

CHAPTER 49 NEWS

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GILES FILES
by
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On this & that....

By the time you read this, you should know whether or not you are getting an award. I'm very proud to say that the majority of rank-and-file employees in Chapter 49 got an award. If you didn't and believe you should have (or if you aren't sure yours is right) please let your favorite steward know the particulars and we'll look into it.

I had the pleasure of attending several good meetings around the state for Labor Recognition Week with employees. Good camaraderie along with good question & answer sessions were held from Merrillville to Evansville (and points in between). I'm proud of the hard work done by employees in Indiana and I think the fact that a majority receive awards speaks volumes.

We are getting ready for a change involving the Examination folks in SB/SE on October 1st. The new Area Director for them will be Faris Fink. My view is that it's too early to tell whether this will be a positive change, a negative change or no change at all. Stay tuned.....

On the pay issue.....we are progressing toward a 3.5% average pay raise for next year. That's the good news. The bad news is this....it's doubtful the legislation containing the measure will pass until after the national elections in November. We may see a situation similar to

this (and last) year when we had a two-phased pay raise. NTEU will keep pressing on Capitol Hill to try and get work on our pay hike completed as soon as possible. Yet another issue where you should stay tuned....

We very recently got some good news on the A-76 (outsourcing) front. There was a small pilot this year done to see whether the Service wanted to move forward on a Business Case Analysis (BCA) to possibly contract out some of the tax law work that comes in over the phones to Accounts Management. I am very pleased to report that based on the consolidations of Call Sites all under W & I management has decided not to pursue the completion of the BCA at this time due to the reengineering/restructuring efforts that are part of the consolidation. This means that the tax law calls will remain where NTEU has said they belong all along.... In the hands of the employees. That's it for now.

2005 FEHB HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS ANNOUNCED BY OPM

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has announced the health insurance premiums for 2005. This impacts federal employees participating in the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) plan. The average increase will be 7.9%. But since FEHB offers so many different health plans, you need to find your particular plan to check on the increase. For example, the most popular plan, the BlueCross and Blue Shield Standard Plans, will go up by \$5.18 per pay for families and \$1.81 for the individual coverage. You can go to our Chapter 49 Web site at www.nteu49.org and we provide a link to rate information for all plans, including local HMOs.

PAY, OUTSOURCING LEGISLATION PENDING IN CONGRESS

Duncan Giles already mentioned the pay raise bill pending in Congress. Let's give you more details on that and on NTEU's efforts to provide a level playing field for outsourcing job competitions.

Both the House and Senate have approved language allowing civilian federal workers an average 3.5% pay raise in 2005. We say average because locality pay can impact that figure locally. This is a major victory for NTEU. The White House pushed hard to provide only a 1.5% wage increase for us in 2005, yet we were able to convince a bipartisan majority in each house of congress to agree with our view that a 3.5% raise is deserved. The House and Senate bills have some differences in them not related to our pay, so a House-Senate Conference Committee must iron out the disparities in the two bills.

Meanwhile, NTEU has also been hard at work on the issue of contracting-out our jobs to the private sector. Both houses of congress have approved language allowing a more level playing field for federal employees when we have to compete with commercial businesses for our jobs. The White House is so concerned about this reversal of their new contracting rules that a threat to veto the legislation has been made if our contracting language is included in the final version of the bill after it emerges from a House-Senate Conference Committee.

This is all further complicated by the fact that the pay and outsourcing issues are contained in the same piece of legislation currently in the conference panel. As Duncan mentioned, this bill may have to wait until after the November elections. We will keep you posted on this in the newsletter and at our Web site – www.nteu49.org

BILQUE FAMILY THANKS

Chapter 49 Communications Steward Larry Lannan sent George Bilque's family a copy of our memorial edition honoring the long-time

Chapter 49 President. Mr. Bilque's family sent this letter to Larry...

Dear Larry,

Thank you very much for forwarding the NTEU Bulletin with all the comments from the people with whom George worked, and also the individual letters.

These letters and memoir anecdotes regarding their working experiences with George are very heartwarming and a consolation to us his family.

They serve to give us an insight as to the type of work he was involved with and the high regard in which he was held by the organization, and we take pride in knowing that he was respected, not only for his capability in his job, but also for his willingness to insure that others were treated fairly in accordance with the provisions of the organization and the union.

We would appreciate, greatly, anything you could do to transmit our thanks to those individuals who took the time to provide us with their feelings and thoughts concerning George, as we do not have an address for them. They have been of tremendous help for all of us to formulate an image of his value and worth for the intervening time in which we were not in contact with him.

God Bless you all.

NATIONAL TREASURY EMPLOYEES UNION CHAPTER 49

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If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, our Web site (www.nteu49.org) or anything else we do, please contact us at 317-226-6841, or e-mail us at nteu49@aol.com.