



**STATE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION**

# SEA View

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July 2008

## All work and no new pay: floods and bargaining go into overtime

The next time a well-meaning citizen or policymaker questions the dedication, professionalism or cost-effectiveness of state employees, you can reply in just five words: "The floods of June 2008."



*Crews worked into the night after flooding in Jefferson County closed westbound I-94. SEA members worked around the clock more than two days overseeing construction of median crossovers – Brian Perz photo*

Many state workers -- a lot of them SEA members -- pitched in alongside local government workers, police units and the National Guard when June's vicious storms washed out entire neighborhoods and blocked roads in a good portion of the state. Engineers and specialists from DOT, DNR, DHFS, and Commerce left their desks and put in long days, nights and weekends to quickly assess trouble and recommend action. Some of their stories can be read on a special page at SEA's web site:

### **From the President**

<http://wisea.org/InTheNews/Storm.htm>

Among the troubleshooters was Dan Jashinsky, DOT bridge maintenance engineer, who worked three straight weekends and inspected a couple dozen southeastern district bridges for flood damage, closing three of them. Dan also led the team that closed westbound I-94 between Madison and Milwaukee due to flooding. The state engineers devised and oversaw construction of an emergency bypass until the waters receded.

State engineers had long since prepared detour routes in case of bridge closings, but flooding was so widespread across the state that a few of the planned routes weren't passable, so, Dan said, "we ran into some trouble." (Turn to page 2)



The workers were cautious. They wore safety gear and were mindful of dangerous high waters and fast currents. "I did a little bit of inspection work with my waders on, but the water was usually too fast and high to even get a boat out," Dan said.

He's proud of the extra effort that SEA members and other state employees gave in the face of disaster, "Everyone in our bridge unit pretty much jumped out right away and helped with this stuff," he said. "A lot of workers missed Father's Day. I'm proud of the way we responded. I think the public noticed."

**SEA VIEW SCHEMATIC**

**From the President:**

*SEA members joined other state and local public servants in responding quickly and professionally to recent floods, working long hours in hazardous conditions. Their contribution belies the notion that public employees have it soft. If so, why do SEA members wait a year or more for the state to bargain fairly?*

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Editor: Ron Legro  
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Even though private contractors are sometimes necessary, according to Dan, "You've got to have staff. You can't contract this kind of stuff out."

The good news is that management seemed to appreciate the effort. The governor, senior managers, and legislators generally applauded the quick response of state workers to the disaster. Those compliments were nice, but not as satisfying as you might expect. After all, some of the same officials have been sitting on their hands for nearly a year, leaving SEA's 1,100 talented, dedicated professionals without a contract or a pay raise.

Pats on the back are always nice, but SEA members can be excused for thinking, "Show us the money!"

Sen. Scott Fitzgerald of Juneau applauded the efforts of state workers but said he would request that a joint legislative committee be formed to examine the state's response to the disaster and the ensuing cleanup. "It would be instructive for the Legislature to hear what worked well, where we fell short, and suggestions for changes moving forward," he wrote.

Yes, it would be instructive. State workers should be among the first to tell legislators what they did and what could be done better, if we only had the staff and resources.

Unfortunately, SEA members are feeling like nobody is listening to what we have to say. It's not good for morale. It's not good for state citizens.

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## A Test of Patience

Right now there is really little reason to be optimistic that there will be a contract between SEA and the state any time soon. The state is not offering a package that our members can accept. The lack of a pay raise covering a year or longer hurts our members economically at a time when prices for energy and other commodities are rising drastically. Yet, beyond money, there is also a feeling of despair and anger that comes with the disrespect being shown by the administration's representatives at OSER. Even knowing this, I ask you to be patient with bargaining.

Recently I was having a conversation with someone I had just met at a social event and I mentioned that I worked for DNR. Another person who overheard our conversation interjected a comment something like, "Anything that comes from the government cannot be good." I was flabbergasted that a member of the public would openly display such a mean-spirited attitude. And it hurt.

Later, as I tried to make sense of why someone could feel this way, I began to connect this attitude with what I have perceived for some time as the caustic nature of current politics in this state and country. Because I see for myself the fruits of hard-working public employees, I can separate the good that comes out of jobs well done – separate it from the disgust I feel for the corruption displayed by a large percentage of the crop of current politicians. Too many citizens, on the other hand, take a broad-brush approach and paint all of government as useless, wasteful and corrupt.

