



STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

SEA View

4510 Regent Street
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From the President

Bargaining resumed on June 20th for the 2003-2005 contract. The previous session was way back on February 27th of 2004. A lot of time has passed since we last met, giving OSER (Office of State Employment Relations) more than enough time to prepare for this session. It was OSER's turn to propose a new compensation plan to us. There was very slight optimism on our bargaining team that they may now be interested in settling the 2003-2005 contract so we can move onto the 2005-2007 contract. The bargaining session was originally set to start at 9:00, then changed to 11:00, but did not actually get under way until 11:17. OSER went over the so-called new compensation plan. The compensation plan did not have any new money in it, but did show what we already know, that they are offering us a negative contract. The plan showed what they called a liability for our members paying back health care premiums. At the end of the two-year contract, over \$200,000 is still owed back to the State from our members. This offer was insulting and the bargaining team rejected this offer in the afternoon. Health care is a bargainable issue, there has not been any agreements made on health care premiums so there cannot be any so-called liabilities. We agreed to schedule additional bargaining dates to bargain language items. The next tentative bargaining date is August 26th.

Prior to this session, OSER gave us less than 24 hours to decide if we wanted our members to receive length of service checks on June 30th or hold the checks and keep it on the table as a bargainable item. Given the history of bargaining with OSER and the lack of good faith bargaining, the decision was simple, send us our checks.

On June 17th the 100th anniversary of the State's Civil Service System celebration was held. The State commemorated the Centennial by recognizing the accomplishments and contributions of current employees. Jim Thiel, the 30 year veteran DOT attorney who was demoted because he released the cost analysis report under the open records request, actually received the loudest and longest applause, even more than our Governor.

Please get involved in the Association – you can make the difference.

Respectfully,

Mark Klipstein
SEA President



Legislative Update

By Dave Bohnsack, Second Vice President

SEA was back at the bargaining table again, but to our disappointment the State has not made any effort to bargain. Members should contact their legislator to inform them of the lack of progress and the disappointment of the States bargaining efforts. As a taxpayer, I am disappointed that so much money is being wasted having meetings to go nowhere. The State comes to the table unprepared to discuss or counter any of our last proposals. They tell us we have a liability to repay. This is the same offer they have made the first nine times we met, if they are not going to come to discuss or counter our proposals, why waste taxpayer's money and our time making an offer that they wouldn't even accept?

A recent issue to surface in the DOT has been a requirement that employees that wish to request travel reimbursement must obtain a special VISA Travel Card. This requires the employee to submit his/her social security number and agree to a credit history search to obtain this credit card that will be in the employee's name and the employee is responsible for making the payment. Employees have been told that they will be subject to a reprimand if they do not sign up for this card. There is no reason an employee should risk damaging his/her credit or worse opening another avenue for identity theft so that state can track employee travel expenses. This is a clear violation of the SEA contract. A union grievance has been filed.

As of this writing, the budget bill has yet to be passed by the Senate. The GOP bill passed the Assembly on June 21st. The GOP budget spends \$88 million more than the Governor's proposal - \$787 million beyond the state projected growth. There are a lot of negotiations taking place behind closed doors amongst the Senate Republicans. There are rumors of a 5% across the board cut in all State agencies, the gas tax indexing and vehicle registration fee increase is eliminated, and the creation of a taxpayer's protection fund. This is a rainy day fund that will hold excess revenue collections in an account to be used for emergencies, property tax relief, or most likely, pork.

New bills of interest:

AB 505 – This bill eliminates the minimum mark up of gasoline. The mark up is currently set at 3% of the cost to the wholesaler.

AB 513 – This bill provides a paid holiday for election day in November of even numbered years

AB 525 – This bill prohibits former legislators from lobbying for 12 months from the date the individual ceased to hold office.

A couple of good sites for news and political information are www.wispolitics.com and www.thewheelerreport.com. If you have questions or comments, I can be reached at dbbohnsack.sea@charter.net.

