

THE SEANC CONNECTION



District 19

Vol. 8, No. 2, February 2001

Chair's Column

BUDGET DEFICIT REQUIRES A CALL TO ACTION BY STATE EMPLOYEES



By Martha Fowler

The 2001 session of the General Assembly convened on January 24. This is a Call to Action to all members of SEANC. The following is an excerpt from the January 11, 2001 edition of the *Insider*, a publication of the *News and Observer*.

"Budget Input Sought: President Pro Tem Marc Basnight, D-Dare, is asking the public for suggestions on where to cut state spending as the General Assembly tries to cover projected shortfalls in state revenues. In a letter to the editor to newspapers across the state, Basnight outlined the budget problems ... (*Editor's note: The budget shortfall could reach \$800 million or more by June 30, 2001.*) The budget will also be tight for the coming biennium, Basnight said, and the legislature will face 'some very tough choices' during the session that begins January 24. 'We will have to do what the average North Carolina family does in tough times—tighten our belt, make do with less, clearly focus our priorities, cut waste and inefficiency in government, and make every penny count,' Basnight wrote. He invited citizens to join the process. 'On behalf of the North Carolina Senate, I would like to call on anyone who may have an idea or suggestion as to how we can reduce spending and make state government more efficient to please contact my office.' He said the Senate Appropriations Committee, which will initiate the budget process this session, 'will carefully review every idea brought forward, and we will respond ... as to the outcome of your suggestion. I can assure you that no idea will be ignored, no suggestion deemed unworthy of our most careful analysis.' Not every proposal will be implemented, Basnight said. He asked for specific proposals, not just across-the-board cuts, which he said won't provide 'improvements in efficiency and long-term cost savings we need.' The address is 2007 Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601-2808."

House Speaker Jim Black, D-Mecklenburg, suggested in a recent news conference that State employees be prepared to work "7 percent harder" next year—an amount equal to the attrition rate for State jobs in the past. The attrition rate is now 15 percent.

I encourage each State employee, whether active or retired, to respond to Senator Basnight, as well as your local legislators with your letters and phone calls. (However, please remember that any contacts with legislators, phone calls, emails or letters should be made on your own time and should not be done on or using state property.)

It is imperative that the Senate Appropriations Committee understands that State employees are paying very close attention to the budget situation and to any action that they may consider in dealing with it. You should stand up for yourselves and your colleagues. As State employees and as citizens, you have unique insight into the situation and the very real problems plaguing the State Government workforce.

Tell the legislators not to cut your job, or deny you a paycheck that is adequate enough to provide shelter, food and clothing for you and your family, or make it impossible to provide health insurance for you and your family. Tell them to fund the pay plan for State employees that will allow your personal budgets to keep up with inflation.

The Senate must know that it cannot balance the State budget on the backs of the very employees that it expects to carry on the work of the State and serve its citizens daily! Please write Senator Basnight today, and send a copy of your letter to YOUR senator too. You can visit the SEANC web site (<http://www.seanc.org>) and click on "Cyber-lobbying" under Legislative Affairs to find information.

TAKE ACTION NOW.

HOW SEANC BEGAN

Ever wonder how SEANC got started? Well, 1947 generally is considered the year of the Association's official debut.

Prior to 1945, a group of individuals, mostly highway and prison employees in western North Carolina, decided they needed representation in the General Assembly. They unofficially organized an association. During 1945 and 1946 the organization began to take shape, and W. B. Ferguson, a district engineer in Burnsville, took the lead in forming the North Carolina State Employees Association (NCSEA). By the end of 1946, approximately 3,600 employees had joined the group and scheduled an organization convention for January 1947 at the Carolina Hotel in Raleigh.

The 1947 General Assembly approved a 20 percent salary increase as the first across-the-board raise ever granted to highway and prison employees. Problems began to develop within the organization, and the original organizers gave up the name of the North Carolina State Employees Association and took the name of the North Carolina State Highway Commission Employees Association (NCSHEA).

On July 26, 1947 the North Carolina State Employees Association was formed again at a meeting held at the Carolina Hotel in Raleigh. Mason E. Swearingen was elected president. Membership totaled 323.

In 1949 the Legislature granted a 20 percent salary increase retroactive to October 1948 for all State employees and approved funds for merit and automatic increments effective July 1, 1950.

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DISTRICT 19 OFFICERS

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Anthony Weaver
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2ND VICE CHAIR
Marie Tate
732-8126

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732-8126

TREASURER
Pamela Siler
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HOW SEANC BEGAN

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During 1950 through 1959 the two associations (the NCSHEA and the NCSEA) continued to make gains in State employee benefits. In 1957 the NCSHEA changed its name to the North Carolina State Highway and Prison Employees Association. Membership in both associations reached 6,000 by the mid-1950s.

During the 1960s pay increases were moderate until 1967, when State employees received a 6 percent increase. Longevity pay was approved in this decade.

The 1970s brought major legislative gains for State employees, including: a 50 percent increase in salaries, 30-year retirement, retirement formula increases, and the creation of a State Health Plan.

