



The Professional Retiree

AFT-W Retiree Council

May, 2015 Volume XV, Issue 1

Retirement Security in the 2015-16 Legislative Session!

by Protect Our Wisconsin Retirement Security (POWRS)

The situation is stark. Woefully few Americans have properly saved for retirement! Even those with access to 401(k)'s have not saved enough. WI is not immune to these national trends. A shocking 22% of all seniors above age 65 depend upon Social Security for 90% or more of their income. (AARP)

WI stands well above these trends for one simple reason: the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS). It is recognized around the world as being one of the best designed and operated systems. Nearly 600,000 public sector participants plus their families depend on it, returning over \$3 billion annually to WI's economy. And, taxpayers are not exposed if investment losses occur because losses come out of annuity payments.

What about WI's 1.5 million private sector employees? Only half of all private employers even offer retirement plans and most of those are 401(k) plans which are NOT designated for retirement security. In 2014, Senator Dave Hansen introduced Senate Bill 611 to allow the state to examine options to use the WRS as a template for a private sector retirement system. A partisan party line vote prevented the bill from clearing committee.

The Republican-controlled legislature sees fit to constantly "reform" it by making changes that weaken it. The most grievous example happened in the 2011-13 budget bill (Act 32) when the annual hours of work for WRS eligibility was doubled (600 to 1,200 hours). This seemingly simple change could prevent upwards of nearly 20,000 part-time employees from EVER qualifying for a secure WRS retirement (former ETF Secretary David Stella's contemporaneous estimate).

(Continued page 6)

INSIDE

- 2 Real Retirement Security Now!
Prescription Drug Cost Increase
News from Your President
- 3 Minutes of 2014 Annual Meeting
- 4 Council Minutes from Feb 6, 2015
- 5 Retirement Security cont'd from pg. 1
New Council Policies
News from Your President continued
WIARA Convention Report
- 6 Constitution and Bylaw changes
- 7 Retirees Working For You
Invest in **InvestaCare**
- 8 Some Unhappy News about Social Security and Medicare

Retiring After 11 Years WIARA Executive Director BILLY FEITLINGER

You are cordially invited to join us on Sunday, June 14th to celebrate Billy Feitlinger's retirement at the Plumber's Local 75 Union Hall, 11175 W. Parkland Avenue, Milwaukee.

At Billy's request, this event is a fundraiser for the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans. Tickets are \$35. All proceeds will be used to continue our work on behalf of retirees to protect our earned benefits.

For more information, please call our office at 414-771-9511 or email us at office@wi-alliance.org.



REAL Retirement Security Now!

by the Alliance for Retired Americans



Sign the Alliance for Retired Americans petition to urge the White House Conference on Aging to make Retirement Security a priority. This year marks the 80th anniversary of Social Security and the 50th anniversaries of Medicare and Medicaid as well as the decennial White House Conference on Aging.

Every generation should be able to retire with the confidence that they will maintain the standard of living they worked hard to attain over decades. That means:

- Preserving, strengthening and expanding Social Security,
- Protecting defined benefit pensions, and
- Strengthening Medicare and Medicaid so that retirees have health care they can afford and access to long-term care if they need it so they can truly enjoy economic security.

Sign this petition (<http://bit.ly/retirementsecuritypetition>) to let the President and the White House Conference on Aging know that we need REAL Retirement Security Now!



Prescription Drug Costs May Increase Under the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)

Fast Track Bill is a Bad Deal for Seniors

by Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans

“This is a fast track to higher drug prices. Americans pay the highest prescription drug prices in the world, and the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal could make drugs even more expensive for seniors. “Retirees are deeply concerned about the TPP and the Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) legislation. Unfortunately, the fast track procedures of TPA would enable changes to prescription drug prices to occur without open and full debate.

“Leaked versions of this secret deal suggest that governments would have to pay ‘competitive, market-driven prices’ for drugs and medical devices. “That sounds reasonable, but in reality it limits the ability of the U.S. government to regulate drug prices and promote the use of proven, generic drugs – two ways that Medicare and Medicaid have worked to keep prescription drug prices affordable for retirees and low-income Americans.

“The U.S. government should be doing more to rein in prescription drug prices, which grew 13 percent just last year, not conducting secret negotiations that will reduce our ability to protect retirees and control government spending. The Alliance urges members of Congress to reject this agreement.