While I ask our members to be patient, knowing that, eventually, we will come to agreement on a contract, I can't predict what will happen when the next crisis arises and we are again called upon to perform above and beyond the call of duty. Will the hurt caused by the treatment we are receiving now make us less willing to respond with the same level of selfless enthusiasm exhibited during the flooding? Will cuts in funding for positions make us unable to respond adequately?

I suspect that those heroes who are left in the ranks will once again perform admirably under the most difficult of conditions. I, too, am proud to be part of a group of dedicated professionals that we call SEA. Let's all hope that professionalism and pride is enough when that call comes.

Respectfully,  
Tom Mugan

## Legislative Update

By Gretchen Wheat  
*Second Vice President*

## Policy potpourri

**Agency budget preparation:** As June draws to a close, so does the 2007-2008 state fiscal year, and state agencies are finishing

their budget requests for the next biennium. Now is the time for citizens to point to the single issue that can most positively influence efficient use of taxpayer money – specifically, agencies must reduce outsourcing, and demand sufficient state employee position funding to allow the work to be done for less.

**Flood response:** Public employees from state and local government responded vigorously to the flood emergency across much of the southern half of Wisconsin in early June. The flood response is, of course, receiving \

*(Turn to page 4)*



considerable press coverage. The governor and Legislature are being challenged to come up with money to repair extensive damage done to state and local infrastructure, and other legislative initiatives are likely. We encourage SEA members to be sure their legislators and the Joint Finance Committee are aware that state employee position funding is critical to efficient flood relief and other disaster recovery efforts.

One editorial on the subject was from Sauk County board member Tom Kriegl: "Sauk County workers responded well in flood crisis," posted July 6 on the Capital Times website; go take a look at: <http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/letters/294851>. Kriegl praised government officials, departments and employees for doing a "great job." He also noted the flooding shows "public safety depends on much more than law enforcement" and emphasizes the need to be sure Sauk County spends tax dollars wisely.

Another comment came from Sen. Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau): "Flood response shows best of Wisconsin," posted July 7 on the Capital Times website at <http://www.madison.com/tct/opinion/letters/294897>. Fitzgerald represents the 13th state Senate District, including Jefferson and Beaver Dam, located in counties declared disaster areas by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Fitzgerald wrote: "Much of the response was very impressive, but it is also possible that some responses fell short."

He has requested formation of a joint legislative committee to examine the state's response to the disaster and recovery efforts. Fitzgerald notes bridge and dam infrastructure are critical, and he believes the committee review should include these programs. Fitzgerald hopes the committee can prepare recommendations in time for consideration during the upcoming legislative session.

#### **State Retirement System roadworthy, but no Cadillac:**

We've all heard it so often, it is hard to believe otherwise. But the fact is, the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) is not at all a Cadillac in terms of retirement payment amounts to employees. A Legislative Council Report, "2006 Comparative Study of Major Public Employee Retirement Systems," released last December, reviewed 85 different US state and local public employee retirement systems, including at least one statewide plan from each state. The WRS covers state and local employees and teachers, although the system is optional for Wisconsin localities, not all of whom have chosen to use it.

The report finds that, as compared to other public employee retirement systems, the WRS provides modest payments to retirees. The WRS is also average in terms of the minimum age (55) and years of service (30) needed to retire without reduced benefits. Almost all WRS contributions are paid by employers, at 5% of each general employee's pay. The WRS also limits the maximum benefit an employee may receive, while a majority of surveyed plans do not.

The report describes difficulty determining exact employer contribution rates among retirement systems, but the analysis used indicates the WRS has lower employer contributions rates than 67% of other surveyed plans.

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**THIS BARGAINING  
UNIT HAS WORKED**

**365 DAYS  
WITHOUT A  
CONTRACT.**



*If the state doesn't hurry up and deal, SEA members will soon be able to post the above sign on their office bulletin boards.*



However, among the retirement plans that were surveyed, the average funding ratio was only 82%, versus nearly 100% for the WRS. That top number helps ensure financial stability. SEA acknowledges and appreciates that WRS has been managed in way that minimizes the need for increased contribution rates, and makes the WRS an excellent value for workers and the entire state.

