

From The Mailbox



A Splendid Job

To the Editor:

The members of OSEA's Curry Chapter 93 would like to thank the OSEA staff for the splendid job and all the hard work that went into helping to acquire for state employees the many benefits that were passed by the 1971 Legislature.

Please accept our everlasting gratitude.

Curry Chapter 93
Gold Beach

Successful Effort

To the Editor:

Joint activity of employee associations and individual employees in the Oregon Public Employees' Retirement Conference again has met with great success. We wish to thank all groups and employees who have supported our efforts by attending meetings, writing legislators, and in many other ways contributing to the satisfying result.

Passage of House Bill 1397, which carries a January 1, 1972, effective date, not only increases the benefits of future retirees by 25 to 35 per cent; it also makes permanent the 25 per cent increase to pre-1968 retirees reflected in "dividend" checks in past years, and gives a 12 per cent increase to persons retiring between January 1, 1968, and January 1, 1972. We are pleased also to at last have established an annual increase based on the cost-of-living index.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Public Employees' Retirement System Board and its Executive Secretary, James McGoffin. The board made our conference bill the official vehicle for retirement improvement and backed it all the way. Jim McGoffin's progressive attitude and impressive testimony before the Joint Ways and Means Committee had much to do with our bill's acceptance.

As in 1967, when legislation was passed to overhaul the PERS and establish the formula system, we again owe much to Rep. Stafford Hansell (R-Hermiston), chairman of the Ways and Means Salary Subcommittee. Without his understanding and strong support, our bill would not have passed.

The mailing list of the Public Employees' Retirement Conference will be maintained, and we will again call upon public employee associations and individuals to support retirement system improvement legislation when the time for further joint action appears appropriate.

Thomas C. Enright
Oregon State Employees Association,
Cecil Posey
Oregon Education Association,
Co-chairmen, Retirement Conference

Membership Count Goes Up—Barely

OSEA ended the month of July with a net gain in membership, but just barely.

The July 1 membership report shows 242 new members were enrolled into the Association last month, while 239 dropped their membership during the same period. That left OSEA with a net gain of 3 members.

Undoubtedly the Association would have suffered a loss in membership had it not been for District Six, which is made up of 9 chapters located in Albany, Corvallis, Eugene and Newport. It led all nine districts with a net gain of 53 members.

Only two other districts ended the month with net increases. They are District Seven, which gained 5, and District Eight, which gained 3.

OSEA's other six districts ended the month with net losses. They are District Two with 29, District Nine with 12, District Three with 10, District Five with 5, and Districts One and Four with 1 each.

Corvallis Chapter 29, located on the campus of Oregon State University, was primarily responsible for the big increase recorded by District Six. It gained 27 new members in June, and is the Association's largest chapter with 1,131 members.

Two other District Six chapters—Eulane Chapter 40 and Webfoot Chapter 49 in Eugene—gained 9 each. University of Oregon Faculty Chapter 77 had a net gain of 5 members.

The membership report puts OSEA's total membership at 17,241.

They Both Stink

To the Editor:

I am a retired state employee, and if you wish my opinion of the 1971 session of the Legislature and what the OSEA did for us, I shall tell you that both of them stinks.

I am very perturbed by your letting the legislators vote themselves a pension much higher than any state employee, who has contributed toward his retirement the maximum amount he can get, and they will get it after eight years.

I think your efforts are very ineffectual as far as we are concerned. I will get an increase of \$2.16 a month and I have worked longer than a legislator who will get \$250 a month and contributed very little.

W.B. Watkins
Portland

Editor's Note: A bill to provide retirement benefits for legislators was introduced but it did not pass.

Timing was Excellent

To the Editor:

My congratulations to OSEA staff members Tom Enright and Ev Stiles for a beautiful job in spearheading the effort in the 1971 Legislature for a greatly improved Public Employees' Retirement System program. Never have I seen a more effective piece of work.

Sometimes you make up on the peanuts what you lose on the lemonade, and the timing was excellent in asking a conscientious group of legislators to offset a lack of a larger pay raise by granting improved benefits under PERS and also adopting a plan whereby medical-hospital benefits will become available one year from now.

At the first major hearing on House Bill 1397 it became obvious that Staff Hansell and other members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee thought highly of Ev Stiles and he is deserving of a great big pat on the back for the job which he performed so well.

