



# SEA View

Volume XXXVIII / No. 9

August-September 2008

## OSER: What happened to the idea of *good* employment relations?



*From the president*

Tom Mugan

The cornerstone of a good union/management relationship is cooperation. While there will always be disagreements about interpretations of contract language or differences in strategies for settling disputes, accomplishing the business goals of the organization is best achieved by working together. Workers who feel they are being treated with respect and fairness will perform more diligently. Managers who see that employee representatives share common work objectives are more likely to understand the values that unions strive to achieve. In this way, both sides win.

I have generally seen this cooperative attitude by management in the past. However, there seems to be a disturbing trend in the highest levels of employment relations in this state. That trend is indicative of the indifference with which this administration treats us.

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Forgive me for thinking that a governmental unit with a title like Office of State Employment Relations should strive for relations with state employees that are *good* relations. Aside from OSER's general refusal to bargain in good faith, let me cite a few examples.

### Fees for information

SEA recently made several information requests needed to help us perform our basic function of collective bargaining. OSER has made it clear to us that the information will only be provided after SEA pays for the documents, pointing to provisions in the statutes allowing state agencies to charge requesters for the cost of producing information. In one case, SEA specifically asked for information in electronic format, knowing that this

*continued on page 2*



would be easier to produce and mail. We were told that the charge was for “locating” the records. But OSER should not have been surprised, nor should it have needed to do anything extraordinary to locate the files, since we had asked for similar documents in past bargaining periods. OSER did not previously charge us for the information.

SEA is, after all, not just any requester of records. This organization of employees is responsible for significant service to the public. The records we are requesting benefit state workers and, therefore, the public at large.

### **Maybe someday**

Here's another example: SEA's attorney, Willie Haus, requested that OSER provide dates for getting together to discuss selecting arbitrators for a number of long-standing grievances. After months of silence, Attorney Haus phoned the agency and was able to talk to Wil Mickelson to set a time to meet. You would think that since there is no bargaining going on, OSER would have time long before that to work on grievance issues.

In connection with the matter, SEA requested a number of documents in a letter dated June 11, 2008. At this writing, we have still not received those documents, a situation that violates the spirit if not letter of the state's open records laws. When attorney Haus and I met with OSER to select arbitrators, we asked about the missing documents. Only then did OSER bring up questions it had about our request.

Since OSER knows how to reach us if the agency ever has questions about any request, it appears that OSER doesn't take very seriously the part of the law that says that a requested record shall be supplied “as soon as practicable and without delay... .” OSER apparently believes that it's okay to supply the records late, and then also charge a fee.

The agencies we work for may talk the talk about employees being the state's most valuable resource. But with an uncompromising, ineffective and uncaring OSER leading the way, it's clear which direction state employment in Wisconsin is currently headed.

I know you'll be professionals in continuing to do your work. Don't let them get you down.

Respectfully,  
Tom Mugan

## **SEA ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR OCTOBER 10-11 IN WAUSAU**

**Plan on attending the 38th SEA Annual Meeting, hosted by the Wisconsin Rapids Section. We're going to have some fun.**

**Details coming soon. Check the Annual Meeting page at [www.wisea.org](http://www.wisea.org) or call the SEA Office in Madison or any Rapids Section officer if you have questions**

## **SUPPORT YOUR ASSOCIATION**

## **SEA Executive Board Election Reminder**

**Ballots are being mailed to members by Aug. 21, and must be returned postmarked by Aug. 31. If you don't receive a ballot, please contact the SEA office and verify your mailing address.**

**In early September, ballots are being counted and the membership notified of results. Your ballot mailing includes summary information about the nomination and election process, and abbreviated candidate biographies.**

**More detailed information and full candidate biographies are in the SEA Election Newsletter on the SEA website. -- Gretchen Wheat**



## **In state budget crunch, money search anew**

**R**esponding to extensive damage caused by the June floods, the governor quickly and strongly stated his intent to ensure funding for repairs. As of July 10, residents of 30 counties are eligible for individual disaster assistance, and public infrastructure assistance is available to 27 counties (for more see <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/spotlight/index.htm> ). Much disaster relief will be in the form of federal FEMA funds, but significant state funds also will be necessary. To come up with that state money, policymakers gave recent consideration to more borrowing from the Transportation Fund, but the idea fell quickly into disfavor.