**SEA Day follow-up:** Senator Risser's office contacted SEA to clarify concerns that SEA would like brought before the Legislative Audit Committee. Specifically, Senator Risser was interested in pursuing audits of state employee mileage reimbursement rates and Act 89. Hopefully audits of these issues will help correct current implementation discrepancies. SEA believes travel costs for state business should not fall on state employees, and Act 89 should not serve as a means to justify outsourcing work at higher cost simply due to the lack of state employees.

**Members express dissatisfaction with state:** SEA leadership reports that members have become extremely dissatisfied with the current status quo of the state's employment relations posture. From Green Bay to Eau Claire, members say they are sick and tired of the lack of appreciation they receive from the state. The severe, "no bargaining" attitude of the state seems to have struck a nerve with SEA members. No contract, no wage increases, but an invitation to an employee appreciation picnic that asks you to volunteer a dish to pass. Oh, and could you please volunteer to do more work, too? SEA members say: No thanks! More on the mood of SEA members is presented in the monthly board report's section items, later in this newsletter.

## Ripping off state workers

### ***DOA mileage rates complex, often stingy***

**W**elcome to the State of Wisconsin Alice in Wonderland Department. That's the best way to describe the byzantine rules and bizarre inconsistencies that allow state government to rip money from many employees who need to drive for their jobs.

This is a primer for State of Wisconsin mileage reimbursement. The going gets heavy, and fast, so brush up on your Introductory Logic 101 textbook, read some Lewis Carroll and stay alert.

A key to understanding the state's looking-glass mileage reimbursement "system" is to know that it offers two rates: the standard rate (the higher of the two, currently at \$.485/mile) and the so-called "turndown" rate, currently at \$.32/mile. That's supposedly the average cost of a fleet vehicle as calculated by the Department of Administration (DOA), the agency that owns and manages the state vehicle fleet.

The standard rate is defined in the statutes and referenced in the biennial compensation plan. Under s. 20.916 (4) this higher mileage rate is set at least biennially by the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER), under sub. (8), and is subject to approval of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCER). JCER has always approved any increase to the standard rate proposed by OSER. Note that legislators get this rate automatically and without question. *(Turn to page 6)*

#### **SPECIAL REPORT**





The turndown rate is calculated solely by DOA. To the DOA bean counters, the fleet looks like a money-making rental car agency with a captive customer base. That customer base includes you, the loyal state employee who is required to travel, and to listen to what DOA tells you.

John Marx, DOA fleet enterprise manager, and James Berend, DOA state controller, are two of the current key players in the turndown rate calculation. They are not bound by any statute or regulation or compensation plan to re-calculate the turndown number until they feel like it. And that might be all right, if Hertz or Avis were competing with them. At least until now, neither has told SEA or the public when, how or why they decide to revise the turndown rate.

The current turndown rate (again, \$.32/mile) is the amount most employees receive if they live in Madison, or have other access to a DOA, fleet car but choose (or sometimes are forced) to drive their private vehicle. Fleet's policy is simple, and increasingly quaint. In so many words: If you choose to drive your personal car, and we have a car that we decide can be driven for \$.32/mile, then you have to drive our car or accept the same arbitrary rate to drive your car.

Fleet also reasons as follows: As a non-elected state worker, you only get the higher, standard mileage rate of \$.485/mile if we cannot provide you with a vehicle and if we provide you with a non-availability slip; that is to say, if we run out of one of our "rental cars" for you or your agency to use. If you do not get our slip, you will not get the higher standard rate. If you get a slip but fail to attach it to your voucher, you will not get the higher rate. So don't lose that slip on your travels, assuming we do decide to give you one.

In so many words, Fleet adds: If you are using our car for work, and for some reason also use it for personal purposes, then you will have to repay us at \$.485/mile (the higher rate) plus applicable state, county and stadium taxes depending upon which county you are based in.

Finally, Fleet's rules say more or less the following:

You are also restricted from smoking in our car, and from parking at casinos or in some resort areas.