Puzzling Puzzler

This month's puzzle was submitted by Larry Legro, "Father of the SEA Puzzling Puzzler":

A SEA member goes into the hardware store (their favorite place to be). The SEA member asks the clerk the price of an item, and the clerk says, "The price of one is twelve cents, the price of thirty is twenty four cents and the price of one hundred forty four is thirty six cents."

What does the SEA member wish to buy?

Submit your answer to carperfarm@mhtc.net. The answer and name of the person who came up with the correct answer first will be published in next month's SEA View.

Last Month's Puzzling Puzzler

Q: Why is it better for manhole covers to be round rather than square?

A: You can turn a square manhole cover sideways and drop it down the diagonal of the manhole. You cannot drop a round manhole cover down the manhole. Therefore, round manhole covers are safer and more practical than square ones.

Congratulations to **Rod Hamilton** who came up with the correct answer first!



Who is SEA?

SEA is **Sharon (Shari) Bremser**, active SEA member since 1985. She is First Vice President-State Grievance Representative and Demands Formulation Chair for the 2003-2005 and 2005-2007 bargaining team. Shari is the WisDOT Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) engineer for the Department of Transportation (DOT) in Central Office in Madison. Shari's recent projects at work include the statewide fiber optics network and the ITS statewide software contract.

Shari and her husband, Bob, live on the southwest side of Madison. They enjoy working on improving their home and getting together with family and friends. They love to attend sporting events (Go Packers!) and concerts.

SEA: What has been your biggest challenge since taking on the role of First Vice President at the SEA annual meeting last September?

SB: I would say the biggest challenge has been to get a fair deal for the 2003-05 contract. Protecting our members from layoff with the governor's promise of cutting 10,000 state employees, a fair mileage reimbursement rate equal to the federal rate, new fleet policies, cell phone policy, and travel policy are all at the top of the list for grievances.

SEA: You have held a large number of leadership positions in SEA, including: Demands Formulation Chair for the 2003-2005 bargaining team; Central Office/PSC President; Demands Formulation Chair for the 1993-1995 bargaining team; Member of the 1991-1993 bargaining team; SEA First Vice President 1990-1992; Transportation District 1 President 1988-1990; and SEA web administrator. What would your advice be to members who would like to be more involved?

SB: Just ask your local president or any executive member! As we have been saying SEA is as strong as its members. Offer to call your legislator, offer to come to a board meeting, offer to write an article for the newsletter, come to the annual meeting, help your local board member pass out information. My biggest disappointment is when I hear someone say SEA has done nothing for me. SEA is not just us, it is YOU. In other words you are saying YOU have done nothing for yourself.

SEA: What are your goals for your upcoming term as SEA First Vice President?

SB: My first goal is to reduce the number of grievances we have and get them settled. Some have been hanging around for years and I hope to work with OSER and our attorney to get things moving. My

second goal is to ensure that our members are treated in accordance to our contract and that they get fair treatment from their management.

SEA: How has the role of First VP changed since you held the position in the early 1990s?

SB: Hands down it is the better technology and communication. With the days of computers, email, websites, etc. information moves faster than ever. With that said I think the challenge is that we all expect results faster or be replied to faster. I would say the biggest change is how much more is expected of the SEA officers on a daily basis.

SEA: What are your expectations for the upcoming rounds of bargaining talks?

SB: My expectation is that SEA is treated like the professionals they are and are recognized for the hard work they perform for the public. I would expect a pay raise and not a pay cut!!! I would also like to see the gap of what the state pays private sector engineers compared to state engineers be reduced.

SEA: What accomplishment are you most proud of through your work as an engineer at DOT?

SB: Providing leadership to several successful process improvement teams and technology implementation teams.

SEA: What is your most rewarding personal achievement?

SB: Marrying my husband and owning my own home.

SEA: Any final thoughts?

