



# Communicator

DECEMBER 2010

## It's a "World Wide" Annual Enrollment!

Employees made their 2011 benefit elections from all over the world! Korea, Kenya, China and Vienna, Austria were just a few of the places that employees were able to make their benefit elections using the new online Annual Enrollment tool on the Garnet Gateway. With just a few clicks employees were able to make their medical, dental and reimbursement account elections.

I heard again and again, "That was it? Wow that was easy!", reports Ken

Emerson, who hosted several open labs at Libbey Forum to assist employees in the new online enrollment tool. Ken credits ILS's



Systems Development & Integration group with be-

ing able to make the online system a reality. "All of Systems Development & Integration either had a direct or indirect hand in making this happen but special recognition should be given to Regan Richards. She was able to make enhancements to the system based on feedback from a group of employee testers which really made the enrollment experience much easier. I know I would have had many more questions on how to navigate the system had it not been for Regan."

## Check Your Online Benefit Statement

Now that the annual enrollment period is over, Ken Emerson encourages all employees to make sure their benefit elections and covered dependents are correct by viewing their Benefit Statement through the Garnet Gateway.

*To check your Benefit Statement follow the below procedures:*

- Sign into the Garnet Gateway
- From the Main Menu click on the Benefit Statement Option
- Click on the drop down box next to "As of Date" and choose January 01, 2011 if you are a monthly employee and December 19, 2010 if you are a biweekly employee
- Review your benefit elections\* and covered dependents

\* Note that new life insurance elections may not reflect the correct amount of insurance until the first payroll is processed in 2011.

If you have questions on your benefits or who is listed as covered dependents please contact Ken Emerson at 786-8271 or via email to kemerson@bates.edu. Any corrections will need to be made prior to the College closing for break on December 23rd.

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*To poke a wood fire is more solid  
 enjoyment than almost anything else in the world.  
 ~Charles Dudley Warner*

## Heating Safely—Safely Heating

It's December and we all desire to be warm, especially after we have been outside playing or working in the cold. There are a considerable number of options for heating our living spaces and each has its own merits and inherent risks. If we think of our heating options on a continuum from least technical to most technical our options are wearing lots of layers of warm clothes, heating the space we are using with a space heater, heating a larger space with fuel that we replenish manually ourselves or heating our entire house or apartment with a central heating system.

It's pretty obvious that wearing layers will only get most of us so far in conquering the cold. Risks include exposed skin and limited heat retention without an external source of warmth. So we move quickly to space heating. In an effort to use less fuel and be environmentally and economically efficient we can opt for space heaters using electricity, propane or kerosene. Here we are introducing several types of potential hazards. With electricity we must pay attention to appropriate cord sizes, load on the electrical circuit, proper cleaning and maintenance of the unit and keeping heated appliances away from combustible materials or surfaces. If the heat source is a fuel which is

being burned, we have an additional fire risk and must be concerned with adequate ventilation. Fuel burning heaters, if not tuned and burning efficiently can release deadly carbon monoxide. If this is an option you are considering, do not use the equipment without installing a carbon monoxide detector in the area where the equipment will be used. Be sure to add liquid fuels outdoors, clean off any spills and keep the burners clean.

The next level in complexity is a stove which might be operated with wood, wood pellets, coal, or gas. Only the gas stove will have a continuous fuel supply and you will want to have it installed and maintained by a technician with special training. Solid fuel stoves will add additional elements of risk since you will need to remove ashes and watch for sparks or embers when adding fuel or cleaning out ash. In addition, it is important to monitor and clean the chimney or vent to which these devices must be connected. Many a chimney fire has forced families out into the cold and brought the fire department to deal with the emergency. A carbon monoxide detector is also critically important with these arrangements. The American Lung Association also cautions that solid fuel devices release "more

particulate matter than well-tuned oil or gas devices producing equivalent heat". If you, or someone in your family, has respiratory issues this is an important consideration.

