Kerry’s Korner

Do you like Alabama? I’m not referring to the state, but the country music group, Alabama. There’s just something about their songs and their driving beat that I enjoy. Their song, In A Hurry, recently struck a chord with me as it relates to not only the busyness of this time of year, but the seemingly endless and often frantic race that we find ourselves in to tackle the challenges and demands of our jobs.

This won’t do the song justice, but read, or sing if you know the melody, the lyrics below to the chorus to In a Hurry:

“I’m in a hurry to get things done
Oh, I rush and rush until life’s no fun;
All I really gotta do is live and die,
But I’m in a hurry and don’t know why.”

I see ‘it’ everywhere as I read the Christmas cards we’ve received. Hand-written notes speak of how busy our friends & family have been – so much so that we each have lost contact and once again, in a twinkling of an eye, another year ends. Reminds me of the movie, Groundhog Day, where the day continually repeats itself until the main character, reliving each day, gradually makes improvements in his attitude and perspective on life; then, and only then, does a new day come for him to enjoy his newfound zest and appreciation of life. Ever felt like you were on a treadmill or a roll-a-coaster and couldn’t get off? Yeah, me too sometimes.

While we don’t want to lose our ‘sense of urgency,’ an important management principle to keep us making timely progress, carried to prolonged extremes, continuous urgency and busyness can cause us to lose our perspective and joy for life - ultimately wearing us out. I’m not a big fan of ‘new year’s resolutions,’ but perhaps not making this a resolution per se, we make a decision that in the busyness of our jobs and life in general, we take time to connect to those around us who make us better, who encourage us, who accept us as we are, who make us laugh (even at ourselves), who we just really enjoy being around. The main point here is “connection” to others. We were born relational beings who have a need for connection. Let’s not lose connection with those we love and those we just love to be around – even at work.

May God richly bless you and your loved ones this Christmas. Have a relaxing, safe and refreshing holiday, and if you get a chance, enjoy some good music.

Kerry
On November 8th, HR celebrated the five HR team members who have served our country.

Michael Barnet, United States Air Force, Claudia White, United States Army, Gary Grimes, United States Air Force. Not pictured are Ron Golenski, United States Air Force and Andy Moore, United States Navy.

Thank you for your service!

James A. Garcia is a native Texan, born and raised in San Antonio, and a graduate of Harlandale High School.

James joined UTSA in 2002, working for Facilities Services and assumed his current position as Police Communications Operator in February 2006. Of his six years at the university, James says, “What I enjoy most about my experience here at the university is being able to help people.” Before coming to work here at UTSA, he worked at Kelly Air Force Base as a jet engine mechanic for twenty years.

James’ outdoor hobbies include hunting and fishing. He also enjoys traveling, cooking and grilling. When not working, James enjoys spending time with his wife, Barbara, of thirty-one years. Together they spend most of their time with family at their ranch in Uvalde County.

James has a great personality; he is always very eager to help people and maintains a great rapport with his co-workers. We are glad that he is part of our team here at the UTSA Police Department Communications Center.

Thank you, James, for your dedicated service to the University and Business Affairs.

Avoiding The Holiday Blues

The holiday season is a time full of joy, cheer, parties, and family gatherings. However, for many people, it is a time of self-evaluation, loneliness, reflection on past failures, and anxiety about an uncertain future. According to many studies, numerous people try to cope with emotions resurfacing during the holiday season and this leads to depression. These emotions are often caused by failure to meet high expectations, loneliness, anxiety from too many commitments and finances, and memories of loved ones passed on. As a service to University employees and their dependents, the Employee Assistance Program is available to offer guidance on how to combat the “Holiday Blues” and focus on what is truly important this season.

For an appointment and confidential consultation, we encourage you to contact the Family Service Association at 210-299-2400. For weekends, after hours or emergencies, please call the EAP hotline 1-800-442-0024 (24 hours a day/7 days a week).

For additional information, visit the HR website: http://www.utsa.edu/hr/EmployeeRelations/eapinfo.cfm

Human Resources Veterans

On November 8th, HR celebrated the five HR team members who have served our country.