### **Legislative Update**

**By Gretchen Wheat**  
*Second Vice President*

State agencies have been directed to lapse (give back) another portion of their previously approved budgets, meaning their staff must comb program budgets to identify any “unencumbered funds” – a phrase to be interpreted very broadly. It has included, for example, grant program funds for which the application and selection process is complete, but applicant notification and check disbursement have not yet occurred. This seems wasteful, since applicants have completed their grant development work (at a cost), and state employees have completed grant review and selection (also at a cost), and now the work (and expense) could be for naught.

**A**t the same time, most state agencies struggle to fill even critical staff positions. In many cases state employees are assigned workloads so unrealistic that completing the tasks would require at least one or two additional employees. For employees in positions represented by SEA, this work pressure builds even while the state offers what amounts to an overall decrease in wages and benefits for most employees – which, of course, the SEA Bargaining Team has not recommended for acceptance. Certain other professional state employee bargaining units also have not accepted the state’s paltry offers.

**IN MANY CASES, STATE EMPLOYEES ARE ASSIGNED SUCH UNREALISTIC WORKLOADS THAT COMPLETING THEIR TASKS WOULD REQUIRE AT LEAST ONE OR TWO ADDITIONAL EMPLOYEES.**

A big part of the problem involving employee wage and benefit packages is the double-digit increase in health care insurance premiums. While the state agrees to cover much of the increase, remaining costs are to be passed on to employees, wiping out most or all of pay increases offered to represented employees and a majority of non-represented employees.

**But, pay increases for the Legislature and governor are not forgotten:** Legislators’ salaries increased approximately 4% (to \$47,413) effective January 2007, and will go up another 6.3% (to \$50,438) effective January 2009. This includes state senators and assembly representatives.

Other elected state officials (all with four-year terms) did not receive increases for their terms beginning in 2007. However, they will see a 7.4% increase effective in 2011 when new terms begin. This applies to constitutional officers including the governor, and the Judicial Branch down to state circuit court level. The governor’s salary will increase by more than \$10,000 (from \$137,092 to \$147,313). *continued on page 4*



State Senators have four-year terms, with half the seats up for election every two years, and all the senators are eligible for the two-year increases, whether beginning a new term or serving out an existing one. Other state elected officials can't receive raises in their current term of office. That is prohibited by the Wisconsin Constitution.

The Legislature's Joint Committee on Employment Relations (JCER) must approve all state employee pay and benefits packages. The committee voted unanimously in November 2007 to approve the upcoming 2009 and 2011 increases for legislators and constitutional officers. JCER also approved a 6.3% increase effective in January 2009 for district attorneys, and increases that will total approximately 5% (phased in over the 2008-'09 biennium) were approved for more than 7,000 non-represented UW System employees (including professors, teachers and others).

### State primary election is Sept. 9

**This fall, all 99 seats in the Wisconsin Assembly and 16 of the 33 total seats in the Wisconsin Senate are up for election. The primary is Sept. 9 and the general election is in November.**

**Of the 86 incumbent representatives running for re-election, 64 will have an opponent in the primary, and 73 will have an opponent in the general election. Of the 14 incumbent senators running for re-election, none will have an opponent in the primary, and seven will have an opponent in the general election. See Legislative Reference Bureau, Wisconsin Brief 08-10, Candidates: Primary Election, September 9, 2008, at:**

**<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/pubs/wb/08wb10.pdf>**

**The document lists candidates for both houses as well as for US House of Representatives seats for Wisconsin. --GW**

Now, I would be the last person to say any of these pay raises is excessive. Clearly, it is in the public interest to have state salaries that are sufficient to attract capable employees.

