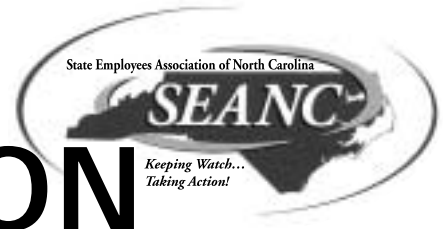


# THE SEANC CONNECTION



District 19

Vol. 9, No. 1, November 2001

## Chair's Column

### SEANC Needs You

By Martha Fowler



This year, SEANC set a first for new beginnings. The doings of the extremely long session of the General Assembly have dismayed citizens and State employees. The budget shortfall, redistricting, and many other issues have kept legislators in session for more than ten months. The events of September 11, 2001 will forever be embedded in our memories. SEANC members have donated money to victims of this disaster. The economy still lags in North Carolina and in the nation.

Yet, SEANC continues to tackle issues that affect State employee benefits. SEANC filed a lawsuit on your behalf to restore money into your retirement system. Money that has been put into North Carolina's retirement system should not be subject to raids by the Governor or the General Assembly. State employees currently pay six percent of their income into the retirement system. Many of you have worked long and hard as State employees, looking forward to retirement. Is it fair that North Carolina has drastically reduced the amount it pays into the retirement system on your behalf to a mere 1.97 percent?

As you will note from the top ten policy platform objectives adopted by the 2001 annual convention (see page 3), we will continue to seek funding to maintain and enhance our cornerstone objectives. These objectives include salary, health care, retirement and job security. Another new but important issue for SEANC concerns collective bargaining and the establishment of a SEANC study commission to fully address this issue.

I would like each of you to do two things. First, become actively involved in your district. Attend district meetings and express your opinions about what is happening to the benefits and rights of State employees. Second, form a partnership with SEANC. You are a valued asset to this organization. Read your newsletter, *The Reporter*, to get the latest news. Communicate and spread the word to nonmembers about SEANC. Ask them to join SEANC. You have no other group to lobby for you with your legislators. We are strong but we need to become stronger. We need your support if we are going to have a positive effect on our own future.

## General Assembly Still in Session

The 2001 General Assembly convened on January 24 for what has turned out to be the longest legislative session in history. As we go to press, the General Assembly is still meeting. A budget for the 2001–2003 biennium was adopted on September 21. It includes the following provisions for State employees:

A \$625 pay increase for State employees retroactive to July 1.

A 2 percent cost-of-living adjustment for retirees retroactive to July 1.

A State contribution rate toward employee retirement of 1.97 percent, the lowest employer contribution in a decade or more.

## Mattie Jones Wins \$1,000 in EMPAC Raffle

Mattie Jones, Housekeeping Zone Manager at UNC-CH and member of District 19, was the surprised winner, along with some of her fellow employees, of \$1,000 in a raffle benefiting EMPAC at the annual convention in September.



She tells us in a recent interview that when she got her tickets, there were only five left. "It was break time for my 3:50 am to 11:50 am employees. Someone selling the tickets asked me if I wanted to buy some raffle tickets. I said OK. I asked my employees if they wanted to go in with me and they said yes. They asked me to put my name down. We would all share in the money if we won. We were so thrilled when we did win."

Way to go, Mattie. And thank you, Pamela Siler, for selling Mattie the winning ticket.

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## District 19 Recognized for Excellence in Communications

At the convention September 6–8 in Greensboro, District 19 was recognized as a top communicator. We received the Best Overall Communications Award, 2000–2001, in Category C (1,500 or more members). This makes it two years in a row for our District. We took home the Best Newsletter award in Category C the year before.

## DISTRICT 19 OFFICERS

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IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR  
Gerry Lawrence  
968-4120

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Anthony Weaver  
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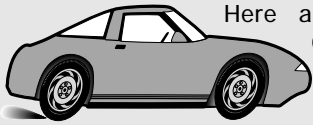
2<sup>ND</sup> VICE CHAIR  
Marie Tate  
732-8126

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Pamela Siler  
843-8094

# Is There a Parking Shortage?

By James Coley, UNC-CH staff member



Here at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, many State employees who are members of the staff, as well as many faculty and students, frequently refer to the “parking problem” or the “parking shortage.” I would like to suggest that we should try to rethink this issue. There clearly is a problem on campus. But I would call it a “transportation problem” instead. In fact, I would call it a “transportation mess.”