Michael Barnet, United States Air Force, Claudia White, United States Army, Gary Grimes, United States Air Force. Not pictured are Ron Golenski, United States Air Force and Andy Moore, United States Navy.

Thank you for your service!
Capt. Kiley,

Thank you for your efforts regarding the traffic problems at University Heights. Your assessments have been instrumental in resolving this important safety issue with the UH building lessor. Due specifically to your recommendations the building lessor is taking appropriate actions including the engagement of SAPD to prevent public traffic through the property’s parking areas.

Dan, I truly appreciate your expertise and willing involvement with this important off-campus location. Thanks again!

Powell Trotti
Business Operations

To Whom it may concern: My daughter is attending UTSA and has been since 2006. You have an employee by the name of Janet Callison that has gone above and beyond to assist me with all questions regarding my daughter’s account. She has been very patient, polite, and courteous every time I have called. She has been extremely helpful and I greatly appreciate her. It is very nice to be able to call UTSA and know that she will be able to assist you.

Parent

Bruce,

I just wanted to send a note to you to give a compliment about Denise Moore. I know your department is extremely busy year-round, even more so at the beginning of each fiscal year with appointment changes, etc. Denise habitually provides friendly, professional and efficient service to us no matter how busy she is. Her affable personality makes it clear for us to “hear” her smile on the phone when we call. It is clear Denise takes a lot of pride in her work...and we very much appreciate her willingness to assist our department (with all of the unique questions and situations we have!). Denise takes the time to solve issues we bring to her...and consistently maintains a welcoming and amiable attitude.

Denise is a true friend of our department!

Thanks,

Bruce,

I have to tell you that it has been a joy to work with you. Thanks for all your help reorganizing the Disbursement’s and Travel Services Department to include merging the departments into one, helping to make possible the creation of the Director and Asst. Director positions. I also enjoyed working with you on the Assistant Director’s search. Your input and perspective were valuable and educational to the committee! I am glad to see this kind of collaboration around the accounting audits.

Lenora Chapman
Controller

The Office of the Registrar wants to send your Surplus Crew a hardy thank you and to let you know how much we appreciate their hard work. Due to the renovation of our JPL space and recent relocation efforts from the JPL to the Business Building and from JPL to the MS building we found we had not only our surplus stuff, but we also acquired items remaining from Admissions. Your great staff, Ed, Angel and others did an excellent job of getting everything moved out of the Registrar’s office in the JPL in record time. We always appreciate their excellent service, but this was a major task and they were very much appreciated.

Terry Allison, Administrative Associate
Office of the Registrar
MORE… Kudos

Business Affairs Staff—

Greetings to the greatest police force ever! This message is being sent as a Happy Thanksgiving wish to you and your families as well as a great big thank you! My name is Kiffini Dula and I am an RA at Chaparral Village and this is not my first kudos to the UTSAPD. I have been here for a while now and each year I am here I become more amazed at how terrific and how great a police force we have here at UTSA and I think that you should know that! That is why I am taking time out to send a very special thank you to each of the following officers for always being so friendly, enthusiastic, professional, courteous and selfless in everything they do! So here is my very special thank you to the following officers: I have had the pleasure of working with personally: Officers Lobrutto, Robinson, Vega, Barrera, Smith, Diaz, Gallegos, Johnson, Manns, Stacey, Weber, Corporals Merritt, Patnode and MacIntosh and last but certainly not least, guard Charles Nail and Lt. Stephanie Padulla. It has been and always will be a pleasure to work with them. Keep up the good work and hopefully all of you will be receiving raises soon:) You may disagree:) however, in my opinion, there is no amount of money that could be paid to show how much you are all worth! Happy Thanksgiving and Thank you all so much! We truly appreciate everything you do!

Sincerely,
Kiffini Dula

Tuition and Fee Committee—

Advisory committees are always tricky! With no decision-making authority their value comes from the way leadership manages the process—discussion, information sharing, research and responsiveness. I want to thank Business Affairs and you especially for providing great leadership for the Tuition and Fees Advisory Committee this semester.

Every concern raised in the meetings was addressed by the very next meeting! And those concerns raised in our last meeting are still getting attention. Thank you! You also encouraged student contributions and made every effort to give them confidence and a voice.

