



# STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION

# SEA View

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## From the President

Dear Members:

As I write this message, the holidays are here and the New Year is fast approaching. Looking back and reflecting, I see a very significant wrap-up of contract negotiations along with a period during which there was quite a lot of turnover in the leadership of SEA. Through these



challenges, SEA remains a vital organization on the verge of continued success. I ask that all members join the board and officers in promoting that success.

The raises we negotiated covering the two four-year contracts were generally modest, especially considering the give-backs on health insurance reimbursements and loss of length of service. We were able to push up add-ons for a few of the professional licenses.

In the area of contract language, we made significant gains on issues such as layoff protection, professional liability protection and our ability to track contracting-out of engineering services. We also came away from bargaining with additional vacation days because of changes in the state's vacation schedule for all employees.

In a continuing effort to finalize the contracts, SEA's attorney, Willie Haus and I met with OSER to review minor changes needed as a result of proofing the contracts. Once OSER incorporates those few changes into the language, we can have the contracts printed. See "Know Your Contract" elsewhere in this newsletter for details on this and other contract issues, including our upcoming Demand Formulation meetings.

There is one issue that has come to our attention, due to comments we received during the latest contract ratification. Confusion among members on what contract terms we were voting on points to the need for a communications plan. The SEA Board has committed to put such a plan into place and has set a kick-off meeting for Friday, January 26 at 7:00 p.m. in Madison. The meeting will take place the night before the January board meeting in a meeting room at the meeting hotel (see information later in this newsletter). Our communications consultant, Ron Legro, and our

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Webmaster, Bob Spoerl, will attend with a subgroup of the board. If you have ideas on what you would like to see, pass them along to your Section President so we have the benefit of your thoughts.

As we all go back to our work responsibilities, I believe there are things we can do and attitudes we can maintain that will make Wisconsin a better place to live and work. Sometimes state management practices can make it difficult for us to do our work effectively. That's one reason SEA exists. But let us not forget the influence on our workplace and our communities that each of us, as individuals, have as we conduct our professional business. I urge you to use your influence with wisdom and respect for all.

I wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year.

Tom Mugan

## **Legislative Report**

By Gretchen Wheat, Second Vice President

### **Sick leave diversion, campaign finance storm, and the Legislature's very good Web**

I'd like to give you an update on the budget, but as of this writing, Governor Doyle has not yet released his recommendations. So, we'll have to wait for that news, which hopefully will not be so bad. Meanwhile, I am covering several topics that you may find interesting and helpful.

**Sick Leave Conversion:** Noticed this in the news lately? For state employees, this is the conversion of unused sick leave into payments for health insurance upon retirement. Media attention to the state's practices focused on the fact that sick leave conversion is available to certain legislators convicted of crimes relating to inappropriate use of state resources.

***...legislators were lining up to reject any earned sick leave conversion benefit upon retirement. This is a good diversion, much easier than trying to explain why they were not reporting sick days.***

Public controversy is understandable. Easy to think that sick leave conversion should be prevented in such cases. One might even question the intent of legislators having sick leave. After all, these are salaried employees that often work irregular hours, and work from home or wherever they may be. Unlike the vast majority of state employees, legislators have no time sheets to submit for supervisory approval.

In the wake of news stories (and then a talk radio feeding frenzy), a number of legislators were lining up to reject any earned sick leave conversion benefit upon retirement. This is a good diversion, much easier than trying to explain why they were not reporting sick days, even when missing a committee hearing or floor debate due to health.

Media attention also focused once again on Milwaukee County's November 2000 pension deal, which covered several hundred county employees, and allowed unused sick leave conversion to lump sum cash payout upon retirement. However, this particular deal and its funding (or lack thereof) under the Milwaukee County retirement system should not be confused with the system



offered by the state to its workforce.

