



Member Newsletter

September/October 2008

Northeast Arkansas SHRM Chapter
P.O. Box 16476,
Jonesboro, AR 72403
neashrm@gmail.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Letter from the President
- 1 SHRM Foundation Update
- 2 News from the Student Chapter
- 3 Meeting Schedules
- 3 Arkansas and Local News of Interest
- 4 Call for 2009 Officer Nominations
- 5 Employee Free Choice Act
- 6 Legislative Update
- 6 Membership Update

Letter from the President

By Beverly Petty, SPHR

Dear NEASHRM members,

I can't believe we are approaching the end of the year! NEASHRM has accomplished a great deal this year, and I would like to thank all of you who have helped with our many activities: NEASHRM chapter internship, Arkansas Scholars presentations, Students Go To Work speakers and tours, chapter logo revision, and our first annual High School Job Fair. Our website changeover is tentatively scheduled for the end of the year, and its implementation will add to our members' ability to network, conduct research, and stay up-to-date with local, state and national SHRM activities.

I mentioned in our last meeting that our mailing address and email address have changed! Our new mailing address is NEASHRM, P.O. Box 16476, Jonesboro, AR 72403. Our email address is neashrm@gmail.com. We are transitioning to these addresses, so please make sure your records are changed, too!

Please see *Letter from the President* on page 2

SHRM Foundation Update

By Amy Privett, PHR

Thanks to everyone who participated in our *Empty Your Pockets* SHRM Foundation fundraiser, we collected \$13.29 in change and bills at the August meeting.

New DVD available thru the SHRM Foundation: *Seeing Forward-Succession Planning at 3M*

A new educational DVD from the SHRM Foundation, this DVD explores 3M's outstanding succession planning and leadership development process. 3M is consistently recognized as one of the world's most innovative and admired companies and one of the best companies for leaders and aspiring leaders.

Visit the SHRM website (www.shrm.org) to order the DVD, download the discussion guide and slide presentation.





2007 SHRM SUPERIOR MERIT AWARD
CHAPTER

Letter from the President from page 1

This year's political environment hints strongly of changes "in the winds" of the near future. Please take a few minutes to visit the HR Voice section of the national SHRM website and add your voice to that of other SHRM members who are concerned about legislative proposals.

The Arkansas SHRM State Employment Law and Legislative Affairs (ELLA) Conference will provide critical, timely state and federal legislative and compliance information to all attendees. This informative conference is scheduled for October 8 and 9 at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock. Early bird discounts will end on 9/9, so check out the ARSHRM website at <http://www.arshrm.com/ella2008/index.php> for more details on the conference, and get registered!

Our next meeting will be a luncheon meeting on Tuesday, September 9, featuring a panel of local legislators. For the past several state legislative sessions, Government Solutions, a state lobbying organization, has been hired by ARSHRM to represent the interests of their member human resource professionals. One of these lobbyists will also be present at our September meeting to review ARSHRM positions on proposed legislation and to listen to your concerns. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this meeting for an update on pending state legislation and for an opportunity to provide your suggestions and recommendations on this legislation and any other concerns. NEASHRM legislative panel meetings in past years have provided input to our legislators that resulted in legislation that addressed a variety of human resource concerns. Examples include: safe harbor guidelines for previous employment references, elimination of the loophole that allowed unemployment benefits for employees terminated for failing a drug screen, and correction of the discrepancies between the federal and the Arkansas state exempt status regulations. The Arkansas SHRM position statements for several pieces of proposed state legislation can be found at http://www.arshrm.com/pages.php?page_id=50. You may wish to review this information prior to our meeting on September 9! This is a great opportunity to be heard and to affect state legislation—don't miss it!

News from the Student Chapter

By Dr. Faye Cocchiara

The student chapter will design and sell Homecoming 2008 t-shirts for the College of Business. This is an awesome opportunity to raise much needed funds to support chapter activities and increase the chapter's presence in the College of Business. The chapter is also entering a team in this year's Heart and Sole Run/Walk to be held on September 27, 2008. This event is sponsored by the Cardiology Associates Foundation to raise awareness of women and heart disease. If you would like to contribute to this very worthy cause and/or be part of the ASU Student SHRM team, we would love to have you. Please contact Dr. Faye Cocchiara at fcocchiara@astate.edu for more information.

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right."

Henry Ford

Remaining NEASHRM Meetings for 2008 Holiday Inn, Jonesboro

- SEPTEMBER: **Tuesday, September 9, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm**
– Legislative Panel: Randy Thurman, ARSHRM lobbyist, Senator Robert Thompson (Paragould), Representative-Elect Butch Wilkins (Craighead County); Tentative: Senator Paul Bookout (Jonesboro), additional panelists TBA
- OCTOBER: **Tuesday, October 14, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm –**
Union Organizing 101 – speaker, Richard Reinhardt, Attorney at Law
- NOVEMBER: **Tuesday, November 11, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm**
– Winning With Diversity – Speaker: Dr. Glen Jones, ASU
Seminar: 1:30 pm – 4:45 pm – Diversity Issues in Today's Workplace – Panelists TBA
- DECEMBER: Time and place TBA – NEASHRM Christmas Party