The legislators have and will receive 2% to just over 3% per year for 2007-'11. A portion of that increase may also be lost to their increased health care insurance costs. Yet, consider that only about one percent per year was offered to most other state employees. The Office of State Employee Relations (OSER) says that's all the state can afford.

Consider also, that most state employees are, and always have been, required to report taking time off when they are out sick. In contrast, last year it was revealed the state's elected officials had not, by and large, been reporting sick leave, even when health problems kept them out sick for many days or weeks.

Ironically, certain legislators more recently have been rumbling that state employees are being given too much sick leave. They've also suggested that perhaps it is also not good to continue allowing employees to convert unused sick leave to cover health insurance payments after retirement.

Legislators are also eligible to receive a per diem. This was last increased effective January 2001 to a maximum of \$88 per day, or \$44 per day for legislators from Dane County (and legislators from further away if they don't establish a temporary residence in the Madison area).

Legislators' salaries are specified in s. 20.923, Wis. Statutes. Increases effective January 2007 are described in the Legislative Reference Bureau's "Wisconsin Briefs, Brief 06-17, December 2006: SALARIES OF STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS Effective January 2007", <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lrb/pubs/wb/06wb17.pdf>. A similar brief is not yet published on increases that will go into effect in 2009 and 2011 for legislators and other state elected officials.

For additional recent history, take a look at an archived news column by Senator Joe Leibham that describes the 2003-'04 salary package offered to legislators. It also provides an especially good description of the method by which legislators are able to claim the higher per diem (\$88/day). "News Columns, Oct. 27, 2004, Just Ask Joe: Vol. II", <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen09/news/Press/2004/col2004-JAJ002.htm>



In 2007, at least two Assembly bills were introduced attempting to require that legislator salaries and expense reimbursements be withheld under certain circumstances – in particular, if biennial budget conference committee members don't show up for their committee meetings (AB 627), and if the Building Commission's long-range state building program recommendations aren't not transmitted on time to the governor (AB 633). These bills also would withhold salaries and provide penalties if certain political contributions were accepted. The bills were introduced in December 2007 and immediately referred to committees that did not decide upon or further develop the legislation. Officially, the proposals failed due to lack of time in the legislative calendar.

**A new contract can still be considered:** The 2007-'08 Legislature's final general business floor period ended in March 2008, and the last veto period ended in May 2008. Therefore, committees are not meeting to consider proposed legislation. However, committees will hold occasional meetings and public hearings on various matters. Committees can consider issues such as appointments to boards and commissions, administrative rules and state contracts. For example, the Regional Transportation Authority met on Aug. 7. Special Study Committees of the Legislative Council also continue to meet while the Legislature is not in session. (See Committee Schedule at <http://committeeschedule.legis.state.wi.us/> )

**Assembly representative goes independent:** Rep. Jeff Wood of Chetek, serving the 67<sup>th</sup> Assembly District and currently sitting as a Republican, has filed for re-election as an Independent. No other candidate has filed to run for the seat. Barring election of a write-in candidate, Wood will become the first Independent to begin a state legislative session since 1947. (See <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/spotlight/index.htm> week of July 21, Rep. Wood Files as Independent Candidate).

## 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 – Aug. 13, 2008

#### SWIB Performance

	Calendar YTD through May 31, 2008		Calendar YTD through June 30, 2008		Calendar YTD through July 31, 2008*	
	\$s (in billions)	Performance (as % gain)	\$s (in billions)	Performance (as % gain)	\$s (in billions)	Performance (as % gain)
<b>Core Fund</b>	79.461	-1.0	75.050	-6.1	74.300	-7.1 (B.M. -6.4)
<b>Variable Fund</b>	6.546	-3.0	5.961	-11.1	5.896	-12.2 (B.M. -11.9)
<b>Total</b>	86.007		81.011		80.196	

\*Preliminary, subject to change

A consultant, McLagan, discussed its report on the peer group (also known as “comparator group”). Defining a peer group and then comparing the salary/benefits of SWIB positions with comparable positions in the peer



group are essential for retaining talented staff to ensure prudent investments. The report concluded that it is reasonable and prudent for SWIB to review its peer group put in place eight years ago, in light of SWIB's new approaches to risk management and other internal changes and market changes. Dan or Mel can provide a copy of this report upon request.

