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September, 2003

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Advocate

At Western Michigan University

Negotiation Friends, Facts and Strategies

Gary Mathews, Ph.D.
WMU-AAUP President

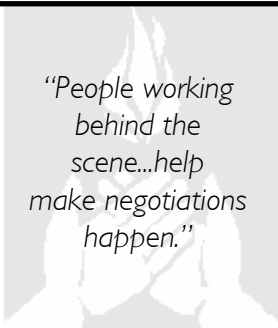
As our negotiation process enters its final phase, it is important to look back and acknowledge people who have contributed to this process. Joel Boyd has served as Planning Coordinator since last spring. While this job does not have a lot of visibility, it is very important to the overall effort. Joel has contributed in discussions, in print and in preparing most of the hot-line messages. We appreciate his support.

Charles May, of the Beckwith Financial Group, has also provided a lot of assistance to the team. Chuck is an independent insurance representative and has served as a consultant on technical aspects of the health care benefit and insurance negotiations. He went to the table with the team on two occasions and was very helpful.

Mike Fayette, the Chapter attorney, has continued to prove invaluable by making himself available for consultation at all hours of the day and night during negotiations. Additionally, he receives and considers, from the framework off the law, all of the language we work on. When people question why we don't have an attorney on our side of the table during negotiations, they haven't realized how close at hand Mike Fayette always is.

Finally, as always, Gail Nangle and Susan Esman have been stalwarts in all of the ways that front line workers can. Throughout the negotiations, they kept

the office running smoothly, arranged another successful barbecue, and still produced table notes faster than seems humanly possible. Thanks to all of the people working behind the scene; they help make the negotiations happen.



"People working
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Continuing Thoughts on Sindecuse

In the July/August 2003 edition of the *Advocate*, I wrote about the Sindecuse Pharmacy, noting that the average prescription of Lipitor there costs \$189 while the average cost for other sources was \$92. I also stated, "And they wonder why Sindecuse is losing money!" In my article, I had harkened back to the figures printed in the July 17, 2003 edition of *Inbetween*.

After the Advocate was published, Gary Kirk, Director of the Sindecuse Health Center, invited me to a meeting to discuss my interpretation of the pharmacy data. During the meeting, I learned that while the *Inbetween* data were correct — that is, the average cost of a prescription from Sindecuse is greater than the average cost of the same prescription from other sources — the implication that Sindecuse either charges or pays more than other sources for the same prescription was incorrect.

The “catch” is the per prescription basis for the comparison. While Sindecuse does charge more per prescription, they usually dispense more pills per prescription than the other sources do per prescription, often dispensing a 90-day supply vs. the other sources’ 30-day supply. The *Inbetween* data also did not note whether the same dosages of medications were compared.

The following patient charge data for six of the medications listed in the *Inbetween* (please see chart below) attest that Sindecuse’s Pharmacy charges for these medications were reasonable and often favorable, when compared to other local pharmacies. Sindecuse professionals are just as concerned about the rising costs of health care as we are. I regret any misrepresentation or exaggeration of data regarding the Sindecuse Pharmacy that occurred during the heat of the negotiation process.

Comparison of Patient Charges for Select Medications – 8/14/03
(i.e., what you would pay if you were to purchase the medications at the pharmacy)

Pharmacy	Walgreens W. Main	Meijer W. Main	Woodbridge Portage	Hardings W. Main	Sindecuse Billed to WMU (co-pay not included)
Medication					
Lipitor 10mg 30 tabs	\$81.49	\$70.44	\$75.85	\$76.49	\$68.65
Celebrex 200mg 30 tabs	\$98.29	\$82.08	\$98.17	\$90.98	\$90.85
Vioxx 25mg 30 tabs	\$106.09	\$90.54	\$104.35	\$91.98	\$76.50
Prevacid 30mg 30 tabs	\$157.99	\$134.94	\$147.77	\$153.98	\$144.90
Synthroid 0.1mg 100 tabs	\$56.29	\$45.78	\$53.61	\$50.98	\$42.80
Prilosec 20mg 30 tabs	\$141.29	\$153.32	\$150.25	\$148.98	\$140.30

From Your Information Officer...