Meeting Schedule for 2009 Holiday Inn, Jonesboro

- JANUARY: **Tuesday, January 13, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm –**
Consumer-Driven Health Care, How to Explain it to Employees and Encourage Cost Savings!
- FEBRUARY: **Tuesday, February 10, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm –**
TBA
Seminar at the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce: 1:30 pm – 4:45 pm – Motivation and Employee Accountability - Speaker, Charlotte Strickland, Education Seminar Coordinator, University of Central Arkansas
- MARCH: **Tuesday, March 10, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm –**
Student Chapter Presentation
- APRIL: AR SHRM State Conference: April 6-8, 2009 at the Hot Springs Convention Center
No chapter meeting in April – Make plans now to attend the State Conference!
More information: www.arshrm.com

Arkansas and Local News of Interest

Arkansas businesspersons are being offered an exciting opportunity to attend "The Disney Keys to Excellence" program without traveling out of state! If you are interested in attending, visit the following website: <http://execed.uark.edu/disney>.

The NEA Charitable Foundation's Circle of Hope Week-Long Event includes an appearance by "Team Hoyt" on Tuesday, September 23, at the ASU Convocation Center. For more information, go to www.neacfoundation.org and follow the links to the Circle of Hope and Team Hoyt. If you are interested in group pricing on the Team Hoyt event, please email neashrm@gmail.com with your name, phone number, and the number of tickets you wish to purchase. If we have requests for a total of more than 20 tickets by Friday, September 5, we will place the order and contact you to arrange for payment and delivery of tickets. If we have requests for less than 20 tickets, you will still be notified of that fact.

*"Eighty percent of
success is showing up."*

Woody Allen

Northeast Arkansas SHRM Chapter Call for Nominations for 2009 Officers

We would like to encourage you to submit nominations for 2009 Officers. Nominations will be accepted through Friday, September 12. Please submit your nominations to neashrm@gmail.com, listing the name and contact information of the individual you are nominating. Be sure to include the title of the position for which you are nominating them! The Nominations Committee will confirm each individual's eligibility and willingness to serve, and will present a list for your vote at our chapter meeting on October 12. New officers will be installed at our chapter meeting on November 11. All officers are expected to attend the Arkansas SHRM Leadership Conference at Petit Jean State Park on December 5.

Brief descriptions of each open position are listed below:

President-Elect: Assist the President in overseeing all the activities of the chapter. In the absence of the President, perform all the Presidential responsibilities. Coordinate chapter seminar series and activities to promote professional certification.

V.P. for Communications: Take minutes of chapter meetings and provide notice of meetings. Maintain chapter records and history. Provide timely and comprehensive information to chapter members about programs, seminars, and other matters of interest via chapter publications. Provide timely and comprehensive information about the chapter to external resources. Create and maintain a favorable image of the chapter working for the professional development of its members by: (a) keeping membership informed of chapter projects, activities and upcoming meetings, and (b) disseminating relevant professional information viewed as beneficial to the members.

V.P. for Programs: Develop and implement programs for monthly chapter meetings. Coordinate arrangements for all meetings. Plan social functions of chapter.

Workforce Readiness Chairperson: Monitors and evaluates on a continuing basis local activities concerning workforce readiness issues and plans and encourages chapter involvement and activities impacting the workforce readiness arena. Presents a report or update to the chapter president and fellow chapter members. Works in cooperation with state-level workforce readiness advocates.

Diversity Chairperson: Monitor and evaluate on a continuing basis local activities concerning diversity issues. Spearhead the effort to diversify the Chapter's membership/leadership and to publicize successful diversity programs in the local community.

Technology Chair: Maintain chapter web site. Advise Board of Directors regarding web site usage and recommendations for improvement.

Student Chapter Advisor/Liaison: The success of the student chapter is often dependent on the guidance and leadership provided by the chapter advisor. As the person closest to the students, the advisor plays an integral role, by advising and assisting the students in running their own chapter. With annual membership turnover of 40% - 50%, chapters depend on the advisors to provide continuity from year to year. As a member of the sponsoring chapter, the student liaison communicates information between the professionals and the students, and assists the students in making contact with HR practitioners. The advisor is also the link between the student chapter and professional chapter(s).

Remember – deadline for nominations is Friday, September 12! Please submit your nominations to neashrm@gmail.com.

Employee “Free Choice” Act (?)

The following article is a copy of an opinion piece written by George McGovern, a former senator from South Dakota and the 1972 Democratic presidential candidate, which was published in the August 8 issue of the *Wall Street Journal* entitled *My Party Should Respect Secret Union Ballots*:

“As a congressman, senator and one-time Democratic nominee for the presidency, I’ve participated in my share of vigorous public debates over issues of great consequence. And the public has been free to accept or reject the decisions I made when they walked into a ballot booth, drew the curtain and cast their vote. I didn’t always win, but I always respected the process.

Voting is an immense privilege.

That is why I am concerned about a new development that could deny this freedom to many Americans. As a longtime friend of labor unions, I must raise my voice against pending legislation I see as a disturbing and undemocratic overreach not in the interest of either management or labor.