I am a fairly new faculty member at UTSA and am still learning the intricacies of how our large organization is managed. By participating on this committee, I learned a lot about the overall procedures and also the range of contributions and practices of the various departments.

Since coming to UTSA, I have been proud to be a member of a university faculty that is committed to academic excellence and student success. The way you managed the activities of this committee earned my respect for establishing a process that carries those dual responsibilities to budgeting as well.

Thank you!
Victoria Jones, Ph.D.
Business Studies for the Americas
UTSA College of Business

Let us make your payment process faster!

Sign up for direct deposit for all your reimbursements.

Direct deposit for reimbursements is set up in DEFINE separately from payroll. Benefits to you include:

* Convenience - no checks to cash.
* Saves time - no running around to cash your check.

Receive an email notification that the deposit is on its way to your account. The process is easy:

* Fill out the Direct Deposit Form.
* Attach a check with VOID written across the check.
* Send via campus mail or deliver to Dorothy Cheatham in Disbursements, JPL 4.04.26.

PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS

All requests to view or copy UTSA documents must be processed through the Vice President for Business Affairs Office. For more information, click:
http://www.utsa.edu/bussvc/OpenRecords.htm
possible mold growth issue, please contact the following EHSRM personnel:

Keith Kewley, x4267 keith.kewley@utsa.edu
John Burns, x6625 john.burns2@utsa.edu
Nancy Woodward, x5250 nancy.woodward@utsa.edu
Richard Garza, x5808 richard.garza@utsa.edu

If you suspect that mold may have established itself in your workspace, you should notify the Office of Environmental Health safety and Risk Management (EHSRM). The staff specializing in indoor air quality issues will conduct a visual inspection of the area and can collect a variety of samples, as deemed necessary, to determine whether a mold growth situation may exist. Most situations result in finding other factors such as evidence of water intrusion, affecting the working environment and EHSRM can assist in correcting these other factors as well.

If mold growth is discovered and confirmed, EHSRM will oversee the cleanup of this mold, including the removal of the contaminated building materials, if necessary.

For more information regarding indoor air quality and/or to report a
Construction Update

The University Center Expansion

This project is just a few months away from the long-awaited July 2008 completion date. One of our finest new buildings on campus, this 59,100 square foot building will provide space for student leadership and cultural programs and a 600 seat ballroom, and includes a commercial grade kitchen, shared conference and meeting rooms, study areas, offices, student lounge spaces, a large game room, and a sandwich and coffee shop.

Students, faculty, and staff should be aware of construction barricades and heed all warnings throughout the area. As the project continues to take shape, several adjoining spaces will be closed due to construction. The Paseo (between the existing UC and the new UC expansion) will be partially closed for several months to make way for the construction of two elevated walkways that will connect the new expansion structure to the existing University Center. The covered walkways at ground level will remain open for pedestrian traffic. In the future, the south end of the construction site (between the new parking garage and the new UC expansion) will also be closed for various site improvements. Notices will be issued in advance of these closures.

Engineering Building Phase II

Construction has begun on a new $82.5 million engineering facility adjacent to the existing Biotechnology, Sciences and Engineering Building (BSE). Completion is scheduled for Fall of 2009. The five-story, 150,000 square foot building will be home to the fastest growing Engineering program in the state. This is an important step toward UTSA becoming a premier public research university.

The state-of-the-art facility will have five large studio-style classrooms, with teaching laboratories and support spaces on the ground floor. The first floor will house Biomedical Engineering; second floor will serve Electrical and Computer Engineering; third floor will be the home of the Physics and Astronomy departments; the top floor is reserved for mechanical equipment and the roof plenum. All floors will include faculty, post graduate, and post doctoral offices, support spaces and associated laboratories.

The architectural features of the building include two different colors of limestone block with inset bands of stucco below the roof line and a clay tile roof. First floor will have double-paned windows with tinted low-e insulated glass and sun-controlled aluminum canopies for maximum efficiency. An atrium on the building’s north entry faces the plaza adjacent to the Bio-Science Building rotunda.

This Month in History

In this month’s column, the University brings you... a look at the past.

