you, with little or no notice, that an account of yours will be shut down unless you reconfirm your billing information, do not reply or click on the link in the email. Instead, contact the company cited in the email using a telephone number or a web site address that you know is genuine and that you

type into your browser personally. Do not use the links that appear in a message that may not be legitimate. These links may take you to the scammers website and not the business you think it is.

\* Avoid emailing personal and financial information. Before submitting financial information through a web site, look for the “lock” icon on the browsers status bar. It indicates that your information is secure during transmission.

As always, exercise caution when dealing with personal information in email or in browsing the Internet. This caution will go a long way in keeping from falling victim to credit card fraud or identity fraud.



### Famous Latin Quotation

**“Stultum est timere quod vitare non potes”**

**“It is foolish to fear that which you cannot avoid”**

## New OCIO Employees...

### Biography....

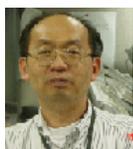
Rob Herring joined the Web Branch on January 12 primarily as a ColdFusion developer in support of the ARS web site and related applications. Rob



joins us from AMTI in Virginia where he developed and maintained a variety of ColdFusion/Sql Server 2000 database-driven web applications. He earned the B.S. degree in Computer Sciences from University of Maryland University College. Rob is in Bldg 3 of GWCC (3-2260 B) and can be reached at either rherring@ars.usda.gov or 301-504-1050.

### Biography....

James Lin received his Bachelors Degree in Physics from Taiwan Normal University and his Master's degree



in Computer Science from Alabama University in 1988. Prior to joining the Application Development Branch, James was an independent consultant working for USGS DOI where he provided Oracle DBA and 9iAS services in Sun Solaris servers for the agency. His experience includes: Oracle

DBA, Systems Administrator, and Web Administrator.

James has also led teams of independent consultants and computer specialists.

James can be reached at either jlin@ars.usda.gov or 301-504-1079.

### Biography....

Michele Koff joined the OCIO staff in December of 2003 as the as Chief of the Customer Support Branch. Michele has been working in IT for the past 18 years, mostly in managerial roles, starting as a contractor at the SBA. She joined the government in 1998 as the Systems Support Team Leader for the FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine. Michele holds an M.S. degree from Cornell University and enjoys travel, gardening, and attending craft shows.

Michele can be reached at mkoff@ars.usda.gov or 301-504-1064.

### Biography....

Raj Pujar joins us as our Sql Server DBA and .Net developer to work on the ARS Intranet project. Raj comes to ARS from the Agricultural Marketing Service where he

served as an IT Specialist working on Microsoft .Net and Sharepoint Portal Server 2003



developer. He holds the Master's Degree in Engineering from

the University of Maryland, College Park. Raj can be reached at jara@ars.usda.gov or 301.504.4554

### Find it on the Web...

Find any ARS employee on the web quickly and easily  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/pandp/people.htm>

P&P Resource Site...  
<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/index.htm>

ARIS system manual...  
<http://arsnet.usda.gov/ARIS/Manual>

ARS photo gallery..  
 Thousands of professional hi-resolution photos—free...  
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/graphics/photos>



### Famous Dumb Quotation

“Remember..... wherever you go, that's were you'll be”





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## Dr. Word



Dear Dr. Word ...

Yesterday afternoon I tried to copy some information from the Web and when I pasted it into my document, it was so tiny I couldn't read it. What am I doing wrong? Can you give me some direction?

Sincerely,  
Going Batty in Seattle

Dear Going Batty in Seattle,

There is a simple fix for pasting plain text from a Web page without having to use a magnifying glass to read it.

**Remember** . . . when you copy and paste text from a Web page or another document, ***the text brings its formatting into your document.***

To avoid that, copy the text and place the insertion point marker where you want to insert the copy. Then, open the Edit menu, choose Paste Special, and select the Unformatted Text option.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Word

I am editing a very large document and would like to see several pages at one time to avoid paging up and down. Is there any way I can view multiple pages at one time?

Perplexed in Peoria...

Dear Perplexed in Peoria..

You probably already know that you can select the "View" menu and then "Zoom" to change the zoom level on

the current document. This is useful when you need to see small graphic items or when you just can't read the text. Did you know, however, you can show several pages onscreen at once?

**To do so, click the "View" menu, selecting "Zoom." Click on the "Many pages" radio button and then click on the monitor button underneath. A popup menu will appear showing six "screens." "Move your mouse pointer over the screens and read the line of text underneath; the line says how many screens your selection would make Word display simultaneously. After you are done, press "OK" to close the dialog box.**

Although you can display up to six screens at once, depending on your monitor and graphics card, you probably will not be able to read the text on the pages. This feature, however, can be useful if you are diagnosing page layout issues.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Word

Please send all suggestions or newsletter comments to:  
ocionews@ars.usda.gov



*No Bull Here!*