As state employees, SEA members wonder: Is my unused sick leave safe, and how will unused sick leave I earn in the future be treated? SEA believes current sick leave balances, and the conversion

### ***Our way, your way, or the highway***

The next legislative session hasn't begun, but Democrats and Republicans are already disagreeing on how the state should proceed to build major highway projects and on the means of funding them.

GOP lawmakers proposed at the end of November that the state make it harder for major road projects to get started and to use more property tax revenue to fund them. But Democrats, who will control the state Senate questioned the proposals.

Republican leaders produced a report recommending tougher standards for approving new major projects. The new standards would tolerate more congestion and higher accident rates. But Democrats expressed concern with causing new problems for localities.

The two sides were discussing an accommodation at year's end, but their toughest task remained, namely: agreeing on a way to generate more transportation money to cover a nearly \$700 million budget shortfall. Gas tax increases and vehicle registration fees have been kicked around as possible offsets.

The GOP report also called for reviewing risk management practices as a way to boost competition in road projects.

option for sick leave earned in the future, are both "safe." First, changes in the law cannot retroactively eliminate a benefit – that is, unused sick leave earned under the current law must be allowed conversion upon retirement. Sick leave conversion is also provided in the SEA contract.

However, perhaps the following facts provide greatest weight in support of sick leave conversion:

Sick leave conversion is a self-funded retirement benefit. No state tax dollars are involved. Sick leave is part of a wage and benefit package under which the employees have already worked and earned the benefit. Sick leave conversion allows the conveyance of only unused benefits to the employee.

Allowing unused sick leave to be converted for a purpose (to benefit the employee) is a rock solid "good idea." Such conversion provisions are widely practiced by forward thinking organizations, public and private sector alike, to improve employee retention and commitment. Employees are rewarded for avoiding use of sick leave, and thereby discouraged to abuse it.

Amid recent criticism about sick leave conversion, an informed response came from Rep. Gary Sherman (D-Port Wing), who also serves on the Employee Trust Funds board. His response appeared Dec. 4 in WisPolitics.com. The following link to the article may still be active: <http://www.wispolitics.com/index.ihtml?Article=78604>

Write, fax, or call Representative Sherman to thank him (Room 320 West, State Capitol, P.O. Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708; fax 608-282-3674; or phone 715-774-3691 or 608-266-7690). The article's title, "Rep. Sherman: Sick Leave Conversion - A Fully Funded Retirement Plan, not Perk" says it all, but Sherman goes on to explain more fully. Here are excerpts from his article:

The sick leave part is only the funding mechanism. The value of unused sick leave accumulated by public employees is converted to monthly payments on premiums of retired employees health insurance. It is not paid out to the retired employee. This benefit is of great value to retired employees and is one of the reasons that Wisconsin is able to attract high-quality public employees despite paying lower compensation than the surrounding states in most job categories. Because this benefit is funded by unused sick leave, it has a very low cost to the taxpayers.

By creating an incentive for employees to not use up their sick leave each year, the same fund of money can be used to fund this additional benefit at little additional cost. Like all



State of Wisconsin retirement benefits, the Department of Employee Trust Funds administers the plan. Wisconsin has one of the largest public employee pension plans in the nation and it is very well managed. The sick leave conversion plan is fully funded, based upon actuarial studies, and the state has no unfunded liability for the benefits to be paid in the future. By being fully funded, investment income is used to offset part of the cost of the plan.

Also, legislators only accrue 65% of the sick leave that full time state employees accrue.

Gov. Jim Doyle commented that lawmakers should tighten their reporting of sick time, but they should be able to convert unused sick leave into a retirement benefit like regular state employees. Legislative leaders including Assembly Speaker-elect Mike Huebsch (R-West Salem) and Senate Majority Leader-elect Judy Robson (D-Beloit) agreed the Legislature needs a better system for lawmakers to report days they are sick and for those hours to be subtracted from their sick leave balance.

So, while it looks like lawmakers may improve accountability for themselves and other elected officials, it seems highly unlikely that the Legislature would act to discontinue this sound practice for regular permanent state employees. Rather, more organizations would be wise to adopt it.