SB: Be happy with what you do!



June 18, 2005 Board Meeting Summary
Meeting held at Best Western East Towne Suites, Madison
By John Bolka, Secretary

Attendance:

Executive Board: Mark Klipstein - President, Sharon Bremser – 1st Vice President, David Bohnsack – 2nd Vice President, John Bolka – Secretary, Nick Martin - Treasurer

Board Members:

Julie Millard, Wisconsin Rapids President
Karl Pierce, Southeast President
Tom Muga, DNR President
Larry Jones, CO President
Robert Pavlik, Green Bay President
Diane Slick, Superior

Mohammad Hayek, Eau Claire President
Leroy Stublaski, State Agencies President
Reiny Yahnke, La Crosse President
Mike Wendt, Rhinelander
Jamie Grainger, Madison

Specialists:

Mel Sensenbrenner, Health and Retirement
Cara Carper, Communication Specialist
Willie Haus, Attorney
Sandy Henke, SEA Office

Committee Leader:

George Mickelson, Compensation Committee

Meeting Begins:

Mark Klipstein called meeting to order at 8:32 am. Introductions were made. Additions were made to the agenda; Audit Committee (Treasurer's Report); Vote on Newsletter Name (Communication Report).

Approvals:

The May 21, 2005 Board Meeting minutes were reviewed. There was a motion by Dave Bohnsack to approve. John Lund seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

The Correspondence Report was reviewed. Julie Millard asked about items #3 and #12, as she had not seen copies of the correspondence. Mark said Sandy had copies if Julie would like to review them. Mark Klipstein accepted the Correspondence Report.

Bargaining:**H.I.C.:**

Atty Haus said Marty Beil indicated that WSEU was on the verge of reaching a settlement and details were discussed. Mark Klipstein received an inquiry asking if SEA was interested in foregoing the upcoming Length of Service payment as a down payment on retroactive health insurance payments. After discussion with Atty Haus, SEA rejected this proposal. PERSA was only other bargaining unit electing to receive LOS as scheduled. (Reportedly, WSEU members will receive LOS payments if the contract proposal is rejected by the membership). SEA is scheduled to meet for bargaining with OSER on 6/20, and PERSA will meet with OSER on 6/30.

Incredibly, OSER has agreed to mediation with the TA's. SEIU exchanged proposals with OSER to start '05 – 07 bargaining.

OSER was communicating (bargaining) by email with the Attorneys but the Attorneys told them to stop sending emails and sit down and bargain.

It was reported that Mark Marotta (DOA), met with Karen Timberlake (OSER) and told her to take a more conciliatory position toward bargaining and get it done. Atty Haus noted the state is not cooperating nor following its own guidelines with regard to layoffs.

Compensation Committee: *By George Mickelson*

The 2005 Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce (WMC) Annual Economic Outlook was released in early June. Of the member firms that participated in the survey, for 2005:

- 14.3% plan for raises between 0 and 2.0%.
- 14.3% plan for raises between 2.1 and 2.9%.
- 48.6% plan for raises between 3.0 and 3.5%.
- 11.4% plan for raises between 3.6 and 4.0%.
- 11.4% plan for raises over 4.1%.

Based on this, the median private sector across the board pay increase this year is in the range of 3.0 to 3.5 percent. The WMC surveys since June 2002 have all had a median pay increase within the range of 3.0 to 3.5 percent

2003-2005 Bargaining:

The SEA Bargaining Team will meet with OSER on Monday 6/20. OSER has informed SEA they will not be able to meet until after 11:00 AM. (The last bargaining session was held on February 27, 2004).

