



# MEMBERS IN ACTION

STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION OF NORTH CAROLINA

## Legislature leaves **WITHOUT PASSING** additional raises, bonuses

The General Assembly adjourned in the last week of June without passing an amended budget with additional raises or bonuses for state employees or retirees.

Legislators did formally authorize the 3% raises already budgeted, which took effect on July 1.

Before leaving, both the House and Senate passed their own proposals. The House plan included an additional 1% raise for a total of 4% for most state employees and a 2% one-time bonus for retirees. It also includes a raise of 8% for step-pay plan employees, including Correctional Officers, Probation/Parole Officers, and Juvenile Justice employees.

The Senate's version was much smaller and dealt mostly with school voucher expansion. It included no additional money for employees or retirees.

Lawmakers are expected to return in the fall and could reach a compromise on additional spending for raises or bonuses.

### STATE HEALTH PLAN BOARD

The end of the session wasn't without a few fireworks. In the closing days, SEANC's lobbyists pressed lawmakers to step in to protect employees' voice on the State Health Plan Board of Trustees. Gov. Roy Cooper appointed an exempt employee who is an agency Deputy Director to replace Wayne Fish, a former SEANC president and employee at Craggy Correctional, on the board.

This means there are no rank-and-file employees or teachers on the board now, and you have no voice in decisions on drug coverage, premiums, or any other matters related to the plan.

Thank you to the many members who

acted when we called on you to contact your legislators regarding this issue. Unfortunately, lawmakers left town without addressing our concerns. We plan to continue to work with them on this problem.

### TAX CAP AMENDMENT

An attempt to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot to cap the state income tax rate at 5% failed to get enough support in the House. SEANC opposed this because we are already concerned about the state's ability to adequately fund salaries and public services. This amendment is an unnecessary constraint to the state's ability to tackle the vacancy crisis.

*"It's kind of a public statement of what their priorities are, or priorities are not. We're still facing a vacancy crisis. It hasn't gotten any worse, but it certainly hasn't gotten any better. And, in order to retain the good people we've got and potentially recruit new people, it comes down to the money."*

Director of Government Relations Suzanne Beasley

### SEANC's lobbying team continues on the front line of the state budget debate, speaking to legislators about public services and tackling the vacancy crisis!



House Speaker Tim Moore (R) and Director of Government Relations Suzanne Beasley



Representative Kelly Hastings (R) and Political Strategist/Lobbyist Flint Benson



Government Relations Lobbyist Chris Hailey, Jr. and House Majority Leader John Bell (R)



Director of Government Relations Suzanne Beasley, Rep. Michael Wray (D) and Rep. Shelley Willingham (D)

## WAKE COUNTY RETIREE FORUM



Wake County districts (38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44) and the SEANC Retiree Council hosted a retiree forum on May 21 at McKimmon Conference and Training Center at N.C. State University. Thanks to N.C. Department of State Treasurer Dale Folwell for speaking to the group!



Executive Director Ardis Watkins



Pictured from left to right, Retiree Council member Rex Foster, Treasurer Dale Folwell, District 39 Chair Doranna Anderson and Public Education Chair Mark Dearmon.

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## Retiring Soon? Know your options.

If you're thinking about retiring, you should submit retirement paperwork 120 days before your retirement date to ensure that you're eligible for most health plan options.

If you're already retired and under 65, your health plan options change when you turn 65. You'll need to make decisions about your new options.

Also, please contact the SEANC Office 30 to 60 days before retirement to let us know you plan to retire. We do not always get updates from the state on employee status. A change can affect your dues deduction and insurance options.

### 2024 RETIREE PAY DATES

Dates pension checks are direct deposited to your bank account or checks are mailed.

<b>July 25</b>	<b>Sept. 25</b>	<b>Nov. 25</b>
<b>Aug. 23</b>	<b>Oct. 25</b>	<b>Dec. 23</b>

Contact N.C. Retiree Systems at 877-627-3287 with address updates, questions about your retirement check or deductions.

## SEANC leading the fight for affordable prescription drugs

SEANC's fight to cut outrageous prices on prescription drugs like Wegovy and Ozempic made national headlines and spurred action in high places!

SEANC President Kirk Montgomery spoke in April at the State Health Plan Board of Trustees meeting about the need to focus on lowering the cost of these drugs so plan members can afford them.

Montgomery, his wife Pam, and Executive Director Ardis Watkins met with Sen. Bernie Sanders in April to discuss the issue. Sanders sent a letter to Novo Nordisk's chief executive asking for internal communications on pricing in the United States, which is substantially higher than in the rest of the world.

SEANC District 65 Chairwoman Kiana Price and District 42 member Tralene Williams were featured in a story from USA Today about the impact of the decision to end coverage for these drugs by the State Health Plan,

State Treasurer Dale Folwell also appeared on NBC Nightly News and CNBC to discuss the issue.



Sen. Bernie Sanders met with Pres. Kirk Montgomery, Pam Montgomery and Executive Director Ardis Watkins in April about the high price of prescription drugs, particularly GLP-1s Ozempic and Wegovy.