SWIB's public equity fund managers provided an update on health care and pharmaceuticals. Some interesting facts gleaned from this presentation:

- More than 8% of global GDP goes toward health care spending.
- Growth in global health care spending is expected to out-pace global GDP for the foreseeable future.
- US health care expenditures in 2007 were over 16% of GDP. Closest runner-up was Switzerland.
- Per capita health care expenditures in the US in 2005 exceeded \$6,000.
- Western diseases (from more sedentary lifestyles, longer lives, and more food intake) are going global. This will lead to greater valuation for global pharmaceutical companies.

Investment performance and market updates were provided by investment staff. Global equities continued to decline in the second quarter. YTD benchmark returns at the end of the second quarter have been largely negative. Core and variable fund re-balancing (as discussed in previous SWIB reports) was completed in June. The core fund's relative under-performance year-to-date was primarily the result of the real estate portfolios under-performing the NCREIF benchmark. Year-to-date public equity portfolios are slightly behind their overall benchmark. The public fixed-income asset class has out-performed year-to-date, as well as the last one, three, and five year periods.

A risk/return analysis was provided for each portfolio. Volatility of returns (measured by standard deviation) is one, but not the only, measure of risk for a portfolio. A key objective of the retirement system is to earn as high a level of return as possible within acceptable levels of volatility.

A white paper on the Wisconsin Venture Capital Landscape was provided. Venture capital remains a high-risk investment strategy. Over the past nine years, SWIB's private equity portfolio has allocated \$200 million to the Wisconsin Venture Capital Portfolio. However, because of its fiduciary responsibility to retirees, SWIB will never put a large percentage of its resources into the venture sector.

Two new analysts and a fund manager will be joining SWIB within the next two months.

Jane Hamblin, chief legal counsel, reported that SWIB received approximately \$320,000 in June and July for securities fraud class action settlements. In response to SWIB's request for an attorney general's opinion on the authority granted to SWIB by the investment modernization legislation, a formal opinion will be issued. Due date for the first draft of that opinion was Aug. 10.

The next SWIB meeting was set for Sept. 10.

-- Dan Joyce

## **ETF ANNUITANT ROUND TABLE & WCOA MEETING – Aug. 5, 2008**

Sari King announced the date for the next joint meeting will be Nov. 4, and then she introduced the assistant director of SWIB, Gail Hanson, and Sandy Drew to give us a mid-year update from the Investment Board. Note the agenda as follows:



- Effects of long-term investing
- 2008 initiatives
- SWIB modernization legislation
- Market overview
- Remembering the long term

The following shows why it is important to always look at the long-term returns. The one-year returns for SWIB from 1991 through 2007 were ahead of benchmarks ten times and behind benchmarks seven times.

SWIB's five-year returns from 1991 through 2007 were ahead of the benchmark 15 times and behind the benchmark two times. SWIB's ten-year returns, 1991 through 2007, were ahead of the benchmark 16 times and behind the benchmark only one time.

The new staff positions from the first modernization phase have made it possible to create a Russell Index portfolio, which moves funds to internal management in the amount of \$12 billion by 2009 and increase international equities by \$1.5 billion, which increased the international equity allocation.

SWIB has completed staff hiring for the initial staffing request and are presently submitting the second staffing request to the Joint Finance Committee. They recently completed an allocation of \$200 million to the Wisconsin Venture Capital portfolio.