The North Carolina State Highway and Prison Employees Association changed its name again in 1973 to North Carolina State Government Employees Association (NCSGEA). Efforts began in the early 1970s to merge the two associations (NCSGEA and NCSEA) but failed. It was not until September 1983 that consolidation was approved.

On July 1, 1984, State Employees of North Carolina (SENC) was formed with a membership of just over 40,000. Kay Slaughter of Mebane was elected president.

During the 1980s, State employee salaries increased by 60 percent. Longevity was enhanced. The State Health Plan was improved and retirement benefits continued to increase.

In September 1984 the new organization changed its name to the State Employees Association of North Carolina (SEANC). Ivan Hill was elected president.

In the 1990s, salaries for State employees increased slightly more than 20 percent. The Comprehensive Compensation System was passed in 1993. The retirement formula was increased from 1.75 in 1997 to 1.81 percent.

By 1995, membership in SEANC had grown to 62,000 members. Since then, SEANC has updated its computer system, launched a public relations program and stepped up its legislative lobbying efforts.

As stated in its mission statement, "SEANC is committed to protecting and enhancing the rights and benefits of current, retired and future State employees."

ALTERNATIVE HEALTH CARE GROWS IN POPULARITY

By Kathleen-Marie Snipes

Today we have two choices for our health care. One is the traditional system that involves accredited physicians and nurses. The other is equally used, but called alternative, and involves more self-care and a multitude of choices made by the individual. The alternative therapies require no prescription, but are at the discretion of the individual or family and may or may not involve physicians, therapists of all kinds and purchasing herbs and other consumables.

For any therapy to be effective, individuals need to believe that it will be beneficial over time and make their personal health improve. A recent study found that 50 percent of people who were told they had surgery felt better even when they had not had a surgical procedure. Some had only had a scar made that was skin deep. Nevertheless, they had less chest pain and less angina. One doctor I know in India says his father prescribed for entire villages and used hot water as a treatment for diabetes and many other diseases. The treatment worked.

For real healing, we as individuals must take responsibility for our own health. We must plan to have good health, good care from others as well as at our own initiative.

Health is so much more than just freedom from disease. It is an overall attitude that is life supporting and refreshing. For some people it can be new experiences, travel, gardening or just playing with children. For others it can be more intellectual or more athletic. It can have so many dimensions, but it leaves the individual satisfied and happy.

The real message of alternative health care today is to provide more options for good health. Some of these therapies are listed below.

Transcendental Meditation:

This therapeutic meditation technique, as taught by qualified teachers, releases stress from the nervous system, allowing the physiology to settle down enough so that deep rest is gained, deeper than deep sleep. After meditating the individual has more clarity of mind and a more refreshed physiology, renewed from past thinking and habit patterns. Research indicates that T. M. is therapeutic in the treatment of cardiovascular disease.

Herbal Therapies:

The most beneficial are those formulas that have been time tested under traditions such as Chinese or Indian (Vedic). When taken in combinations as formulas, either in teas or tablets or pastes or oils, herbal therapies treat disease and bring balance into the body.

Balanced, Natural Diet:

A diet that contains fresh foods, appropriately cooked when needed and some sources of calcium (milk or yogurt), forms the basis for good health. All the "therapies" in the world do not replace several balanced meals on any given day. All six tastes and rich flavors must be present daily in foods to create a physiology that will generate health and well-being.

NORTH CAROLINA LEADS THE WAY

North Carolina's government is moving ahead with efforts to make its computer systems more available to disabled users. Secretary of Administration Katie Dorsett learned that a State employee with a visual impairment was unable to use a function of Netscape Navigator. Upon further investigation, she found that several disabled employees had trouble working with North Carolina's information technology. The Information Resource Management commission formed a group to study the IT systems and suggest changes. The group said better training is necessary to improve accessibility. Also evident is a new portal, North Carolina @ Your Service, which employs the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Advocates for the disabled have expressed their support for these standards, and the federal Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board referred to them when proposing its own IT standards. (Government Computer News/State and Local, December 2000, as reported by the electronic publication *Educause* on December 27, 2000.)

Take a look at District 19's
Web site:
www.unc.edu/depts/seanc19/

DISTRICT 19 RECRUITS 100 NEW MEMBERS



(L to R) Dana Cope, Anthony Weaver, and Cliff Brown with the box of 100 new memberships in SEANC

Membership Co-Chairs Anthony Weaver and Wendy Watkins recently recruited the large number of 100 new members for District 19. A partial list follows:

