

# THE SEANC CONNECTION



District 19

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## Erskine Bowles Focuses on the State Personnel Act



Erskine Bowles

UNC President Erskine Bowles will not move forward in lobbying for proposed legislation that would have created a separate human resource system for the 16-campus university system.

Bowles sent a March 16 memorandum to chancellors in which he said that he had listened carefully to opinions from human resource directors on the campuses and from the UNC Staff Assembly.

The UNC-CH Employee Forum unanimously voted on March 7 to oppose the section of the President's Advisory Committee on Efficiency and Effectiveness (PACE) report that advocated a new human resource system for the University of North Carolina system.

Instead of pursuing proposed legislation in the General Assembly, Bowles has now said that he would seek approval from legislators to create a task force to identify potential modifications to the State Personnel Act "that would provide the University with greater flexibility in personnel matters so that we can better meet the needs of our employees and improve the efficiency of our personnel operations."

Bowles wants the panel to reach a consensus on recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly in 2008.

The UNC-CH Employee Forum will seek input for the task force's study by surveying all SPA staff, EPA non-faculty staff and other non-tenure track employees in an effort to gather ideas on how the current system can be changed to become "more operationally efficient, cost effective and fair for everyone."

## General Assembly Demographics

House	68 Democrats	52 Republicans
Senate	31 Democrats	19 Republicans
Gender (both chambers)	42 Women	128 Men

## The Governor's Proposed Budget

Governor Mike Easley's proposed budget includes:

- 2.5 percent pay raise for state agency and university employees
- 5 percent pay raise for community college faculty and professional staff
- 2 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for retirees
- 5 percent pay raise for teachers
- \$45 million to pay back the escrowed retirement funds from 2001 (pays off the balance without interest).

SEANC has proposed a 5 percent pay raise for all state employees and a retiree COLA equal to active state employees' pay increase or equal to the current Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 2.5 percent, whichever is greater. SEANC is asking for an increase in the employer contribution to the Retirement System to 4 percent (currently 2.66 percent) and an increase in the retirement accrual formula from 1.82 percent to 1.83 percent.

## Joe Hackney Elected House Speaker



(L to R) Dana Cope and Joe Hackney

Joe Hackney, a member of the House of Representatives for 14 terms, was recently elected Speaker of the House. In addition, he has been endorsed by EMPAC for his pro-employee voting record. SEANC Executive Director Dana Cope commented, "SEANC looks forward to working with Speaker Hackney. He has always taken the time to consider how the state workforce benefits North Carolina."

In a radio interview on April 2 with Dana Cope, Hackney explained his position on issues that are important to state employees. When asked about the Governor's proposed 2.5 percent salary increase for state employees, Hackney said, "If we can, and I think we can, we should do better than that." He wants to keep the cost of health care down and he thinks that "we have a great retirement system," one that is fully funded. Ethics reform is something that "could stand tweaking." Hackney himself "did not find financial disclosure onerous."

Joe Hackney is a farmer and lawyer. He resides in Chapel Hill, is a member of District 19, and represents Moore, Chatham and Orange Counties in the General Assembly.

## DISTRICT 19 OFFICERS

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## Kudos to District 19 Members Claire Miller and Susan Whitfield



Claire Miller

The first annual Claire Miller Lecture in Philosophy took place on October 7, 2006 at the 40th Chapel Hill Colloquium in Philosophy. Donors who wish to remain anonymous established the endowment to recognize the extraordinary contributions that Claire Miller has made to the Philosophy Department and to the internationally acclaimed Chapel Hill Colloquium. Daniel Dennett from Tufts University became the first Claire Miller Lecturer in Philosophy.

Chair of the Department Geoffrey Sayre-McCord said, "It is a delight to be able to put in place this permanent honor to Claire."



Susan Whitfield

Susan Whitfield was one of two UNC employees to be honored with the Robert R. Cornwell Unsung Hero Award on March 19.

Robert R. Cornwell served the University for more than 20 years as associate university registrar and as research associate in the Office of Institutional Research. He died in 1994 in active service at the University. The awards were established to honor him and are presented annually to faculty or staff employees who have

provided significant service in support of the University over a long period of time and, generally, from a background position.

Susan Whitfield is a photographer, artist, illustrator and computer-based design specialist who has worked for UNC-CH for more than 20 years. Steve Matson, Chair of the Biology Department, describes Whitfield as someone who has evolved with the times, keeping up with the constantly changing needs of the Department while learning to combine her sensibilities as an artist with the latest in digital graphics. He tells us that she "is one who is always helpful and happy to answer questions, provide advice or find the necessary supplies and equipment to carry out any graphic arts project. Her work graces most of the publications from the 40 or so labs in the Biology Department and few graduate students have finished their theses without her assistance."

Professor Albert K. Harris praised Susan Whitfield very strongly when he said, "Besides being utterly reliable, she is the single best staff member that I have ever dealt with....This university and this department are blessed to have her among us."

## Retirees' Corner



Retirees at their summer picnic

The Retirees' Chapter continues to be very active. Their monthly meetings feature programs on a wide range of topics, including long term care, breast cancer awareness, safety issues, and the environment.

## New SEANC Headquarters Opens



(L to R) Dana Cope, Linda Coleman, architect Roula Qubain, and Linda Rouse Sutton cut the ribbon



(L to R) District 65 Chair Vivian Bazemon, Linda Coleman, and Martha Fowler at the ceremony



SEANC headquarters



The SEANC cake

On November 17, 2006 more than 100 SEANC members, staff and guests celebrated the opening of SEANC's new headquarters with a ribbon-cutting ceremony featuring Representative Linda Coleman (D-Wake) and SEANC President Linda Rouse Sutton. Ruth Lewter and Martha Fowler represented District 19 at the event.

SEANC relocated from downtown Raleigh to 1621 Midtown Place, a move that doubled the working space while saving money in property taxes. The new site also includes two conference rooms available to SEANC districts or for rental to outside groups.

## Mark Your Calendars

District 19 meets the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., at the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA), 400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro. There is plenty of free parking and refreshments are served. All state employees are welcome.

May 15, 2007	Monthly Meeting
June 19, 2007	Annual Meeting
July 17, 2007	Monthly Meeting
August 21, 2007	Monthly Meeting
September 6-8, 2007	Annual Convention, Greensboro
September 20, 2007	Monthly Meeting

The Retirees' Chapter meets on the fourth Tuesday morning of each month at 8:30. All retirees are welcome. For information, call Phyllis Fearington at 929-2284.



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