



Florida Public Personnel Association, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

FPPA Website: www.fppa.org

3rd Quarter, 2010

THE PREZ'S VIEW FROM THE PORCH

WHAT'S IN YOUR BOX?

The other day, I was reflecting back on my 37 year career in Human Resources. What a remarkable, rewarding trip it has been! Human Resources in the military (Go Navy), Private Sector (Banking & Manufacturing), County Government and finally City Government. All venues have been uniquely valuable experiences. I was recently interviewed for an article and was asked "what's the worst place you have ever worked?" I did not have a "worst" place. Every place I have ever worked has provided me with a learning experience and something of exceptional value.

As I am winding down and beginning to cast a vision for my next life phase, I started looking around my office to see what needed to be done. Having been with the City of Orlando for 24 years, I sure have accumulated some "stuff". At some point, I'm going to need to start boxing up my "stuff" and carting it out of here.

As I look at the "stuff", I notice it consists of books, plaques, certificates, pictures, pen/pencil sets, clocks, hats, coffee mugs,....on and on and on. I begin to wonder as I box that stuff up, is this the summation of my career? I'll put this stuff in boxes and take it home and probably put it in the back of the closet or in the garage where my other box of "stuff" is from previous employers. My kids will find it some day and wonder what it is all about and what did this stuff mean to their Dad?

Upon further reflection, I decided this "stuff" really was just insignificant junk. The real thing I'm packing up and taking away are the memories and relationships with the *phenomenal* people I've worked with in this organization. That's what's important. Through times of workplace joy and heartbreak, bounty and scarcity, accomplishment and frustration, laughter and stress, the *people* in this organization are what make it great. Couldn't be otherwise.

I am convinced that each and every one of you, even if it's buried down deep in some, has that spark of commitment and dedication that comes with public service. You serve and you work hard as a professional in your field, to make things better for our citizens. Doesn't matter exactly what you do, only that you accomplish it with excellence and pride. I'm walking away, head held high, knowing that in some small way, I made a difference. I hope you will to when ever that time comes in your life.

I was recently talking to someone in an organization going through difficulties (not this one), who shared with me something quite valuable. *"There is a reason that the windshield and side windows in the car are so large and clear, and the rear-view mirror is so small. That's to enhance your view **forward** so you pay attention, and you don't become overly concerned with what is behind you."* Excellent advice which I took to heart. Focus on the future because that's where the possibilities lie.

That being said, when I *do* look in my rear view mirror, I'm going to see *wonderful* memories of fantastic people who have meant a great deal to me. I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to work with all of you and **you** will forever be the *true* treasures in my box. Absolutely priceless.

My parting advice to you would be:

- * *Keep your family close to your heart,*
- * *Keep your friends close by your side,*
- * *Treat your co-workers with respect (even if you think some don't deserve it),*
- * *Forgive those you feel have offended you.*

If you follow this advice, you will lead a much happier life.

As we move forward in life, I am entrusting some of you with the continued legacy of excellence to this organization. I of course will be serving one more year on the Board of this awesome professional association. I will perhaps see some of you down the road. Maybe you can stop by my porch sometime, sip a glass of iced tea and we'll chat about old times. Let's do that in the hospitality suite at the conference in Marco. See you there!

NEWS from the President-Elect Tom Neal

The final conference program should be available on the FPPA website now and we believe it is well rounded and has topics of interest to all who will attend. While there still may be some last minute changes to speakers, the subject matter is locked-in. One change I want to announce is the time change for the Tuesday evening, August 3 Reception; it has been changed to 7:00 pm from 6:30 pm. A few comments relative to conference registrations:

- 1) Please make sure you complete and submit the page which asks for your topic during the round-table discussions.
- 2) Please select only one topic title for the round-table discussions.

In our effort to "Go Green" we will not be using notebooks this year. Instead, we plan on placing presentations on CD which will be given out when you check-in for the conference. So, please feel free to bring your laptops with you. Just a reminder, there will not be free internet access in the meeting rooms or your suites. However, there is free access in the Lobby Bar which is adjacent to the hotel registration desk.

In case you didn't notice it on the conference program, on Tuesday, August 3, at 3:30 pm we have scheduled time for "Exhibitor Recognition". Please make a special effort to

be present as it is our opportunity, collectively, to thank those who contribute financially to the success of the conference. Believe me, we couldn't make it financially without their generosity. It is also during this time Exhibitors/Sponsors present their door prizes to the membership. We intend to ask each of them to award prizes to only those in attendance at the session.

I'm sure everyone is aware, but please be advised that meeting rooms sometimes have a tendency to be a little cool. We highly recommend you bring a sweater.

On a sad note, we have recently learned of the passing of Grace Burmeister, former employee of the Human Resources Department, Hillsborough County, BOCC and former FPPA member. Rest in Peace, Grace.

Academy Director
Sally Ellison

On July 31st we will be starting the Pre-Conference sessions for the 2010 FPPA Conference. The Academy, the Pre-Conference and the Master's Programs are all shaping up very well and the topics can be seen on the website, Pre-Conference Agenda.