**Bronze Medal of Honor Recipient District 2 member Kalla Hughley**

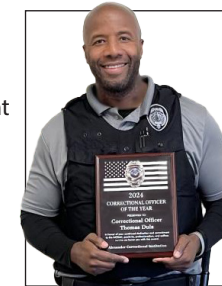
District 2 member Kalla Hughley received the One Voice United Bronze Medal of Honor on April 26 at a ceremony in Chicago for her bravery in saving a juvenile shooting victim's life in Asheville last year. With her are SEANC Prison Safety Committee Chair Deborah Harney and First Vice President Wendell Powell.

### 2024 Correctional Officer of the Year District 9 member Thomas Dula

An officer who exemplifies the leadership, team orientation and independent judgment required of front line prison staff was named the state's Correctional Officer of the Year on May 15.

Officer Thomas Dula of Alexander Correctional Institution in Taylorsville was honored alongside other prison employees during the N.C. Department of Adult Correction's annual awards ceremony for its Division of Institutions.

"We are here to celebrate excellence, the best of the best," Secretary of Adult Correction Todd Ishee told attendees. "You are guiding lights in the dark that can seem dangerous or daunting. How many times have you run toward danger, not away from it? Your work does not go unnoticed."



**Sheriff Landric Reid Bridge**

District 11 Chair A.D. Hall participated in a ceremony in May dedicating the bridges crossing Lanes Creek on U.S. 74 near the Anson County community of Peachland in honor of Sheriff Landric Reid, who was a longtime SEANC member and member of the State Highway Patrol before his time as Anson County Sheriff.



Sheriff Landric Reid



**District 16** sponsored Bojangles biscuits for the DOT Maintenance Safety Meeting in Forsyth County on April 4 and two new members joined the SEANC family!



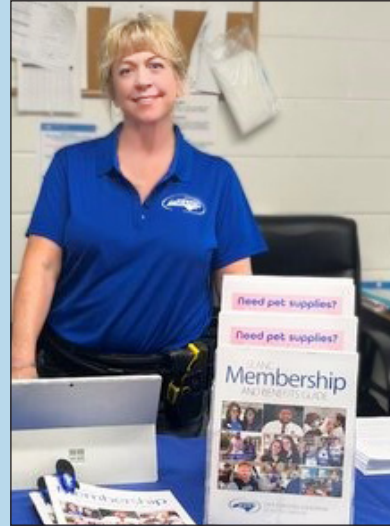
**District 40** met with members who work at Department of Adult Correction in the Randall Building in Raleigh on April 9.



**District 2** provided meals to all three shifts at Julian F. Keith Alcohol & Drug Abuse Treatment Center in Black Mountain on April 30.



**District 6** provided meals to all three shifts at Broughton Hospital in Morganton on May 1.



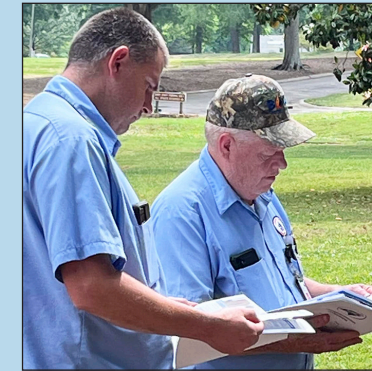
SEANC attended the Lumberton Correctional Institution and North Carolina Department of Adult Correction hiring event on April 10.



**District 41** members Jeri Barnes, Matthew Russell and Dawn Dye volunteered in April at the Shepherd's Table Soup Kitchen in Raleigh.



Executive Director Ardis Watkins and Public Education Committee Chairman Mark Dearmon provided an update on employee issues during the N.C. State University Staff Senate meeting in May.



SEANC teamed with N.C. Department of Health and Human Services in providing sweet treats for employees at the Adams Building on Dix Campus on May 8. Pictured above DHHS Secretary Kody Kinsley greets everyone.



**District 2** fed all three shifts at Black Mountain Neuro-Medical Treatment Center on April 29 as part of our Western N.C. Blitz!



**District 9** took a group of new Gaston County Probation and Parole officers out to lunch in April and gained six new members.



**District 17** visited at the Dan River Prison Work Farm April 23 & 24 to show North Carolina Department of Adult Correction employees our appreciation for their hard work!



Pictured are **District 18** Membership Chair Lisa Martin and member Sharron Patterson during a Richmond County Schools Event.





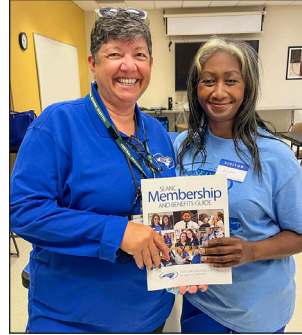
**District 22** sponsored lunch for employees at the Cumberland County Courthouse on May 14.



Thank you to the North Carolina Department of **Adult Correction** for allowing us to meet with employees at its **Administrative Conference** in Greensboro May 15-17.