**Campaign Finance Reform:** The public knows that campaign finance reform is the only road to clean government. And, on the heels of public outcry for campaign finance reform at the national and state level, Wisconsin legislators from both sides of the aisle have vowed to act. Any real reform will significantly impact future campaigns of nearly all legislators, and also presumably local elected officials.

This is a difficult task, but on Dec. 14, Gov. Doyle, along with the new Senate and Assembly leadership, announced agreement to pass major, bipartisan ethics reform early in 2007. "This agreement is not only a major breakthrough on significant ethics and elections reform, it's a very hopeful sign that Republicans and Democrats can work together," Gov. Doyle said. "This reform is strong, far reaching, and most importantly, bipartisan."

See more at [http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/journal\\_media\\_detail.asp?locid=19&prid=2449](http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/journal_media_detail.asp?locid=19&prid=2449).

Contact your legislators and let them know you're looking forward to progress on this vital issue.

**Legislature Website:** I recommend visiting this website: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/> As you might imagine, I'm spending a lot of time there these days. The pages load quickly, even with a dial up connection (what I have), and unlike almost every other website I've been to, I've yet to find a dead link – amazing. The pages are also quite well organized, so its really easy to find your elected officials, and get their email, phone number or mailing address. So, don't be afraid to take a peak.

**Legislature's "InSession" Service:** Have you heard about Internet coverage of legislative floor debates? The Senate sessions, which have audio coverage only, are available at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/insession/Senate/index.htm>. Assembly sessions have both audio and video coverage, available at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/insession/Assembly/index.htm>. Broadcasts are live only. The InSession pages also provide the day's calendar, with links from the calendar to bills before the house and to roll call votes as they occur. The recommended audio source is Windows Media Player.

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**INSIDE YOUR CONTRACT:****Whats, whens, wheres and whys**

**DEMANDS:** SEA will hold our Demands Formulation Committee (DFC) meeting in Stevens Point on Saturday, Jan. 20 to review and compile demands submitted by members.

SEA is already looking ahead toward bargaining for the July 2007 – June 2009 biennium. The Bargaining Team has been named and approved by the SEA Board as per the SEA by-laws.

The team will consist of the five officers; Tom Mugan, Leroy Stublaski, Gretchen Wheat, Duane Hubeler, and John Bolka, and these others: Tim Hanley (Demands Formulation Committee Chairperson), George Mickelson (Compensation Chairperson), Mary Pamperin-Volk, Reiny Yahnke, Bill Taylor and John Lund (alternate).

**CONTRACT:** All members will receive printed copies of the 2005-'07 contract. To save costs, we will print a more limited number of copies of the 2003-'05 contract. You may continue to use the contract versions on the SEA web site until we can get those printed copies out to you.

**ACCOUNTING:** Some members have wondered if they're getting a proper accounting when trying to cash out accrued vacation pay. Under the contract, such cash-outs may need to be calculated on a basis that includes retroactive add-ons. Check the cash-back amount that you get back, and speak up if you believe an add-on has not been properly figured in.

Other members have reported that on occasion their time sheets appear to have been altered by managers without notice, for example in the case of hours reported for stand-by pay.

Whether you're able to resolve matters on your own and even if you decide not to grieve, be sure to let your SEA officers know if you run into these or similar situations, so we can keep track..

*Have more questions about your contract? Contact SEA View and we'll report back in later issues on the most frequently cited issues. And check later editions of SEA View for further reports on what's in our new contract.*



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**Executive Board:** SEA's new board met for the first time at the October annual meeting in Oconomowoc. Left to right: John Bolka – Treasurer, Leroy Stublaski – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Gretchen Wheat – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Tom Mugan – President, Duane Hubeler – Secretary

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**Important Retirement and Health Insurance Information**  
 by Melvin B. Sensenbrenner, SEA Retirement & Health Insurance Representative

**ETF BOARD MEETING – DEC. 14, 2006**

The first report for ETF Retirement Boards was the GRS (Actuaries Report) for the 2003-2005 Experience Study. The Actuary always estimates the future number of retirees, which determines the estimated contributions rate increases or decreases.