We will never get out of the transportation mess we are in until we have a radical change in our thinking about the very subject of transportation, and an important part of that change is to realize that it is a fundamental mistake to suppose that there is a “parking shortage” in Chapel Hill or on campus. *The Daily Tar Heel* repeatedly makes this mistake, as in an editorial this summer, which said, “on-campus parking is scarce.” But in this respect, the student newspaper is not at all unusual. The idea of a parking shortage is so ingrained that it may seem absurd to question it.

However, here is a completely different, and ultimately more practical, way to think about this. There is no parking shortage. There is an overabundance of automobiles.

Also, there is a shortage of other transportation options, such as transit and biking. While Chapel Hill has an excellent bus system by comparison to others in North Carolina, we really need to have transit services around the clock every day of the year, and we need new bike routes. We need to provide people with transportation, not parking spaces.

Obviously, there is a gap between the amount of available parking on campus and the amount of it some people would *like* to have. But this seems like a “shortage” only if one assumes that the parking people would *like* to have is something they *should* have. This is the very assumption that got us into the mess we are in now, and we must learn to think about transportation in new ways that are not based on this assumption.

Of course, many University employees, especially those who live outside of Chapel Hill, really have no alternative to driving in. The way to provide them with a transportation link to campus is, naturally, park-and-ride. And many State employees currently do use this arrangement. That will increase, particularly because the many construction projects on campus will require it. The park-and-ride option will not just be temporary, however. When these construction projects are finished, the increased use of park-and-ride facilities and services will have to continue.

We will be better served, not by demands for more parking, but by demands to improve park-and-ride facilities and services, as well as other transportation alternatives. Therefore, I hope we begin to hear less in coming years about the so-called “parking shortage” and more about practical solutions. In the long run, that’s the only way out of this mess.



Martha Fowler makes a nomination speech

## SEANC Convention Makes Historic Decision

Delegates to the annual convention September 6–8 decided to pursue the right to collectively bargain with the State for better working conditions.

After an hour of impassioned discussion, the 900 delegates sent a strong message to the political establishment in Raleigh. They authorized SEANC leaders to seek the repeal of G. S. 95–98 that prohibits collective bargaining by public employees, and to amend legislation on the books that voids the payroll deduction of dues of organizations that participate in collective bargaining.



Brenda and Claude Hooker



Martha Fowler and Representative Dan Blue

Delegates also empowered the president of SEANC to appoint a special commission to explore all aspects of collective bargaining.

In a separate vote, the convention retained in the SEANC Bylaws the language “SEANC shall not be affiliated with any local, state or national labor union,” but deleted the sentence, “In no event shall a strike or work stoppage be employed by SEANC.”

The discussion was lively, and predominantly pro-collective bargaining.

Dana Cope, SEANC’s Executive Director, commented, “The 18th annual convention of SEANC has taken a bold step to improve the salaries, benefits and overall working conditions of State employees. Collective bargaining legislation, when enacted, will level the playing field with our employer, something we don’t currently enjoy. The journey will take some time—months, if not years.”



Teddy bears collected for the Highway Patrol

Collective bargaining is the process of negotiation between representatives of employees and their employer to determine the terms of employment. The resulting agreement may determine items such as compensation, benefits, hiring practices, working conditions, and employee discipline.