You cannot take our car out of state, even if that state

borders Wisconsin and you have legitimate business there. No passengers who are not confirmed state employees or approved volunteers, no carrying of heavy personal things like bicycles or bricks (yes these have been mentioned in the DOA's rules). And we will not allow you any choice in the car you are given. You will get what we give you, and be happy about it. If you had to lug 500 pounds of technical equipment to your work site and we still had Pintos in the fleet, we would reserve the right to assign you a Pinto if we felt like it. Got that?

Warning: Do not take your state fleet car home or the IRS will want you to claim personal use -- and proper reimbursement of that use is considered income. Besides, it just looks bad to have a red license-plated, state-owned vehicle sitting in your driveway, even though it's usually safer there than in most municipal parking lots.

Oh, and did we mention that you are not really given any safe place to park this vehicle but *are* allowed a 15-mile radius around your headquarters (that is, usually your office locale) to find a parking spot *at your own expense* -- and it had better be a safe spot or you might be liable for damages to the car.

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**FLEET IS NOT BOUND BY ANY STATUTE OR REGULATION OR COMPENSATION PLAN TO RE-CALCULATE THE TURNDOWN NUMBER UNTIL THEY FEEL LIKE IT. AND THAT MIGHT BE ALL RIGHT, IF HERTZ OR AVIS WERE COMPETING WITH THEM.**



Is there any bright side? Well, trips of under 100 miles can get the standard rate (\$.485/mile) even if a state DOA fleet vehicle is available. For unexplained reasons, University of Wisconsin employees are allowed a 500-mile round-trip limit on the higher rate when using a personal vehicle.

Where fleet cars are involved, DOA has perfected the art of gouging. It assesses your agency a "surcharge" if more than 2,000 miles per month are placed on a fleet car. James Berend advised me in writing a couple of years

**EMPLOYEES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SURCHARGE DOA BACK WHEN THEY ARE OBLIGED TO PUT MORE THAN 2,000 MILES ON THEIR PERSONAL CARS, EVEN WHILE BEING LIMITED TO COLLECTING THE LOWER TURNDOWN RATE. CAN YOU SEE A PATTERN HERE? OF COURSE YOU CAN.**

ago that this surcharge is a money maker for DOA and the fleet operation. Yet I also have a state document that says the surcharges are meant to cover higher wear and tear. And here's where DOA's unofficial One Way Street Rule comes into effect: Employees are not allowed to surcharge DOA back when they are obliged to put more than 2,000 miles on

their personal cars, even while being limited to collecting the lower turndown rate. Can you see a pattern here? Of course you can.

Even while DOA maintains its stingy policy of paying only 32 cents per mile and collecting some of that back in its surcharges, the federally approved mileage rate for tax purposes as of June 30 had climbed to \$.585/mile through the end of 2008. Money maker for DOA? You bet.

That will of course change, a little. I predict the turndown rate will increase to \$.38/mile on or near Dec. 1, which of course would remain ridiculously low compared to the federal standard calculated by the IRS.

**W**e need to bring about an end to low, low, extremely low turndown rates. Expense reimbursements for state employees are defined by various statutes, by their bargaining unit's contractual language, and from the state compensation plan by what is known as Uniform Travel Schedule Allowances. Language in union contracts can conceivably trump these definitions. Thus, bargaining is one change method. Boycotting the DOA fleet is another. If the fleet lost money it would not be around very long.

The fleet does provide a useful service that needs to be paid for, but it shouldn't subsidize itself by dipping into the pocketbooks of some state employees, especially not when it gives other employees – especially legislators -- much more leeway. DOA needs to calculate a valid turndown rate and present it to represented employees for evaluation. If DOA cannot justify its low ball rates – and after reading the above description of its incoherent rules, how could it? -- then this is just another scam we have to deal with on a different level.

-- Larry Legro  
SEA / State Agencies President

**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.



## Retirement and Health Insurance Report

by Melvin B. Sensenbrenner SEA Retirement & Health Insurance Representative  
and Daniel J. Joyce SEA Retirement & Health Insurance Co-Representative

### STATE OF WISCONSIN INVESTMENT BOARD MEETING – June 11, 2008

#### SWIB Performance

	<u>March 31, 2008</u>	<u>*April 30, 2008</u>	<u>May 31, 2008</u>
Core Fund:	-4.8%	-1.7%	-1.0%(B.M.-0.7%)
Variable Fund:	-8.8%	-4.6%	-3.0%(B.M.-2.6%)
Core Fund:	76.946B	78.909B	79.461B
Variable Fund:	6.160B	6.443B	6.546B
Total:	83.106B	85.352B	86.007B

\*Corrected by SWIB

The SWIB FY 2009 budget plan includes the next request to the Legislative Finance Committee for 16.5 additional staff positions, which will then complete the modernization for SWIB, and increase the internal investment dollars and decrease the externally managed investment dollars. This proposed increase in staff is supported by DOA and will be coordinated with the Legislature.