The Wisconsin Statutes provide for this in depth study of assumptions every three years. The risk areas considered in this three year experience study are as follows:

- \* Retirees rates of mortality – normal
- \* Retirees rates of mortality – disabled lives
- \* Economic rates of investment return (by SWIB)
- \* Economic rates of inflation

Every three years, the assumptions are studied in depth and adjusted to reflect experience trends only, not the random year to year fluctuations. The Actuary, GRS, is seeing some delays in retirements caused by economy, medical costs etc., which causes a net decrease in liabilities.

The life expectancy after retirement is anticipated to increase in the future.

|      |                   |                         |
|------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 2005 | Retirement Age 60 | Life Expectancy 22 yrs. |
| 2030 | Retirement Age 60 | Life Expectancy 24 yrs. |
| 2055 | Retirement Age 60 | Life Expectancy 26 yrs. |

Wage inflation assumption is 4.1%. The WRS has averaged 3.9% a year since 1981. The Actuary recommends remaining with 4.1% and see if trends continue.

The economic assumption for WRS has been 7.9%, and the Actuary, GRS, recommends continuing with the 7.8% assumption.

The contribution rates may increase due to the results of this study because of the changes in mortality of the annuitants.

2007 contribution rates: 10.8% general; 11.6% Executive & Elected officials

|                         |       |       |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|
| Possible future change: | +0.2  | 0.0   |
| Future total:           | 11.0% | 11.6% |

The next report was by ETF on the WDC (Wisconsin Deferred Comp. Program). This program is covered by federal law and is a 457 Plan.



SECTION 457 – DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLANS

- . Tax-deferred savings to selected mutual funds
- . Convenient payroll deduction
- . Maximum contribution of \$15,500 or 100% of compensation in 2007, whichever is less
- . Age 50 catch-up provisions
- . Flexible distribution options
- . Portable among qualified plans – roll \$ in or roll \$ out of another 457, 401(k), 403(b) or traditional IRA
- . Can purchase WRS forfeited and qualifying service using s. 457 funds

**WDC HISTORY**

Established in 1982 with five initial enrollments with no state funds for administration.

**1984:** State Statutes amended to permit local employers to participate in the WDC.

42 local employers started in that year.

**1989:** WDC Board was created (state legislation).

I have provided a copy of the ETF Fact Sheet for the WDC system dated 12-31-05 to all SEA Board members.

The WDC has grown from \$220.4 million assets and 270 employers in January 1991 to \$1.188 billion assets and 535 employers by January 1999, and to \$1.768 billion assets and 699 employers by December 2005.

The WDC participant fees vary from 50 cents per month to \$10.00 per month on \$6.00 invested up to \$150,000.00 invested, and there are no state funds used in the WDC fund. It is totally participant owned and operated.

**WDC FEATURES**

- . \* No minimum deferral amount
- . \* Change deferral amount at any time
- . \* Redirect deferrals to other investment options offered by the WDC without restriction (subject to the stable value fund equity wash)
- . \* Exchange existing account balances from one option to another (subject to the excessive trading policy)
- . \* Self-directed brokerage option (through Schwab)
- . \* Rebalancer (automatic account rebalancing)

**PENSION TENSION**  
**The New York Times reports that a small but increasing number of state and local governments across the country are beginning to challenge guarantees protecting government worker pensions. Milwaukee County and a handful of states, cities and other regional government bodies have moved, and in some cases succeeded, in scaling back existing promises and even shrinking some current payments. The Times quotes professionals as saying this may be an early warning sign of what could be coming on a wider scale as local officials take stock of unexpectedly large obligations to retired public workers. In San Diego, for example, an ambiguously written pension statute was discovered by lawyers while combing through the city's financial records after a local pension scandal. Besides Milwaukee County, public worker pensions have been cut in Oregon, Rhode Island and several cities and towns in Texas. The recurring argument has been that pension funds had gone disastrously out of balance. Government lawyers have worked to find ways around a wide array of legal guarantees that were supposed to prevent such reversals.**



Bob Conlin, Director of Legislative Communications and Planning, gave his report on legislative committees so far and possible legislation for retirement. One bill was submitted to include the tribal law enforcement officers in the WRS because of loss of current officers to other employers. The second bill he reported on was that there is a study committee to include charter school teachers and employees in the WRS.