John Merrifield
Merrifield Associates
Portland

Editor's Note: John Merrifield is a former State Senator from Multnomah County and a former member of the Joint Ways and Means Committee.

Other States Ask For OSEA Speakers

OSEA President Chalmers Jones and staff members Thomas C. Enright and Everett B. Stiles have fulfilled speaking requests from state employee associations in Oregon's neighboring states of Idaho, Washington and Nevada recently.

Jones was keynote speaker at the recent General Council of the Idaho State Employees Association. Enright spoke at the annual convention of the Washington State Employees Association, and Stiles keynoted the General Council of the Nevada State Employees Association.

Jones Given New PERS Board Term

OSEA President Chalmers Jones has been reappointed to his third four-year term on the Board of Directors for the Public Employees' Retirement System by Gov. Tom McCall.

He was first appointed by former Gov. Mark O. Hatfield in 1963, and was reappointed by McCall in 1967. His new term will expire on June 30, 1975.

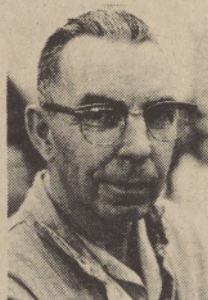
Jones is presently serving his third year as chairman of the board. Serving with him are Robert Gormsen, Highway Division; Joseph Adams, University of Oregon Medical School; Roger Meier, Meier and Frank Co.; and Edwin Armstrong, Pacific Cooperative.

Jones, who has worked for the Employment Division for 16 years, Gormsen and Adams represent public employee members of the PERS. Meier and Armstrong represent the public.

Inquiring Photographer

Should Employees Be Paid For Unused Sick Leave?

(Asked at Highway Division Shops, Salem)



CLARENCE HAM
Machinist

They should be compensated for at least a percentage of it—and I think it should be a major percentage. However, payment of sick leave should have some qualification, like a minimum of 5 or 10 years of employment. Then it should be paid upon termination, death, or retirement. I'm near retirement and I won't get anything for the more than 700 hours of sick leave I've got on the books.



CYRILL LUTGEN
Mechanic

I would say yes, definitely. State employees should be paid for sick leave upon retirement. Employees who use their sick leave when they are sick get paid for it. On the other hand, employees who do not use their sick leave forfeit it. Payment for sick leave should only go to career employees who retire; employees who leave state service before retirement shouldn't be paid for unused sick leave.



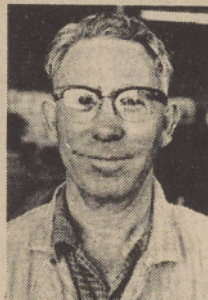
LaVERN MATTISON
Body and Fender Repairman

I believe state employees should be paid for sick leave. To me, sick leave and vacation leave are a part of my monthly pay for the work I do. I don't think payment for sick leave should necessarily be made in cash; perhaps employees could be reimbursed by pre-paid medical-hospital or life insurance premiums. But whether or not it's paid for, sick leave is really a great fringe benefit.



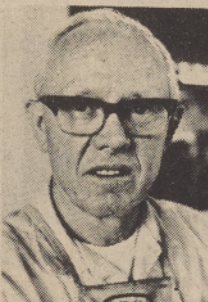
DON NOTT
Machinist

I think we should be paid for at least a portion of it because that would give employees a good incentive not to abuse the sick leave benefit. I would rather be paid for unused sick leave than accumulated vacation leave. I also think that all employees should be paid for sick leave upon termination—not just retirement or death. If they have it coming, I think they should be paid for it.



FRED DAULTON
Heavy Equipment Mechanic

Before I worked for the state I worked for Douglas Aircraft, and they paid employees in cash each year for unused sick and vacation leave. I liked that system, and most of the other employees seemed to like it. I'd like to see the state adopt it. I consider sick and vacation leave as part of my pay check. The state could pay employees for their accumulated leave each year in cash.



W. C. HOEVET
Maintenance Man

I think we should be paid for a part of our unused sick leave upon retirement. Perhaps 50 per cent or so. If sick leave were paid for, it would encourage employees not to use it unless they were actually sick. In other words, it would keep abuse of the benefit to a minimum. I had a heart attack three years ago and used about 480 hours. Believe me, I was very glad I had sick leave coming.