David Villa, chief investment officer, and Ron Mensink, director of quantitative analytics, updated the board on their research and analysis of risk vs. excess returns and the conclusions that can be drawn.

After their report, some of the board members complimented the staff on their presentation, and indicated that the board is beginning to understand what the staff's analysis is producing for SWIB and the possibility of increasing future excess returns.

David Villa indicated that SWIB is near the top of public retirement funds with the investment improvements. There are only two funds that are more technical with improvements than SWIB. They are the State of Virginia and Calpers of California.

Jane Hamblin, chief legal counsel, reported that SWIB received \$476,764.00 in May 2008 for securities fraud class action settlements. She also reported that they are considering another class action suit.

The new index fund manager was introduced and reported SWIB has already started to pull index funds to be internally managed. The index portfolio will gradually increase from \$1 to 2 billion by July or August. The internally managed index portfolio will continue to increase to a total of \$10 to \$12 billion by the end of the 2009 calendar year.

The next SWIB meeting was set for August 13.

-- Melvin B. Sensenbrenner



**GROUP INSURANCE BOARD MEETING – JUNE 10, 2008**

Deloitte Actuarial Report on the state ICI program was improving through 2007. With the increased premiums in 2007, the funding level improved from 90.6% in 2006 to 96.8% of liabilities in 2007. The actuary recommends holding premiums because there is \$13.8 million of deferred investment gains, which will be smoothed into the fund through 2011. They propose monitoring the plan for two years before considering an increase in premiums.

The local TCI Government plan is overly funded at 400 to 500% and will continue at the same premium rate.

The next report was presented by Aetna Insurance Co. on the administration of ICI and LTDI claims for ETF. Last year’s report covered the purchase of Broadspire by Aetna and its transition of staff and improved procedures. The group met or exceeded its standards for three of five customer service measures, and the other two were 1% or less from meeting the standard in calendar year 2007.

The claims handled by Aetna in 2007:

State ICI claims	1388
Local Gov. ICI claims	70
LTDI claims	233
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1691</b>

2008 Goals for Aetna:

- Maintain customer service goals
- Maintain staffing experience, strength and numbers
- Look for program efficiency and improvement opportunities
- Look to ETF/GIB for priority guidance

WPS provided its Health Care Utilization Report to the GIB for the self insured plans and thanked the GIB for its business from 1980 through 1993 and 2006 through 2010, for administration of SMP and Medicare plus \$1,000,000 health plans. WPS also handles Medicare, Military Tricare and Tricare for Life.

Bill Kox provided the technical changes to the 2009 guidelines and uniform benefits to GIB. The SEA Board members have a copy of them.

The next GIB meeting is August 26 when the board will review and approve the HMO rates for 2009.

-- Melvin B. Sensenbrenner

**SOME GOOD NEWS FROM THE ACTUARY**

While bargaining for reasonable salary and benefits have been an exercise in frustration, membership can take some measure of comfort in knowing that the Wisconsin Retirement System is in sound financial condition. That is what was reported in the 27<sup>th</sup> annual actuary valuation. The report was presented to the Teachers Retirement, Wisconsin Retirement, and Employee Trust Fund Boards joint informational meeting on June 26 by the actuary firm Gabriel Roeder Smith & Company. *(Turn to page 10)*



For those of you who enjoy looking at lots of numbers, charts, and graphs, a copy of the report can be made available by contacting Dan Joyce or Mel Sensenbrenner, the benefits and retirement co-representatives for SEA. For others, here are some important conclusions of the report:

- Normal cost contributions decreased for all valuation groups, except executive and elected (no SEA members in these categories), due to favorable investment performance.
- Core investment return was above the assumed level of 7.8 % for 2007 and has exceeded the assumed rate for each of the last 5 years.
- WRS continues to operate in accordance with principles of level percent of payroll financing.