Jo Wiley, M.A.

I must admit to some hesitation when initially approached to consider the position of Chapter Information Officer. Certainly, I wasn't looking for additional work or responsibilities. I wasn't lacking change in my life. And, truthfully, I was still reeling from the anger expressed last fall with regard to faculty specialists and their treatment by the 2002-2005 Agreement. I gave the request a lot of thought; I talked to my colleagues, past and present, and to my friends. I reflected on my own experiences and perceptions regarding unions in general and our AAUP Chapter in particular. I worked hard to put my emotions aside and analyze positive and negative membership energy and to figure out what I believed the Chapter should do to avoid situations similar to the one that occurred with the recent negotiations. I pondered what it could do to unite and strengthen the membership as opposed to finding it divided and weakened. The answer was fairly obvious—improve communications. The action, though, will be much more difficult, I'm sure. As those who know me will attest, there is nothing that intrigues me more than a challenge, and so I agreed to accept the position.

Because my appointment began Fall 2003, I was not involved in the recent communications regarding summer negotiations. However, through the Negotiation Updates, Inbetweens, and Myth and Fact sheets, the negotiation team and Planning Coordinator, Joel Boyd, illustrated the Chapter's commitment to information sharing. I accept the responsibility of continuing this pattern while also

working to establish and revitalize other means of Chapter communication. Some of these areas include this (Advocate) monthly newsletter and the Chapter website. I will also be soliciting members regarding additional interests and needs; however, please contact me at any time with suggestions or inquiries. I have regular office hours at the Montague House (see sidebar in this issue) and am easily reachable by telephone (345-0151) or e-mail at (jowiley@ameritech.net).

One of my goals is to remind membership that union representation is not only about money and benefits. It is not only about contracts. There are many current issues that challenge our profession and could, if not addressed, negate our ability to fulfill our commitment to education (see future Advocate articles). Please stay attuned and in touch.

IMPORTANT CONTRACTUAL DATES

Professional Activities Report Due

Wednesday, October 15, 2003

Tenure & Promotion Portfolios Due

Wednesday, October 15, 2003

Semester Ends

Friday, December 12, 2003

Commencement

Saturday, December 13, 2003

Final Grades Due

Tuesday, December 16, 2003
12:00 noon

Winter Semester Begins

Monday, January 5, 2004
4:00pm

Spirit Day

Friday, February 27, 2004

Chief Negotiator & Contract Administrator Update

Robert Ricci, Ph.D.

As negotiations move toward closure and we put the finishing touches on health care and economic issues, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the four official members of our team, as well as to some others who have helped immeasurably over the last four months. With regard to our President Gary Mathews, our Contract Administrator Ariel Anderson and to our Vice President Dennis Simpson, I want to tell the faculty body of their commitment, intelligence and flexibility in dealing with what has often been difficult terrain for us all. In addition, Bill Fenn (Health Care Administration), Jerry Kreuze (Accountancy), and Allen Schwenk (Mathematics) have advised the team on important aspects of health care and economics. Their help has proven to be invaluable, and invokes pride to see the skills and insights our colleagues possess. Joel Boyd has performed ably as our information officer, and the Executive Committee has been with us along the way with important commentary on the progress of negotiations. The issues have been complex. I, for one, have learned an awful lot about some of the intricacies of health care plans and financial conundrums. We began the negotiations telling the administration that we no longer accept the fringe rate that they assign to our faculty group, despite their claim that they produce a "blended" rate that is essentially university-wide. Publication of their "blended" rate has given

the outside world the mistaken impression that the faculty at Western are making enormous amounts of money (the Gazette published an article claiming that our salaries were number two in the state!) and that is just not true. We have asked the administration to publish the “real” rate for *faculty*, and we have hopes that they may do this in the future. The fringe rate is published yearly, along with the salary figures, in *Academe*, and to say that it has been misleading for our faculty is indeed a large understatement.

