



Retired
State
Employees
Association
P.O. Box 1974
Springfield, IL 62705-1974
217-634-4317



Current News of Special Interest to State Retirees

RSEA Website: www.RSEA4U.org

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Editor, Marcia Hoos

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Deployment to Iraq



Our speaker this month will be State Representative Jim Watson (R-Jacksonville) who has represented the 97th District in the General Assembly since December of 2001. Representative Watson's diverse background includes teaching at both the High School and College level and 10 years of business experience. Jim is a veteran of the first Gulf War and also Operation Iraqi Freedom. He currently serves as a Staff Sergeant with the U.S. Marine Corp. Reserves 3rd Civil Affairs Group. He recently returned from a deployment to Iraq as a member of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force's Governance Cell.

While in Iraq, Watson served as a Governance Chief and the Chief Liaison to the Anbar Provincial Council, assisting the Iraqi people during their transition to a representative form of government. To achieve this objective, Watson's unit focused on tribal engagement working with the existing tribes in the region to form functioning governments incorporating local leaders.

His duties included working with city councils and the provincial leadership council, analyzing and revising provincial laws, synchronizing and coordinating local and provincial governments, and establishing tribal relations. Watson believes that governance is the key to victory, and states that the Iraqis are working hard to implement their own form of representative government.

In the General Assembly, Representative Watson has been a strong advocate for veteran's rights, serving as the Republican Spokesman for the Veteran's Affairs Committee. In addition to veteran's issues, Jim continues to focus on education issues, fiscal responsibility, and growing Illinois' job market. His other committee assignments have included Financial Institutions, Elementary and Secondary Education, Public Utilities, and State Government Administration.

THIS MONTH

Wednesday, September 30, 2009
1:30 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church
Family Life Center
2477 W. Washington St.
Springfield, Illinois

"Deployment to Iraq"

Speaker: Jim Watson
State Representative

COMING ATTRACTIONS

October 28, 2009, 10:30 a.m.
Annual Legislative Update

PLEASE NOTICE: Our October 28th meeting is going to be a MORNING MEETING, 10:30 AM. Senator Larry Bomke is going to talk to us. He is in VETO SESSION that afternoon and so the change. Plan NOW to attend.

November - No Meeting

December 4, 2009
Holiday Party
Northfield Inn, Springfield, IL
11:00 - 3:00





Lately, the biggest source of calls, and e-mails, are the complaints about the delay in payments to health care providers. This situation has become so serious that more and more doctors, and clinics, are requiring that the patient pay at the time the service is provided. As a service to their patients, most health care providers will file a claim for the patient, but it is the patient that will have to wait for payment from the insurance company. For those with frequent visits to a health care provider, this can become a task worse than balancing a checkbook, keeping track of payments to the doctor, matching that with the insurance claim, and finally, hopefully, the payment from the insurance company, or reimbursement from the doctor.

A spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family

Services was quoted as saying that medical bills for state workers, and retirees, could take as long as 18 months to be paid. And, because the state budget for the fiscal year that began on July 1 underfunds health coverage by about \$600 million, delays in paying medical and dental bills through Cigna could increase to 400 days. Is it any wonder that health care providers are now demanding up front payment?

The problem, of course, is the current state budget crunch, and the non payment to the insurance companies, primarily, Cigna, by the state. The state has a massive budget deficit for the current fiscal year, and the prospect for an even larger deficit for the next fiscal year. Current attempts to cut costs have fallen too heavily on essential state employees, and on

state retirees, witness the late payment of insurance claims, and the recent increase in dental insurance premiums. Certainly, no one likes to see increases in taxes, or fees, but the cold, hard, fact is, the state must find ways to generate more revenue.

We also still get occasional calls from retirees who did not, for one reason or another, take advantage of the opportunity within the sign-up period, to ensure their survivors would not be subject to the Social Security offset. Some seemed quite legitimate, rehabilitation in a nursing home after some form of surgery, or an extended out of town emergency, etc. For those people who feel that their situation might, or should, warrant an appeal, they should call the State Employees' Retirement System at (217) 785-7444, for the details of the appeal procedure.

Article from Senator Bomke

A quotation from me, that was carried in the State Journal-Register on August 29, did not express the true level of sympathy that I have for retirees who are facing new charges for dental insurance.

Unfortunately, space and time limitations often mean that news reporters must pare quotes and interviews down to the essentials and that can leave little opportunity for detailed explanations or context.