Western Region Rep. Cliff Johnson and **District 2** member Martha Ramsey attended the N.C.C.A. Health Care Professionals 2024 Annual Training Conference in Asheville in May.



**District 28** fed all three shifts at Central Region Hospital in Butner on May 15, showing our appreciation and spreading the word about SEANC!



**District 21** sponsored lunch at Gazebo Park in Butner on May 21.



Executive Director Ardis Watkins spoke on May 23 at the N.C. Department of Adult Correction Central Region Wardens and Operations meeting at Wake Technical Community College. Pictured above are Warden Isaac Rogers, Associate Warden of Programs Sharon Blount, Warden Anthony Perry, and Warden Louis Southall. Pictured above left is District 40 Co-Chair Antoinette Battle-Faulcon with Watkins. Pictured left are Regional Director Herachio Haywood and Tiffany Vaughan (District 40 members).



**District 9** provided lunch for Probation & Parole employees in Gastonia on May 23.



North Carolina Department of Transportation Secretary Joey Hopkins met with Executive Director Ardis Watkins and SEANC Staff on May 30 to discuss important issues for employees.



SEANC met with North Carolina Department of Adult Correction employees at the Randall Building in Raleigh on May 29. Thanks to DAC Secretary Todd Ishee and Deputy Secretary Peter Buchholtz for attending!



SEANC attended an employee appreciation event on May 30 at N.C. Correctional Institution for Women in Raleigh. Pictured are Regional Director Herachio Haywood (District 40), Sharon Blount, Amy Gowan, and Director Anthony Smith.



**District 11** sponsored breakfast snacks as part of a member appreciation event at Anson County Courthouse on May 30.



**District 65** provided lunch during the East Carolina University Appreciation Event on June 6, recruiting 35 new members!



**District 41** volunteered at the North Carolina Special Olympics in Cary on June 1.



**District 68** held an employee appreciation on June 14 at the Dare County Ferry Division. Pictured at left is Eastern Region Representative Rita Woods.



**District 25** gained three new members during the U.N.C. Facilities Employee Appreciation Day at Anderson Park in Carrboro on June 5.



**District 18** member Chris Nicholson (at right) of Anson Correctional Institution was one of several state employees to carry the torch in the Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics North Carolina in June.



**District 18** provided breakfast for Richmond Senior High School employees on June 10.



**District 57** provided meals to Longleaf Neurological Medical Treatment Center employees in Wilson on June 12.



**The Emerging Leaders Council held a successful Health and Wellness Community Fair on June 18 at the Southeast Raleigh YMCA.**



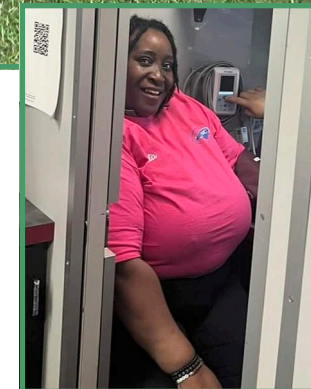
**District 39** enjoyed a beautiful day on June 13 while showing appreciation to N.C. State University's College of Veterinary Medicine staff.



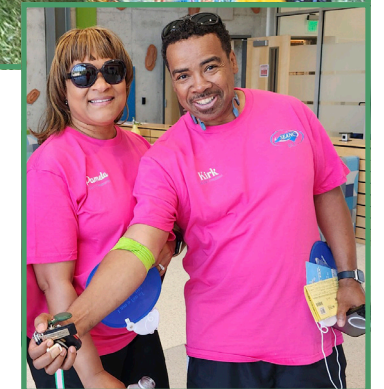
District 43 member Nicole Hunter enjoys a chair massage.



Emerging Leaders Chair Tracey Webb prepares for her boxing match.



District 57 member Pepita Hargrove donates blood.



President Kirk Montgomery and his wife Pam donate blood.

The **SEANC** View Podcast

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**District 66** provided meals for Caswell employees during all three shifts on June 19. **Over 70 members joined SEANC that day!**

Pictured at immediate right are Executive Director Ardis Watkins, District 66 Chair Regina Jackson and Caswell Center Director Dr. Valour Richardson.



**District 16** visited the Forsyth County Courthouse, the Department of Labor Office and the North Carolina Department of Transportation Division 9 office on June 21.



**THEME PARK SEASON IS HERE!**  
Discount tickets can be purchased at [SEANC.org/themeparks](http://SEANC.org/themeparks)



We offer discounted tickets to eleven of the best theme and water parks in North Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee. Check out our list of prices on our Theme Parks page, and make plans now for a trip this summer!



**District 22** provided lunch for Fayetteville State University employees on June 26 and **recruited 72 members!** Thanks to the FSU Staff Senate for your help!

# SEANC goes **WILD** at NC ZOO



District 17 provided a Chick-fil-A lunch for North Carolina Zoo employees. SEANC representatives discussed and answered questions regarding the State Health Plan, pay raises, retirement, legislation, insurance programs, member discounts and academic scholarships. Ten new members joined SEANC that day!