The backlog on retirement estimates still continues. On 11-24-06, they had 2,108 waiting to be completed.

I have also provided the Sept.-Nov. '06 quarterly retirement report annuity statistics dated December 1, 2006 to all SEA Board members for your review.

**The next ETF Board Meeting is scheduled for March 15-16, 2007.**

**SWIB MEETING – DECEMBER 13, 2006**

SWIB Performance YTD – November 30, 2006

|            | Sept. 30, 2006 | Oct. 31, 2006 | Nov. 30, 2006      |
|------------|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Core Fund: | +9.2%          | +12.0%        | +14.3%(B.M.+13.3%) |
| Variable:  | +9.4%          | +13.2%        | +15.7%(B.M.+15.8%) |
| Core Fund: | 72.551B        | 74.582B       | 76.297B            |
| Variable:  | 6.741B         | 6.997B        | 7.172B             |
|            | 79.292B        | 81.579B       | 83.469B            |

On Nov. 30, private equity was at +24.6% and real estate equity at +25.7%.

On Dec. 8, both funds increased another 0.7%.

The SWIB staff informed the board that global currencies exchanges have a huge effect on their returns, about a 30% hedge.

Also, SWIB received good news from its Toronto-based benchmarking consultant, CEM Benchmarking, Inc., which provided a comparison to 13 other public pension funds of approximately the same size. CEM's analysis showed the following:

- ✓ Large funds did better than small funds.
- ✓ External active management and total cost reduced net value added.
- ✓ Funds with more internal management and passive management did better.
- ✓ Internal management has outperformed external management on a net basis in the past 13 years in most asset classes.



SWIB was above average in all categories when compared to the other 12 funds in the peer group. They varied from \$33.3 billion to \$200.9 billion. (SWIB was at 67.5 billion in the Core Fund.)

**The next SWIB meeting is scheduled for Jan. 13, 2007.**

**December 9, 2006 Board Meeting Summary**  
Meeting held at Best Western Inn-Towner, Madison  
By Duane Hubeler, Secretary

**Attendance:**

**Executive Board:** Tom Mugan – President, Leroy Stublaski – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Gretchen Wheat – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Duane Hubeler – Secretary, John Bolka - Treasurer

**Board Members:**

Tom Peronto, Wisconsin Rapids President  
Gary Metzer, Southeast Vice President  
Dennis Keyzer, Green Bay Vice President  
Sandra J Anderson, Central Office President  
Jeremy Tomesh, La Crosse President  
John Lund, Rhinelanders President

Mohamad Hayek, Eau Claire President  
Paul Caleb, State Agencies Vice President  
Brian Mattson, Superior President  
Michelle Ellias, Madison President  
Bob Schaefer, DNR Madison President

**Specialists:**

Mel Sensenbrenner, Health and Retirement  
Sandy Henke, SEA Office  
Ron Legro, Communications Specialist  
Willie Haus, Attorney

**Guest:**

George Mickelson, Compensation Chair, Bargaining Team

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**Meeting Begins:**

Tom Mugan called meeting to order at 8:40 am. Introductions were made. Under additions to the agenda, Dennis Keyzer pointed out that Green Bay had accidentally been left off of the section items report.

**Approvals:**

The October 21, 2006 Board Meeting minutes were reviewed. There was a motion by Bob Schaefer to approve. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

The Correspondence Report was reviewed. There was a question on an inquiry from Department of Commerce plumbing plan reviewers on what steps need to be taken towards reclassification and transfer into SEA. This is primarily an issue for OSER to determine. Tom accepted the Correspondence Report.

**Bargaining:**

Willie Haus reported that he and Jill Thomas of OSER were scheduled to meet during the week of December 11 to finish up the few remaining details on the contracts. The contract books can then be printed. Due to the considerable expense, only a limited number of 2003-2005 books will be printed for each office in addition to the normal number of 2005-2007 books for each member.

Tom Mugan presented his nominees to the 2007-2009 bargaining team. In addition to the 5 members of the executive board, Tim Hanley of DOT will be the Demands Formulation Committee (DFC) Chair and George

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Mickelson of DNR will be the Compensation Chair. The remaining 3 bargaining team nominees were Reiny Yahnke, Mary Pamperin-Volk and Bill Taylor, all from DOT. John Lund of DOT agreed to be an alternate. There was a motion by Gary Metzger to approve the bargaining team nominees. Sandy Anderson seconded. Motion carried without opposition.

The Demands Formulation Committee (DFC) will meet in Stevens Point on Saturday, January 20, 2007 at 8:30am. Contact your section president if you are interested in attending. Demands must be submitted prior to the meeting. A form for submitting demands is located on the SEA website at [wisea.org](http://wisea.org)

**Grievance Report:** *By Leroy Stublaski*

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-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-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.
  - P-414 (filed 11/9/04) – DOT D2 – Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
  - P-415 (filed 11/17/04) – DOT D2 – Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-419 (filed 12/23/04) – DNR Water – Add-on is part of year end cash out option. Filed at Step 4. Consolidate with A-369.
  - A-420 (filed 1/27/05) – DOT – Turndown Mileage Rate. Filed at Step 4.
  - P-421 (filed 2/09/05) – DOT D2– Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Moved to Step 4.
  - P-422 (filed 2/09/05) – DOT D2– Administrative Leave/Discrimination. Filed at Step 4.
  - P-424 (filed 3/18/05) – DOT D2– Demotion without cause. Moved to Step 4.
  - P-425 (filed 4/05) – DOT D2– Mental Torture/Investigation Meeting. Filed at Step 4. (Meeting 5/4/05).
  - P-426 (filed 5-16-05) – DOT D2 – Suspension w/o Just Cause. Filed at Step 4.
  - P-427 (filed 7-27-05) – DOT D2 – Termination w/o Just Cause. Filed at Step 3.
  - A-428 (filed 6-23-05) – DOT D5 – Travel Policy/Cards/Hotels. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-429 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
  - A-430 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
  - A-431 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
  - A-432 (filed 4-27-05) – DOT D5 – PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
  - A-434 (filed 6-10-05) – UW Stout – Termination w/o Just Cause. Hearing held 10/06. Brief filed 12/06.
  - A-435 (filed 11-30-05) – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. – Consolidated with A-307.
  - A-436 (filed 11-18-05) – PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. – Consolidated with A-307.
  - A-437 (filed 11-15-05) – Letter of Reprimand. Filed at Step 4
  - A-438 (filed 1-5-06) – Poor Review. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-439 (filed 11-29-05) – DNR - Extra Mileage. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-440 (filed 11-09-05) – DOT D1 - Lunch Money. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-443 (filed 3-10-06) – DOT D7 - CIRT Building Alarm Response. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-444 (filed 3-14-06) – DOT D2 – Individual Bargaining. Filed at Step 4.
  - A-446 (filed 2-14-06) – DOT SW – PE exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307
  - A-447 (filed 3/27/06) – DOT NCR – Fleet vehicle assignment & utilization. Awaiting Step 3 response.
  - A-448 (filed 5/12/06) – DOT NCR – HAM used on current state employee in promotion. Filed at Step 4.
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A-450 (filed 5/25/06) – DOT SE – Disputed evidence. Filed at Step 3, Meeting 9/26/06. Dropped.  
A-451 (filed 7/10/06) – DOT NWR EC – Discipline w/o just cause. Filed at Step 4.  
A-452 (filed 7/12/06) – UW - WSHL – Return to work denied. Filed at Step 1. Dropped.  
A-453 (new) – DOT NER - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Waived to Step 3.  
A-454 (filed 10/26/06) - DOT NER - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Settled at Step 2, 10/26/06.  
A-455 (new) – DHFS Reimbursement of surcharge for over 2000 miles. Filed at Step 4.  
A-456 (filed 9/13/06) – DOT NER - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Settled at Step 3.

The current status of several grievances was reviewed. Specifics discussed were as follows:

A-369 - Willie will ask Jill Thomas to expedite in their meeting during the week of December 11.  
A-452 was denied at Step 1. Leroy Stublaski motioned to drop. Bob Schaefer seconded. The motion carried without opposition.  
A-443 – DOT will solicit vendors to respond to building alarms.

**Health and Retirement Report:** *By Mel Sensenbrenner*

In the interest of time, Mel deferred his discussion and will summarize new information in his article in this newsletter.

**Legislative Report:** *By Gretchen Wheat*

Gretchen has drafted a letter of introduction along with election congratulations to the Governor and new legislators on the Joint Committee on Employee Relations (JCOER) and Joint Finance Committees. A suggestion was made to support Representative Gary Sherman's letter to the editor explaining sick-leave conversion that appeared in several newspapers. After discussion, the decision was made to reprint the letter in this newsletter.

**Communication Report:** *By Ron Legro*

Ron presented a more developed plan for an organizational communications strategy. The main points entail:

- A public relations timetable or calendar that lists events for the year, such as elections, SEA Day, bargaining, etc.;
- A rapid response plan with a decision tree for emergency communication; and
- A backup plan for web site and email database use.

There will be a meeting on Friday night, January 26, 2007 (the night prior to our next Board Meeting) from 7-9pm to brainstorm ideas to implement the communications plan. Ron can be contacted at [rlegro@yahoo.com](mailto:rlegro@yahoo.com).

**Section Reports:**

*Madison* — There are 2 new CE – senior hires. They anticipate 12 more hires in the coming months.

*Southeast* — There have been 12 new engineer hires in the last few months. Many new entry level hires are anticipated. Members are anxious to get written copies of the contracts.

*Green Bay* — The mileage reimbursement rate is still a concern. There is a problem with short lead times in announcing supervisor tests.

*Wisconsin Rapids* — Members are collecting demands for DFC meeting in January. New officers have been elected.

*La Crosse* – No Report

*Eau Claire* — Members are concerned about sick-leave conversion and are anxious for a printed copy of the 2005-2007 contract.

*Rhineland* – There are 2 new CE – entry hires. Many transfers have been filled. It was announced that transfers will not be posted unless there are major changes to the PD's. They lost the EARS position.

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*Superior* — There was a section meeting in November. Members are anxious for a printed copy of the 2005-2007 contract.

*Central Office/PSC* — A section meeting will be held in January.

*DNR* — Members have many questions on the vacation-carryover MOU and are concerned about sick leave conversion.

*State Agencies* — Construction Representatives at DOA have received their \$0.30 add-on for Asbestos Supervisor certification if they were not already receiving an add-on.

John Bolka will check into registering the SEA logo as a “Service Mark”.

George Mickelson reported on the progress of the posting of transfer opportunities on the Wisconsin Employee Referral Service (WISCERS) web site. This web site is an opportunity for laid off or at-risk employees to see what vacancies exist in other state agencies. Our new contract language gives SEA members preference for jobs posted on WISCERS for which they are qualified. SEA currently has approximately 4 employees who are laid off and still have restoration rights. The job openings are being posted as required but the postings are sometimes too generic to be of any real value. We will try to push agencies to use specific job descriptions whenever possible.

**Financial & Membership Reports:** *By John Bolka*

John motioned to accept the July, 2006 Membership Report. Mohamad Hayek seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John motioned to accept the August, 2006 Membership Report. Bob Schaefer seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John motioned to accept the September, 2006 Membership Report. Gary Metzger seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John motioned to accept the October, 2006 Membership Report. Gary Metzger seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted a revised Annual Treasurer’s Report to replace the one in the booklet from the Annual Meeting. After discussion John motioned to accept the revised Annual Treasurers’ Report. Bob Schaefer seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted a revised July Treasurer’s Report for review. After discussion John motioned to accept the revised July Treasurers’ Report as corrected. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted a revised August Treasurer’s Report for review and motioned for approval as corrected. John Lund seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted a revised September Treasurer’s Report for review and motioned for approval as corrected. Bob Schaefer seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted the October Treasurer’s Report for review and motioned for approval. Gary Metzger seconded. Motion carried w/o opposition.

John submitted the proposed 2007 budget for review. After a minor adjustment to account for the cost of printing the contracts, Bob Schaefer moved and Sandy Anderson seconded, to approve the proposed 2007 budget. Motion carried w/o opposition.

**Moving?**

*Since we no longer send many copies of SEA View through the mail, it is difficult to track members who have moved. If you have a new address, please contact the SEA office so we can continue to send you mailings.*



John submitted the Board Meeting & Expense Vouchers for approval:

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 06-067 => 06-081 |                  |
| & 06-084         | \$1504.70        |
| M-032 => M-042   | <u>\$1650.00</u> |
|                  | \$3154.70        |
| <br>             |                  |
| 06-082-083       | \$22.76          |

John motioned to pay the Board Meeting Vouchers. Sandy Anderson seconded. The motion carried w/o opposition.

John motioned to pay the 2 Expense Vouchers. Bob Schaefer seconded. The motion carried w/o opposition.

John stated that there are still 5 outstanding checks that must be tracked down. Checks to the sections for the months of May – October, 2006 should have been received by section treasurers during the week of December 11.

#### **New Business:**

No new business was brought forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 pm .

The next Board Meeting will be January 27, 2007, at East Towne Suites in Madison. **Note the new (old) location.**

#### **PUZZLING PUZZLER: A bulbous problem**

**In the Hotel Conundrum, each floor contains one suite, consisting of two rooms separated by a long hallway. On one of these floors, you arrive to find that the hallway doors are closed to each room. In one room there are three light switches labeled A, B and C. In the other room there are three 60-watt, incandescent light bulbs. Your assignment: Determine which light switches control which light bulbs. Limitations: You can only walk down the hallway once, and you cannot see all the way from one room to the other. Mail your answer to our contest address: [puzzlesea@yahoo.com](mailto:puzzlesea@yahoo.com). The answer and name of the first person who came up with the correct answer will be in next month's SEA View.**

#### **Last issue: The ? minute egg**

*It takes longer to boil an egg at higher altitudes. However, if you cooked eggs in two pressure cookers at different altitudes, which of the following would be true, and why? An egg would: a) still take longer to cook at higher altitude; b) take the same amount of time no matter the altitude; c) take longer to cook at lower altitude..Assume the pressure cookers won't crush the eggs and that they are at the same pressure setting for any pair of altitudes you choose.*

*Solution: The answer is a) it would still take longer to cook the egg at higher altitudes. This is because a pressure cooker doesn't control the absolute pressure inside the pot. It controls the pressure DIFFERENCE between the inside of the pot and the outside. In other words, if the atmospheric pressure is 15 psi and a pressure cooker is set to run at 15 psi, then the absolute pressure inside the pot will be 15 + 15 = 30 psi. At higher altitudes where the atmospheric pressure is say, 13 psi, the pressure cooker will run at 13 + 15 = 28 psi. Since the pressure inside the cooker is lower (28 is less than 30), the water will boil at a lower temperature and therefore it will take longer to cook the egg.*

Congratulations to the first reader who submitted the correct answer: **George Mickelson** of the DNR.