These conclusions are really quite remarkable in light of the economic downturn being experienced over the past year. Much credit goes to the prudent investment strategies of the State of Wisconsin Investment Board (SWIB) and management of those funds by the Employee Trust Fund.

From the period of 1983 to the end of 2007 the contribution rates (as a percentage of payroll) for general employees has varied between 10.5% and 12.3%, this in spite of an unstable market and an increasing rate of retirements. How is this possible? The answer is WRS’s outstanding funding ratio of 99.6%. This compares to the average funding ratio of 82% for 85 pension plans analyzed in the 2006 Comparative Study of Major Public Employee Retirement Systems. By the way, the comparative study is available on the Wisconsin Legislative Council’s website, and all SEA board members were provided a copy at the February board meeting.

-- Dan Joyce

**June 28, 2008 Board Meeting Summary**  
 Meeting held at Best Western East Towne Suites, Madison  
 By Duane Hubeler, Secretary

**Attendance:**

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

**Board Members:**

Tom Peronto, Wisconsin Rapids President	David Solberg, Eau Claire President
Southeast Section – No Representative	Larry Legro, State Agencies President
Tony Allard, Green Bay President	Brian Mattson, Superior President
Sandy Anderson, Central Office President	Khader Abu al-eis, Madison President
Jeremy Tomesh, La Crosse President	Bob Schaefer, DNR Madison President
Mike Wendt, Rhinelander President	

**Specialists:**

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

**Meeting Begins:**

Tom Mугan called meeting to order at 8:39 am. Introductions were made.

**Approvals:**

The May 17, 2008 Board Meeting minutes were reviewed. Sandy Anderson moved to accept the minutes as written. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried. The Correspondence Report was reviewed. Tom Mugan accepted the Correspondence Report.

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

To follow up on SEA Day items, Senator Fred Risser's office asked for additional information on mileage reimbursement and ACT 89 issues. Agencies are in the process of finishing their budgets. Now would be a good time to push for less outsourcing. The Wisconsin Rapids section presented T-shirt mock-ups with bargaining-related themes that they will be ordering.

**Election Details:**

All SEA officers are up for elections. Nominations will close on July 15. Biographical information is due in the SEA office by July 25. A special newsletter will be e-mailed to members on or around August 1. Section Presidents should post a copy on their bulletin board. Paper copies of biographical information will also be included with the ballots. Balloting will close on August 31. A tally committee consisting of Bob Schaefer, Sandy Anderson, Larry Legro and Gretchen Wheat will meet shortly after Labor Day to count the votes.

**Bargaining & G-18:** *By Tom Mugan & Willie Haus*

A recent meeting of the G-18 group discussed the 4 units that do not yet have a contract. Besides SEA, the other groups are the Assistant District Attorneys, the Madison Teaching Assistants and PERSA (economists and statisticians). Health care plans were also discussed.

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

Note: P-xxx indicates personal grievance

A-xxx indicates an Association grievance

- A-307 (filed 5/3/99) – DOT D2 – Denied work time to take PE exam.
- A-351 (filed 7/19/01) – DOT D4 – RLS exam reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.
- A-352 (filed 6/25/01) – DOT D3 – 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 .
- 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 D1 - 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-419 (filed 12/23/04) – DNR Water – Add-on is part of year end cash out option. Filed at Step 4. Consolidated with A-369.
- A-420 (filed 1/27/05) – DOT – Turndown Mileage Rate. 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-435 (filed 11/30/05) – DOT D4 - PE Exam and Licensing Fee Reimbursement. Consolidated with A-307.



