

GREAT SPIRIT SYSTEMS CORPORATION

The
Eagle Eye
Monthly Newsletter



July 2008



**A WORD
FROM
THE
PRES...**

We're Growing Again!

In this issue I'm taking a brief diversion from my series of articles on our new software redevelopment project. I will return to that subject next month.

I am extremely pleased to announce that we have added a

new member to our GSS team, Lyndzie Fifhouse. Lyndzie has begun working closely with Lori Smith in the area of user support. Lyndzie will "shadow" Lori for a few weeks, becoming familiar with our software, our problem resolution methods, and most importantly becoming familiar with you, our customers. When you place requests for user support in the coming weeks, you will very likely hear Lori say, "will you please wait just a moment while I bring Lyndzie into this call" (or meeting).

Our plan is for Lyndzie to take over a good deal of our day-to-day software support. This will free up much of Lori's time so that she can begin to use her programming skills to help develop our new Flex base version of MissionBase. As Lyndzie gets "up to speed" on each portion of MissionBase, she will begin handling those calls directly, using Lori as backup. We will move this responsibility over to Lyndzie on a module by module basis.

As you may have guessed, Lyndzie is related to me. She is married to my eldest son, Michael, and has been in our family for nearly 15 years. Now that I think about it, I believe she was present at my "Going Into Business Party" in 1994. I am excited to be adding Lyndzie to our GSS team.

Lyndzie brings some well-suited background to this position. She graduated from Bradley University with a degree in Communications. She has worked as an Account Coordinator with Hult Fritz Matuszak, Inc. in Peoria, Illinois, and as a Business Analyst for Accenture, LLP in Bloomington, Illinois. As a Business Analyst she was responsible for evaluating and supporting a customer facing application for a Fortune 500 Insurance and Financial Services Company. I look forward to having Lyndzie bring what she has gleaned from these positions into our GSS customer support services.

Welcome Lyndzie!



**FROM
THE
BULL
PEN...**

**Coming soon to a
MissionBase near YOU!**



We have begun the process of rolling out the new addressing schema in MissionBase. This project has taken over a year to accomplish and should provide much needed flexibility with contact information. The rollout to all customers will take most of the month of July as each customer requires specific interventions to bring the new schema on-line.

Our current Add-on modules:

- Benefits (Pension & Medical, Flex, & Life Insurance billing)
- Property & Liability Insurance billing
- Event Registration
- Cabinet Decision Support
- Certified Leadership (Safe Sanctuary)
- Candidacy Process tracking
- Year-End Statistics (Tables 1,2,3)
- Church Remittance
- Online Local Church Leadership
- Online Statistics entry
- Online Event Registration
- Onsite & web-based training

For more information on any of these modules, contact lori@greatspirit.com

What'sNew

Directions Cards

In addition to all the updates in the area of addressing, there is also a new feature on the Contact Information form to be able to **PRINT** your directions!

The directions print to an Avery 3259 size notecard. And if you don't want to buy the special Avery notecards, you can simply cut the card stock equally in 4 sections after printing to accomplish the same thing! (The result will just be a slightly larger card.) So arm those NEW District Superintendents with "Directions" to all those hard-to-find churches before they head out for that first visit!

GSS Schedule

For your convenience, these are the dates GSS staff are "out of the office" and/or unavailable.

Dates Unavailable:

Al Fifhouse:
 Bill Johnson: July 22-27

How will you know if the new schema is operational for your database? You will likely have an email from your "coordinator" about when the conversion will occur. In addition, you will notice some changes on the address form. Should you have any questions or need assistance on the new items within the addressing form, contact Lori at lori@greatspirit.com.

Lori Smith: July 18
Jacob Fifhouse:

What's next? The next and last major phase of the addressing project is to bring the address certification and CASS for mass mailings on-line within MissionBase. We have run a number of address certification tests and have it about 60% ready to go. Address certification and CASS should be operational by the end of August or early September.

In conjunction with address certification is the Move Update or "National Change of Address" (NCOA) database that the United States Postal Service maintains. We plan to offer an option to certify all your addresses against the NCOA database once each quarter. However, this is an option that a customer can elect to use or not use because it will require an additional cost beyond regular address certification.

Contact information, that is, addresses, phones and email, are a very critical part of MissionBase and form the foundation of almost everything MissionBase does. I personally want to thank you for your patience as we have moved forward on this highly significant project.



LORI'S TIPS & TRICKS...

Tips for the New Addressing Schema

Not everyone has received the new addressing upgrade, but I thought you should have a few tips on hand for when you do!

Probably the most significant change is the unlimited number of "Address types" that can be used in the system.

Of course, these lists will be controlled by the MissionBase system administrators, otherwise they might get totally out of hand! The flexibility, however, will be a nice addition.

The most important item to keep in mind is to try and always have a Primary Address selected. There are many reports in the system which specifically look for a set Primary address, and if none is selected than the address may come up blank or choose an address at random, depending on the report. Neither is a good option. So control the output by always selecting a Primary Address.

Keep in mind that when a pastor is moving, they not only have a current Primary Address, but you may be entering their upcoming Primary Address. So we had to allow for the ability to have more than one Primary address in the system. However, this is where it is important to use the Start and Stop Date fields related to those addresses so that when the first Primary Address stops, the following day the next Primary Address begins.

I've also already received several calls/emails related to why there are SO MANY "Church" addresses on a Person's Contact Information form. This is not happening in every case, but where this is the case there is an easy explanation. Remember on the old Contact Information form there was a Church address tab, and there were also tabs for both a Mailing address AND a shipping address. IF a person had a Church address entered as one he/she used as a Mailing address, and also an address present on the Church shipping address tab, you would see both those separate addresses connected to the person after the upgrade.

Contact Information

Home | Home Seasonal | Office | Other | **Church**

Use as default address  Include place name on labels

Place Name:

Mailing Address | Shipping Address | Directions |

Address1:

In addition, if a Primary Church is listed on their Personal Information form, then a blue-highlighted (Read-only) address for their Primary Church is also listed. In next month's addition of the Eagle Eye, I'll touch on how to "clean-up" your address listings to make them more concise.



JACOB THE WEB GUY... UMCData.com Tips

While last month I wrote about the new technologies of Adobe Flex and AIR that we are working with to create a more engaging, user friendly experience for the future, I thought this month I would share a few insights that may help you enjoy a better experience with UMCData.com.

- **Browser Selection** – There are many browsers to choose from today when you are using the internet, so many that I probably couldn't list them all. This also means there are a variety of ways that UMCData.com can be displayed as different browsers interpret the code in a variety of methods. When we are making changes and additions to the functions of the site we test them in different ways using multiple browsers, however there is no way to test all of the scenarios. Therefore we recommend the use of Internet Explorer 7 when working on UMCData.com. It will provide you with the most consistent display and functionality throughout the site.
- **Two windows or tabs open at the same time** – What I mean by this is you open one browser window and login to UMCData.com and then open a second browser window or tab and also login to UMCData.com. Maybe you want to do this to compare two different screens of data, or for some other reason; however this is not a good idea. Due to the amount of dynamic data displayed and exchanged throughout the site, the integrity of your session is very important. Having two sessions open from the same computer, at the same time, can confuse that integrity and cause the information from one window to overwrite the other in the database. So try to stick to just one session at a time.
- **Browser Back Button** – Similarly to the previous tip, using the browser back button can cause unwanted results. Often you make specific selections to get to the function you are using. The back button can cause those settings to be unset or forgotten. It is best to use the buttons and links provided on the site to navigate through the functions.

These are three of the most common pitfalls of navigating a data driven web application like UMCData.com. I also want to mention that if you did not see my section of the June Eagle Eye, it included some information on the use of JavaScript throughout the site and ensuring you have JavaScript enabled when using UMCData.com. You can read the full article by checking out the archives of the Eagle Eye.

Would you like a printable version of this newsletter? You will find it [on our website](#), along with all the archive issues of **The Eagle Eye**!

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