



Minnesota Retired State Employees Association

Spring 2008

Volume 1 Issue 2



**JASON DAVIS-
KEYNOTE
SPEAKER –
FOR 2008
ANNUAL
MRSEA SPRING
MEETING**

From "On The Water" To "On The Road", Davis Has Covered The World with over 40 years experience in broadcast journalism, Jason Davis has helped establish 5 EYEWITNESS NEWS' reputation for excellence. Jason was born in London, England, and spent his early years traveling "On The Water" as a British merchant seaman. He settled in Australia in 1964, where he began his career in television news four years later. Jason joined 5 EYEWITNESS NEWS in 1976, and he has been informing and captivating viewers ever since.

Winner of multiple awards, including induction into Silver Circle Jason has won numerous awards, including two Emmy Awards in 2006 for Magazine Program ("Family Reunions") and Documentary ("Spelling Bee"). In 2005, Jason won two Emmys for Documentary ("On the Road to Costa Rica") and On-Camera Host. Renaissance News Reporter Won First Emmy In 5 EYEWITNESS NEWS' History
A renaissance newsman, Jason has won every major regional award for feature, documentary, investigative,

and sport news — including the first Emmy awarded in 5 EYEWITNESS NEWS' history. He has also received several Emmys for the popular "5 On The Road" stories he continues to produce for his Sunday night weekly half-hour show, which premiered in January 2004. Ask Jason about his work and he says: "What I like most about this business is the ability to communicate with thousands, perhaps millions of people, with the creative freedom to interpret happenings or events in a way that is informative and entertaining."

IN MEMORY OF...

Robert F. Hoffman
1921-2008
MRSEA Board of Director Member

Bob served on the MRSEA board of directors for ten plus years from the late 1980's though 1998. Bob retired in 1984 after 32 years of service at the Regional Treatment Center in Fergus Falls. August 2, 1984 was proclaimed the Robert F. Hoffman day, by the Minnesota Welfare Association in his behalf. Bob will be sadly missed by all.

Mission Statement

United to advocate for the well being of state retirees by:

***monitoring the deliberations of the legislature and the Minnesota State Retirement System Board of Directors; and responding as appropriate to promote , protect and enhance retiree interests.**

***providing educational information on state and national issues affecting retirees**

***maintaining working relationships with other retiree organizations**

***promoting social activities through local sub chapters and statewide meetings**

***advocating for the affordability of state retiree health and long term care benefits**

Editors Note:

Articles are contributed by MRSEA Committees comprised of board members, who are assigned to specific committees on an annual basis.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008 ELECTION PROCESS AND BOARD ENDORSED CANDIDATES

Each year, five positions on the Board of Directors for the Minnesota Retired Employees Association are up for election. In the fall of each year, current directors are surveyed to determine their interest in running for another three year term. Subsequently, an announcement is made in the December/January newsletter listing those members running again and soliciting MRSEA members who are interested in running to submit a letter of interest in and qualifications for board membership. Any member may submit this showing of interest prior to the February board meeting. The Nominating Committee of the Board then determines which (if any) of the candidates is recommended for endorsement.

At the March meeting, the full Board reviews the Nominating Committee's recommendations and determines which candidates will be on the ballot receiving the board's endorsement. Any candidate not receiving endorsement may have their name placed on the ballot as well.

The election of Board of Directors members takes place at the annual meeting in May. (This year's date is May 14, 2008.) At the meeting, endorsed candidates are requested to make a short statement regarding their work history and reasons for their desire to serve on the Board. Any other candidates requesting to be on the ballot or nominated at the meeting have the opportunity to address the meeting as well. A member nominated from the floor and not at the meeting must provide a written statement to be read at the meeting which states their qualifications and wishes to be on the board.

If a printed ballot is required the ballot election is conducted at the meeting. If no printed ballot is required a voice vote is conducted at the meeting.

Each candidate must receive a majority of the vote to be elected. Candidates elected begin serving at the next (June) meeting of the Board.

2008 BOARD ENDORSED CANDIDATES:

Incumbents: ROBERT LUNDAHL FRED MAURER & RICHARD MESENBURG
Applicant Candidates: SANDRA HALE & LOIS WILLOCK

Constitution & By Law Committee -PROPOSED CHANGES

The Committee is proposing changes in four areas: (1) expanding the membership eligibility for MRSEA; (2) providing for removal of Board of Director members; (3) creating a new By-Law concerning Sub-Chapter and MRSEA relationships; and (4) fiscal/dues years.