One of the points that did not get covered was my belief that current retirees should not have new fees imposed on them. As was pointed out by former state employees quoted in the story, the cost of health care insurance is an important factor that people take into account when they make the decision to retire.

Certainly, as I told the newspaper, the Governor does have a tough decision to make and I am hesitant to be too critical as he tries to deal with the crisis at hand.

This current debate may be over a modest increase, but it exposes a serious risk. Retirees are promised that their costs will not increase, but are not always told of the loopholes that exist such as higher co-payments, changes in approved drugs and new premiums.

It is unfair to unilaterally and retroactively change the terms after an individual has retired, which is what Governor Quinn's administration is doing. It is one thing to raise rates for those contemplating retirement, it is quite another to raise costs for those who have already retired.

- **State Senator Larry K. Bomke, 50th District**

HOLIDAY PARTY

The luncheon will be on Friday, December 4, 2009. A reservation form appears in this issue. As in the past the Party will be held at The Northfield Inn and Conference Center. The Northfield Inn is totally handicap accessible, has ample free parking and has motel accommodations .

Amazingly, we have kept the ticket price to \$15.00. The price includes a full meal with a choice of entrees: (1) Grilled Chicken Breast with Basil Cream Sauce or (2) Pork Medallions with Peach Glaze. Both entrees come with: Tossed Salad and choice of dressings, Green Beans Almondine, Baked Potato - served with butter and sour cream, and assorted Fruit Pies - Apple - Cherry - Peach.

Tickets will be sold at the September and October meetings. Watch for more party details in the next issue.

- **MARCIA**

CHICAGO METRO CHAPTER

Hello Chicago Metro RSEA members! On July 29, Jackie Humphreys, Herbert Phillips and I, traveled to Springfield to attend their meeting. We were met at the train station by Joyce Rodgers who whisked us off to the Board Meeting that was just getting underway. After which, Pres. Bill Curry treated us to a delicious lunch at Bernie & Betty's, a local restaurant. Then we were off to the general meeting where everyone was entertained by two gifted piano players, Ken Bradbury and David Zink, who performed a number of old familiar tunes from way back when. And they both played the same piano at the same time! All in all we had a very enjoyable trip. Meanwhile back at the ranch, our next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 16. Our guest speaker will be a representative from the Social Security Administration. The date for our Oct meeting is set for the 28th and Susan Shapiro from Life Line Screening will be our guest speaker. Mark your calendars now so you won't miss these two informative meetings. Until then take care, stay safe and see you at our next meeting!

- Sylvia Schluter, Chairperson



RETIRED STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION ADDRESS CHANGE FORM AND APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

NAME _____
 First Middle initial Last

MAILING ADDRESS _____
 Street Address or PO Box # Apt # if applicable

_____ City State Zip Code

PHONE # () _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

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

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 Spouse/Survivor *Current Employee of _____ (Agency)
- My Check for \$ _____ is enclosed for January through December, _____ year(s). (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. I also authorize SERS to provide change of address information to RSEA, if requested. (Currently, the deduction is 75 cents per month.)

Signature: _____ SS# _____ Date _____

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

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to our new members - thanks for joining us. We hope you'll enjoy your membership and our newsletter for many years to come. Our membership drive for 2009 has apparently come to a halt as mail receipts for August were very light. So far this year, we have picked up a little over 800 new members. Unfortunately, we have also reported about 160 deaths and 440 members did not renew their membership at the end of 2008. This leaves us with a current membership of about 8600. At this time, all of us are retirees or surviving spouses.

Membership is not limited to retirees/survivors; current Illinois state employees are welcome (wanted). The Board is always open to any ideas on how to get current employees interested in joining. Each of you can help by passing your copy of The Reporter (and membership application) on to your 'working' acquaintances (and, of course, fellow retirees) and encouraging them to join us.

This is your newsletter and you are always invited to share your ideas regarding future articles and what issues are important to you. Write them down and mail them, call me, or email us! The RSEA does not maintain an office space, so the phone number shown on the front page is actually my home phone. But, feel free to call me with your suggestions. With 8600 members, we should be a force to reckon with - get involved!

