



# Florida Public Personnel Association, Inc.

## NEWSLETTER

**FPPA Website: [www.fppa.org](http://www.fppa.org)**

**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2009**

*The FPPA Newsletter is published Quarterly by the Florida Public Personnel Association. Submission of member's workplace experiences or news of interest is encouraged. If you would like to submit an article for publication in the April issue please contact Joe Denaro, [joe.denaro@titusville.com](mailto:joe.denaro@titusville.com) or call 321 383 5820.*



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### ***A Message from the President*** Bonnie Steinberg

Happy New Year! It is a pleasure and an honor to be your President this year. I am very fortunate to work with a great group of professionals that make up the 2008/2009 Executive Board: Lee Brown President-Elect; Tom Neal Vice President; Portia Dinkins Treasurer; Joe Denaro Secretary; Vickie Cannoy Academy Director and Debbie McDonald Immediate Past President. Thank you, Debbie, for your leadership as last year's President and for leaving the association in good financial condition.

In the early 1500's a young man left Puerto Rico when he was fired from his job as Governor. Ponce de León sailed north along the coast of an island which he named La Florida ("place of flowers"). In those days, there were no unemployment benefits, no 401K or retirement plans, no union contracts, ADA, FLSA, COBRA, EEO, FMLA, OSHA, ERISA, USERRA, INA, Veterans' Preference, pre-employment drug screening, etc., etc. Although he didn't have to deal those challenges, he faced his own when he was searching for the Fountain of Youth and landed in the area of present day St. Augustine.

It seems appropriate then that this year's conference theme is "In Search of the HR Fountain of Knowledge". Sally Ellison is this year's Conference Host Committee Chair and is working hard with her committee to coordinate the conference events. It is important that you make your reservations now to attend. Due to budget constraints for most of us, we encourage you to consider car pooling and room sharing.

Like Ponce Deleon's goal was to find the fountain of youth, the Executive Board has also laid out goals for this year. They include:

- Website - We have contracted with Evergreen Solutions to take the FPPA website in a new direction with a new look and feel. A Website Committee has been appointed to work closely with Evergreen on the design of the website including an annual salary and benefits survey. More details will be provided at a later date.
- A Legislative Committee has been appointed and is very active in researching legislative issues that affect our jobs as Human Resources professionals. This committee is led by our favorite HR Doctor....Phil Rosenberg.
- Constitution and Bylaws - We have reviewed the Constitution and Bylaws and will present recommended changes to the membership at the annual conference.
- Business Plan - Several years ago the Executive Board prepared a Business Plan. We are currently reviewing it to lay out a schedule for completion of some of the goals outlined in that document.
- Tax Exempt Status – We hope to make another attempt to get FPPA designated as Tax Exempt.

As you can see, we have been busy. We would not/will not be able to accomplish these goals without the help and support of the members.

On behalf of the Executive Board, I wish to extend a warm welcome to all of our new members. I am proud to say that I have been a member of FPPA for 20+ years. I have volunteered as Regional Coordinator, Host Committee member and the Executive Board. I have made many friends along the way and I am sure you will too.

This is your association. If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to become involved in FPPA so that our association remains one of the best in the state.

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***"A View from the Porch"***

An Essay by Pres. Elect., Lee

While sitting here on the City Hall porch, sipping some Iced Tea and contemplating the meaning of life (this would be *after* a (male) employee forwarded my City-wide email announcing the scheduling of the mobile

mammogram bus to two female co-workers, announcing he (said male employee) would be conducting the mammograms in his office). I have reached the decision that my iced tea needed something stronger in it.

(I sometimes don't know why I have a policy against drinking at work, since that's where I seem to need it the most...) After reaching that conclusion, I also began to ponder what an extraordinarily momentous time is upon us. This is, and will continue to be, an age of change for us nationally, individually (perhaps), and professionally (for sure).

If you remember, I mentioned in the last newsletter, that there are many changes here now, and being considered with regards to employment legislation. I just went to a presentation on the new regulations on the FMLA and it will require a significant revision to the way we do things. We just gave a presentation to some of our key people that prepare payroll, and you could see the concern and confusion on their faces about the work required to track these new forms and eligibility issues.

As the conference "program planner" I will guarantee you we will have an entire session on the new changes to the FMLA, presented by an attorney. I have also already lined up and confirmed speakers on some other topics, which include In-house medical clinics; Using Facebook, My Space (and other on-line sites) to make hiring decisions (pros/cons) and USERRA Law Compliance Training for those of us who have military reservists called up; and an overall Legal Update. I also plan to have speakers (still looking for some) on the recent changes to the ADA, health insurance cost containment, the new Mental Health Parity Provisions, Wellness Programs (which can reduce your health insurance costs) and potentially, some info on reductions in force. Those are just some of the programs and I'm sure others will turn up.

There are also two significant pieces of legislation pending that rumor has it, will pass easily in the upcoming federal legislative session. The first of those is the **Ledbetter Act** (HR11) which has already passed the House and is expected to pass in the Senate quickly. This Act would effectively eliminate the uniform statute of limitations on pay discrimination claims. Instead, the time clock for filing such a charge with the EEOC would restart each time an employee receives a paycheck. This could amount to going back years and years in pay research to justify pay differences. The second is the **Paycheck Fairness Act** (HR12) which has also already passed in the House and is expected to pass in the Senate quickly. This Act would amend the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which requires that jobs requiring comparable function, skills, effort and responsibility in similar working conditions must compensate equally. This bill lifts the caps on compensatory or punitive damages for which employers would be liable, in addition to current liability for back pay. These damage penalties would apply to *even unintentional pay disparities*.

I know budgets are very tight. I do however think you need to "lobby" intensely to get your organization to send you to our annual conference this year. Show them the program and point out that even in these tight economic times, training and knowledge of these critical HR topics will keep your organization from losing costly lawsuits and can even potentially lower costs in the long run. It will be well worth the expenditure. FPPA has value not only to you professionally, but also to your organization. Send a memo with the program (when I get it finished of course) and show the benefit to the organization of your attendance.

Don't forget that effective February 2nd, you should be using the **new** I-9 Form, and on January 1st, 2009 the **Florida** minimum wage went to \$7.21/hr and on July 24th 2009, the **Federal** minimum wage will be \$7.25/hr. If you have anyone making minimum wage, I'd recommend just going to the \$7.25/hr now, so you don't have to do it twice.

Hey, what a **great** inauguration! I listened to President Obama's speech, and also read the text again as well. I'm inspired and filled with hope for this great Nation, our great State, County, City and everything else. I hope you are too! We have many challenges ahead, especially in Florida, but just view them as fantastic opportunities to do even more, with even less. You are not alone. We have each other to rely on. WE will persevere!

Well, that's all I have, other than answering that nagging question you have about my emailing employee. Fortunately (for me, not so much for him) through an emailing mistake, his email to his female co-workers came straight back to **me** and never went to the ladies. Yes, he **did** get a reprimand, and he **is** going, posthaste, to Sexual Harassment training. I'm also considering using a cattle prod in the future, to reinforce sexual harassment training, but that might be the "iced tea" (long island style) talking, and might even violate the Violence in the Workplace policy. I'll have to think about that some more.....I guess.....it might need some re-writing as well.

Come join me on the Porch (at the annual conference).

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### ***A Regional Coordinator Update***

Tom Neal, Vice President

I'm pleased to announce the following members have agreed to serve as Regional Coordinators this year:

Richard "Rick" Anderson, Emerald Coast Utilities Authority, Pensacola – North West Region  
Wendy Widmann, City of Cocoa - Central Region  
Anne Allen, City of Cocoa – Central Region  
Lydia Storck, City of Tampa – West Central Region  
Jeanette Green, Hillsborough County BOCC - West Central Region  
Deborah Cline, City of Madeira Beach – West Central Region  
Gail Coel, Sarasota County Government, Sarasota – West Central Region  
Tim McPherson, Town of Jupiter – East Central Region

The Coordinators are working towards conducting Regional Seminars and further information will be forthcoming from them in the near future. In the meantime, if you have suggestions on topics, speakers, etc., please feel free to contact them direct. Contact information is available on the FPPA website [www.fppa.org/Admin/Memberlist.asp](http://www.fppa.org/Admin/Memberlist.asp) The FPPA Executive Board sincerely appreciates the volunteerism displayed by these members.

We are, however, lacking Regional Coordinators in the following Regions: North Central, North East, Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade. Anyone desiring to step forward please contact me at [tomneal\\_fppa@yahoo.com](mailto:tomneal_fppa@yahoo.com)

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***Treasurer Update***  
Portia Dinkins

It is that time of year again. What time is that? Well lots of things: tax season, budget preparation, plan renewals, negotiations – but also time to renew your FPPA Annual Membership. Most of you have already paid, but if you haven't, now is the time. We would appreciate payment as soon as possible. If not paid before the conference, you will be charged the non-member conference rate. That rate is \$50 more for each registration for a total of \$150. Let's say three members of your agency attend the conference, your agency will pay \$25 more than if a \$125 agency membership was renewed now.