## 2002 Policy Platform Objectives

1. Request the General Assembly to fully fund pay plans prior to considering other appropriations.
2. Seek continuation of a fully paid individual health care benefit for all active and retired State employees.
3. Amend the retirement formula to allow an employee to retire using his or her two highest salary years as an averaging factor.
4. Seek a change in G.S. 126-7 to fully fund the Comprehensive Compensation System. The cost-of-living adjustment and the performance bonuses will be funded from the expansion budget.
5. Seek special appropriations totaling at least five percent of total payroll to be included in the continuation budget to enable pay plan to catch up the ground lost to inflation over the past six years.
6. Seek an increase in the retirement accrual rate to 2.5.
7. Seek the repeal of G. S. 95-98 and support the enactment of legislation to govern collective bargaining by State employees.
8. Seek a change to allow State employees who have completed 28 years of creditable service to be eligible for a full, unreduced service retirement.
9. Seek full restoration of the employer's contribution to the Retirement System at 9.35 percent and reduce the employee's contribution to 5.0 percent.
10. Assign an existing committee or appoint a special committee to determine the steps SEANC needs to take to be prepared to act as a collective bargaining agent.

### Pinkey DuBose Honored with Chancellor's Award



Carolyn (Pinkey) S. DuBose, a longtime member of District 19, became a proud recipient of the Chancellor's Award this year. She, along with four others, received \$1,000, a special leave award of 24 hours, and a framed certificate at the August 15 luncheon with Chancellor James Moeser. DuBose, who has since retired, was a University administrative manager with the Health Sciences Library. She was nominated by her department for "her unselfish devotion to duty that is far and above normal expectations." Her nominating materials said, "All Pinkey's hard work has a single focus: making sure the library has the resources needed to provide good service to our users.... As her outstanding career comes to a close with her imminent retirement, Pinkey deserves special recognition for her exemplary dedication, numerous outstanding and unselfish contributions and high standards."

Well done, Pinkey.

## Retirees' Corner

### Gerry Lawrence Goes on the Trip of a Lifetime

District 19 retiree member Gerry Lawrence recently returned from an unforgettable trip to Romania. She and her team of 11 members from Grace Church left on June 26 and returned July 11. They visited the children's hospital in Cluj as part of their Global Outreach. For two days they



Two orphaned children dropped off at the hospital also went to the park, where they did clowning and presented a puppet show, followed by two dramas. They gave out 2,000 balloons in the park and, according to Gerry, "could easily have given out 5,000." The next day they had the use of an exhibition building and they continued their missionary work. "All of the people we came in contact with were so gracious. I'd love to return," Gerry says. Her wish could come true. A trip to Romania is being planned for next year.



Performing for the children at the city park



A street scene in Cluj, Romania



Gerry Lawrence and a clown riding the bus

### District 19 Recruits New Members

Thirty new members were recruited by District 19 on October 15 at the UNC Employee Benefits Health Fair.

## It Pays To Be a Member of SEANC

Group buying is one of our favorite benefits and includes the following businesses in the Chapel Hill and Carrboro area.

### The Body Shop, Inc.

10 percent off  
11744 Highway 15-501, Carrboro  
942-1023

### The Furniture Doctor

10 percent off  
Lloyd Street, Carrboro  
967-9102

### Jiffy Lube

10 percent off signature service  
(Not valid for NC inspection or with coupons)  
North Fordham Blvd., Chapel Hill  
968-9000  
West Franklin Street, Chapel Hill  
929-2937

### The Painted Bird – boutique

10 percent off (Excludes sales items)  
West Franklin Street, Chapel Hill  
942-2311

### The Potted Plant

10 percent off regular items  
(Not valid February 10–15)  
Eastgate Shopping Center  
968-0502

### The Shoe Doctor

10 percent off goods and services of regular  
priced merchandise  
11460 Highway 15-501, Chapel Hill  
929-7740

## 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.

November 20, 2001	Monthly Meeting
December 18, 2001	Monthly Meeting
January 15, 2002	Monthly Meeting
February 19, 2002	Monthly Meeting
March 19, 2002	Monthly Meeting
April 16, 2002	Monthly Meeting
May 21, 2002	Monthly Meeting
June 18, 2002	Annual Meeting
July 16, 2002	Monthly Meeting
August 20, 2002	Monthly Meeting
September 5–7, 2002	Annual Convention, Greensboro
September 17, 2002	Monthly Meeting

The Retirees' Chapter meets on the fourth Tuesday morning of each month at 8:30 at Bob Evans Restaurant. All retirees are welcome. For information, call Mariah McPherson at 732-2583.



## FORWARDING & ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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