The following proposed changes have been approved by the MRSEA Board of Directors, have been presented to, and well received by, Sub-Chapter members at fall meetings. Members will vote on the proposed Constitution and By-Law changes at the MRSEA Annual Meeting in May 2008.

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS CHANGES FOR RETIREE CHAPTER 6

BY-LAW 3. Fiscal Year.

At the end of the paragraph, add a new sentence:

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year. The administrative year shall be the approximate one year interval between annual meetings held in May. The dues year shall be from May 1st of one year to April 30th of the following year.

BY-LAW 6.

(K) A director may be removed from the Board, with or without cause, by a majority vote at any annual or special meeting of the members; provided, (i) that the notice of the meeting at which removal is to be considered states such purpose, (ii) that the director to be removed has a right to be heard at the meeting, and (iii) that a new director is elected at the meeting by the members to fill the vacant position caused by the removal, or (iv) the members may delegate to the Board of Directors the duty of selecting a director to fill the vacant position.

(1) A director shall be removed by the

Board of Directors if such director has been found, after a hearing, where the director to be removed is present and has an opportunity to be heard before a Special Board Committee appointed by the President, to have been accused of inappropriate behavior. Prior to the hearing, the Executive Committee of the Board should present the facts in question to said Director and provide the director an opportunity to be heard with respect to these facts. The Special Committee, after this hearing, will provide a written statement of facts as to its decision, and make a recommendation based on those facts to the Full Board of Directors. The director designated for removal shall be provided another opportunity to present his/her case to the Full Board of Directors. If the Full Board of Directors having conducted this hearing finds that the director should be removed, the Board will present its findings at the Annual Meeting or Special Meeting of the Members.

(2) A director who has more than three unexcused consecutive absences from Board meetings and/or members meetings during any twelve month period, or (ii) is no longer a dues paying member of MRSEA may also be removed.

(3) A Board of Directors' member or an

officer of a Sub-Chapter of MRSEA may be removed according to procedures in this paragraph. See BY-LAW 9. Sub Chapters. Paragraph E.3.

BY-LAW 9. Sub-Chapters.

(A) A Sub-Chapter will be created if (1) MRSEA receives a written request from a minimum of eight (8) retired Minnesota state employees who want to create a Sub-Chapter of MRSEA in a given geographical area, and, (2), the Sub-Chapter submits By-Laws to MRSEA that are not in conflict with MRSEA's Constitution and By-Laws.

(B) By-Laws of the Sub-Chapter and any proposed Amendments thereto, shall be approved by a person designated by the MRSEA President. This person's responsibility is to insure there are no provisions in conflict with the Constitution and By-Laws of MRSEA. Any conflict shall be resolved in accordance with MRSEA policy set forth in the document "Chapter -- Sub- Chapter Relationships" approved by the MRSEA Board of Directors on June 14, 2006.

(C) Membership in the Sub-Chapter shall be consistent with the membership requirements provided for in the MRSEA Constitution and By-Laws

(D) A Sub-Chapter shall hold a minimum of two (2) meetings each year, one of which is to be designated as the Sub-Chapter's Annual Meeting at which officers are elected and any other official Sub-Chapter business is conducted.

(E) (1) Officers of a Sub-Chapter, elected at the Annual Meeting shall include at least a President, Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer. If the Sub-Chapter's By-Laws so provide, additional officers and members of the Sub-Chapter's Board of Directors may be elected or appointed.

(2) Only Sub-Chapter members who have paid their current dues to MRSEA may serve as an Officer or member of the Sub-Chapter's Board of Directors.

(3) Board of Directors' members or officers of a Sub-Chapter may be removed according to the procedures in MRSEA By-Law 6. Paragraph K.

(F) (1) The fiscal year for the Sub-Chapter shall be established to begin on the first of the month following their annual meeting.

(2) MRSEA will provide a rebate of dues to a Sub-Chapter upon request, based on the number of MRSEA members whose dues are paid or who are first year free members attending and signing a roster at the Sub-Chapter's Annual Meeting. (Refer to the "Chapter--Sub-Chapter Relationships" in (B) above.)

(3) Mailing service assistance in contacting Sub-Chapter members will be provided by MRSEA.

(G) (1) A Sub-Chapter whose membership falls below four (4) members who regularly attend Sub-Chapter meetings, for two (2) consecutive fiscal years, or a Sub-Chapter that fails to elect the three required Officers at its Annual Meeting shall become an inactive Sub-Chapter. The MRSEA liaison and Board will attempt to assist the Sub-Chapter to achieve these requirements to be reactivated.