You may access the Membership Application of the FPPA website [www.fppa.org](http://www.fppa.org).

Agency Membership - \$125.00 (Membership covers three individuals)

Individual Membership - \$50.00

Qualified Retiree Membership - \$15.00

Associate Membership - \$125.00

Student Membership (Not employed in a full time capacity at an agency) \$15.00

Also remember to add 5% for credit card renewals AND we know longer can except American Express

On behalf of the Executive Board, thank you for your continuous support.

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***Health and Funding Strategies***  
Joe Denaro, Secretary

As you recall in our last newsletter I shared with you some of the health care plan design strategies we pursued during the City of Titusville's renewal, Now, in response to GASB 45 and mapping out a financial action plan strategy to control health care costs we are planning to review our benefits design for former employees and active members on our health plan. Here is what we would like to do in the next two years.

We have already established a "Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust. The Trust is intended to provide for funding of non-pension post – employment benefits for employees who meet the age and service requirements. We are also planning to review our long term benefit costs and adopt a formal

policy. The City offers health care for active members and retirees. Our retiree health care premiums are the same as active member premiums blending the costs of active and retired members except for the way we manage retiree medical liability for Medicare eligible retirees who are offered a Medicare Advantage Plan through one carrier with incentives to use benefits wisely and programs to stay healthy and fit. We think the plan helps us manage and reduce our GASB liability providing a win-win for the City, the taxpayers and plan beneficiaries. Subsequent to our "OPEB" Funding Plan we now turn to hiring an advisor to assist in identifying the most appropriate implementation steps for mitigating our current liability. On the horizon is a 2009 Action Plan of our basic benefits plan design including a planning survey for the purpose of identifying benefit trend factors such as health savings program, an employee health clinic, offering a dual option health plan, and cost sharing components to assist the City in determining monthly premium rates for retirees. Any modification to existing retiree benefits that has the effect of reducing the City's cost will obviously be perceived as a "takeaway". Let me know what experiences you have in handling benefit reductions.

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**2009 Pre Conference Academy Update**  
Vickie Cannoy, Academy Director

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Florida Public Personnel Association Conference will be held at the Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village in beautiful St. Augustine, Florida. The pre-conference academy will be all day Saturday, August 1<sup>st</sup> and a half-day on Sunday August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The pre-conference will consist of the Academy, Classification and Compensation and the Master's Programs.

The information for "08" pre-conference, conference and regional workshops have been updated in the FPPA website. It is now time for those members who have met the criteria for FPPA certification or re-certification to complete the attached forms. Once you have completed the forms they can be mailed to me at City of Lakeland, 228 South Massachusetts Ave, Lakeland, Florida 33801 Attention: Vickie Cannoy, or faxed at 863.834-6004 or e-mailed to [Vickie.cannoy@lakelandgov.net](mailto:Vickie.cannoy@lakelandgov.net).

If you have questions about what is required to achieve certification or re-certification, please visit our website at [www.fppa.org](http://www.fppa.org) and click on the "FPPA Certification" link on the right side of the page. I need to receive all certification and re-certification applications prior to April 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have specific questions regarding your eligibility, please don't hesitate to contact me at 863.834.6037.

I look forward to seeing you all at the FPPA Conference in St. Augustine.

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**Annual Conference 2009 Update!**  
**Sally Ellison, Host Committee Chair**

**IN SEARCH OF...**  
**HR'S FOUNTAIN OF KNOWLEDGE!**

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual FPPA Training Conference will soon be upon us. This year it will be held at the Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village in historic St. Augustine. In trying to keep with the history of the area, we have selected Ponce de Leon's search for the legendary Fountain of Youth to be this year's theme...with a little twist.

Mark your calendars for August 1<sup>st</sup> through August 5<sup>th</sup> for an adventurous time. Searching for HR knowledge knows no age limits...



[www.wgv.com](http://www.wgv.com)

[www.oldcity.com](http://www.oldcity.com)

**Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village**

500 South Legacy Trail  
St. Augustine, FL 32092  
Reservations: 1-888-740-7272  
Direct Line: 904-940-8000

**St. Augustine, Florida**

Room rates are \$139.00 per night. To make a reservation, contact the Passkey Call Center at (800) 266-9432, and be sure to refer to the FPPA 2009 Conference.