From Your President, Kathy Monaghan



Many changes have happened in Wisconsin since the passage of Act 10. Your retiree chapter, also, has begun to place more emphasis in three areas.

We have increased our involvement in coalitions with the **Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans** and the **Wisconsin Coalition of Annuitants** which work to protect your social security and retirement. Our delegates keep a watchful eye on any adverse legislation which affects you. Information on any current changes will be included on our AFT-W Retiree website.

AFT-Wisconsin has reorganized to support six core functions which address the needs of its members under Act 10. The core functions include: organizing, leadership development, communications, political activity, community outreach, and professional development. Our retiree chapter will continue to be involved in supporting these activities wherever possible.

At the last AFT-W convention, a constitutional amendment was passed to hold conventions every two years instead of yearly.

(Continued on page 5)

Minutes Of The Aft-Wi Retiree Council Annual Meeting

The AFT-WI Retirees had their Annual Meeting on Friday, November 14, 2014 at the Green Bay Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Green Bay, Wisconsin. The meeting was called to order by President Kathy Monaghan at 4:30pm with 10 members present. Present were Joy Bashara, Kathy Monaghan, Kathy Lisdahl, Bob Beglinger, Jim Moore, Marilyn Bunnell, Carol Meagher, Richard Amoriello, Ruth Ludwig and Jill Hynum.

Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the last annual meeting minutes and executive minutes.

Treasurer's Report

The first item of business was a report on the 2014 budget. Total liabilities and equity was \$14,474.13. Income as of October 10, 2014 was \$8,536.03; expenses were \$8,865.02; and the overall total was minus \$328.99. Our CD's value is \$5,954.61 and our checking balance is \$8,519.52. A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the treasurer's report.

The next order of business was the proposed 2015 Retiree Budget. Income is anticipated to be \$8,250.00; expenses budgeted for are \$8,250.00. This is \$3,000.00 less than last year. A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept this budget.

Committee Reports

-Marilynn Bunnell reported that we have 115 lifetime members and 88 yearly members as of this date.

-Newsletter update was that there are 3 issues per year. The next one will come out in December 2014.

-Jill Hynum reported that the website is up and running with pertinent information such as resources for retirees on local, state and national issues. She encouraged people to get her other information that they wanted included such as photos, links, information, etc.

-Bob Beglinger commented at length about the Coalition of Annuity and other issues facing the AFT-WI. Charter schools, outsourcing, 2 for 1 (half-time hiring) to avoid benefits and privatization were some of his topics. The following is Bob's summary: "Currently there is little to report as the legislature is not in session. However, complacency could be a problem in the future. We will continue to monitor activities and will try to keep members informed if and when new threats appear. The 'strategies conversations' sponsored by WEAC has encouraged members to become involved in their regime." All committee chairs are thanked for their work for AFT Retirees.

President's Report

President Monaghan reported that Bob Beglinger was honored at the WI-ARA Luncheon in Milwaukee and commented on the good works of the ARA stating that it provides leadership for many other retiree groups.

Kathy reiterated the Retiree Policy changes in regard to expenses which were adopted on July 25, 2014: Rooms for convention will be paid for delegates and alternates; rooms will be paid for officers and standing committee chairs for regular meetings when necessary; and only receipted expenditures for gas and meals will be paid for convention and regular meetings if participants choose to submit them.

The status of the AFT-W/WEAC merger is that it is stalled. The biggest issue seems to be the difference in dues structure. AFT Retirees pay less than the WEAC Retirees. This is significant. In February 2014 is the date of WEAC's rejection of merger.