The negotiations themselves have been laborious, primarily because of all of the permutations of health plans. While the economic situation at Western is poor at the present time, we have stressed at the table that we do not see the faculty as responsible for the huge debt bind Western is currently in, due primarily to new construction projects coupled with a cutback in funds from the state. Western has admitted at the table that the construction of the Seelye Center at this time was a mistake. However, no matter how one slices fiscal responsibility, healthcare costs have expanded exponentially here and across the country.

Beyond Buildings and Healthcare

For the past three years the Mid-American Conference has been in the red. Each year, the MAC must file a financial statement with the Internal Revenue Service. The most recent filing, in June, 2001, indicated that the MAC had lost money for three consecutive years. To offset that, the presidents of the league’s member schools agreed to a plan that increases the annual dues and levied a one-time special assessment to cover football-game costs. Television broadcasts of football and basketball alone produced losses of more than \$2.5 million in the four years ending

in 2001. These losses have grown every year. Member schools in the MAC pay annual dues of \$65,000 as participant costs, although this figure is dated; those costs may be higher now.

The national media has given much attention over the past two years to how big time athletics are now the driving force at many universities. Many see intercollegiate athletics as contributing to the central identity of a school. While there is nothing pat-



ently wrong with this perception, one has to question just how important athletics really is in the larger context of the university. In my building on campus, and probably in yours too, we have dumpsters in the hallways to collect trash. This produces an ugly eyesore for prospective students and parents when they come to visit. Janitorial service is at an all-time low. Often, our classroom equipment is either outdated or just doesn’t work. The question then that filters down is just what are the priorities at our university, and should athletics be the predominant focus in times of financial constrictions. It seems true that there will be some cutbacks in the athletic program at Western this year, but they will probably not impact football. Positive exposure in athletics may generate alumni support and

perhaps attract students and, no doubt, the Seelye Center construction project was implemented to boost the chances of Western’s football hopes. Will there be a payback? We shall see.

Contract Administrator

I will be assuming the role of contract administrator this academic year. I have some major shoes to fill in this regard, following the tenure of Ariel Anderson in this position. Ariel has, over the years that I have known her, been a vigorous and tenacious defender of faculty rights in the context of the contract. She is knowledgeable and savvy. I know that her new position in collective bargaining on the national level will illustrate her talents very quickly. We all wish her the best of luck in her new venture.

WMU-AAUP Officers’ Hours*

Gary Mathews

President

Wed 9:00am — 12:00pm

Pam Rooney

Grievance Officer

Mon 3:30pm — 4:30pm

Wed 3:30pm — 4:30pm

Robert Ricci

Contract Administrator

To be arranged

Jo Wiley

Information Officer

Thurs 9:00am — 11:00am

Fri 12:00pm — 3:00pm

*And by appointment

FOR SALE

Macintosh 800mhz G4
17" Monitor
256meg Memory, 40gig Hard Drive
56k Modem, 10/100 Network Card
CD-RW

The Macintosh is available at the Montague House, Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm.
We are accepting sealed bids from Monday, September 29th through Monday, October 6th at 4:30pm.
The highest bidder will be notified by telephone or email.
The lowest acceptable bid is \$300.00.

Bidding Rules:

1. Only bargaining-unit faculty members are eligible to bid.
2. All bids must include name, department, telephone number (where you can be reached on Monday, October 6th at 4:30pm), and email address.
3. The computer must be paid for and picked up from the Montague House no later than Friday, October 10th at 4:30pm or the computer will be sold to the next highest bidder.

**NEGOTIATION
HOT
LINE:**

269.345.3880

**WMU-AAUP
website:**

WWW.WMICH.EDU/AAUP

**WMU-AAUP
Email**

WMUAAUP@AMERITECH.NET

Nominations Are Needed

The Chapter's Nomination/Election Committee is seeking candidates for the 2003 election of **Executive Committee Representatives** from the following constituencies:

- Academic Support Units
- College of Aviation
- College of Arts & Sciences — Science & Mathematics
- College of Arts & Sciences — Social Sciences
- College of Engineering & Applied Sciences
- College of Fine Arts

Please contact the AAUP office (345.0151) if you wish to nominate someone or would like to be a candidate yourself. We would like to hear from you by Thursday, October 10th. Nominations close officially at the Chapter Meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 16th.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED