



P.O. Box 1974
Springfield, IL 62705-1974
217-634-4317



Current News of Special Interest to State Retirees

RSEA Website: www.RSEA4U.org

Legislative e-mail: RSEAlg@aol.com

RSEA email: Retire@RSEA4U.org

Vol. XXXI No. 4

April 2008

Editor, Marcia Hoos

Executive Board Members

Bill Curry
President

Larry Wort
1st Vice-President

Carolyn Ackley
2nd Vice-President

Jim Clancy
Treasurer

Lorraine Gillespie
Secretary to Board

Standing Committee Members

Ross Buie
Legislative and Legal

Pat Espenschied
Membership & E-mail Coordinator

Muriel Runyen
Publicity and Education

Gladys Hajek
Finance and Budget

Appointed Board Members

Ray Ackerman
Lee Fuchs
Tom McGee
Wendall Messenger
Joyce Lanham Rodgers

Metro Chicago

Sylvia Schuller
Chairman / 1-773-275-1464

Special Committee Members

Alice Griffith
Social-Monthly Meeting

Marcia Hoos
Shirley Hagen
Dorothy Tuxhorn
Bill Curry
Holiday Luncheon

Shirley Dillon
Joanne Riedesel
Dorothy Tuxhorn
Welcome

Bill Pierce
Website Maintenance

SAME MESSAGE: NEW MESSENGER---- SIBERT TO DELIVER INSURANCE UPDATE

- Muriel Runyen, Publicity & Education

The always popular "Insurance Update" will make its 2009 appearance on the RSEA stage at the April 30 meeting in Springfield.

For many years, Dave Thomas played the starring role as an ambassador from the State Employees Retirement System, patiently explaining the intricacies of the ever-changing benefits package. Then Dave retired and became an active member of RSEA. (Ever notice how he bears an uncanny resemblance to Santa Claus?)

Marlys Vala was the most recent SERS emissary, valiantly boning up on the changes and additions to the insurance picture each year, and playing to a full house each time she appeared.

This year the cast has changed again, putting Tina Sibert in the starring role. Like Marlys, Tina is a field representative for SERS, but the two positions were redefined in recent months. Tina now works exclusively with the retirees, while Marlys works with those who are still actively employed.

We met Tina at the April meeting last year, when she accompanied Marlys to watch the presentation and get acquainted with her new audience. She may be new to working strictly with retirees, but she's hardly new to the Retirement System. She began working with SERS as a file clerk

while still in high school, and has now been with the agency for 29 years.

Most of her career was spent in the Service and Refunds Division of SERS, but she became a Field Services Representative last September. In addition to being the agency's liaison to RSEA and other organizations, Tina conducts the "Myths and Realities" seminars for retirees throughout Illinois. It's a daunting task: she has 88 of the workshops on her calendar this year!

Tina will be meeting with Central Management Services the week before our meeting in order to familiarize herself with the latest changes in the benefits package. To make it easier for us, she's preparing a Power Point presentation to highlight the changes.

The new benefits package will, of course, be printed and made available to all retirees usually within a week or two after our April meeting--but for most of us, nothing beats a chance to hear about it first-hand and get our questions answered on the spot.

Bring your notepad and pencil to the meeting and be prepared to ask questions. Tina has assured us she'll be ready for the onslaught! We've promised to fortify her with plenty of coffee and cookies in case she runs out of steam before the questions cease.





We are in the midst of the most difficult, the most frustrating, time of each legislative session, trying to get all the parties on the same page, sometimes even having to remind ourselves of our real goal, eliminating the Social Security offset from all who have already been affected by this offset, and providing an option to those whose survivors will be affected in the future. Remembering the legislative edict that the elimination of the Social Security offset must be done without increasing the cost, or the long term liability of the state, there are continuing questions on how, or who, will pay, or where else the money could come from.

Before that legislative edict, there was always hope that the legislature would see the real need, the unfairness, and simply pass a bill eliminating the Social Security offset completely. That ideal solution is no longer even a remote possibility. Now, the only solution, the only hope, is to not only find a

source of funding, but to convince a multitude of parties that it will meet the no cost to the state edict, and more, that it will not create an administrative nightmare.

In past years, there had been talk of a dedicated fund, a set aside from some new source of revenue, but in the present legislative and executive environment, that is not only unrealistic, but naive. We have witnessed the so called dedicated funds, gobbled up, drained, in the scramble to fund grand new projects or programs. So, in the end, there is only one source of reliable, untouchable, revenue, the same people who have always met their responsibilities, their share of funding the retirement system, the active and retired state employees.

That is why our proposed legislation is asking for an additional, modest, contribution from that same dedicated, reliable, source. But, as I said before, the challenge is to satisfy all the

players, not just the Senate, and the House, each of whom has their own ideas, their own reservations, but all the offices that would have to administer this legislation, our own retirement system, the Comptroller's office, the Treasurer's office, Central Management Services, the agency personnel offices, and some we probably have not even thought about.

So, we will continue to push forward, hoping that our legislation will not be too severely changed, but knowing that what usually emerges is a bill that is not entirely satisfactory to any of the parties involved. We can only hope that whatever details emerge, we will not be put in the position of having to oppose our own bill. There are two points upon which we cannot compromise, that the Social Security offset must be removed from all widows and survivors currently affected, and that any contributions, from whatever source, must be voluntary.

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

I want to thank all you that email in your comments about the REPORTER and the articles that appear in it. Here is one that I thought was very nice:

I read The Reporter each time you send it. I particularly read the Legislative Report which keeps me current on the

political arena.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work for a retiree such as myself.

-Dolores M Foster, Quincy, IL.

Thanks so much, Dolores

I also want to say to all of you that receive your newsletter

late. I am sorry. We try to get everything out in time but as I have said before the post office is the one who keeps it so long and there is nothing we can do about it. So be patient and just put the meeting on your calendar for the next month. We always let you know who is coming.



RETIRE STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
ADDRESS CHANGE FORM AND APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

email address retire@RSEA4U.org
website www.RSEA4U.org

NAME: First, Middle initial, Last
MAILING ADDRESS: Street Address or PO Box #, Apt # if applicable
City, State, Zip Code
PHONE #, E-MAIL ADDRESS

Mark ALL Boxes that apply:

- Permanent Address Change, Temporary Address Change for ___ months
Current Member Renewal (Annual Payees Only)
New Member, I am a: Retiree, Surviving Spouse, *Current Employee of
My Check for \$___ is enclosed for January through December / ___ (Annual dues are \$9.00 per year.)
I hereby authorize the State Employees Retirement System of Illinois (SERS) to deduct from my pension check the amount as certified by the RSEA of Illinois for my dues, and to remit said amount to the RSEA of Illinois.

Signature: SS# Date

Mail to: RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION P.O. BOX 1974 SPRINGFIELD, IL 62705-1974

Current employees must obtain, complete and submit a payroll deduction to your payroll department.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

FINAL FAREWELL TO OUR DEPARTED MEMBER

Corlew, C. Lawsen, Butler, PA (Past Secretary, RSEA 1996)

Our sympathy goes out to Mr. Corlew's family. Please remember that surviving spouses can continue membership by submitting a new membership application.

-Pat Espenschied, Membership Chair

RSEA - THEN AND NOW

It's been quite sometime since we have visited the beginnings of RSEA in The Reporter. This past summer, I volunteered to organize and archive the storage space which was full of files and boxes of papers.

How did the RSEA get started?

Six State of Illinois retirees met at the home of Dr. William Sloan in Springfield on November 6, 1975 to discuss the feasibility of forming an association that would work through the legislative process to provide and protect benefits for all Illinois state retirees.

and invite interested parties to a luncheon in December.

Twenty-four people attended that luncheon on December 2, 1975. Before the day was over, they passed a motion to organize, they elected temporary officers and appointed an executive committee.

1976 and 1977 were very busy with meetings to nominate and elect permanent officers; write by-laws, draft, present, and monitor three legislative bills; petition the IRS for tax exempt status; contact and recruit retirees as new members; and create, publish and mail a newsletter - The Reporter.

committee for any newly formed association knows, none of these tasks are easily accomplished without a lot of determination, time, and dedication.

Where is the RSEA 32+ years later? Today, the association, based in Springfield is still going strong. We have hired a lobbyist, Cook-Witter, to assist us and keep us informed of legislative issues.

Continued on Page 5....

NOT GLOBAL WARMING BUT GLOBAL WARNING: INTERPOL IS WATCHING!



If they didn't already know it, members attending the March meeting in Springfield learned there are two kinds of traffic cops. There are the ones we see along the highways of at busy intersections, and there are those who deal with another kind of traffic: human trafficking.

Human trafficking--coercing children or adults into forced labor or prostitution-- is just one example of the kinds of criminal activities on the police blotter of INTERPOL, the International Criminal Police Organization.

Adron Cross, retired Illinois State Policeman with a 40 year career in law enforcement, gave RSEA a rare inside look at this mysterious, little-known police agency.

Focusing mainly on the complex organization and structure of the massive agency, Cross told how INTERPOL was formed in 1923 in an effort to achieve cooperation between police of neighboring countries and eventually grew into a worldwide network.

As Cross explains it, when a crime is committed in one country and the perpetrator takes refuge in another, the need for cooperation between law enforcement agencies of the two countries is obvious. The concept, proved so effective

that INTERPOL began to flourish after the World War II, and today it is a truly global network comprised of law enforcement agencies in 186 countries.

It was surprising to most RSEA members to learn that movies and television shows to the contrary, INTERPOL has no agents of its own. Instead the agency serves as a "conduit for the cooperative exchange of information to help deter and combat international crime."

Cross explained that INTERPOL functions through a General Secretariat administered by a Secretary General who oversees the day-to-day operations. Its headquarters, located in Lyons, France, has a staff of 550, including police officers and technical and support staff, from 80 different countries. Despite the wide disparity in native tongues, business is conducted in four official languages: Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

Cross confessed that his first visit to the headquarters in 1987, was a bit intimidating. The building had been bombed by terrorists just the day before he arrived.

He told how each participating country sets up its own National Central Bureau, called simply "NCB," which serves as the contact point for international law enforcement for that country. His initial assignment division in the United States NCB

(USNCB), was to direct the formation of state law enforcement in every state and territory, a formidable task which was completed in a remarkably short period of 17 months. Today the state liaison program is the largest branch of the USNCB.

In the question period which followed his remarks, Cross admitted that he had played various roles in his INTERPOL assignments through the years-- from auto mechanic to plumber -- but he had never been required to resort to Hollywood makeup artists to disguise his appearance.

To protect the speaker from allegations with what he may have disclosed any classified information, and to further protect this timed reporter from possible libel charges, we'll confess that we largely ignored our own notes and relied on the information printed in the pamphlet, which Cross distributed at the end of the meeting. So if you're disappointed that we didn't divulge more secrets about INTERPOL, we cheerfully suggest you check the internet or our local reference library!

Suffice it to say, RSEA members hearing the complexities of this amazing global network felt considerably more secure, knowing that our lives are being protected by so many layers of law enforcement agencies, even though we are totally unaware of most of them.

- Muriel Runyen.

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT - Bill Curry

April showers bring May flowers. We all learned this in elementary school. This year, we may not need April showers after the third wettest winter on record and the wettest February on record. This information came from one of the local weather men in central Illinois.

The wet winter helped to replenish the water table in Illinois after several dry summers. The farmers welcome any and all moisture because they never know if it will rain during the summer months.

April is the month between March and May. Many times Mother Nature

does not know if it is winter or summer and spring is lost. This is a time of waiting. Presently, all state employees and retirees are waiting to see if April showers (your letters to representatives and senators) bring May flowers (passage of legislation to eliminate the Social Security offset). While we are waiting, let us have positive thoughts, knowing that blooming flowers will come just as passage of legislation will come.

If you have not contacted your representative and senator regarding HB5012 and SB1985, please think about it and then write them. As

mentioned above, this is a time of waiting. Please give your representative and senator something to ponder. Piles and piles of handwritten letters do make a difference! So lets shower them!

I hope the April showers do not keep you from attending the membership meeting. We meet the last Wednesday of the month at St. John's Lutheran Church at 1:30 p.m. It is located at 2477 West Washington Street, Springfield, Il. The date for April is the 30th. We have guest speakers, coffee, and homemade cookies. Hope to see you.

...Then and Now cont. from page 3

We have an informative website that is updated each month. Each January through October the all-volunteer board meets; a membership meeting with an informative guest speaker is presented; and The Reporter is drafted, published, posted on our website and mailed to all members. (A newsletter is also generated in November.)

In 2007, several Board members traveled to Chicago to help organize a new satellite chapter which we hope can get a good foot-hold this year. And, last, but not least - throughout the year our committee members plan and host a Christmas party to celebrate the season and another productive association year.

How many members does the RSEA have?

Membership dues can be paid annually (\$9.00) by check or through a monthly payroll deduction (\$.75 per month). As of February 5, 2008 our membership count was:

6134 Payroll deduction payees
1143 Annual payees
7277 Total membership

Members are from all over the state of Illinois and the rest of the nation. We even have some residing in other countries. In doing some sta-

tistics last August using zip code data, we found that at that time only about 27% (2050 out of 7600) of the members lived within a 50 mile radius of Springfield. At the end of January we had to drop 332 members who did not mail in their renewal dues. The Board is looking at options to get these folks back.

How does the RSEA contact potential new members?

Periodically in the past, recruitment campaigns have been undertaken. In conjunction with SERS, names and addresses of recent retirees are obtained and a recruitment package is mailed to them. The last package went out in 2006 to over 17,000 retirees, resulting in about 640 new members. This type of campaign is costly and only resulted in a 4% response, so we are looking for some new ideas this year.

How can you help your association?

If you live near Springfield, attend the monthly meeting and invite a fellow retiree who is not a member - invite several! Do lunch, make it a day. We always have an informative speaker, a short business meeting to let you know what's happening, and free coffee and cookies afterwards.

Pass your newsletter on to friends and family that have a vested interest in the state retirement system.

Encourage them to join. The membership application is usually printed each month. Membership is open to retirees, spouses, survivors of retirees, and current employees. Our efforts and legislative bills are not only for the benefit of those already retired, but will also benefit future retirees.

Let us know any other ideas you have for recruiting new members and getting the current ones involved. If we can't use your ideas now, we will store them away for future use.

Contact your state legislators often. Tell them you are a member of the RSEA and would like them to support our bills. Let them know you care. Let them know we are out here and need their help. If you don't know who your representatives are, check the RSEA website at www.RSEA4u.org. If not available in this issue, this year's house bill and senate bill numbers will soon be posted there. Read the bills and use the bill numbers when contacting your legislators. If you don't do the internet, call the number on the front of this issue, we'll get names and addresses for you and copies of the bill if you need them.

-Pat Espenschied, Membership Chair



Post Office Box 1974
Springfield, IL 62705-1974

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. Postage
Paid
Springfield, IL
Permit No. 723

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

COMING ATTRACTIONS

May 28, 2008

*"A Preview of the Lincoln
Bi-Centennial in Illinois"*

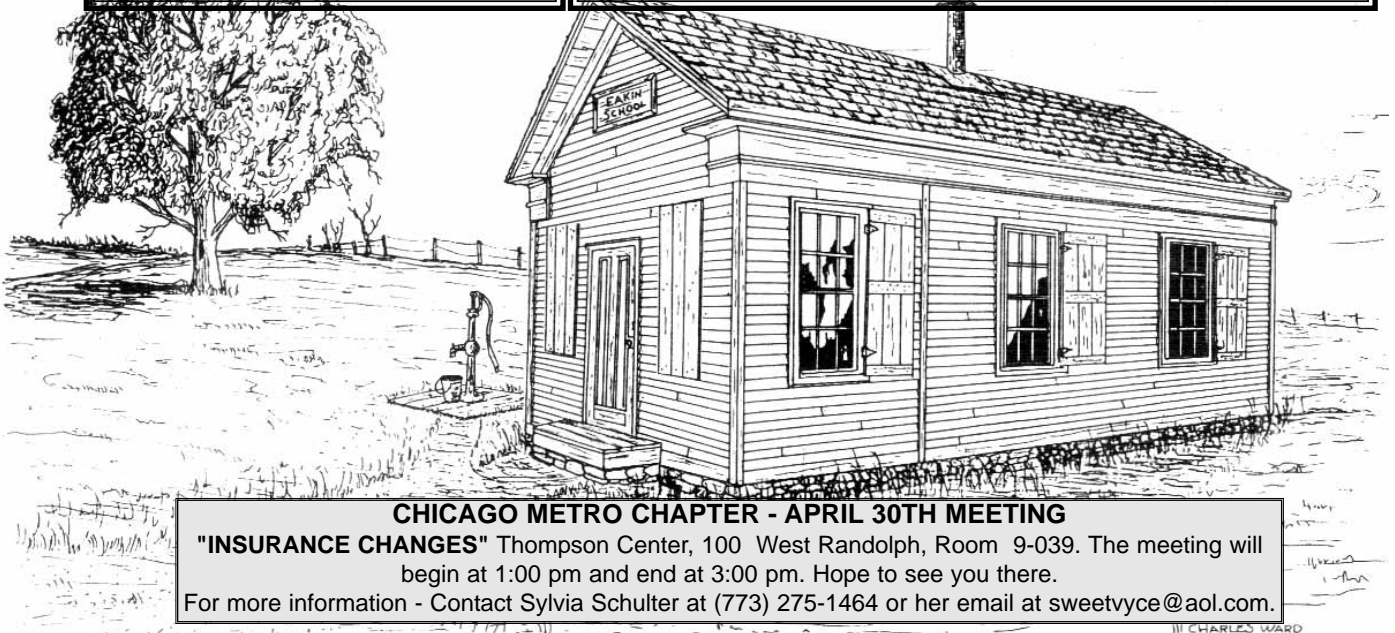
Dr. Axel Steuer
President of Illinois College

THIS MONTH

Wednesday, April 30, 2008 - 1:30 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran Church
Family Life Center
2477 W. Washington St., Springfield, Illinois

"Sibert To Deliver Insurance Update"

Tina Sibert
State Retirement System



CHICAGO METRO CHAPTER - APRIL 30TH MEETING

"INSURANCE CHANGES" Thompson Center, 100 West Randolph, Room 9-039. The meeting will begin at 1:00 pm and end at 3:00 pm. Hope to see you there.

For more information - Contact Sylvia Schulter at (773) 275-1464 or her email at sweetvyce@aol.com.

III CHARLES WARD