(2) A Sub-Chapter that does not currently have any officers, will identify a Sub-Chapter contact member for the MRSEA Business Administrator.

(3) If after a third fiscal year, sufficient membership (more than four [4] members) has not been achieved or officers have not been elected, the Sub-Chapter may dissolve.

(H) Dissolution. (1) Upon Dissolution of a Sub-Chapter, all of its assets remaining after payment of all costs and expenses of such dissolution, shall be returned to MRSEA.

(2) The President and Business Administrator of MRSEA, and the last Sub-Chapter officers shall sign a written document listing the type of asset and the amount of any money returned to MRSEA. These assets shall be

retained by MRSEA for five (5) years.

(3) If at any time prior to the five (5) year time limit, the Sub-Chapter is reactivated, these assets shall be returned to the Sub-Chapter.

4) At the end of the five (5) years, and if the Sub-Chapter is not reactivated, the Sub-Chapter assets shall become assets of MRSEA.

**BY-LAW 9 10. AMENDMENTS.
(Renumber from 9 to 10).**

**CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS CHANGES
FOR RETIREE CHAPTER 6**

BY-LAW 4. Membership Requirements.

Any person eligible for membership under Article X of the Articles of Incorporation, or any person eligible under Article IV. MEMBERSHIP AND DUES. of the CONSTITUTION FOR RETIREE CHAPTER 6 (MINNESOTA) (MRSEA), may become a member of this Association upon the payment of current membership dues as established from time to time by a vote of the members at the annual meeting.

**CONSTITUTION ARTICLE IV.
MEMBERSHIP AND DUES. Section 1.
Jurisdiction.**

All retired persons and their spouses who are eligible for membership under Article X of the Articles of Incorporation, and any retired persons who were appointed or elected to serve on a full-time basis as official representatives of organized labor or an association representing state employees, and their spouses may become a member of Retiree Chapter 6 (Minnesota) (MRSEA); except that any members of Chapter 6 residing outside the State of Minnesota shall, as a condition of remaining a member of Chapter 6, also become a member of any chapter chartered by the International Union having geographical jurisdiction over such member place of residence.

**CONSTITUTION ARTICLE VII. Board
of Directors**

Add new Section 11. A director may be removed from the Board, with or without cause, by a majority vote at any annual or special meeting of the members according to the procedures set forth in MRSEA By-Laws, By-Law 6. Board of Directors. Paragraph (K).

**CONSTITUTION ARTICLE X.
Miscellaneous Provisions.**

Add a new section Section 2. Sub-Chapters. Retiree Chapter 6 and its Sub-Chapter relations are provided for in MRSEA By-Laws, By-Law 9.

Renumber old Section 2. to Section 3. Authorization necessary to represent chapter.

MRSEA 2007-2008 BOARD OFFICERS

Ruth M. Husom
President

Sally Olsen
First Vice President

Gene Gere
Second Vice President

Gloria A. Johnson
Secretary-Treasurer

Yvonne Ross
Assistant Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Donald M. Bucker

Terry Dempsey

Frank Dowzak

John Kuderka

Robert Lundahl

Dennis Maki

Fred V. Maurer

Richard Mesenburg

Lyle Nelson

Peter Obermeyer

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

By the time you read this, the 2008 legislative session may be ended with hopefully passage of the Post Fund revisions bill. A joint committee of the 3 pension plans (MSRS, PERA and TRA) met for the majority of 2007 attempting to develop revisions to the Post Fund. The focus of their efforts was to recommend legislative changes which would strengthen the long range financial sustainability of the pension fund while optimizing retiree benefits and treating all present and future retirees equitably. The MRSEA was an active participant in their deliberations. Their recommendations were ultimately approved by the 3 Board of Directors and introduced in the legislature as HF3421 and SF2969. The bill is currently under consideration by the Legislative Commission on Pensions and Retirement (LCPR) for recommendation to the full legislature for passage. The bill will not adversely affect current retirees but could help out some recent retirees as the result of a catch-up provision for retirees that did not benefit from the significant pension increases granted in the late 90's and early 2000's. The MRSEA Board has testified its support for this legislation in addition to a lot of major organizations throughout the state.

