



The WCEA Review

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A Message from the Executive Director

by Carla Fells

This is my first opportunity to speak directly to you as employees and members of the Washoe County Employees' Association. After spending 30+ years in city/county employment as line staff, as well as management, I have always advocated the role of management/labor relationship. Management cannot survive and deliver services without the hard work of labor.

I have been asked many times over the years "why should I pay to be a member of the association, I am never in trouble" or "why should I become a member, I will get what everyone else is going to get in the contract whether I am a dues paying member or not". The fact that you may feel it is not imperative for you to become a member belies the success of this organization, and underscores the reason you should become a member. Your comfort is at the expense of those who do contribute! The benefits you currently enjoy come from hard work, and it will be even harder work to keep management from turning back the clock.

The power in bargaining lies within the numbers, whether they be financial and/or membership support. It is my goal to obtain as

close to 100% membership as possible, to ensure we are a force to reckon with at the bargaining table. This year alone, Washoe County has shown a decline in revenues that have hit our members very hard, resulting in layoffs and elimination of jobs.

Currently, we are diligently working with the county to place the individuals who have been laid off, and continue to challenge managements' right under the collective bargaining process to enact provisions we deem are contrary to our contract. These actions are not without costs.

We have been asked to do more with less in the workplace, some of you have advised me three people used to do the same job you are now tasked with doing by yourself! As the new employee of this membership, I have witnessed this more than any other time in my previous tenure with Washoe County. If you have any question why you should belong, keep reading!

The association's top priority is the protection and enhancement of the rights and benefits of county employees and retirees. Association employee issues include pay, health care, retirement and job security, to

name just a few. WCEA members provide direction for the association.

Top 10 Reasons to Join WCEA

1. To improve your future by securing better pay, health care and retirement benefits.
2. To save money with WCEA's insurance products and 2,700 member discount businesses.
3. To meet a network of county employees and retirees who care about the same things you do.
4. To take advantage of the WCEA college scholarship program for yourself and your dependents.
5. To grow professionally while ensuring continued sustainability of WCEA programs, and representation.
6. To have a full-time advocate in the legislature.
7. To get up-to-date information about your pay and benefits.
8. To make a difference for your family by educating legislators about your important public service.
9. To have access to staff resources to answer your questions related to employment.
10. To be part of something big members strong!

What is Association Power?

Getting involved!! Making your voices heard!!

Solidarity

Without an association, employees stand alone. WCEA representatives are there to help if you get into a difficult situation at work.

Voice

As an association member, you have an equal voice and no one is speaking for you. A lot of good people worked for a very long time so that you could have your association benefits and protections.

Confidence

Unity of fellow WCEA members gives you the strength and confidence to work through difficult issues with management.

Respect

When everyone in the bargaining unit is an active dues paying member, you will have the respect of management and no one can be singled out or harassed for their association participation.

Representation

The law says you have a right to due process, but the legal and administrative procedures can be complicated and so demanding that only a professional representative like WCEA has the time and resources to stay on track.

Strength

Your association dues go toward paying professional staff to work with the county on your behalf.

Support

Being a proud dues paying member who supports the organization whose sole purpose is to improve working conditions negotiated through your contract, conduct Labor-Management meetings when workplace issues arise, train workplace advocates, and provide representation.

Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is the only fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much higher consideration.

*—Abraham Lincoln,
16th US President*

Meetings Not To Be Missed

The Washoe County Employees' Association has reached a tentative agreement on our contract. We will be at the following locations listed below to go over the proposed changes to the contract.

The ballots will be sent out on July 31st. to your home addresses. **If you have moved and have not contacted WCEA of your new address, you need to do so a.s.a.p. to be guaranteed a ballot.**

If you are unable to attend one of the following meetings, there will be a written description of the changes in with your ballot.

Wed. July 30, 2008

6:00 AM - Reno Roads

12:15 PM - Downtown
Library

3:30 PM - Incline Roads

Thur. July 31, 2008

5:15 PM

S. Conference Room
Health Department

Quick Bits



Has there been any changes in your address, phone #, department, etc? Let the WCEA office know so your information can be updated

Rising prices nixing summer plans? Log onto www.recreationconnection.com for savings at theme parks, golfing, movies and more!



Discount Movie Tickets are still available

9th & Wells, Assessor's Office - Pat O'Hair (328-2237) or Stacey Jackson (328-2679)
Sheriff's Office, Darla Gallagher (328-3060)
D.A.'s Office, Penny Rasmussen (328-3812)

More Savings with Wild at Work Vacations!

www.wildatworkvacations.com

Check the WCEA website for logon information



Working For You

As of July 1, 2008, changes in the Health Plan's tier rate system went into effect. For many employees, this was a positive change and let WCEA's President, Penny Rasmussen, know how much it was appreciated.