December 1, 1880  The Missouri Pacific Railway Company entered the Lone Star State for the first time by leasing the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad and its line from Kansas to Texas.

December 8, 1873  The community of Texarkana was established, and the first store in town, a combination drug and grocery store operated by George M. Clark, opened for business.

December 29, 1842  Under orders from Sam Houston, officials arrived in Austin to remove the records of the Republic of Texas to the city of Houston, touching off the bloodless Archives War.

Worth Remembering

“Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skilful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.”

--William A. Foster

REMINDER.....

Please email us the new employees in your department, so we can add them to the newsletter mailing.
The University Staff Council is pleased to announce that applications are being accepted for the Staff Council Scholarship. Employees who are Classified or Administrative and Professional, and meet the remaining criteria for the scholarships are encouraged to apply. The scholarships will be awarded for Fall 2008, to one undergraduate and one graduate student in the amount of $250 for each scholarship.

University Staff Council sells bottled water in May at all 5 commencement ceremonies in efforts to raise scholarship funds. Fundraising events and other opportunities in the future will ensure the continuation of the scholarships.

Any Classified or Administrative and Professional employee who meet the scholarship criteria can apply by either picking up a paper application from the Scholarship Office or by going to the Staff Council website www.utsa.edu/sc/ and printing a copy of the application and criteria. Deadline to complete the application, biographical essay, and submit to the UTSA Scholarship Office (JPL 1.01.20) is February 15, 2008. Further details are available on the website or by contacting the Scholarship Office or your Staff Council Representative.

Valero Way parking restriction

To increase traffic safety, the east side of Valero Way is now a no-parking zone. The City of San Antonio recently implemented the parking restriction along the east curb of Valero Way adjacent to Valero Energy Corp. Valero Way runs north and south just east of the UTSA 1604 Campus.

Parking continues to be available along the west curb of Valero Way adjacent to UTSA and parking lot 13.

For more information, call the UTSA Office of Parking and Transportation Services at (210) 458-PARK (7275).

New Traffic Signal

The City of San Antonio recently activated a traffic signal on UTSA Boulevard at George Brackenridge, between The Oaks Phases II and III. These traffic and pedestrian crosswalk signals were installed to promote pedestrian safety for students crossing UTSA Boulevard.
Avoid doing time in the Payroll jail “pardner”

Sign up to go paperless today!!

“There’s a new sheriff in town and he doesn’t take too kindly to them there varmints that tain’t go’in paperless! Just ask Cindy Orth, she weren’t nun too cumfterble wearin them irons. Ole Sheriff Martinez shackled her up afore she could bat an eyelash!”

“Why Sheriff, what is my o-fense?” asked a bewildered Cindy.

“Miss Cindy, I’m gonna have to incarcerate you for not go’in paperless ma’am! If’n ya want out, you’re gonna have to sign up lickety split!”

“Sheriff, I’ll sign up quicker’n you kin skin a rabbit!”

On a more serious note folks, the UTSA Payroll Department would like to encourage you to go paperless. Each month, our department processes more than 6,400 paper earning statements. UTSA is a quickly growing university and in keeping with our aspirations to become a tier one institution we also need to keep up with the changing technology that allows us to become a more efficient university. We hope you will join us in our efforts to “Go Green” in our own small way. Not only will you help the Payroll office cut down on massive paper consumption but you’ll also give mother nature a much needed break.

Signing up to go paperless is simple and safe! Employees (including faculty) with UT Direct access simply sign on to UT Direct and follow these quick and easy steps:

1. click on My Paycheck Profile.
2. click on My Paycheck Distribution.
3. select “I want an electronic earnings statement” by clicking on the box provided.

Lastly, click on “update” and you are set to go paperless…you will receive an email letting you know that your earnings statement is now available for viewing.

For employees who do not yet have UT Direct access, visit the Human Resources website at www.utsa.edu/hr for more information. If you have any questions about going paperless or signing up for UT Direct access, call Payroll at (210) 458-4280. We’re glad to help “pardner!!”

Patti Titus, Cindy Orth, Javier Martinez, Mary Contreras, Chris Bodily, and Liz Ortiz