Additionally the MRSEA Legislative Committee is working with the Insurance Committee and others to seek legislation for improved health care for retirees. Health care costs continue to escalate and a recent study by the Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) found that a couple, both age 65 today living to average life expectancy, could need as much as \$295,000 to cover premiums for health insurance coverage and out-of-pocket expenses during retirement. Furthermore, they found that Medicare covers only 51 percent of expenses associated with health care services. We have been urging Congress, thru our

congressional delegation, to pass legislation currently being considered which would allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices with the pharmaceutical industry. This conceivably could lower prescription drug costs substantially. Additionally, we are working with several groups to seek legislation for Health Savings Accounts (HSA's) for retirees. This would allow retirees to divert a portion of their monthly retirement payment tax free into an account for health care. These accounts have been available to employees but upon retirement there is no mechanism to continue to pay into such an account. We will continue to work on these issues throughout 2008.

LOGO CONTEST \$50.00 HOLIDAY GAS CARD

At the February board meeting the board authorized a prize to the author of the winning logo for our newsletter. It is a \$50 gas card from Holiday. Remember, you don't have to be an artist to submit an idea for a logo. There are no preconditions, so use your imaginations! Not an artist? No Matter. Just send us a description of the elements you would like to see included.

In order to not leave this too open-ended, we will have a deadline of May 31st.

Please submit your ideas to MRSEA, PO Box 270095, St. Paul 55127 or email us at mrsea@comcast.net

A written description and a rough drawing are all that's necessary.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Q. A member questions renewing due to opposing political endorsements and contributions to candidates by ASFCME.

A. First, MRSEA makes no political contributions nor do we endorse political candidates. We are not allowed to under our constitution. However, a Retired Peoples Political Action Committee (PAC) was formed in 1979 by some members of the Retiree Association who wished to carry on a political and legislative action program designed to help the needs of Minnesota state retirees. The PAC was created as a separate and distinct entity. However, some of the members of PAC have always been members of the MRSEA Board. The PAC is composed of eight members who serve without compensation. The PAC is funded by voluntary contributions. Each year when you renew your membership in THE MRSEA, you have the opportunity to make an additional voluntary contribution to the PAC. Many retirees choose to make a small donation to the PAC.

Second, with the voluntary funds, contributions are made to the House and Senate Caucuses of the Democratic and Republican legislative caucuses. Contributions are financially equal to both parties. The PAC does not contribute to an individual candidate. PAC does not, and in fact as constituted cannot contribute to campaign funds for Federal Offices. The PAC Committee works to keep the legislative members informed of the concerns of our retired state employees and their survivors.



MRSEA's 2008 ANNUAL MEETING & SPRING LUNCHEON

LOCATION: JIMMYS CONFERENCE 3565 LABORE ROAD, VADNAIS HEIGHTS, MN

DATE: MAY 14, 2008

REGISTRATION & SOCIAL HOUR: 11:00 a.m. -12:00pm

*LUNCH-ELECTIONS -DOOR PRIZES TO FOLLOW
GUEST SPEAKER JASON DAVIS FROM "ON THE ROAD"*

From the NORTH

35E South, Exit County Road E, Left on County Road E to Labore Road, Right on Labore Road, Entrance on Right

From the SOUTH

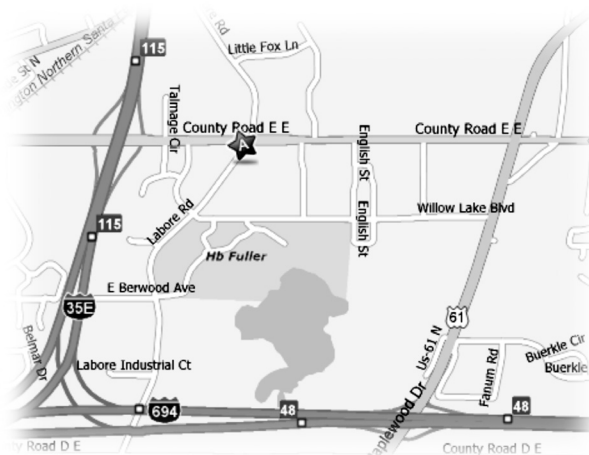
35E North, First exit past 694 (County Road E), Right on County Road E to Labore Road, Right on Labore Road, Entrance on Right

From the EAST

694 West to 35E North, First exit (County Road E), Right on County Road E to Labore Road, Right on Labore Road, Entrance on Right

From the WEST

694 East to 35E North, First exit (County Road E), Right on County Road E to Labore Road, Right on Labore Road, Entrance on Right



*Please use Conference Parking lot on Labore Road**

SELECT ONE ENTRÉE PER PERSON

- | | PRICE |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Sauteed Chicken Breast w/ Champagne Cream Sauce, Baby Red Potatoes, Sauteed Vegetables | \$16.00 |
| 2. Broiled Walleye Fillet topped with Lemon Cream Sauce, Wild Rice Blend, Sauteed Vegetables | \$17.50 |