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**June 18, 2005 Board Meeting Summary (continued)****Civil Service Celebration:**

Mark Klipstein and Atty Haus were among the union notorieties that attended the celebration marking the 100th Anniversary of Wisconsin's Civil Service System. Prior to the celebration the state had asked all bargaining units to nominate individuals worthy of recognition. All bargaining units nominated the same single individual; Jim Theil (Former Chief Counsel of OGC), who many feel, was quickly demoted late last year for properly responding to an open records request. This information (the nomination) was also given to the media prior to the state. Karen Timberlake, OSER, responded that it felt the unions were taking the low road. The state then moved to orchestrate the celebration, moving to a smaller room, assigning seats to some BU's (including SEA) in the far reaches of the upper balcony, and adding approximately 150 to the list of honorees. There was considerable applause by those present when Jim Theil's name was read. Atty Haus had an opportunity to speak with Karen Timberlake, regarding bargaining, after the ceremony.

Communication Report: *By Cara Carper*

Cara handed out a list of tasks she has accomplished in May/June for review and discussion. Cara distributed the list of entries for naming the SEA Newsletter and asked everyone to vote and turn in ballot before the lunch break. Cara did some initial investigation for a waterslide article but found it was too messy to handle. After some discussion it was decided SEA will contact some media outlets regarding the situation. Cara will draft and make available a letter members can send to member of the Joint Finance Committee thanking them for keeping the Compensation Reserve intact. Cara did a lot of work on the various articles, press releases, and editorials (Capital Times) regarding State Employee Recognition Day. Sharon Bremser and Bob Spoerl are working with Sandy Henke to see if Cara can assemble the July Newsletter. Newsletter articles can be sent directly to Cara. (Tim Radtke, Wisconsin Rapids, won the \$50 stipend and 1 article of SEA Clothing for his winning submission of "The SEA View" as the new name for the monthly newsletter).

Grievance Report: *By Sharon Bremser*

Note: P-xxx indicates personal grievance

A-xxx indicates an Association grievance

A-307 (filed 5/3/99) —Denied time to take PE exam – Arbitration pending with Bellman. (Date selection)
A-351 (filed 7/19/01) – DOT D4 – RLS exam reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
A-352 (filed 6/25/01) – DOT D3 – Initial PE licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
A-361 (filed 10/30/01) and A-362 (filed 10/31/01) – DOT D1 and D2 – Assignment of scheduled overtime. Arbitration pending (Date selection).

A-369 (filed 1/2/02) – DNR Water – Add-on as part of year-end leave cash out option. Arbitration pending.
A-373 (filed 5/21/02) – DOT D3 – Rescind disciplinary action. Arbitration Pending (7/19/05).
A-378 (filed 8/14/02) – DOT 1 - Not being paid appropriate mileage rate. Filed at Step 4.
A-389 (filed 5/30/03) – DOT D3 – PE Licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
A-394 (filed 8/1/03) – DOT D1 – Discipline Reassignment. Filed at Step 4.
A-395 (filed 5/3/03) – DNR NER – PE Exam Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
A-402 (filed 3/25/04) – DOT-DTID – Discipline without just cause. Filed at Step 4.
A-405 (filed 4/5/04) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
A-409 (filed 7/14/04) – DOCOM D5 – Unhealthy and Un-Safe Workplace. Step 3 Decision on hold.
A-410 (filed 6/29/04) – DNR Water – Granting of Restoration Rights. Filed at Step 4.
A-412 (filed 7/7/04) – DOT D2 – Stalking Incident. Filed at Step 4.
A-414 (filed 11/9/04) – DOT D2 – Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
A-415 (filed 11/17/04) – DOT D2 – Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
A-416 (filed 7/16/04) – DOCOM D5 – Unhealthy and safe workplace. Filed at Step 1.
A-419 (filed 12/23/04) – DNR Water – Add-on is part of year end cash out option. Moved to Step 4. (Same as A-369)
A-420 (filed 1/27/05) – DOT – Turndown Mileage Rate. Filed at Step 4.
A-421 (filed 2/09/05) – DOT D2– Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Moved to Step 4.
A-422 (filed 2/09/05) – DOT D2– Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
A-423 – DOT D2– Co-Worker Inefficiency. Denied at Step 3. Motion to move to Step 4 failed.
A-424 (filed 3/18/05) – DOT D2– Demotion without cause. Moved to Step 4.
A-425 (filed 4/05) – DOT D2– (Unknown details). Filed at Step 3. (Meeting 5/4/05).
P-426 (filed 5-16-05) – DOT D2 – Suspension w/o Just Cause. Filed at Step 3.

