



NRLN Annual Meeting

John Leasher represented the *Johns Manville Retirees Association* at the *National Retirees Legislative Network* Board of Directors annual meeting in Washington, DC on January 29 and 30. John also serves as NRLN's Secretary and Treasurer. Here is the meeting report:

HR 1322 & S 2904 - The Emergency Retiree Health Benefits Restoration Act

Congressman John Tierney (D-Mass) told the NRLN's Board of Directors he will re-introduce this vital legislation in this Congressional session. The 2002 retiree health bill had 96 Democrat co-sponsors, but little Republican support. Tierney wants a bipartisan bill. Representative Rob Simmons (R-Conn) has written a letter supporting it and Tom Tancredo (R-Colo) has written urging hearings on the bill. NRLN has identified a few more Republicans who will support the bill if a Republican co-sponsor is found.

Congressman Tierney said that AARP apparently opposes the bill, supporting a prescription drug addition to Medicare. Both the Republican and Democrat prescription drug proposals have many flaws and may have the undesired effect of companies' canceling existing retiree prescription drug programs. Tierney suggested that all members write to AARP strongly supporting HR 1322.

Tierney also said that NRLN must establish grass roots efforts in support of HR 1322. He suggested (1) having Town Meetings, meetings with editorial boards, and a Washington rally; (2) identifying medical experts who could dispute rising health care costs; and (3) using new web-site tools to create petitions with thousands of signatures.

The search for a Senate sponsor for the companion bill, S 2904, continues. Several Senators are potential sponsors, but none has committed. Senator Baccus has agreed to co-sponsor the bill when a chief sponsor is found.

Expansion to include older workers

NRLN realizes that many benefits reductions facing retirees also apply to workers near retirement age or who have been laid off after many years of service. Adding these workers to NRLN will increase the membership base and provide more bargaining power with Congress.

Pension Legislation

Michael Gordon, NRLN Counselor, is researching aspects of forcing companies with defined pension plans, such as JM, to provide annual inflation increases. He is addressing retroactive adjustments, pension formulas and vested rights. NRLN is committed to introducing pension legislation in 2003.

Mr. Gordon will also formulate a solution to the problem of pension plan conversion to so-called Cash Balance plans. Legislation should protect older workers in any and all abusive conversions.

Financial Report

While NRLN ended 2002 with a small surplus, the organization cannot become a strong Washington force unless it dramatically increases its revenue. One suggestion is for retirees who contribute to political parties to instead make those contributions to NRLN. Another is to raise dues from \$1 to \$2 per member for larger retiree organizations.

Action Committees

Several action committees were set up to address these issues, with a person assigned responsibility for reporting on progress at future board meetings.

Annual Meeting
Bill Snyder, Secretary

The annual meeting of the Johns Manville Retirees Association was held at the Bemis Public Library in Littleton, CO at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 26, 2002. Members represented by proxy established a quorum. The meeting was called to order by President John Leasher. Minutes of the 2001 annual meeting were read and approved.

The president asked the secretary to cast one vote for the slate of officers and directors proposed by the nominating committee. This slate was unopposed.

The following were elected to serve for two years:

- John Leasher (incumbent)
President & Director
- Bill Snyder (incumbent)
Secretary & Director
- Fern Balaun (incumbent)
Director & Newsletter Editor
- George Kinzer (incumbent)
Director
- Andy Sokal (incumbent)
Director
- Jack Woodall (new)
Director

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

Many thanks to these people for agreeing to serve. A special

thanks to the Nominating Committee for their work this year. In addition to those elected, the following continue to serve terms which run to 2003:

- Bob Feeney
Vice President & Director
- Ann Rogers
Treasurer & Director
- Roy Hillmer - Director
- Burt Emory - Director
- Mike Sivetts - Director
- Dan Gallagher (non-voting)
Past President

Many thanks to those of you who returned your proxy. This enabled the Association to have the necessary representation for an official annual meeting and

In Memory

- William Van Blarcom
(Denver)
- Doris Douglass
(Denver)
- Bill Henseler
(Denver)
- Arthur J. Jarvis
(New Jersey)
- Nona Jean Laird
(Antonito)
- Tim Loftus
(Denver)

Listed in the San Francisco Newsletter:

- Al Haun
- Robert Lohse
- Jerry Martin
- Ray McAdam
- Harlan Smith

Audit Report from Roger DeVries, C.P.A.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have examined the disbursements records and other financial records of the Johns Manville Retirees Association for the year 2002.