New Business

The items of new business dealt with the Retiree Council Constitution and Bylaw Amendments as well as the AFT-WI Constitution and Bylaw Amendments. Here is a summary of the AFT-WI Retiree changes: Article IV Sect 1 – Membership-item C – add to end UNLESS THEY CHOOSE TO AFFILIATE WITH THE AFT-W COUNCIL; Article VI Sect 1 –Composition – item E delete what is there and add UP TO FIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF FORMALLY CONSTITUTED LOCAL CHAPTERS OF AFT RETIREES WITH A MAXIMUM OF ONE BEING FROM ANY SINGLE LOCAL. IF MORE THAN FIVE LOCAL CHAPTERS ARE ORGANIZED, THE TOP FIVE MEMBERS WILL BE ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING BY THE MEMBERS PRESENT; Article VI –Sect 2 – Duties of Exec Bd - item F – add COALITION OF ANNUITY; Article VII – AFT-WI-R Committees – delete all and replace with A. MEMBERSHIP/ORGANIZING B. LEGISLATIVE/COPE C. COMMUNICATIONS. To the Bylaws the following changes were made: Officer Duties, item D –Treasurer –add PREPARE AN ANNUAL BUDGET; revision date – change to REVISED NOVEMBER 2014; add the following – AFT-W-R POLICIES 1. OFFICERS AND ELECTED DELEGATES AND ALTERNATED SHALL HAVE THEIR ROOMS REIMBURSED FOR THE ANNUAL CONVENTION 2. OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS WILL HAVE THEIR ROOMS REIMBURSED FOR MEETINGS WHEN NECESSARY AS APPROVED BY THE RETIREE EXECUTIVE BOARD. 3. MILEAGE – SUGGESTIONS TO BE DETERMINED – FROM NONE TO 20 CENTS A MILE, TO GAS RECEIPTS WERE DISCUSSED. 4. USE

Kathy presented some information on two of the items being voted on at convention. One was the reduction of the size of the board by two. The amendment states that the At Large Vice-presidents would be reduced from 6 members to 4 members. The second amendment dealt with changing the convention to once every other year rather than once a year. The conventions would occur in odd numbered years only. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Joy Bashara, Secretary

Retire Council Minutes - February 6, 2015

The conference call of the AFT-W Retiree Council was called to order at 10:05 a.m. on Friday, 6, 2015 by President Kathy Monaghan. Members present were Bob Gallagher Beglinger, Bonnie Greasby, Ed Gallagher, Marilynn Bunnell, Wanda Gerard, Buzz Davis, Kathy Empie, and Kathy Monaghan.

The minutes of the Retire Council Convention were discussed. A motion was made by Gallagher and seconded by Davis to approve them as distributed. Motion carried.

Thea treasurer's report showed a balance in the checking account of \$10,988.98 and a CD balance of \$5,959.81 for a total of \$16,948.79.

Old Business

1. An AFT-W Convention Report was given. Major changes included changing the annual convention to a biannual convention and reducing the size of vice-presidents at large by two.

2. Bob Beglinger gave a lengthy report from the Coalition of Annuitants. WRS predictions will include a probable increase in the core fund from 2.8-3.2% and the variable from 0-3. Issues of concern were explained at length. Bob will write an article for the upcoming issue of the newsletter.

3. The newsletter will be published in March and will include our bylaw and constitution changes as well as our changes in our policy for reimbursement. Also included will be the two main changes in the AFT-W constitution as listed above.

New Business

1. The dues are due letter was sent to approximately 88 individuals. From that we have received 69 yearly members and 1 life member. A committee was formed to increase the number of former members that were contacted and did not pay dues last year. The committee will include Ed Gallagher, Bonnie Greasby, Marilynn Bunnell, and Kathy Monaghan.

2. The Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans Convention will be held in Madison at the Concourse Hotel on Monday, March 2. Members were asked to donate \$100 for advertising and \$50 for members attending. A motion was made by Beglinger and seconded by Davis to donate \$100 and pay the \$50 for Jill Hynum, Bonnie Greasby, and Marilynn Bunnell at a total cost of \$250. Motion carried.

3. AFT-W Executive Board Report. A dues structure committee has been formed to study the dues levels bases on the state's decreasing membership. Each council will have a representative and an alternate. Bob Beglinger will be the representative and Kathy Monaghan will be the alternate.

Convention dates for the 2015 Convention will be Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 23, 24, and 25. A Madison location was recommended. No site has been chosen to date.

A motion was made by Beglinger and seconded by Gallagher to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Monaghan, Acting Secretary

Retirement Security in the 2015-16 Legislative Session!

(continued from page one)

More changes are being considered or made possible in the 2015-17 budget bill include denying WRS eligibility for NCAA football coaches. If football coaches can't participate, why not preclude other UW staff? Then there's the issue of UW "flexibility" under the proposed authority. If it's created and the UWS runs short of revenue, it could let university staff to "opt-out" of the WRS (Representative (R) Stachota's 2012 proposal) or reduce the employer-employee contribution. The WRS has nearly 30,000 UW participants. Can it survive with thousands less?