The speakers selected are going to be providing everyone the latest information on their topic to help keep you at the peak of your professional performance. There is something for everyone...

I am still looking for a few more moderators to help with speaker introductions. I can schedule you to introduce someone whose session you will already be signed up to attend. Easy as pie...read a brief bio on the speaker, watch their time to help keep everyone on schedule, collect the sign in sheets and then present them with a "Thank You" gift from FPPA. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at:

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Treasurer News
Joe Denaro

Membership Update

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Florida Public Personnel Association:

Melissa Malone, Sr. HR Generalist , Marion County BOCC , **Tiffany Boyd**, HR Specialist I, City of Opa-Locka, **Cassandra Joseph** , HR Specialist II, City of Opa-Locka, **Guithale Ruiz-Nicolas**, HR Director, City of Opa-Locka, **James Osburn**, Human Resource Specialist-Assessment , City of Lakeland, **Anne Stoker**, HR Assistant, City of Bunnell, **Kenneth Craft**, Assistant Fire Chief , Bonita Springs Fire Control and Rescue District , **Dawn Jackson**, Human Resources Manager , City of Longwood, **Trisha Fuston**, Payroll Clerk , City of Longwood, **Patrice Murphy**, Assistant to the City Administrator ,City of Longwood, **Kathryn Dyson**, Human Resources Analyst , Town of Palm Beach, **Celia Grochowski**, Recruitment Specialist - Personnel Tech III, Palm Beach County Health Department , **Gregg Brennan**, Assistant County Attorney, Citrus County BOCC, **Isabel Gonzalez**, HR Coordinator, City of Doral, **Dale Garcia**, HR Director, Manatee County Government, **Cynthia Alejo**, HR Specialist, Town of Miami Lakes, **Barbara Harkins**, HR Administrator, City of Bunnell, **Angela Hall**, HR Analyst, Labor, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, **Allison Marcous**, Director, HR, City of Altamonte Springs, **Judy David**, Sr. HR Analyst, City of Altamonte Springs, **Jay Thivenor**, President, Risk Focus 1 LLC, **Michele Egues**, HR Administrative Assistant, City of South Miami, **Patricia Wilson**, Director of HR, Hardee County Clerk of Court.

We are at the mid year of our membership year 2009-10. If you have not already renewed your membership for 2010 please do so without delay. We appreciate you helping us to keep your FPPA file folders current and keep your membership from lapsing. Also as a reminder your 2010 annual conference registration form must be received by June 25, 2010.

You can go to the new FPPA website www.fppa.camp9.org click on public documents and pick up the membership link and be sure to complete the application and send payment to FPPA, Joseph A. Denaro, Treasurer, 401 East Las Olas Blvd. #130 – 452 , Fort Lauderdale, Fl. 33301. You can pay your membership and conference registration by check or credit card. All credit card payments will include a 5% processing fee. Call me 321 383 5820 or email questions to me joe.denaro@titusville.com anytime. See you at the Conference. On behalf of the Executive Board we thank you for your continued support.

**Immediate Past President
Bonnie Steinberg**

Have you explored our new website? If not, go to www.fppa.org Let us know what you think. This is your website and your opinions are welcomed. We are attempting to reduce the number of duplicate requests we all get from other FPPA members seeking information. The Forum Summary on the new site is a place to request information. You may periodically receive e-mails from me reminding you to go to the Forum to ask your question, to see if members have already responded to the same question or to see if you can supply information that a member is seeking.

In the near future, we will ask you to include links to your website so that all members can go directly to your site and search for items such as job descriptions, pay plans, miscellaneous policies, union contracts, etc. So, if you haven't already done so, please get your information on your website for the benefit of all FPPA members.

We will have a computer set up at this year's conference to show off the new website. So please stop by and take a look, ask questions, give us your opinion, etc. We need your feedback to ensure efficient use of the site.

See you in Marco Island!

Government Employees Marketplace (GEM)

I recently read an article in the Nation's Cities Weekly newsletter announcing a program called **Government Employees Marketplace (GEM)**. The article states that it is a "value added service for cities and towns to offer employees and retirees." The article goes on to say that many cities unable to offer salary increases or benefits can offer this **free** service to their employees. Go to <http://www.nlc.org/enterpriseprograms/gem.aspx> to read more about this program. More information is also available at www.govmarket.org Sounds like a great program so you should check it out.

Gearing up for the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program
Submitted by: Gehring Group

The passing of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and Accompanying Health Care & Reconciliation Act (the Acts), and early implementation date of various provisions, pose timely considerations for plan sponsors and employers with an October 1 and a January 1 effective date. As these plan renewals are negotiated or put out to bid, employers will need to ensure that these new plan year plans are updated for the legislation that becomes effective for plan years starting after September 23, 2010. But even before plan administrators tackle the health reform in the renewal period, there are various reforms benefit administrators are dealing with now. Included among these early reforms of the recent Acts is the availability of reimbursement for eligible retiree costs through the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program.