"I just wanted to thank you and your fellow board members for changing the tiered schedule for our health plan.

"Even though my husband has his own plan, I was forced to add him to my plan when I covered our children. Now that I can remove him from the coverage, I'll save \$6,508.72 in the coming fiscal year. That's a huge boost for our family.

"Thanks again!!"

The Insurance Negotiating Committee was created pursuant to collective bargaining with the various associations and includes a member from each association plus one member from management.

It is their responsibility as the negotiating committee to accept all suggestions, which are then compiled throughout the year and reviewed during negotiations.

The committee is always on the look-out for the best coverage for employees and tries to stay current with the needs of our ever-changing population.

If you have any ideas that could help county employees as a whole or items you'd like discussed (ie: a doctor or pharmaceutical to be added to the list, etc.), please send an email or write out a suggestion and send it to a committee member or the WCEA office.



Insurance Negotiation Committee Members:

Ginny Sutherland, Assessor's Office

Lora Zimmer, Assessor's Office

Stacy Hardie, CCHS

Holly McGee, CCHS

Richard Kishpaugh, DA's Office

Roy Stralla, DA's Office

Dennis Allen, Sheriff's Office

Milton Perry, Sheriff's Office

Board Announcements

- ⇒ **Did you know** that your WCEA President and Board of Directors use a lot of their own personal time **and** vacation time for the Association and their Members?
- ⇒ Volunteers are needed for the upcoming Reno Air Races. This is the one event every year that funds our employee scholarships and the more workers we have, the more we have to give back to our members.
- ⇒ Volunteers are needed to sit on the **WCEA Endorsement Committee**. You will be interviewing candidates on **WCEA Issues only**. Interviews might be early morning, during the day or in the evening and you may be required to use your vacation/comp time.
- ⇒ Volunteers are needed to stuff and count the ballots. Stuffing will be at the WCEA office Thurs. 7/31 8:00 am. Counting will be at Kohn Colodny's office Wed. 8/20 8:30 am. If interested in helping, please contact Peggy, WCEA Office at 329-9750.
- ⇒ If you are interested in getting involved and volunteering your time for the Association, please call President Penny Rasmussen at 328-3812 or e-mail her with your name and a contact phone number.
- ⇒ The WCA Board of Directors voted to not hold a Christmas Party this year based on the economy. A picnic next summer for members and their families is being considered.
- ⇒ Do you know an employee that is not a member of WCEA? WCEA is not affiliated with any national union and all dues, as low as they are, stay within the association. Talk to a Board member today! **There is strength in numbers!**
- ⇒ Have you looked at the WCEA website lately? Everything from contracts and NRS statutes to member benefits and past newsletters can be easily found—www.wcea.us

PROTECT YOUR FUTURE INCOME!

Stop and think about what would happen if you were suddenly unable to earn money and provide for your family. We don't hesitate to insure our home or our car, but without our monthly income we may not even be able to afford those things. Secure yourself and your future income with a Disability Income Insurance plan from American Fidelity Assurance Company.

Why do you need Disability Income Insurance? Consider the facts:

- Disability causes nearly 50% of all mortgage foreclosures, compared to 2% caused by death.*
- 1 in 7 employees will be disabled for 5 or more years before retirement.**
- About 80% of workers who have planned financially for a disability said they are much more confident in their ability to cover living expenses in the event of a disability.***
- 90% of disabilities are not covered by Workers' Compensation.****

WCEA has endorsed American Fidelity as your provider for Disability Income Insurance. American Fidelity's Disability Income Insurance was created specifically for Washoe County employees. **There are several plan options to choose from with benefits beginning after either 14 or 60 calendar days for a qualified Sickness or Accidental Injury and with benefits payable for one year or more.** Unlike other plans, American Fidelity's Disability Policies provides immediate coverage—there is no 30-day waiting period after the coverage effective date. Plus, it is available to all WCEA members who work 30 or more hours per week.

Take a step in protecting your future income! Contact American Fidelity at 775-829-1313 to begin your coverage or to update an existing plan.†



*Health Affairs, The Policy Journal of the Health Sphere, 2 February 2005

**Insurance Learning Center: Why You Need Disability Insurance, 2007

***2007 Disability Awareness Survey, Council for Disability Awareness, March 7, 2007

****America's Health Insurance Plans, "Disability Survey of Full-Time Employees", August 2004

†This policy does not automatically update with pay raises. Please contact American Fidelity to update your coverage to keep up with your increased salary.