A grievance was filed last week in DOT D5 regarding employees denied expense reimbursement for PE Exam.

A-419 was denied at Step 3. There was a motion by Sharon Bremser to move the grievance to Step 4. Dave Bohnsack seconded the motion. After brief discussion the motion carried without opposition.

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June 18, 2005 Board Meeting Summary (continued)

A-409/A-416: The state would like to eliminate A-416 and keep A-409. State is trying to relocate employees but having difficulty finding space. Management is working on issue. Grievant will withdraw A-416. Management has made modifications to air handling system, eliminated some hazardous materials, performing regular testing and is actively working on problem. Management has agreed to relocate. Hold A-409 at Step 3.

A-373 has a scheduled arbitration date of 7/19/05.

A-423 was denied at Step 3. There was a motion by Sharon Bremser to move to Step 4. Mohamad Hayek seconded but later withdrew his second. Nick Martin seconded. Atty Haus led the discussion on this grievance. Motion failed with 2 ayes, 9 nays, and 3 abstained.

Sharon gave Atty Haus and Tom Mungan info on \$0.30 add-ons.

It was noted a DNR SE Member was recently fired and may likely file a grievance. Details were discussed. An employee was also fired in D5 but no grievance has been filed as yet.

Karl Pierce asked if grievance training could be held soon. Atty Haus suggested it be held the same weekend as the Annual Meeting. This was discussed but decided there would not be an appropriate amount of time available that weekend for the training. Training will be scheduled for a later date.

Health and Retirement Report: By Mel Sensenbrenner SEA provided written support, (a letter from Mark Klipstein), for SWIB Budget amendments at Legislative Finance Committee Meeting on 5/23/05. This helped obtain a 16-0 vote in approving the SWIB Budget. SWIB performance for end of April and May:

	April	May
Fixed	-1.7%	0.4%
Variable	-3.8%	-0.8%

A new internal Auditor was hired (Brandon Duck, TX), and some significant errors were found and need to be corrected. Mel has a copy of the report. The ETF Final Financial Report for 2003 was just released.

Two State legislators made a proposal regarding a statewide health insurance plan that will likely generate some discussion at the GIB Meeting on 6/21. The retirement Board is scheduled to meet on 6/23. The June SWIB meeting was cancelled due to a lack of a quorum; no meeting is scheduled for July.

Stay involved a make sure to read Mel's report in this newsletter for more detailed info on this and other Health and Retirement Issues!

Legislative Report: By David Bohnsack ETF is strongly opposed to the proposed health savings accounts as proposed under AB 341 and SB 131. Dave has a copy of the legislative briefing on their version of the Budget Bill.

There is a new Bi-Partisan proposal for a state sponsored Health Insurance program that would be funded by a 12% payroll tax.

Section Reports: Madison — D1 & D5 Management met in the "Great Southwest Get Together".

Southeast — A DNR Member was recently fired. Members are requesting grievance training. A New contract demand was forwarded to Sharon. The Section Annual Meeting will be held on September 22. Would like Atty Haus to attend, and along with Mark Klipstein, answer questions from membership. Local Section Officers are questioning why Official Meeting Minutes cannot be published or posted. (Some information contained in official minutes can be of a sensitive nature and Board agreed to continue policy of not sending out for general distribution or posting on website. See Section Presidents for details on specific items).

Green Bay — No Report.