The intent of the recently enacted legislation is to expand health coverage to more Americans. In fact, the legislation is intended to expand coverage to 32 million people by 2019. Many of the people not covered fall into two distinctive groups – young adults and retirees who are not yet eligible for Medicare. The Early Retirement Reinsurance Program and the Dependent Coverage to Age 26 mandate are intended to bring coverage to these groups of uninsured. Both of these pieces of legislation are already in the works of implementation.

In order to entice employers to maintain and offer coverage for retirees aged 55-64, the legislation included the establishment of the Early Retirement Reinsurance Program. This program allocates \$5 billion to reimburse employment based plan for eligible medical costs paid for eligible retirees, their spouses, and dependents. To participate in the program, employers must submit an application for certification to the Department of Health & Human Services. Employers will include an estimate of the eligible reimbursements they expect through the plans termination date of January 1, 2014. Once a complete and accurate application is received, employers will be certified as program participants until the \$5 billion is allocated. At that time, the applications will no longer be accepted for employers to participate in the program. Below is an overview of some of the submission requirements to apply to be certified to participate in the program, noting that the actual application has not yet been released by the Department of HHS, but is expected to be released by mid-late June:

What costs are reimbursable? 80% of the eligible medical costs INCURRED AND PAID between \$15,000 and \$90,000 of each eligible retiree, their spouse, and their dependents (costs are calculated on a per enrollee basis). Eligible costs include all eligible medical costs paid, after all discounts and rebates, regardless of who pays the premium or who pays for the services. For example, the retiree co-pay and deductible is a reimbursable expenditure, but to remit for reimbursement the employer will need to provide documentation of payment. (For this reason, some employers may choose not to plan to remit for reimbursement for this portion of the expended retiree medical costs). The effective date for the program is June 1, 2010. For plan years that are currently in progress, the program allows for current plan year eligible medical costs paid prior to June 1 to be applied to fulfill the eligible enrollee's \$15,000 threshold; with only costs aid after this date eligible for reimbursement.

What information needs to be remitted to become a certified plan of the Program?

- One completed application per plan which identifies the plan year cycle for which the sponsor is applying (starting month and day, and ending month and day – no year ex: 10/1 – 9/30), the applicant's taxpayer identification number, name, address, contact information. The application does not have to be submitted each year – once a plan is certified, the application approved, and the sponsor continues to meet the requirements and guidelines, the plan sponsor will continue to be certified for the subsequent plan years. The application must also include:
 1. Documentation that there are programs and procedures in place to generate savings for chronic and high-cost conditions (defined as “a condition for which \$15,000 or more in applicable claims are likely to be incurred during a plan year by one participant”)
 2. A summary of how the plan sponsor will use the reimbursements to meet the requirements of the Program and how it will reduce plan participant

or plan costs, or any combination of these costs . Reimbursements cannot be used as general revenues, and plan sponsors are required to maintain their contribution levels to the plan(s). HHS expects that plan sponsors will use the reimbursements to pay for example, for increases in the sponsor's premium or other health benefit costs, or to reduce plan participant costs such as premium contributions, co-payments, deductibles, coinsurance, or other out of pocket costs for plan participants.

- A written agreement between the plan sponsor and the health insurance issuer or employment-based plan to disclose information on behalf of the plan sponsor to the Secretary
- An attestation by the plan sponsor that there are policies and procedures in place to detect and reduce fraud, waste, and abuse. Even though the insurance issuer may maintain the procedures, the sponsor must have access to and be able to produce the policies, procedures, and any documents or data to substantiate their implementation.
- A projection of the reimbursement amounts for the first two plan year cycles.
- Identification of all benefit options under the employment based plan than any early retiree, for whom the applicant may receive reimbursement through the program, may be claimed.

Where do I start? There are estimates in the marketplace that it will take 40-100 hours to complete the application paperwork to participate in this program. First, there is quantifying the amount of reimbursement that might be expected. Next there is communicating with the broker/carrier to understand what information the carrier will provide to assist through the application and if certified, eligible reimbursable costs submission process. The insurance issuers are starting to release information to brokers on what types of assistance they will offer with respect to reporting and/or the application process. Many insurance companies appear to be putting programs and agreements together to handle the application process on behalf of plan sponsors for an additional fee. Simultaneously, the organization should consider their availability and resources, in house, through the insurance issuer or TPA, or through engaged consultants, to fulfill the rest of the outlined program application requirements. With all these things considered, employers should determine if they plan to apply for to be certified for reimbursements through the program, and who will take the lead on coordinating the information and submitting the application for the employer.

Applications for the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program are expected to be available soon. There are some industry indications that there will be a period between the time the application is released, and the first date it can be submitted. But as funds are limited, and expected to be allocated with demand exceeding supply, interested employers are encouraged not to delay in submitting their application(s).

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