Finally, we can rely on central heating systems with oil, gas or combined fuel burners. These systems will be either forced hot air or circulated hot water. As we are dealing with fuel burning devices, we have the same need to install carbon monoxide detectors throughout our homes, but especially close to the potential source for the earliest warning. Unless you are a trained service technician you will want to have your heating unit cleaned, inspected and serviced at least annually for safest, cleanest and most efficient operation.

All of the options above can be used safely with proper vigilance and care. Never remove or override safety devices on these appliances. It is safest to turn off space heaters when you will not be present to monitor them. Gas devices and central heating systems have a variety of safety devices. Some even have redundant devices so with manufacturer recommended maintenance they should offer years of safe use to keep you warm when the temperature drops.

~Ray Potter



### Dates of Interest in December

- 9th      Bi-Weekly and Monthly Pay Date
- 23rd     Bi-Weekly Pay Date

## Ways To Spend Less During the Holidays

Many people blow their holiday budgets because they get carried away by the excitement and spirit of the season. It's important to remember that you can still have a joyous holiday season without going over your budget. Try to focus on the true spirit of the season rather than the more commercial aspects. The best gifts are those chosen with an eye toward what's personal and meaningful to the recipient. These kinds of gifts don't have to cost a lot.

Here are some more ways to save money during the holidays:

**Set expectations with friends and family.** If you're worried about your finances this holiday season, talk about it with friends and family. Let them know if you'll be cutting back on the number of gifts or how much you plan to spend. This is especially important for children, who often have unrealistic expectations about gifts and don't fully understand the cost factors.

**Look for ways to cut back on the number of gifts you buy.** If you have a large family

or group of friends, ask if they'd like to draw names out of a hat and give one gift per person. Or give family gifts, such as a board game or a pass to a local museum rather than individual gifts.



**Consider homemade decorations and gifts.** There are many heartfelt, thoughtful gifts and decorations that don't come with a sales receipt. Use the holiday cards received as part of your decorations; you could cook some treats; put together a photo album; or give the gift of your time by making homemade coupons or certificates.

**Make a shopping plan.** Don't head out to the mall without a specific list of gift ideas and price limits.

**Look for bargains.** Take the time to look for ways to save money on decorations and gifts. Consider buying items during the "after the holidays sale season" and put them away for next year.

**Keep it simple.** Focus on enjoying the simple pleasures of the holiday season, like spending time with friends and family or taking a walk to see the holiday decorations in your neighborhood. These kinds of activities often capture the spirit of the season better than expensive gifts or elaborate celebrations.

**Use your credit card wisely.** Finally, be very careful about using your credit card to pay for holiday expenses. Don't use your card unless you know you can pay it off right away. If possible use a card that you're not already carrying a balance and making payments on. You don't want to start the New Year off with an oversized credit card bill.

~Melanie Hardie, MA, CFP®,  
AFC, LADC.

### Random Thought

There is great need for a sarcasm font.



### New Staff

Mike Leonard, *Head Baseball Coach, Athletics*

Michael Martinez, *Assoc Dean Multicultural Enrollment & Asst Dean Student Transition, Admission*

Gary Russell, *A/V Engineer, ILS*

Dan Salerno, *Writing Specialist, Writing at Bates*

## Winter/Spring 2011 Training Calendar

### Technology

#### *Windows 7 and Office 2010*

Discover the new features of Windows 7, Office 2010 for Windows and Office 2010 for Mac! We will be offering courses in early Spring so reserve your spot now by registering on the Garnet Gateway. Actual class dates and times will be announced in the Spring.

### Professional Development

#### *Effective Communication*

January 20, 2011  
8:30 a.m. to Noon  
(open to all staff)

#### *Coaching For Success*

February 22, 2011  
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
(open to all staff)

### Physical

#### *Snowshoeing*

January 6, 2011  
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

#### *Snacks and Spirits*

February 23, 2011  
3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### Safety

#### *Home Fire Safety*

January 20, 2011  
1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

#### *Chemical Emergencies at Home*

February 22, 2011  
9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

*Look for course descriptions and registration on the Garnet Gateway—Events Tab—Winter/Spring Staff Development.*