There will be a fee for the parking valet, but no fee for self-parking.  
Registration forms for the Pre-Conference and the Conference are on the website at  
<http://www.fppa.org/conference/conf2009/conf2009.asp>

Completed forms should be sent to:

Sally Ellison  
c/o Manatee County Sheriff's Office, Human Resources  
600 301 Blvd. W. #202  
Bradenton, FL 34205  
(941) 747-3011, ext 2132

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### FPPA Legislative Committee Chair Report

Phil Rosenberg

Dear Colleagues,

March 3<sup>rd</sup> is a "red alert day" for public agencies throughout the State of Florida. This is the day when the 2009 session of the Florida Legislature officially begins. The red alert part stems from the fact that Legislatures around the Country always appear to be on the look-out to create Bills which, in various cases, put Local Government stability and financing at considerable risk while threatening to add unfunded and caseload driven mandates to our already full plates. In view of the global as well as statewide economic downturn that is already affecting all of us in Public service, the prospect for legislative mischief further adding to hardships for cities, counties, school boards, and special districts is particularly serious.

FPPA's Legislative Committee is going to be bringing forward during this session comments on bills that are introduced or ideas for legislation, and generally trying to keep up with what comes and goes through the Legislature's scores, if not hundreds of Bills each year. Some will relate to items of direct interest to HR Professionals. Others will have a context important to Public Administration in general even if the labels say nothing about human resources directly. In periodic reports to the Board during this session individual Bills might be highlighted and calls may go out for support in rallying in opposition to or in favor of particular matters that come forward. It is also important that each FPPA member get to know more about their jurisdiction's interaction with the State Legislature in order to help sound alarms and alerts to measures which will help or hurt our ability to do the best professional jobs we can do.

In the case of this newsletter, I would like to focus briefly on a particular Senate Bill (SB356) which opens the State's health insurance and pharmacy benefit program to participation by any school board, county, city or special district in the State. Certainly, the notion of finding a way out of individual jurisdiction wrestling matches with the Health Insurance industry is very attractive on the surface. The idea that we might be able to defer to a State Plan offering health insurance benefits and, therefore, perhaps defer responsibility for keeping an individual Agency Plan functional, sounds very attractive. However, when this Bill is looked at more closely, there are traps and snags that take a generally reasonable sounding idea and make it one which, at least in this author's opinion, is something to be avoided.

I appreciate the help and support of a great insurance benefit consultant Lloyd Rhodes of the Rhodes Insurance Group for also analyzing this Bill and offering commentary. The Bill has been presented many times in the past, Lloyd notes, and has always been defeated. In part, this is likely the result of the finer print in the Bill which would mandate that if an Agency is going to participate it makes a three year, "no back-out" commitment. This may sound reasonable, but it also is a mandate regardless of cost increases

which may come during that three year period. The Agency, in other words has no control over the increases which may come and no ability to back out. There is no mention in the Bill summary of the fact that the Agency which enters the State Plan has no control or option to change or customize coverage. You buy into a one-size fits all benefit plan and give up options which are present in both the fully insured or self-funded plans to tailor the plan to local needs, labor relations history, or local capabilities. The capabilities can have important impacts on a local program. The great Jim Carnicella of Ocoee will be happy to describe the success of an on-site clinic for City employees and dependents, for example. Other agencies around the State can speak to other individually tailored components of the healthcare plan. Those components are at risk when they are subsumed under a giant and less flexible program. Finally, the organization that opts in is responsible to pay costs associated with the entity's participation. Its hard to know exactly what that means but it could involve such things as administrative costs which might be equal to, if not greater that what an agency might be able to find by self-funding or by local bidding, if not local consortium building. On this Bill, I agree with Lloyd Rhodes. The reality is that joining this plan might be the best option for agencies that have no other options.

Members of this year's Legislative Committee are as follows:

- Don Albonesi, Collier County
- Alanna Carinio, City of Sunrise
- Sara DeBella, Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
- Barbara Dupre, Town of Davie
- Kevin Fulford, Pasco County
- Kim Gibbons, Village of Wellington
- D'Andrea Giddens-Jones, City of Lauderdale Lakes
- Dianah Jackson, City of St. Petersburg
- Louis Morales, City of Orlando
- Phil Rosenberg, HR Doctor
- Stacie Ross, City of Sarasota
- Barbara Rulison, Pasco County Clerk of the Circuit Court
- Theresa Smalling, City of Coconut Creek
- Lydia Storck, City of Tampa
- Jacqueline Wehmeyer, Town of Jupiter

We should all thank them for their willingness to step out and help in the often thankless job of trying to figure out what's going on in the State Legislature – a task which Legislators themselves likely have trouble doing!

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