A-436 (filed 11-18-05) – DOT D2 - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. – Consolidated with A-307.  
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-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. Filed at Step 4.  
A-448 (filed 5/12/06) – DOT NCR – HAM used on current state employee in promotion. Filed at Step 4.  
A-453 (filed 8/18/06) – DOT NER - PE Exam and licensing fee reimbursement. Waived to Step 3.  
A-455 (filed 10/27/06) – 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. Waived to Step 3.  
A-463 (filed 4/18/07) – DOT NER – PE for CE-Adv positions. Filed at Step 4.  
A-464 (filed 6/5/07) – UW - Termination without just cause. Filed at Step 4.  
A-469 (filed 8/20/07) – DOT NER – Mileage reimbursement rates. Filed at Step 2.  
A-472 (filed 12/04/07) – DOT NCR – Denied standby pay for 25-hour shift. Moved to Step 4.  
A-473 (filed 1/8/08) – DOT NCR – Denied 2 hours call-back time. Moved to Step 4.  
A-474 (filed 1/16/08) – DOT NCR – Denied 2 hours call-back time. Moved to Step 4.  
A-475 (filed 2/7/08) – DOT SE – Involuntary reassignment. Moved to Step 4.  
A-476 (filed 2/28/08) – DOT NCR – Denied benefits after car accident. Moved to Step 4.  
A-477 (filed 4/29/08) – DOT NCR - Denied 2 hours call-back time. Moved to Step 4.

Specific issues discussed at this meeting: There is finally movement on reducing the backlog of long-overdue grievances. Numerous arbitration panels are ready for OSER's input.

**By-laws and Stipends:** *By Duane Hubeler*

Duane presented proposed changes to Article 5 of the by-laws (Powers and Duties of the Board of Directors) related to removal of officers and periodic Board reviews of stipends, fees and wages. Proposed changes to Article 6 of the by-laws (Powers and Duties of Officers & Section Presidents) included updating the required duties for all positions. The Board approved an increase in the hourly fee paid to our communications consultant, Ron Legro. There was a long, heated discussion on stipends. In the end, the Board passed a motion to increase monthly stipends \$200 for President & Treasurer, \$100 for Secretary & Vice Presidents and \$50.00 plus some changes in frequency for Section Presidents. These changes will take effect after the fall election.

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

Our Act 89 consultant, Professor Emeritus Ed Beimborn, is making progress and will plan to attend the next Board meeting in August and present his results so far. Ron would like examples of contributions state employees made in helping to mitigate damage and disruption caused by the recent flooding.

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

The Wisconsin Income Continuation Insurance Program is very well funded and in good financial shape. Reasonably priced dental insurance is available for all retirees through WREA (Wisconsin Retired Educators Association). The membership dues for WREA can be waived under specific circumstances. Employer contributions to the Wisconsin Retirement System will remain the same for 2009 – a sign that the fund is in good shape overall. Contrary to certain politicians who portray our retirement benefits as extravagant, our benefit multiplier is among the lowest of the 85 largest pension funds.

**Miscellaneous Items/Updates**

The SEA Annual meeting will be held the weekend of October 11 in Wausau. Any ideas for entertainment should be sent to Nichole Lysne or Tom Peronto of the Wisconsin Rapids section.



The updated grievance rep list should be proofed and sent to Leroy Stublaski and Sandy Henke at the SEA office.

**Section Reports:**

*Madison* — Willie Haus attended a recent meeting.

*Southeast* — (from John Bolka) Management does not see a current morale problem in the section, even though a recent employee appreciation day had more consultants than employees. The annual section meeting will be the third week in September. Recent flooding temporarily closed the Waukesha office building.

*Green Bay* — Some supervisors do not have a PE even when their PD requires one. Vacated positions are becoming difficult to fill. Members are becoming more interested in bargaining now that other units are getting their back-pay checks. All current CE Adv members now have their PE's. There is concern over continuing education impacts now that it is likely PE's will have to take it.

*Wisconsin Rapids* — A section meeting was held on June 9 with Willie Haus as a guest. Members are ordering T-shirts to wear in the office. An executive board meeting was held on June 17 to plan activities to publicize the lack of progress in bargaining.

*La Crosse* — Low reimbursement for mileage is a big issue with members. The lack of progress with bargaining is affecting morale.

*Eau Claire* — A section meeting was held on June 19 with new officers elected.

*Rhineland* — No report.

*Superior* — A section meeting was held in June. Senator Jauch paid a visit to the office. There is one member with potential problems with the PE policy. Bargaining remains a big question.

*Central Office/PSC* — Members are upset with the state's unwillingness to bargain in good faith. Members are unwilling to give up professional development leave without something in return.

*DNR* — Members have been working overtime responding to problems caused by flooding. Most people have moved back into the GEF II building after the recent remodeling. There is some debate over where the union bulletin boards will go.