Address Changes -- One of the most time consuming, expensive problems I encounter as your Membership Committee Chairperson is dealing with address changes. If you move, unless you advise us ahead of time so we can change our records, The Reporter is returned as undeliverable and we pay 44 cents to get it back. So far this year, the USPS has returned over 900 Reporters costing you over \$400 of your dues' money. Then, sometimes we get a new address, sometimes we don't. Please report your address changes (permanent or temporary) as soon as possible. And, be aware, changes reported to the State Retirement System are not passed on to us.

Phone Calls -- RSEA does not have any of your personal pension or insurance information. When you have questions regarding either one, you must call the SRS (State Retirement System). I will be more than glad to discuss general issues with you if you call the RSEA number, but if you need details, please use the number shown below to call their Springfield office. Be sure to have your social security number handy when calling them!

STATE EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM Phone: (217) 785-7444

- Pat Espenschied
 Membership Chair

FINAL FAREWELL TO OUR DEPARTED MEMBERS

The Board members would like to extend our sympathy to the families and friends of the following members. If you are a surviving spouse of one of these members, please remember that as such you yourself are eligible for membership. There is a membership application in this publication that you may use to join. We would be happy to have you continue showing support of our organization.

James D. Gamblin, Cambria
 Helen Holmes, Lawrenceville
 Antoinette James, Chicago
 Rosa Jenkins, E.St.Louis

Verna Kelly, Chicago
 Sharon McArthur, Springfield
 Lewis McGinnis, Posen
 Brian Rader, Orland Park

John Stuper, Springfield
 Dolores Wiemers, Plainfield
 Tom Willman, Pentwater MI
 August Swick, Springfield

- Pat Espenschied, Membership Chair

ILLINOIS, JAPAN AND MEXICO



Carol Zerkle, an actively involved member of the community, presented information on the Sister Cities Association of Springfield, Illinois at our September 26th meeting.

President Eisenhower thought if you were friends with people outside this country we would be less likely to go to war. Today, 60 cities in Illinois have sister cities all over the world.

During her power point presentation, Ms. Zerkle told of the different activities that developed with the organization. The activities of the organization promote "Citizen Diplomacy," cultural and educational exchanges, and improved understanding among citizens in all countries.

The Sister Cities Association has opportunities for you to become involved in this organization. Travel and hosting visitors is among them. Contact the organization at P.O. Box 1474, Springfield, IL 62705.

Springfield is a sister city to Ashikaga, Japan and San Pedro de las Colonias, Mexico. Springfield has friendly city agreement with a city in Ireland and a twin city agreement with a city in the Ukraine. Exploration is under way to make a city in Italy a sister city.

The sister city organization was established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on 8/13/56.

- Carolyn Ackley

WE'VE GOT MAIL!

Dear Newsletter Editor:

I am a retired state employee and member of RSEA. I favor a public option in the proposed health care reform legislation, and am concerned that so many lies are being spread to scare away support. Some insurance companies, such as United Health Care, are encouraging (maybe I should say pressuring), their employees to show up at town hall meetings to oppose a public option. Anyone who has watched C-SPAN (instead of biased cable and talk shows) has witnessed congressional testimony about how insurance companies pressure their employees to deny claims. After all, the more claims denied, the more money the insurance company makes. In fact, bonuses are given to those who deny the most claims and people have died because of it.

I am on Medicare, a national government run public plan, and it is the BEST health care coverage I have ever had. I get quick, pleasant responses to my questions, payment is immediate to providers, and I can choose any doctor, hospital, or medical facility I want. The private insurance I've had in various jobs (both as a private sector employee and as a state employee) required me to go "in network" or pay a much higher fee, and, get permission from a clerk who decided what procedure I could have (thus rationing my care and coming between me and my doctor about what is best). Furthermore, the private insurance companies take months and months to pay. In fact, Cigna, my current supplemental insurer, has not yet paid for a procedure I had in June 2008 and, after 4 requests, still has not sent me an EOB! Some of my friends have been beset by bill collectors due to Cigna's nonpayment.

So I urge everyone to be wary of claims that a national health plan is scary. What's really scary is NOT having one.

Judith Kohler
Macomb, Illinois

To Whom this may apply:

I have just received my letter of charges that will be costing retirees the monthly fees that active employees pay for dental care. WE AS A GROUP HAVE TO RAISE CAIN ABOUT THIS. It won't stop with only one benefit, if it's allowed to continue.

WE MUST PROTEST THIS ACTION, and safeguard any other "benefit" that was promised us because we worked for less than the corporate, and this was part of our retirement pay.

