

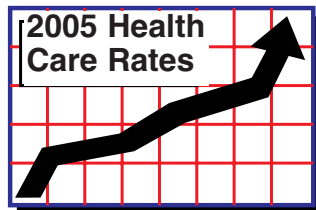
# MCEA NEWS *Extra*

October 2004

Maryland Classified Employees Association

## Senate committee to hold health insurance briefing in Annapolis on Oct. 5

The Senate Budget and Taxation has scheduled a briefing on the 2005 State employees and retirees health insurance program to obtain specifics on the premiums, co-pays, and coverages. The briefing will be held **Tuesday, Oct. 5 at 12:30 p.m. in the Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West Wing, in Annapolis.** Although it has been mentioned that premiums are to increase approximately 12 percent, the Department of Budget and Management says no rates have been finalized. However, co-pays for the point-of-service and HMO plans are to increase to \$15. There is no word on the co-pays for the prescription drug plan.



Committee chairman Sen. Ulysses Currie called the meeting to address FY2005 budget language that mandates that 2005 rates and benefits remain at the current 2004 levels. MCEA is urging the Governor's office to hold off any increases, especially in light of the \$309 million surplus for FY2004. After all, the health care hikes could erase the employees' \$752 pay raise very quickly. MCEA will attend the briefing and keep you updated.

## Register for Convention by Oct. 8 to avoid late registration process

Please be advised that no registrations will be taken over the phone or by fax. Any registrations for the Convention must be made on the official MCEA Delegates or non-delegates registration form. Completed forms must be

mailed prior to Oct. 8, 2004 with full payment of registration fees (\$50 delegates, \$45 non-delegates, check or money order) to: MCEA, Attention: Barbara Mitchell, 7127 Rutherford Road, Baltimore, MD 21244. Paid registrations also will be accepted in person at MCEA Headquarters on or before Oct. 8. Delegates and non-delegates who register before the Oct. 8 deadline will have their Convention packets mailed to them.

Registrations after the Oct. 8 date will be accepted during the registration hours at the Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 2nd level, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. Chapter Presidents who are registering their delegation after the Oct. 8 deadline will require a motion to be seated with the MCEA delegation. These individuals will be given further instructions from the Credentials Chair.

## Free bus rides for Convention delegates

Delegates attending the Convention on Oct. 25-27 will be able to ride the municipal buses at no charge, thanks to the town of Ocean City. Delegates must present their Convention badges to the driver.

## Are security checks considered work time?

The Court of Appeals, Maryland's highest court, will decide. The Eastern Correctional Institution directed non-custodial staff to use their own personal time to undergo security screenings. Lost time and no compensation? After all, these searches last up to 15 minutes before and after their shifts. A group of Case Managers had enough and filed a grievance with MCEA. Our union swung into action! MCEA argued before the Office of

– see other side –

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Administrative Hearings that employees should be compensated under Maryland law. OAH ruled in our favor. Management appealed to the Circuit Court for Somerset County and lost. Determined to get the ruling overturned, management appealed again, to the Court of Special Appeals. Believing this “work time” issue is so significant, the Court of Appeals stepped in and decided that it, instead of the Court of Special Appeals, will assume jurisdiction. A hearing is expected in December 2004.

**Phil Parker, Laura Washington pass away**

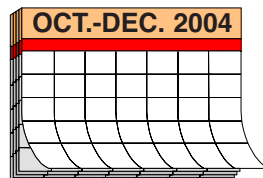
We regret to inform you that two of our active chapter officers recently passed away. They are Phil Parker, president of Chapter 228, Baltimore City Department of Social Services, and Laura Washington, vice president of Chapter 32, Walter P. Carter Center. Both were longtime Convention delegates.

**Volunteers needed for administrative tasks**

MCEA is updating its database to correct telephone numbers, addresses, and other information. We are seeking retirees and other member volunteers to assist in this important task. If you can donate some time toward this project, please contact Geneva Cooper, Information Services Manager, 410-298-8800 or 1-888-611-MCEA, ext. 214.

**Important dates: Mark your calendar**

- Oct. 21 – Board of Directors Meeting
- Oct. 25-27 – MCEA Convention, Roland E. Powell Convention Center, Ocean City
- Nov. 5 – Area IV Meeting, Antietam Family Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 8 – Chapter Presidents Orientation, MCEA Headquarters. Details to come.
- Nov. 9 – TEAM General Membership Meeting, 6:30 p.m. MCEA Headquarters.
- Nov. 16 – Area I Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 18 – Board of Directors Meeting



- Nov. 30 – Area IV, Workplace Training, Hagerstown Library
- Dec. 1 – Area V Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 16 – Board of Directors meeting, 2 p.m.

**End of summer Fish Fry a fun time!**

If you missed MCEA’s fish fry you missed a great time. The Membership Committee (Marilyn Miller, Chair) organized the event, held on Sept. 25 from 1 to 5 p.m. at MCEA Headquarters in Woodlawn. Chef Danny Day kept the fresh fried fish coming, along with plenty of other food. D.J. Dai Rock pumped up the volume, bringing everyone on the floor for hand dancing and line dancing. There were door prizes, games, and lots of activities. Mark your calendars now for the 2005 Crab Feast/ Fish Fry on June 25.



**Above: Interim Executive Director Robert Stephens and Membership Committee Chair Marilyn Miller, also MCEA’s Secretary, help themselves to the buffet of fish and chicken. Below: Members and guests do a line dance to “Cha Cha Slide.”**