Wisconsin Rapids — North Central Region Director, Dan Grasser and Operations Manager, Jerry Mentzel, met with labor organization representatives. Introductions, discussion about labor and management interaction, and willingness to work cooperatively were shared. There will be no regularly scheduled labor/management meetings. Issues will be presented and addressed as they arise. Dan & Jerry suggested each office's labor organization representative get together to discuss communication procedures to manage issues from two offices within one region. Members continue to have concerns about uncertainty, and undefined operating procedures for the region.

La Crosse — D5 & D1 Management met in the "Great Southwest Get Together".

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June 18, 2005 Board Meeting Summary (continued)

Eau Claire — An ES-Adv position that was approved to be filled was abruptly changed to an ETT-Adv and filled. Members are seeing a pattern regarding SEA positions. Changing SPO Planning Chief to Non-CE Position hurts future opportunities for promotion. Mohamad would like Mark Klipstein to follow up on this issue.

Rhineland — Filled 2 CE-Adv positions that were being temporarily filled. Going ahead with reorganization, members sense less of a management presence.

Superior — No Report.

Central Office — Nearing selection of new Director of Bureau of Structures. Members asking if contract demands can still be submitted. (Demands will be considered)

DNR — No Report

State Agencies — Leroy attended 2 discovery hearings for an employee in early May. Expected Letter of Reprimand, but employee was terminated on 5/12/05.

SEA Office Website:

Check out the website at www.wisea.org or contact SEA at wisea@wisea.org

DNR Bylaws:

Tom Mugan did a quick overview of the updates made to the DNR Section By-Laws that were distributed at the May Meeting for Board Review.

There was a motion by Tom Mugan to approve the DNR Section By-Laws. Mohamad Hayek seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

Julie asked if Bob Spoerl could post Section By-Laws on the Website. After some discussion it was decided only recently updated Section By-Laws would be posted.

Financial & Membership Reports:

Nick Martin reviewed the April Membership Report. There was a motion by Nick Martin to accept the April Membership Report. Julie Millard seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

Nick Martin submitted the April Treasurers' Report for review. John Bolka asked that future reports list an itemized breakdown of the Corporate Credit Card. Leroy asked about the payment to the Sign Language Association (Approved at Previous Board Meeting). There was a motion by Nick

Martin to accept the April Treasurers' Report. Mohamad Hayek seconded. Motion carried without opposition. Nick Martin reviewed the vouchers submitted for payment at this Board Meeting.

04-178 => 04-183	\$1608.24
M-093 => M-104	<u>\$1950.00</u>
	\$3558.24

There was a motion by Nick Martin to accept Board Meeting Vouchers. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

Nick Martin reviewed Special Expense Voucher 04-184 (Wisconsin Civil Service Day Celebration) for \$64.35. There was a motion by Nick Martin to pay the Voucher. Tom Mugan seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

Mark said volunteers were needed for the SEA Audit Committee. The commitment typically involves spending a weekend in August (Friday night, Saturday, and possibly Sunday) reviewing the books of the Treasurer. Some time is also needed in September after all Section Audits are received and corrected as necessary. John Bolka, Leroy Stublaski, and Diane Slick were interested in working on the committee. Mike Humke's name was also mentioned as a possible interested party although he was not present at the meeting.

Annual Meeting:

The date of the 2005 SEA Annual Meeting is October 15 in Madison.

New Business:

Sharon noted since all Directors were directed to have open office hours, members are encouraged to stop in and talk about the lack of a reasonable contract.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:32 PM.

No Board Meeting is scheduled for July. The next meeting dates are August 20 and September 17.

New Name!

As you can see on the front page, the newsletter has a new name. "SEA View" was submitted by Tim Radtke. For offering the chosen name, he will receive \$50 and an article of SEA clothing (and the respect and admiration of all SEA members). Thank you to everyone who proposed names for the newsletter. We had 37 excellent entries and the competition was close.



Centennial Celebration Honorees

As you read in Mark Klipstein's article, the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) hosted a ceremony on July 17 to honor the 100th anniversary of the civil service system. Each union was invited to nominate members for recognition of long service and career achievement.

