

The Non-Union Organization  
Representing Only Retirees

# AFPE UPDATE

Fall 2006

## President's Message

By: Dave Zentner



**Stronger membership means a stronger voice for you in the 2007 Legislative session!**

**Sign up a friend today.**

**See page 3**

As we ease into autumn with the shorter days and the leaves turning I hope you all had a fun filled summer season despite the stifling heat that griped the northern plains this year.

Our annual meeting is scheduled for October 16 in Bismarck. Please consider attending this important meeting. The agenda is taking shape and will provide you with helpful information regarding issues we face as retired state employees.

With fall upon us it is time to start the planning process for the next Legislative session. There is no doubt about it health insur-

ance premiums will be increasing during the next biennium. The current credit for retirees is \$4.50 for each year of service. This amount has remained constant since 1993. One of our goals is to increase this credit to assist retirees in maintaining their current purchasing power.

The other priority concerns the 13<sup>th</sup> check. As you are aware, our retirement system does not include an automatic Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). While the lack of a COLA has kept our retirement system in a strong financial position, inflation does affect our purchasing power.

In order to counteract this problem we again will be advocating for a 13<sup>th</sup> check if the retirement fund earns more than 9.16 % in one or both of the next two years in the new biennium.

One last item concerns membership. There is strength in numbers. It is important that we continue to maintain a strong base of retirees in our association in order to ensure that our voices are heard. Talk to those retirees who are not members of our association and ask them to consider joining our ranks.

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## AFPE to Hold Special Election

With this year's Fall Meeting approaching we are charged with the task of filling the spot on the board left open with the passing of Howard Snortland.

The "Member at Large" position is voting position

on the AFPE board that is of great importance to association governance.

Currently we have one candidate for the position. Mark Swartz has been filling the vacant position over the passed months and is willing to continue

serving the association. If you would like to nominate someone for the position please contact the state office, otherwise the floor will be open for nominations at the Fall Meeting.

## AFPE Remembers Howard Snortland

Howard Snortland

AFPE Founder



AFPE lost a champion for state retirees when Howard J. Snortland passed away on May 1, 2006, at the age of 93. Howard served this organization with dignity, integrity, and intelligence. He always focused upon the concern for the future of state retirees. Howard was currently serving as Member at Large on AFPE's Board of Directors. He served on the Board for over a decade, and was one of the association's founding members.

Howard was born in 1912

in his Grandfather's house on a farm north of Sharon, ND. He attended a consolidated school in Sharon, ND. Howard received a football scholarship from UND and attended college there for 2 yrs. He was offered a teaching job in Sherebrook, ND where he taught for 2 yrs. Howard then returned back to UND to finish college and graduated there in 1937. Howard's intention after he graduated from college was to teach and coach. However, he was offered a job in Bismarck working for Worker's Compensation Bureau. After returning from the Armed Services he then became a Cashier at the State's Treasures Office. In 1948 Howard was then employed by the Dept. of Public Instruction where he served 32 years. His last 4 yrs of working he held the

position of ND's State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Howard listed his greatest accomplishments as gaining appropriation from the legislature for public Kindergarten programs in the state. And also, while attending UND for his Masters he did a thesis on a new state aid program. His thesis was enacted into law and this program still exists today as the Foundation Program. Howard's hobbies included golfing in the summer and swimming in the winter.

We will miss his dedication, demeanor and Norwegian jokes he provided AFPE and its members for many years. Howard Snortland will be missed.

*Howard served this organization with dignity, integrity, and intelligence.*

## 13th Paycheck Possible for 2007

NDPERS will pursue another 13th check for all eligible retirees when the legislative session begins this January.

The proposal by NDPERS would give eligi-

ble PERS retirees a 13th Paycheck for 2007 or 2008 if the PERS fund exceeds annual returns greater than 9.16 percent.. This is great news for retirees as the fund returns have been

much higher than the required amount over the last few years. The payment if triggered would pay out an amount equal to 75% of an eligible retiree's monthly benefit.

## AFPE Meets with Governor's Office

AFPE has had a busy legislative interim watching and working with legislative committees, the Governor's office and the PERS office to insure that PERS retirees receive enhanced benefits in the 2007 session.

AFPE met twice with Lt. Governor Jack Dalrymple to discuss the need for benefit improvements for the state's retirees. Specifically the re-

tiree health credit was discussed. The credit of \$4.50 for every year of service is credited toward the cost of the retiree health plan through Blue Cross Blue Shield, and has not been adjusted in 13 years.

As the insurance premiums and healthcare costs continue to escalate this has left retirees with a great deficit in paying their health expenses.

Although PERS is pursuing an increase of 50 cents per year of service, AFPE feels this doesn't go far enough toward correcting a situation that has gotten out of hand.

The Lt. Governor was extremely sympathetic even suggesting an increase much larger than that of the PERS proposal. AFPE Staff will be meeting with him again.

# Join Us for the AFPE Annual Meeting

October 16, 2006

1pm to 5pm

Doublewood Inn, Bismarck

Fall 2006



## ATTENTION!

Interested in receiving email updates on retiree news?

AFPE is interested in sending out email updates to our members to let them know about important retiree issues.

To be added to the list, send your email address to:

[bill@aptnd.com](mailto:bill@aptnd.com)

## Come and See...

Presentations by:

ND PERS

North Dakota Retirement and Investment Office

Legislative Candidates

Volunteer Caregiver Exchange

### AFPE Membership Enrollment Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose one method of payment and mail completed form to: AFPE PO Box 1411 Bismarck, ND 58502-1141**

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$24.00 for annual membership payable by every January 1.

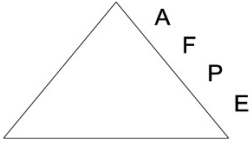
\_\_\_\_\_ **Preferred Method:** I voluntarily request ND PERS withhold \$2.00 per month and transfer the amount to AFPE for membership in the organization. The withholding remains in effect until I choose to terminate by written notice to ND PERS. The voluntary request for the withholding of dues applies to any increase the AFPE Board or it's membership chooses to make in the future.

**Social Security Number (necessary for auto withholding):** \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Representing Only Retirees

**Association of  
Former Public  
Employees**

**AFPE**

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We're on the Web!

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# Legislative Agenda

## AFPE's plan for the 2007 legislative session

AFPE has already been very active meeting with the PERS Benefits Committee and with the Lt. Governor. AFPE looks forward to a positive legislative year with strong support from legislators and the Governor's office for retiree adjustments.

At this stage AFPE will focus on three major items concerning retiree benefits for 2007:

1. Pursuing an increase in the pre-funded health credit. The current credit of \$4.50 per month/per year of service was last adjusted in 1993 and has not matched the pace of rising premium costs.
2. Seeking another 13th check. AFPE and PERS both agree that pursuing another 13th annuity payment based on PERS fund performance is a viable alternative to COLAs which have been repeatedly voted down by the legislature.
3. Maintenance of your PERS retirement system in its current form, opposing privatization of the PERS benefit.

AFPE

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