Membership dues and deposit records were not available, but I was able to establish that dues and corrections reported by the Treasurer were added to the Association's Credit Union Accounts in total.

I found the financial operations and record keeping of the Association to be in order.

The enclosed Fund Activity Summary was compiled from the Association records without audit.

As this Summary was not subject to audit, and as it is not accompanied by other financial statements generally considered necessary for full financial presentation, I am unable to express an opinion on this Financial Summary.

Yours very truly, Roger DeVries, CPA

Johns Manville Retirees Association Fund Activity Summary

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>
Beginning Balance, Funds on Deposit	\$65,229	\$41,405	\$49,139
Income: Credit Union Dividends	2,720	3,552	2,550
Dues & Corrections	<u>1,067</u>	<u>31,060</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Income	3,787	34,612	2,550
Expenditures:			
Legal & Accounting Fees	275	210	1,308
Travel & Dues	3,615	2,500	2,128
Liability Insurance	3,216	2,500	2,500
Newsletters, Postage & Other	<u>6,241</u>	<u>5,578</u>	<u>4,348</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>13,347</u>	<u>10,788</u>	<u>10,284</u>
Net Change in Funds During Year	<u>-9,560</u>	<u>23,824</u>	<u>-7,734</u>
Ending Balance, Funds on Deposit	\$55,669	\$65,229	\$41,405

election.

Senior Fraud

Some of the suggestions made by the Johns Manville Credit Union:

- Order a supply of checks with security features.
- Endorse checks in the presence of a teller.
- When mailing checks, use a U.S. Post Office drop box to prevent mailbox theft.
- Never give numbers—account, social security—or other non-public information by phone without verifying caller identity.
- Report lost or stolen cards and checks immediately.
- When writing checks, use ink and leave no spaces.
- Be aware of your statement cycle and if you don't receive your statement timely, check to see why.
- Keep a record of your account numbers, their expiration dates and the phone number of each company in a secure place.

Dues, Dues, Dues

Your retiree association is dedicated to protecting and improving your benefits. Our greatest concern currently is your medical plan, a vital benefit—promised to you but not guaranteed. Medical costs have risen more than 172% in the last two decades. Recently Bethlehem Steel Corporation asked for Bankruptcy Court approval to terminate health and life insurance benefits for 95,000 retired workers and their dependents. This ominous note is not unique as corporations look to cut costs in a weak economy.

In response to the national threat to retiree medical plans, your association is an active member of the *National Retirees Legislative Network*, which represents millions of retirees and is actively promoting HR 1322. (See page 1 article) This legislation is our best hope for protecting your medical plan.

Our association's dues for membership in the network is \$1.00 per member and probably will increase. Our representative, John Leasher attends network meetings in the nation's capitol and other members of your board may travel there to meet with Congressmen and increase pressure to pass HR 1322. When hearings are held, it will be necessary to pay for travel, food and lodging for older retirees who can testify to the importance of legislation to protect medical benefits.

So your 2003 Retiree Association dues of \$20.00 is vital to supporting this national effort to protect and possibly improve your retiree benefits. We are in this together with millions of retirees from dozens of large corporations since the combined weight of the entire national network is necessary to pressure Congress to pass this legislation.

Please return this section of the newsletter with your dues check. You can also access the dues form by going to <http://JMretirees.org> on the internet.

To: Johns Manville Retiree Association
P. O. Box 3336
Littleton, CO 80161-3336

Date: _____

My dues check for \$20, made payable to *Johns Manville Retirees Association*, is enclosed. *Please print:*

Name: _____ Phone: (____) - _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip + 4 _____ + _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Dues Enclosed: \$ 20.00

Please provide ZIP + 4 digits code to help the Association save postage. The ZIP + 4 for your home address should be on mailings from utility companies, or you can call your Post Office or you can go to the web site <Http://wwwUSPS.com/zip4/>. Enter your address and your ZIP + 4 digit code will be shown. Thank you.