To send a message about the treatment of civil servants, SEA joined eleven other bargaining units to nominate Jim Thiel. Thiel is a 31-year DOT veteran and former Chief General Legal Counsel. As you recall, Thiel was demoted after he released a report discrediting the Administration's review of DOT's Engineering Cost Analysis report. (DOT had once again confirmed that contracting out engineering work is at least 18 percent more expensive than using existing state employees do the work.)

According to a copyrighted article by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, when Randy Romanski, Executive Assistant to Secretary Busalacchi, learned that the report had been released to the media, he said, "What? What? What? You released it?" Jim Thiel was demoted the next business day after complying with legal requirements to release a document that was requested by the media. The Attorney General's office was asked to investigate the Administration's likely violation of the Open Records Law for refusing to release the Cost Analysis when it was originally requested by SEA.

Jim Thiel's joint nomination letter stated: "We looked to the very spirit behind the enactment of civil service – to make certain government is accountable and transparent to the citizens who benefit from it...Our civil service system was founded to protect taxpayers from a patronage system. To continue this tradition, we collectively nominate one candidate who fulfills all these ideals."

SEA Members Honored

The following SEA members were recognized during the Centennial Celebration for their "career achievements in public service to the State of Wisconsin." The wording below is directly from the certificate each member received from the Governor's office.

Gene Renguette, DOT

Gene Renguette has worked continuously for the Department of Transportation in either a full or part-time capacity since 1948. Gene served in World War II as a navy electronics technician. After leaving the Navy, Gene graduated from Marquette University with a degree in civil engineering. From 1948 to 1992, Gene worked full time as a civil engineer for the DOT. After taking a short retirement, he returned to work as a limited term employee. Over the years, he has been responsible for the production, review and processing of hundreds of right-of-way plats and many thousands of individual highway land acquisition parcels, including those for the Interstate Highway System. Gene is an invaluable resource when comes to researching, locating and interpreting past plans, plats, legal descriptions and other road records impacting our highways in southeast Wisconsin, some of which date back to the 1800's.

Phil Wilson, DOT

Phil Wilson is a professional engineer in the Department of Transportation. When others have a problem and are looking for a solid solution, he is the "go-to" colleague. Phil joined the department in 1969, but shortly after that he was drafted for a two-year tour of duty in the Army during the Vietnam War, where he served honorably. Phil mentors and develops staff, designs projects that have very short turn around, monitors and directs many complex construction projects in the field and leads a design/construction team. Over the past 10 years, Phil has served as the project manager for over \$60 million worth of construction improvement projects. Phil performs all of these duties with the utmost humility, diligence, care, and regard not only for the safety of the traveling public, but for his coworkers as well. He serves as a role model for all who know and work with him.

Michael Bath, DOA

Mike Bath was hired by the Department of Administration as a painter over 20 years ago. In his early years with DOA, Mike worked extensively at the State Capitol performing restoration painting and documenting the original paint finishes in the building. In 1990, when the North Wing of the Capitol was restored, Mike helped write the detailed specifications used to restore and conserve this wing. During the restoration of the South Wing and Capitol Rotunda, Mike acted as the DOA representative responsible for the treatment of all the decorative surfaces in these areas. Mike has recently undertaken new responsibilities as an engineering specialist. He continues to take on the challenge of unique projects at both the State Capitol and Executive Residence utilizing his knowledge and love of historic preservation and restoration.



ETF Retirement Board & ETF Group Insurance Board Reports

By Melvin B. Sensenbrenner, SEA Retirement & Health Insurance Representative

ETF Retirement Board – June 24, 2005

The meeting was started with the Legislative Report and was minimal except for the action on the budget for ETF. Both proposals only reduced the ETF budget by 1.0 full time position.

