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The APA

NEWSLETTER

The Official Newsletter for the Administrative Professional Association of MSU
MSU Administrative-Professional Association MEA/NEA/1480 Kendale Blvd, Suite 300/East Lansing MI 48823/(517) 353-4898

First Annual APA Picnic

A good time was had by all!

by Shawn Myrda Mahorney

MSU APA Member and Picnic Committee



On Friday May 20, 2011 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., the MSU APA Union held its first annual picnic at Patriarche Park, East Lansing. It was a beautiful day – 70° and sunny! The catered food was aplenty and included cheeseburgers, bratwurst, potato salad, baked beans, fruit salad, lemonade and iced tea. Approximately 140 APA members and their families were in attendance. Children activities included blowing bubbles, making chalk drawings, playing on the playground equipment, and eating Tootsie Roll pops.

Maury Koffman, MSU APA President, welcomed the large group and thanked them for attending the picnic. APA members mingled while enjoying the food, weather, and networking with each other. CTU President Deb Bittner was also in attendance. The evening proved to be an opportunity for all to network, both socially and professionally.

MEA/MSUAPA uniserv director Mary Henson was instrumental in helping to plan this social event. From post cards to securing the final acquisition of the venue, Mary kept things on task, laying the groundwork for a great success, which is sure to be repeated for years to come.

Be sure to watch for an invitation in the spring for next year's picnic.

More and More Damage to the Middle Class

Your Union Rights Under Fire!

by Leo Sell

Legislative Committee Chairperson, MSU APA



Things continue to be politically grim for the middle class and particularly for public employees. While the Michigan legislature hasn't garnered so much national publicity, the effort to erode the rights and compensation of people like you and me has been no less pursued.

I hope you're paying attention and that you will be active in the next election with trying to elect lawmakers who are friendlier to the working and middle class and to public employees.

Most recently, House Bill 4152 was passed and signed by Governor Snyder. Now known as Public Act 54, it amended the law referred to as PERA (the Public Employment Relations Act). This heinous piece of legislation is intended to completely eliminate a public employee union's ability to effectively bargain for its members. The act "freezes" wages and benefits at the level they are when a contract expires, which is not awful on its own. But it also encumbers the employees with certain increased cost of health and similar benefits AND prohibits retroactivity.

While it is plain that this law applies to K-12 employees, it's less certain whether it covers university employees as well. I suspect the answer depends on "who you ask". You can bet that every employer who can will take absolute advantage of this superior bargaining position. I wish heinous was too harsh a word, but it is not.

Meanwhile other bills that would be dreadful in their effect continue are pending. Requiring 20 percent premium co-pay, prohibiting bargaining on a wide range of subjects, and the latest outrage is the pending House action to completely gut retirement health care coverage for State of Michigan employees hired since 1997. If that happens, can the attempted elimination of retirement health care benefits of public school employees, and for you and I, be far behind?

This is one subject that troubles me almost more than any other. Health care benefits, including those for retirement (as well as pensions) in the public sector have generally been pretty good and have been negotiated that way as a trade-off for lower salaries and wages. In other words, the deal would be: if labor takes a lower wage, the employer will provide a better benefit package. Unfortunately, labor accepted a "promise" instead of anything truly concrete with these deals.

But the "deal" was predicated on more than just agreeable intentions. It also presumed that the employer would meet a fiduciary promise. One to have the funding needed in place to provide the benefits. Unfortunately, what's happened is that legislatures including Michigan's chose to live "paycheck by paycheck". They were not lawfully required to do the wise thing – to put money away for future obligations – so they didn't do so. They ignored the actuarial realities.

Now, instead of keeping the promises made by the State over many years, this legislative crowd is inclined to just issue a "so sorry" and eliminate the obligation by dumping it on to the employees.

This is just wrong.

Protests have not availed with this crowd. The only thing that is going to change the tenor of our times is to change who we elect. We cannot keep ignoring what has been going on and hope for a benign effect. This is quite the contrary. It is a malign intent and vicious intent. I hope you'll remember and act.

If you are not monitoring legislation and contacting your legislator about items of concern, you really need to start. You can see updates on www.mea.org, subscribe to the MEA Capitol Comments e-newsletter at <http://www.mea.org/signup/> (be sure to use a non-MSU mail account). Additionally, there is a coalition organization of labor, student, senior, and other organizations that has become quite active. See

<http://wearethepeoplemichigan.com/> for more information.

For information on the national level, you may also wish to check out www.educationvotes.nea.org.

Put Your Ed Assist Dollars to Work!



Following classes have been added to the HRD calendar and are available for enrollment:

Communication Skills

- **Grammar Essentials:** Tuesdays, July 12 and July 19, 8:30 am – noon (\$165; includes *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White)
Presenter: Jackie McCarroll
- **Mastering Presentation Skills:** Tuesdays, July 12 and 19, 1 – 4:30 pm (\$155; This class uses video-recording to enhance your learning.)
Presenter: Jackie McCarroll

Professional Development

- **Goal Setting to Transform Your (Work) Life:**
Thursday, July 14, 8:30 am – noon (\$110)
Presenters: Bob Hoffman and Julica Hermann

MSU Processes and Procedures

- **Department of Homeland Security I-9 forms:**
Tuesday, August 9, 2:30 – 4:30 pm (free)
(Note: this class will earn **2 recertification** credits toward CHRS recertification)

Enrollment

To enroll online visit <http://ebs.msu.edu> and click on *EBS Portal Login*; Log in with your MSU NetID and Password and click on the *ESS* tab. Click on *Training Opportunities* in the lower right of the screen. You may also reply to this message or contact Nancy Sanchez, HRD enrollment specialist, at 517-884-0169 or sanchezn@hr.msu.edu.

Click and Learn

- [Podcast #9 - Negotiation - The Relationship Between Power & Relationship](#) Take about 20 minutes to listen to this free information-packed podcast.

Free Self-Paced Technology Training

At this time, lynda.com access is available at no charge to full and part-time paid MSU faculty and staff, plus GEU members. To access lynda.com through the MSU partnership, visit train.msu.edu/lynda and login using your MSU NetID and password. The offerings include a wide range of software, from word processing, spreadsheets to publication design.

Educational Assistance Eligibility

If you have questions about your benefit, please contact Julie Rorick at 884-0177 or Rorick@hr.msu.edu.

Know Your Contract!

Article 22: Personal Leave Days



Let's face it. Sometimes life happens and you just need to take a few hours or a day off for an emergency or to conduct some personal business.

As part of your leave time at MSU, employees are afforded personal hours each year which can be used for emergencies – ever find yourself with a flat tire in the morning? – or to deal with personal business. While use of these hours with professional discretion, they are not subject to approval as with vacation time or sick time.

-176 The University grants eligible employees paid time off in order to attend to personal matters. Employees on the payroll as of July 1, will be credited with 24 hours of personal leave for use during the fiscal year (July 1 - June 30). Employees who are hired, rehired, or change to regular status of half-time or more during the fiscal year will be credited with personal leave as follows:

ON THE PAYROLL	FULL-TIME	3/4 TIME	1/2 TIME
July 1 – Dec. 31	24	18	12
Jan. 1 – Mar. 31	12	9	6
April 1 - May 31	6	4.5	3
June 1 - June 30	0	0	0

-177 Begins on date of hire, rehire, or change to regular status of half-time or more. Personal leave days should be approved by the employee's supervisor, in advance if possible. Personal leave is to be taken and reported in one hour increments. A maximum of eight (8) hours' pay

may be made for each day of absence (may vary for persons on a flexible appointment). Each hour paid to an employee shall be paid at the base rate of pay and shall not include shift premium or other premium payment. The employee may use all personal leave days before commencing a leave of absence without pay. Personal leave days may be used to supplement Workers' Compensation up to a maximum of eight (8) hours' total pay for each day of absence. Personal leave days may not be used to provide payment for absence due to disciplinary suspension.

-178 Part-time employees will be paid only for the hours scheduled to work but not worked because of the approved absence. Personal leave credits may not be carried forward to the next fiscal year. No payment for unused personal leave credits will be made when the employee terminates.

MSU APA 2011 Bargaining

Committee Update

by Maury Koffman

President/ Chairperson, MSU APA

Preparations for APA contract negotiations with the University continue. It now appears the APA Bargaining Team will enter formal negotiations in early August. Per the APA Constitution and Bylaws, the Team must be comprised of seven (7) members from the Negotiations standing committee. MEA staff members servicing the APA also serve and assist the Team.

At the June 21, 2011, meeting of the APA Executive Board, the 2011 APA Bargaining Team was appointed. The individuals named to bargain a successor APA contract were: Maury Koffman (Co-chief spokesperson), Melissa Sortman (Co-chief spokesperson/MEA UniServ Director), Nick Bourland, Sue Brandt, Aaron Ledger, Vivian Leung, Erica Phillipich and Leo Sell.

The following day on June 22, 2011, the APA Negotiations Committee held another meeting to, among other things, review and discuss the nearly 500 responses received from the recent APA 2011 bargaining membership survey. The responses provided valuable information to the Committee and further assisted in identifying the bargaining priorities of the APA membership.

As negotiations begin, the APA membership will be provided updates as necessary via the APA ListServ, the APA Newsletter, and alternative members input avenues.

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**Executive Board meetings are normally held on the second Tuesday of each month commencing at 2:00 p.m. in the APA office located at 1480 Kendale, Suite 300, East Lansing. Visiting members should call in advance to verify the time and place.*

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