**** LUNCH TICKETS MAY BE PICKED UP AT REGISTRATION BOOTH****

PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO MRSEA RETURN TO MRSEA PO BOX 270095 ST PAUL MN 55127 ** FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE A PREADDRESSED ENVELOPE HAS BEEN INSERTED IN THE NEWSLETTER**

**** RESERVATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 7, 2008 NO REFUNDS IF NOT NOTIFIED BY MAY 7, 2008****

I/We plan to attend the Spring Annual Meeting & Luncheon May 14, 2008

Member Name: _____ Address _____

Phone (_____) Dept. Retired From _____

Entrée Selection _____ \$ _____

Guest Name: _____ Entree Selection _____ \$ _____

Guest Name: _____ Entree Selection _____ \$ _____

Guest Name: _____ Entree Selection _____ \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

MRSEA
Retiree Chapter 6
AFSCME, AFL-CIO
300 Hardman Avenue So.
South St. Paul, MN 55075

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St. Paul MN
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directed into the account. The result is that funds are withdrawn from the "savings plan" until the account is exhausted. Dave Bergstrom, Executive Director of the Minnesota State Retirement System, assisted the committee to understand the various tax-free "savings plans" available to active employees. Current state employees may set aside money as a bargained group, on a tax-free basis, to be used for reimbursement of insurance and other health expenses after they leave state service.

We have concluded that federal and state legislation is necessary to allow retired state employees the option of diverting funds from an IRA or their MSRS pension payments to the HCSP or a health "savings plan". This will require close coordination with the Legislative Committee, which we plan to continue.

For calendar year 2008 the Insurance Committee has established the following goals:

1. Working with the Legislative Committee to urge the Minnesota Congressional Delegation to introduce or support legislation, which would allow "health care savings plans" to receive tax free contributions from IRA's or public pension funds.
2. Develop coalitions with other retiree groups (Minnesota Senior Federation, Minneapolis and St Paul Retired Teachers Associations, Minnesota AARP, trade union retiree groups, and the Minnesota Retiree Council and to support "health care savings plan" reform.
3. Monitor legislation that affects retiree health care issues at the federal and state level.
4. Work with MSRS Board to draft a legislative proposal which would open "health care savings accounts" of all kinds for contributions by retirees over 65.

The Committee urges you to contact any of its members with your thoughts, support, and concerns on health care issues.

INSURANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The rising cost of health insurance is an important issue for all retirees. Throughout 2007 the MRSEA Insurance Committee focused on reviewing and studying various options that may help retirees pay for these rising costs.

A variety of "savings plans" were identified-Health Care Savings Account, Health Retirement Account, Flexible Savings Account, Voluntary Employee Benefit Association and Government Trusts (this is what HSCP is considered).

Unfortunately, all these "savings plans" have the same problem. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to direct money into a "savings plan" if you are over 65 and retired. Money is drawn out of these plans to pay for medical expenses, but tax free dollars can not be

Minnesota Retired State Employees Association

FUTURE SUB CHAPTER MEETING DATES

Please contact the MRSEA Office Administrator if you are not receiving sub chapter notices.

BRAINERD-	June 20, 2008 12:00 AT Bonanza Restaurant, Baxter Peggy Hildebrandt Pres. 218-764-2988
DULUTH-	April 23, Sunset Bar & Grill -2008 Lois Stone, Pres. 218-834-5059
FERGUS FALLS-	First Tuesday of Month 11:30 VFW Fergus Falls, George Wagstrom, Pres. 218-736-2368
NORTHWOODS-	June 12, 2008 Eagle Club, Bemidji, LaVerne Kennedy, Pres. 218-547-1364
ROCHESTER-	May 9, 2008 - Old Country Buffet Merton Rew, Pres. 507-356-8677
SOUTH CENTRAL-	June 2, 2008, 11:30 VFW Riverfront Drive Mankato, Bob Lamont Pres. 507-257-3372
SOUTH WEST-	April 24, 2008 11:00 AM at the Wood Nickel, Evelyn Henderson, Pres. 507-752-7583
WEST CENTRAL-	We are pleased to announce that MRSEA will be working jointly with a member of the MRSEA West Central Sub Chapter to schedule a meeting for the Sub Chapter. Our goal is to hold the meeting in the West Central area in June of 2008. Please watch for your meeting notices to arrive in the mail.