The SWIB performance data for June and July 2008 are provided in the SWIB article in this SEA View.

The major discussion for WCOA after the meeting was the search for office candidates for chairman, with Ed Kehl wishing to leave that position. There are volunteers for treasurer and secretary, and all nominations must be submitted by the October meeting of WCOA.

The next WCOA meeting is set for Sept. 17.

-- Melvin B. Sensenbrenner

### **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).



**August 8, 2008 Board Meeting Summary**  
Meeting held at Best Western East Towne Suites, Madison  
By Duane Hubeler, Secretary

**Attendance:**

**Executive Board:** Tom Mugan – President, Leroy Stublaski – First Vice President, Duane Hubeler – Secretary, John Bolka - Treasurer

**Board Members:**

Tom Peronto, Wisconsin Rapids President  
Emmanuel Yartey, Southeast Section President  
Tony Allard, Green Bay President  
Bob Schaefer, DNR Madison President  
Sandy Anderson, Central Office President  
John Lund, Rhinelander Vice President

David Solberg, Eau Claire President  
Larry Legro, State Agencies President  
Jeremy Tomesh, La Crosse President  
Brian Mattson, Superior President  
Khader Abu al-eis, Madison President

**Specialists:**

Willie Haus, Attorney  
Mel Sensenbrenner, Health & Retirement

Sandy Henke, SEA Office  
Ron Legro, Communications Specialist

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**Meeting Begins:**

Tom Mugan called meeting to order at 8:40 am. Introductions were made.

**Approvals:**

The June 28, 2008 Board Meeting minutes were reviewed. There was one change to the minutes. Schaefer moved to accept the minutes with the one change. Tony Allard seconded. Motion carried. The Correspondence Report was reviewed. Tom Mugan accepted the Correspondence Report. The agenda was changed to move the stipend discussion to the end of the meeting.

**Election and Legislative Report:** *By Gretchen Wheat*

Gretchen could not attend the meeting but provided information in advance. Paper copies of biographical information for SEA Officer candidates will also be included with the ballots, which will be mailed to members by Aug. 21. Ballots must be mailed back in the included envelope by Aug. 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. Gretchen also reported that the Department of Regulation and Licensing has begun the long process of writing rules to implement the statute change regarding continuing education for Professional Engineers and Architects.

**Bargaining:** *By Willie Haus*

There is still no movement to report.

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

Note: A-xxx indicates an Association grievance



- A-307 (filed 5/3/99) – DOT D2 – Denied work time to take PE exam. Arbitration pending.
- 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. Tom Mugan and Willie Haus were able to meet with OSER to get movement on setting up seven arbitration panels. OSER will be sending us the dates for the panels to meet. The following grievances are scheduled for priority arbitration: 307, 361, 362, 369, 378, 394, 402, 419, 444 and 464.

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

Our ACT 89 consultant, Professor Emeritus Ed Beimborn, is making good progress and presented a preliminary draft of results to date. Board members are invited to critique the draft. Ron stated that two recent SEA-



generated editorials have been picked up by the Baraboo newspaper and by WisOpinion.com which extol the contributions of SEA members in helping to mitigate damage and disruption caused by the recent flooding.

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

The poor performance of the stock market is reflected in the recent performance of funds used to finance the Wisconsin Retirement System, with larger losses seen in the variable fund. The ETF website has some newly enhanced retirement information. A bill is being debated in Washington (HR 6382) that could restrict annual dividend increases from public retirement funds. This would penalize well-run retirement programs like ours.

**Miscellaneous Items/Updates**

There was discussion about keeping tighter control of the SEA member mailing list. There was a motion by Bob Schaefer with a second by Leroy Stublaski to require Board approval to release the list.

The SEA Annual meeting will be held the weekend of Oct. 11 in Wausau. There was discussion of entertainment options, including having all in attendance attend an informational picket at the McCleary Bridge in Wausau.