Read the entire article at <http://retirees.wi.aft.org>.

WIARA 10th Anniversary and Convention

by Jill Hynum

I attended the biennial convention of the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans (WIARA) recently. The National ARA was founded in 2001 and was the first retiree's organization to affiliate with the AFL-CIO. Wisconsin joined the organization in 2005.



John Nichols gave his usual rip roaring talk. He talked about what a misnomer "right to work" is. It suggests you have a right to a job which of course it doesn't deliver. He discussed voting rights, the civil rights and labor movement. They were different groups fighting for the same goals.



Dr. Robert Kraig from Citizen Actions of Wisconsin (CAW) spoke on Comprehensive and Affordable Health Care for all. He said Robin Vos is worried about the Senior Care provisions in the budget. He said he believes RTW was pushed forward at this particular time in order to take attention away from the recently proposed budget. The Legislative Fiscal Bureau has already estimated that Wisconsin could save \$345 million by accepting the Medicaid expansion money. That would be enough to reverse the UW cuts with \$45 million to spare.



Dean Baker from the Center for Economic and Policy Research spoke on the importance of Retirement Security. He said the TPP (Trans-Pacific-Partnership) isn't about free trade. What it really is about is building a corporation-friendly infrastructure. It would make it easier for corporations to sue countries while bypassing their court system. One big example he cited is that the pharmaceutical industry could get even stronger patent protections that could delay cheaper, generic versions. It might also include stronger prohibitions against letting Medicare someday negotiate drug prices.

Read the entire report at <http://retirees.wi.aft.org>.

RETIREE COUNCIL



Adopted July 25, 2014

1. Rooms will be paid for delegates and alternates to the AFT-Wisconsin Convention.
2. Rooms will be paid for officers and standing committee chairs for regular meetings when necessary.
3. Only receipted expenditures for gas and meals will be paid for convention and regular meetings if participants choose to submit them.

From Your President,
Kathy Monaghan

(continued from page two)



This year our convention will be held October 23-25 at the Radisson Hotel in Madison. This change will be to a Friday night to Sunday to accommodate those individuals that no longer have released time during the week to attend our convention. Hopefully this will allow more members to attend and increase our participation.

Our Retiree Council will have the election of officers and a guest speaker. More workshops will be planned. Put the dates on your calendar.

In order to keep you more informed and up-to-date on issues quickly, it is important that we have your e-mail address. Also, please review our retiree website regularly.

<http://retirees.wi.aft.org>

**HAVE A GREAT
SUMMER!**

AFT-W Retiree Council Constitution and Bylaw Changes

Article IV Section 1--Membership in AFT-WI-R

- A. Membership eligibility in the AFT-WI-R shall be determined without regard to sex, race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, and position in public employment, political affiliation, or sexual orientation.
- B. Individual applications for membership shall be submitted to the AFT-WI-R or the AFT-W local the person retires from may submit an application and dues payment.
- C. The AFT-WI-R's jurisdiction shall not include any currently AFT chartered retiree chapters in Wisconsin **unless they choose to affiliate with the AFT-W-R Council.**
- D. Only chartered retiree chapters shall be affiliated through the AFT-WI-Retiree Council.

Article VI Section 1--Composition of the AFT-WI-R Executive Board

The AFT-WI-R Executive Board shall consist of:

- A. All the officers of the Council
- B. The immediate past AFT-WI-R President for one term only (as ex-officio)
- C. The President of AFT-W (as ex-officio)
- D. Standing committee chairpersons
- E. **Up to five representatives of formally constituted local chapters of AFT-W retirees with a maximum of one being from any single local. If more than five local chapters are organized, the top five members will be elected at the annual meeting by the members present.**
- F. All of the above persons shall be voting members of the AFT-WI-R Executive Board

Section 2--Duties of the Executive Board

It shall be the duty of the Council Executive Board:

- A. To conduct all business affairs of the Council between annual meetings.
- B. To plan the agenda for all Council meetings.
- C. To approve all standing committees and special committees appointed by the president.
- D. To prepare and conduct an annual AFT-WI-R convention.
- E. To prepare and present an annual budget to the state convention/annual meeting.
- F. To act as liaison with other retiree organizations, the state and national Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA), **WI Coalition of Annuitants**, Coalition of WI Aging Groups (CWAG), AARP, WREA, WEAC-Retirees, and the state and national AFL/CIO.
- G. To cooperate, formulate and implement decisions and plans for the proper functioning of the AFT-WI.