The legislation is called the Employee Free Choice Act, and I am sad to say it runs counter to ideals that were once at the core of the labor movement. Instead of providing a voice for the unheard, EFCA risks silencing those who would speak.

The key provision of EFCA is a change in the mechanism by which unions are formed and recognized. Instead of a private election with a secret ballot overseen by an impartial federal board, union organizers would simply need to gather signatures from more than 50 percent of the employees in a workplace or bargaining unit, a system known as “card-check.” There are many documented cases where workers have been pressured, harassed, tricked and intimidated into signing cards that have led to mandatory payment of dues.

Under EFCA, workers could lose the freedom to express their will in private, the right to make a decision without anyone peering over their shoulder, free from fear of reprisal.

There’s no question that unions have done much good for this country. Their tenacious efforts have benefited millions of workers and helped build a strong middle class. They gave workers a new voice and pushed for laws that protect individuals from unfair treatment. They have been a friend to the Democratic Party, and so I oppose this legislation respectfully and with care.

To my friends supporting EFCA I say this: We cannot be a party that strips working Americans of the right to a secret-ballot election. We are the party that has always defended the rights of the working class. To fail to ensure the right to vote free of intimidation and coercion from all sides would be a betrayal of what we have always championed.

Some of the most respected Democratic members of Congress – including Reps. Marcy Kaptur of Ohio, George Miller and Pete Stark of California, and Barney Frank of Massachusetts – have advised that workers in developing countries such as Mexico insist on a secret ballot when voting as to whether or not their workplaces should have a union. We should have no less for employees in our country.

I worry that there has been too little discussion about EFCA’s true ramifications, and I think much of the congressional support is based on a desire to give our friends among union leaders what they want. But part of being a good steward of democracy means telling our friends “no” when they press for a course that in the long run may weaken labor and disrupt a tried and trusted method for conducting honest elections.

While it is never pleasant to stand against one’s party or one’s friends, there are times when such actions are necessary – as with my early and lonely opposition to the Vietnam War. I hope some of my friends in Congress will re-evaluate their support for this legislation. Because as Americans, we should strive to ensure that all of us enjoy the freedom of expression and freedom from fear that is our ideal and our right.”

SHRM opposes EFCA and urges all of its members to contact their Senators and congressman and encourage them to withhold support of the EFCA whenever it comes up for a vote.

Legislative Update

By Sherie Calderon, PHR

Employment Law & Legislative Affairs Conference. The 2008 ARSHRM Employment Law & Legislative Affairs (ELLA) Conference will be held October 8th and 9th at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock. ELLA's objective is to educate and motivate HR professionals in lobbying on legislative issues vital to the HR profession and provide important employment law updates on both Federal and State level. This is a great opportunity for you and your company or organization to have a presence in an area of interest to employers and to the HR profession. This conference will make sure our voice is heard by our legislators on matters affecting employers across the state. More information is available on the website, <http://www.arshrm.com/ella2008>.

In only 2 days, you will receive a wealth of information. Not far to travel, reasonable costs, and both you and your employer will benefit. Hope to see you there!

Why should NEASHRM get involved in legislative issues?

- Cultivating and fostering member interest in state legislative activities.
- Fostering member/chapter involvement and teamwork by undertaking a collective legislative goal.
- Establishing lasting relationships with state policymakers.
- Establishing our chapter as an expert resource regarding workplace issues.
- Creating a new employment law/revision of a problematic law to benefit the HR profession.

September 9th is our Legislative Program, and will include State Representatives and Senators, and Randy Thurman, lobbyist for Arkansas SHRM. Take advantage of the opportunity to learn about state legislative activities, and meet the legislators.

Exactly What Did He Say?!

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Assistant Secretary Stewart Baker posted an entry on an agency-supported blog titled

"Exactly What Do They Want?," in which he accused members of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) of seeking to hire illegal workers. Mr. Baker wrote: "I suppose corporate hiring is easier if you can hire illegal workers, so perhaps I shouldn't be surprised that SHRM wants to kill a program that makes it harder to hire illegal workers."

Are you insulted by DHS's statements? Then let your HR Voice Be Heard! The statement demonstrates a lack of understanding of HR's role in the workplace, SHRM's position on employment verification, and our association's record as a respected, independent professional association. Write your Congressman and Senators today.

Membership Update

By Sonya Sanders

Join me in welcoming four new members to our organization - April Buckholtz (Anchor Packaging), Shannon Hamrick (Staffmark), Bob Puckett (Families Inc.), and Billie Pyle (Clay County Electric). Please continue to spread the word about the benefits of SHRM membership. It is all of our responsibility to help the chapter grow.

Don't forget you have one more opportunity to win a \$50 gift certificate from the Mall at Turtle Creek or even the Grand Prize of \$100 gift corticated from the Mall at Turtle Creek (it sure would come in handy for the upcoming holiday season!). All you have to do is invite, encourage, and recruit new people to SHRM. Easy enough! Remember, I want to call your name at the September or December meeting.