The grievance representative list still needs to be updated for the Eau Claire and Southeast sections. These updates should be sent to Leroy Stublaski and Sandy Henke at the SEA office.

George Mickelson has requested several ratified contracts for our use in bargaining. Due to a recent procedural change, OSER is now charging for these open records requests.

**Section Reports:**

*Madison* — There are continued concerns over the lack of progress bargaining.

*Southeast* — The annual section meeting will be the third week in September. DNR and DOT regional directors are invited. There was a recent labor/management meeting where the lack of bargaining was discussed.

*Green Bay* — There have been moves in the office to create a separated space for the US 41 Capacity Expansion Projects Team. Members continue to contact their legislators regarding the lack of good-faith bargaining.

*Wisconsin Rapids* — Members are ordering T-shirts to wear in the office with a bargaining-related theme. Planning for the annual meeting is ongoing. There is a proposal to picket at the McCleary Bridge during the annual meeting.

*La Crosse* — The lack of progress with bargaining is negatively affecting member's volunteer activities. Members working for DNR are being told they have to carry a cell phone with them when they are in the field but there is no indication the employer will provide one or pay for its use.

*Eau Claire* — A SEA picnic is scheduled for mid-August. The lack of progress in bargaining is affecting employee's willingness to volunteer for various office social functions.

*Rhineland* — No report other than the ongoing concern over bargaining.

*Superior* — Bargaining remains a big question with members.

*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 — After the recent remodeling, union bulletin boards appear to be up. A recent study was provided by management dealing with the rash of upcoming retirements and the loss of institutional knowledge. The safety glass saga continues although the policy was supposed to be set long ago.

State Agencies — 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. Larry is trying to meet with someone at DOA to discuss mileage reimbursement. Some agencies do not appear to be notifying SEA of HAM (hired above minimum) hires. There will be an audit meeting on August 25.

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

John moved to accept the June, 2008 Membership Report. Bob Schaefer seconded. Motion carried. John moved to accept the July, 2008 membership report. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried.

John moved to accept the June, 2008 Treasurer’s Report. Leroy Stublaski seconded. Motion carried.

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

08-01 => 08-15	\$1981.90
M-1 => M-11	<u>\$2200.00</u>
	\$4181.90

Section Audits are due to John by Sept. 1, 2008.

**New Business:**

There was further discussion over Board Member stipends. A new subcommittee was formed to attempt a more comprehensive look at stipend levels and will report back at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm. The next Board Meeting will be on Sept. 13, 2008, in Madison.

**PUZZLING PUZZLER: *A room of one's own***



**T**hirteen SEA members are in Eureka, Oregon attending a science conference. When they arrive at the Parallax Hotel to check in, they are told that only 12 rooms are available, even though reliable Sandy at the SEA office had made reservations for 13 rooms. The members are debating what to do when the hotel manager comes out.

When the manager hears of the situation she assures the SEA members that the Parallax Hotel has enough space to accommodate each of them in his or her own room.

The manager begins by taking two of the engineers to room #1, promising to come back in a few minutes to take one of them to another room. She does, taking the third engineer to room #2, the fourth engineer to room #3, the fifth engineer to room #4 and so on, until she has taken the twelfth engineer to room #11. She then returns to room #1 and escorts the extra engineer waiting there to room #12, announcing that all of the engineers are now happily settled in their own rooms.

**QUESTION: Is this possible? Why or why not?**



**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: 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?

Solution: If you light both ends of one rope, it will burn in exactly a half hour. Thus, burn one rope from both ends and the other rope from only one end. Once the one rope (which is burning from both ends) finally burns out (and you know a half hour has elapsed), you also know that the other rope (which is burning from only one end) has exactly a half hour left to burn. Since you only want 45 minutes, light the second end of the rope. This remaining piece will burn in 15 minutes, thus, totaling 45 minutes. Congratulations to the first member to solve the puzzle, Kenneth Scherer, DNR.

### ***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.