I am livid - it will not stop here? They will take more and more.

Hopefully, everyone will contact their representatives.

Dave Roberts



FROM THE PREZ...

"For all those whose cares have been our concern, the work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die."

--Senator Edward M. Kennedy

By now everyone should know of the passing of Senator Edward Kennedy. The Kennedy name has been in the news since 1959 when John Kennedy began his campaign for the presidency followed by Robert's campaign for the presidency. And who can forget

John and Robert's assassinations. Edward's campaign for the nomination falling short. And then Edward's long tenure in the U.S. Senate. I cannot begin to list all the accomplishments of the Kennedy's in this article.

I believe everyone should stop and reflect for a minute. What will life be like now without any Kennedys? Will a new Kennedy step forward? Better yet, think about our life today, if

President John Kennedy had not have been assassinated.

".....the dream shall never die."

Our next membership meeting is Wednesday September 30, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. It is held at St. John's Lutheran Church, 2477 West Washington, Springfield, Il. Coffee, cookies, and conversation follows the meeting.

--G. William Curry, President, RSEA

EDITORIAL--

The dental policy change thrust upon us without advance notification and input has caused restlessness throughout our membership. We have received e-mails (see e-mails in Reporter), telephone calls, and letters complaining about the dental policy change. The RSEA Executive Board is opposed to this change. (See letter to CMS in Reporter).

There was no legislative bill introduced, so we could not lobby against it with our lobbyist, Cook-Witter. This change was not negotiated and the contract was not reopened.

I quote from The State Journal Register August 29, 2009..." Council 31 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which represents or used to represent the largest chunk of retirees affected by the change, believes new premiums must be bargained. AFSCME has filed a grievance against the premiums, but it's unclear whether that will prevent the premiums from taking effect."

At this point, we strongly suggest you contact your senator and representative expressing your objection to the dental policy change. Please make your letter a handwritten one. E-mails sometimes come into computers as junk mail, or are deleted before being read. Form letters are routinely tossed into the trash. The power of the pen has not been diminished! A stack of handwritten letters make a greater impression!

A letter of objection to CMS couldn't hurt. Contact James Sledge, Director Group Insurance Division, Bureau of Benefits 201 East Madison, Suite 3A, P. O. Box 19208, Springfield, Il, 62794-9208.

--G. William Curry President, RSEA

LETTER TO CMS

To: James P. Sledge, Director
Department of Central Management Services
Group Insurance Division, Bureau of Benefits

From: George W. Curry, President
Retired State Employees Association

Topic: Dental Policy Change

The Retired State Employees Association is disappointed with your recent notification to retirees regarding a dental policy change. We received no advance notification and did not have an opportunity for input. What was the basis for this decision and who made it?

Our membership totals 8,634. We have received numerous e-mails and letters from our members expressing their dissatisfaction with this decision. We would like to see this decision reversed.

We look forward to your response.

Very truly yours,
George W. Curry
President, Retired State Employees Association

cc: Senator Larry Bomke, Senator Deanna Demuzio, Representative Rich Brauer, Representative Raymond Poe, Representative Jim Watson

ELECTION OF NEW RSEA OFFICERS FOR 2010

Elections of New Officers will be held at the October meeting.

RSEA Nominating Report for 2010

For President Bill Curry

For First Vice President Carolyn Ackley

For Second Vice President Arno Grey

For Treasurer James Clancy

For Secretary to the Board Carol Matheson

Any member who is interested in running for one of these offices should contact Larry Wort at 217/498-9120, or in care of RSEA, P.O. Box 1974, Springfield, Illinois 62705-1974.

THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE

Don Grammer, our Publicity & Education person, has given up his position. His church obligations must come first.

We wish him well and thank him for doing a fine job these last six months.

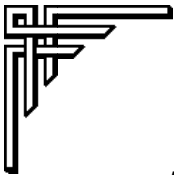


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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*TICKET ORDER - RSEA ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS PARTY
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2009 - 11:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.*

My/ our choice of entree is:

Enclosed is my check for _____ tickets

_____ Grilled Chicken Breast

@\$15.00 each

_____ Pork Medallions

Total enclosed \$ _____

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Address _____



Make checks payable to RSEA. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope and mail to:

Marcia Hoos - 1241 Urban Ave. Springfield, IL 62704 217/546-1404

DEADLINE FOR TICKET ORDERS: NOVEMBER 27