Dave Stella commented on A.B. 361 indicating it was illegal and would be challenged; and if health savings accounts are created, it would split the employees up, healthy vs. sickly, and would increase the cost to the state because of adverse selection.

The Actuary, Norm Jones, gave his 24th Annual Actuarial Valuations for December 31, 2004. He reported that we are meeting funding objectives very well because we have made good assumptions, low and level % of payroll funding, funding discipline, and a sound investment program.

Norm Jones indicated the WRS is better funded with lower contribution rates and with better benefits than any other retirement system he is familiar with. His report indicates that for 2006 the contribution rates will increase by 0.1% for general employees and 0.2% for elected and executives.

Bob Willett's report on the WRS also was excellent, with a funding level of 104%, and for 2005, projected investment returns: +1.1% to +6.3%. We will have 0% dividends. With +1.1% return or less, we will have a negative dividend, and with +6.3% or more, we will have a positive dividend.

Eric Stanchfield reported on his recent National Association of Public Retirement System Directors' meeting. The report they received from the Social Security Administration was that 1.7% to 1.75% increase would remove the insolvency question. He also indicated the YTD SWIB performance figures as of June 17th for the Fixed Fund are +2.0% and the Variable Fund is at 1.6%, so we are out of the negative range for now.

Dave Stella reported on the progress they have made on the new payment system. They currently are in the construction phase of the new system and are very pleased with the progress - within budget and on time.

The 2004 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for ETF, including all benefit programs, is on schedule and coming out soon.

The next ETF Board Meeting is September 22-23.

ETF Group Insurance Board – June 21, 2005

The actuary of Deloitte presented the annual review of the Income Continuation Insurance Plans (ICI) for state employees and local government employees.

The state (ICI) plan is currently funded at 110% of liabilities with a total of 64.108 million at the end of 2004. There will be no increase in rates. The investment earnings for 2004 were 5.1 million dollars.

The local government ICI plan for 2004 has a net balance of 14.124 million and a liability funding level of 546%. The Board may be considering a dues holiday for local government employees.

The actuary also reviewed the proposal for long term care insurance, which the Insurance Board approved for Mutual of Omaha. Now there are three companies approved by ETF: John Hancock, Genworth, and Mutual of Omaha. Currently there are 6,473 long-term care insurance policy holders and about 3,500 are annuitants.

Bill Kox gave a report to the Board on Medicare Part D drug plan, and the state can continue with their plan if it is as generous, or more generous, than Medicare Part D. ETF has requested GIB approval to submit the request to (CMS) Center for Medicaid and Medicare services for the 28% federal subsidy on the effective date of January 1, 2006. The application is due at CMS September 30, 2005.

Bill Kox also indicated that ETF is evaluating the (WPE) program, which is the Proposed Wisconsin Public Employers Plan and will be presented at the August GIB Meeting for final determination.

ETF is also reviewing the statewide health plan proposed by the Legislature and how it may affect the state employee self-insured plan we have currently, and will report to the GIB meeting on August 30, 2005.

PLEASE NOTE: SWIB cancelled their June meeting and no meeting is scheduled for July. The next meeting will be held in August.



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Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars for the upcoming SEA Annual Meeting on **October 15**. This year the meeting will be held in Madison. Additional details will be provided in next month's SEA View.

New Format

We're working on a new format for the newsletter. Take a critical look at the new format. Please provide comments, concerns and suggestions to your Section President or carperfarm@mhtc.net.

The goal is to get the newsletter on the SEA website as it goes to print. Not only will this provide members with information you need in a timely manner, it will also allow everyone an equal chance at the Puzzling Puzzler. (Some members get their newsletters 3-4 days late.)

In the near future, to save postage and trees, we'd like to send out fewer paper copies of the newsletter. Instead, you would receive email notification that the latest SEA View is available on the website. Members without web access at their homes (and those who prefer paper) will continue to receive a paper copy. *If you would prefer to read your newsletter on the web and save money for SEA, please let your Section President know.*

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