Scott Adams	Sandra Holland	Rhonda Plaisance
Jennifer Albright	Eileen Holzmacher	Andrea Presler
Linda Allred	Madge Hubbard	Joseph Purifoy
Rhoda Bias	Lorene Hughes	Annette Raines
Richard James Brown	Cheryl Jarmon	Peter Reinhardt
Naomi Bullock	Joyce Jefferies	Naser Rezk
Donald Bynum	Mary Lou Jones	Betty Richmond
Donna Clapp	Jerry Joyce	Evelyn Riggsbee
Robert Collier	Melissa Kerkau	Pamelia Roberts
Mary Craven	Linda Killian	Jean Rouleau
John Dates	Monta King	Caroline Rutledge
Janice Daugherty	Mary Kyles	Annemarie Ryan
Patricia Davis	Catherine Lambeth	Deanna Sanders
Tena Davis	Alesia Lassiter	Shelby Sikes
Cynthia Dean	Barbara Leonard	Cynthia Snipes
Alfred Dolge, Jr.	Shirlene Lester	Timothy Stiles
Ellen Douth	Darlene Little	Sherman Stroud
Dawn Edgerton	Brenda Lowe	Robert E. Sutton
Mary Everette	Lynn Martin	Marc ter Horst
Amber Fawell	Arlene Medder	Sheila Warner
Penelope Ferry-Leeper	Rebecca Molinary	Betty Welborn
Esphur Foster	Tom Munk	Oscar Wilborn, Jr.
Mary T. Fox	Sheila Nickerson	Christine S. Williams
Dianne Glover	Delores Oakes	Wayne L. Wilson
Cheryl Gore	Geri Osborn	Beverly Wood
Eva Green	Denise Pearsall	Donna Wyatt
Nancy Hall	Nickey Pennix	
Sonia Hanker	Archie Phillips, Jr.	

Betty Welborn, who is one of these new members, told us that joining SEANC "is something I wanted to do for myself for a long time." We're delighted she feels this way. We hope to see Betty and all other new members at our monthly meetings.

Congratulations, Anthony and Wendy, on a job well done!

Retirees' Corner

SPOTLIGHT ON MARIAH MCPHERSON

By Hazel Lunsford

Mariah McPherson, the new Chair of the Retirees' Chapter of District 19, is a native of Tennessee who came to North Carolina to attend North Carolina Central University where she majored in business administration and minored in education. She met and married William McPherson and decided to make Orange County her home. She is retired from the Orange County Cooperative Extension Office after 45 years of outstanding service.



In 1996 Mariah McPherson was honored by the Orange County Commissioners. She worked with the Country's 4-H Program and was hired as an office assistant with the Agricultural Extension Service, now called Cooperative Extension, during the time when segregation was legal. She believes that caring and loving others is the key to developing a successful society.

She helped start a class in Orange County where people could obtain a General Education Degree (GED). She says, "People need to be trained so they can earn a living." She was instrumental in encouraging individuals to further their education and is proud that she worked with many students who have gone to college and developed successful careers. She assisted people from all backgrounds and helped them move from poverty to self-sufficiency. She tells us, "I care about people and want to show them what a benefit a good education is."

Mariah has made many contributions to Orange County through her participation, membership or involvement in such organizations as the Commission for Women, Human Relations Board, Democratic Party (presently Head Judge in West Hillsborough precinct). She has been a strong supporter of the Northern Orange Black Voters Alliance, Council on Aging Board, Old Stanback School Task Force, North Carolina Central University Alumni Association, American Civil Liberties Union, and is an active member in First Community Church.

Mariah participated in a Cultural Diversity Group in Orange County and was one of the representatives to a related conference held in Alabama. She has served on the State Democratic Party Executive Board and attended a National Democratic Convention. She has served as District EMPAC Chair for Area 6. She has also been involved with the Women's Agenda Assembly and accepts speaking engagements with community groups.

Mariah is described by those who know her well as honest, sincere and responsible. If you ask her to be on your committee or join your group, she tells you, up front, that she is not a "yes" person. She gathers information and makes her responses based on her findings or what she perceives as the truth. Don't ask her a question unless you expect a candid answer, because that is what you will get.

We are very pleased to have Mariah McPherson as a valued member of District 19.

WE HAVE A PLACE FOR YOU ON OUR COMMITTEES

District 19 Committee Chairs for 2000-2001 are:

Auditing	Patricia Harris	732-8126
Awards	Peggy Cotton	962-5239
Bylaws	Hazel Lunsford	732-4410
Communications	Claire Miller	962-7291
EMPAC	Muzetta Pettiford	596-9569
Group Buying	Jim Vaughn	408-0346
Hospitality	Claude Hooker	966-7749
Membership	Wendy Watkins	966-1250
Membership	Anthony Weaver	962-6270
Nominating	Beverly Leake	942-4967
Retirees' Chapter	Mariah McPherson	732-2583
Scholarship	Ruth Lewter	966-2736

Chapel Hill's oldest import boutique, The Painted Bird, at University Square, has joined our Group Buying program with a 10 percent discount off non-sale items to members of SEANC.

DISTRICT 19 MEMBER BECOMES A STAR HEEL

UNC-CH's new employee recognition program for faculty and staff, the "Star Heels" Award program, was created by a donation from TIAA-CREF in October 2000. A \$20 dollar gift certificate is given to a deserving State employee.

Karen Thompson, an SPA staff member, recently became a Star Heel. Her employer had this to say when nominating her for the award. "Karen joined Women's Studies in August 1994. She takes great pride and commitment in her position in Women's Studies. Her loyalty and confidence contribute greatly to how smoothly the curriculum runs. Karen is a pleasure to work with and a great asset to Women's Studies. Thank you, Karen!"



FORWARDING & ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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