*State Agencies* — A huge amount of money was wasted training a nuclear engineer who was a Russian national. His visa was not renewed because you don't need a degree to become a nuclear engineer at DHFS. Many HR people in the various agencies are misinterpreting the add-on language in our contract. Mileage continues to be an issue for many members who do extensive traveling. A double standard seems to exist in certain headquarter designations at DHFS.

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

John moved to accept the May, 2008 Membership Report. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried.

John moved to accept the May, 2008 Treasurer's Report. Bob Schaefer seconded. Motion carried.

John submitted the Board Meeting Vouchers and moved for approval to pay them. Bob Schaeffer seconded. Motion carried.



07-271 => 07-282 & 07-285 & 07-287	\$1537.84
M-102 => M-111	<u>\$2000.00</u>
	\$3537.84

John moved to pay miscellaneous voucher 07-286 for \$52.53. Duane Hubeler seconded. Motion carried. John noted that the Rhinelander section still has some uncashed checks outstanding.

**New Business:** An audit team consisting of Michelle Ellias, Nichole Lysne, Nick Martin and Larry Legro was nominated and approved by the President. John Bolka moved to pay the expenses associated with this committee. Duane Hubeler seconded. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 pm. The next Board Meeting will be on August 9, 2008, in Madison.



## PUZZLING PUZZLER: *Rope-a-dope*

You're on a wilderness expedition and it's heavily overcast. You need to measure off exactly 45 minutes of time, and while running an awesome whitewater falls in your kayak you lost your watch. But as a generally well-prepared scout, you do have two lengths of rope. Each length, you know, will burn in exactly one hour. The two ropes are not necessarily of the same length or width. Nor are they of uniform width; that is, each of the ropes may be wider in their middles than on their ends. Thus, burning half of either rope does not necessarily take a half hour.

You determine that by burning both ropes in a controlled manner, you can measure exactly 45 minutes worth of time. How do you do it?

**Email your answer to our contest address: [puzzlesea@yahoo.com](mailto:puzzlesea@yahoo.com). The answer and name of the first person who comes up with the correct answer will be in the next SEA View.**

**Last issue:** Ed and Edna Himes have three sons, all of them fathered by Ed, and all born naturally to Edna on March 3, 1993. However, the boys are not triplets. How are we to explain this?

**Solution:** Ed and Edna are the proud parents of quadruplets: One girl and three boys. Congratulation to the first member to supply the correct answer: **Jim Baumann**, special assistant to the director, Bureau of Watershed Management, DNR. Jim has won twice in two months, so maybe we should ban him from the sport and declare him pro.

Many other members figured out this puzzle. A few noted that the boys could have been part of quintuplets or greater, not just quadruplets. And a few others were even more creative. Honorable mention to our very first respondent, Barbara Gassen. who missed the quadruplets solution but suggested, quite reasonably, that perhaps the boys were part of an artificial insemination procedure. "Eggs from different mothers fertilized by sperm from father (Ed), implanted into mother (Edna). So, since they are not genetically related on mother's side, they are not triplets." Hey, it could happen.



Michelle Elias was arguably even more creative. "Ed and Edna are chickens, or some kind of animal that lays eggs. Edna laid three eggs, and they all hatched on the same day. If I'm wrong, I probably have the most bizarre answer," Michelle wrote. That's right, but hats off to a novel problem-solving approach.

Charles Landey called this puzzle the easiest one ever. "Normally I'm not bright enough for your puzzles, but I got this one." Why he got it: "My two cats (now deceased), Chesapeake Landey and Ohio Landey, were born the same day in 1983 to the same cat mother (father/ fathers unknown) in Detroit, Michigan. But they weren't twins. The kittens were 2/3rds of triplets." You see, folks, real-world experience really does pay off.

**WANTED: Your comments, calendar items**

What's going on in your area? Are members in your section doing great things, either at work or off hours? What's going on in your neck of state government? SEA View readers want to know. **Share your ideas, opinions and suggestions. SEA View will print guest columns from members as space allows.** We're also interested in your feedback and suggestions. How are we doing? Got a take on an issue of interest to members in general? Email [sea\\_wis@yahoo.com](mailto:sea_wis@yahoo.com).