Article VII AFT-WI-R Committees

Standing committees of the Council shall include the following:

- A. Membership/Organizing**
- B. Legislative/COPE**
- C. Communications**

Article XI--Adoption

This AFT-WI-R Constitution is adopted as amended on **November 14, 2014** by the members of the AFT-WI Retiree Council.

Officer Duties

D. Treasurer: The treasurer shall maintain all financial records of the Council, see that all money from dues and other sources are receipted, full accounts are kept and that this money is deposited to the credit of the Council in banks or savings institutions; prepare a financial report for the annual meeting and upon prior request, **prepare an annual budget**, prepare a financial report for the Executive Board or any membership meeting of the AFT-WI-R; notify members of dues renewal; and perform any other duties as may be prescribed by the Executive Board. The treasurer shall also keep an accurate list of all AFT-WI-R members along with their membership status.

Annual Dues

At the AFT-WI-R annual meeting October 1999, the dues were increased from \$15 to \$20 per annum. A lifetime membership is \$200. Changes in the annual dues will be determined at the annual meeting. Dues may be collected by cash, check or bank draft.

Revised November 14, 2014

AFT-Wisconsin Retirees Working For You

By Bob Beglinger

In order to increase our leverage and better advocate for our member's interests, the AFT-W Retirees participate in and collaborate with a number of other organizations that share common interests. Among these is the Wisconsin Coalition of Annuity (WCOA).

Working with representatives from more than 20 groups of annuitants participating in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS), the WCOA is committed to achieving the most effective and efficient operation of the WRS, free from political interference on policy and investment decisions, and with the best interest of our members paramount.

In order to accomplish our goals, the WCOA Board meets monthly with representatives of the ETF (Employee Trust Fund)

and SWIB (The State of Wisconsin Investment Board) to discuss issues of concern and share information. Two AFT-W Retiree members, Buzz Davis and Bob Beglinger, participate in these monthly meetings for AFT-W.

The WCOA maintains a non-partisan status and consensus of the Board is required for any action. However, because of the wide scope of members, the Coalition does have considerable impact on legislative decisions affecting your pensions.

As new GASB reporting requirements are implemented, perceived liabilities of state and local government entities will become much more volatile. As a result, large surpluses may show up one year and huge deficits the next. In order that legislators don't use this as an excuse to forgo payments because of perceived surpluses or reduce pensions because of

perceived shortfalls, it is critical that legislators be educated in the difference between an annual accounting report and long term funding requirements. This is just one of the many issues the Coalition is currently working on with the ETF.

In addition to our monthly meetings of the Coalition Board, the WCOA maintains a website at (www.wicoa.org) which contains a wealth of information about the WRS and is open to all.

The Coalition also sponsors an annual conference in Madison. This year the conference was held on May 18. Information on that meeting will be available on the website shortly.

Again, one of the ways the AFT-W Retirees are able to better advocate for our members is through our work with other groups. Our participation in the Wisconsin Coalition of Annuity is just one example of AFT-W Retirees working for you.

Invest in InvestaCare
from Wisconsin Women's Policy Institute



The **Wisconsin Women's Policy Institute** encourages members of the Wisconsin State Senate and the State Assembly to co-sponsor proposed **InvestaCare** legislation. **InvestaCare** provides a low-risk option for addressing long term care needs, as well as, delays in Medicaid program payments. Any adult citizen or legal resident would be eligible to open an **InvestaCare** account and to deposit funds to pay long term care costs.

The funds could be used to pay for a broad umbrella of services that include, but are not limited to: home health care, durable medical equipment, admission to long term care facilities, medical transportation and caregiver relief.

For more information on **InvestaCare**, contact Wendy Kelly at: 608-304-0056; or visit <http://bit.ly/1Ez9z>

AFT-WI Retiree Council
6602 Normandy Lane
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Some unhappy news about Medicare and Social Security

Yahoo Finance - May 5th, 2015

by Rick Newman

“I’m going to ask [people] to give up a little bit to make sure the system doesn’t fail,” Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) says in a video. “If we don’t, the baby boomers are going to wipe out Medicare and Social Security. We’ll become Greece.”

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/some-unhappy-news-about-medicare-and-social-security-132526040.html>

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