

Pension COLA Rejected

Dan Gallagher

Representatives of Johns Manville met with three members of the Retiree Association on May 20 to review the membership survey reported in the Winter 1998 issue of the newsletter. While sympathetic to the need for a COLA, as documented in the survey, Johns Manville executives said that a recent review of the retirement fund determined that a COLA was not possible.

Dan Gallagher, John Leasher and Bob Feeney represented the Retiree Board. After reviewing the retiree survey, your representatives asked for a pension adjustment for all retirees with emphasis on those who have the greatest need, and those retired the longest.

Your Board will continue to urge Johns Manville to consider some kind of financial relief as the assets of the retirement fund permit.

lenged GM's decision to reduce some benefits and to require retirees to "co-pay" a share of health care costs. Retirees now pay up to \$5,000 annually for out-of-pocket expenses, according to their lawyers. The high Court sided with GM, denying the appeal without comment or dissent. GM said the appeals court ruling applied settled law to the facts of the case, and that Supreme Court review was not warranted.

1998 Election

The nominating committee this year has been appointed and is comprised of the following members of the Association: Jerry Attridge, Nate Henn, Bill Johnson, Andy Sokal and Carl VanderLinden. The committee will be electing a Chairperson from these committee members. Positions to be elected this year are: President & Director, Secretary & Director, Newsletter Editor and Director, Regional Representative Director, and two additional directors.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Board of Directors, please advise one of the above committee members or contact Bill Snyder, 1952 W. Ridge Rd., Littleton, CO 80120.



Sprague vs General Motors Update

In the September 1995 issue of the retiree newsletter, Dan Gallagher reported on the Sprague vs General Motors case which raised the possibility for "window" retirees to challenge past or future changes in their health care benefits. Following is a current update on this case:

The Supreme Court on Monday sided with General Motors Corp. in a long legal battle on whether the automaker violated federal law in reducing health care benefits to some of its retirees. The justices declined to review a U. S. appeals court ruling in January that rejected the claims brought in a class-action lawsuit filed in 1989 involving 84,000 retirees. The lawsuit chal-

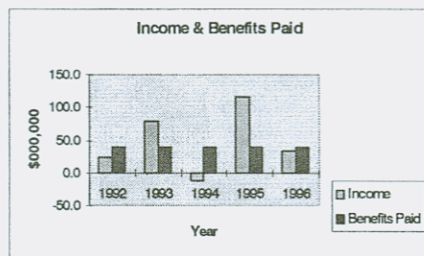
Retirement Plan Review

John Leasher

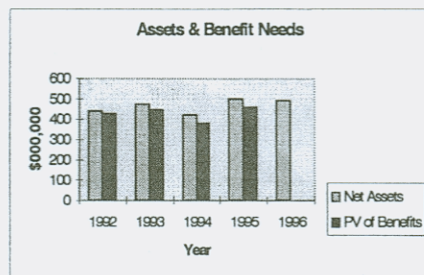
Each year, Johns Manville sends every retiree a Summary Annual Report showing summarized information about the Retirement Plan, the Thrift Plan, and the Retiree Medical Plan. This Summary mentions the full annual reports that are available for review by an retiree. Your Retirees Association obtains the voluminous full annual report and analyzes it. Here are some observations that resulted from our review of the years 1992 through 1996 (numbers for 1997 won't be available until later this year).

Payments of pension benefits have held fairly steady over the last five years, at about \$39 million per year. Administrative expenses paid from the plan have also been fairly steady, at about \$2.6 million per year. The majority of these expenses are investment advisory fees.

The Retirement Plan's income (consisting of earnings on investments plus the company's contribution) ranged from a \$12 million loss in 1994 to a \$116 million gain in 1995. The company contributed \$7 million in each of the 1993 through 1995 years, but made no contribution in 1996. Income from investments was \$36 million in 1996.



Due to the poor market conditions in 1994, the Retirement Plan's assets declined from \$475 million to \$422 million. The assets bounced back to \$497 million in 1995, and were \$491 million at the end of 1996.



The company also computes, actuarially, the present value of the expected future payouts from the Plan. Essentially, this number represents how much money would have to be set aside today to earn enough money to pay all persons expected to be retired in future years. This number is computed as of January 1 of each year, so the latest available number is as of 1/1/96. At that time, the present value of future benefits was \$461 million (as compared to the total assets of \$497 million on 12/31/95).

Prepare Your Computer to Celebrate the Year 2000

The end of the century is rapidly approaching and some of you may already be making plans to celebrate the biggest New Year's party of the last 1,000 years. Unfortunately without some preparation between now and then, the computers we depend on for day-to-day tasks may become inoperable.

What's the problem? When computers were first becoming popular, storage space was extremely expensive. Today, you can buy three gigabytes of hard drive space for \$300, but 20 years ago it cost thousands of dollars for one megabyte. Management asked programmers to save space if at all possible. The programmers decided to shave off the first two digits of the year wherever it was stored. Hence, in date fields with the abbreviation 98, the computer assumes the 19.

That solution works well unless those first digits are 20. If the computer assumes 19, you end up with 1900 and not 2000. This can create huge problems for any programs that rely on date calculations, such as mortgages or credit card expiration dates.

What do you need to do to handle this situation? Fortunately, it appears we may have things very easy. The most common problem is that the systems BIOS (Basic Input Output System) cannot handle the change-over. Most computers built within the last five years are easy to fix. If the computer is powered off when the date changes to 2000, it will read 1980 or some other in-

correct date, when you power it on for the first time. The solution is to let the computer boot normally, then change the date in Windows or DOS and restart the computer. Steps to fix the problem:

DOS:

1. At the DOS Prompt type the command, Date.
2. Set the date.
3. Type in the command, Time
4. Set the time.

Windows 95:

1. Double click on the clock at the lower right corner of the screen.
2. Set the date and time to the appropriate values.

Windows 3.11:

1. Double click on Control Panel.
2. Double click on Date/Time.
3. Set the date and time to the appropriate values.

It's that simple.

If your computer is not in this majority, you need to obtain a BIOS upgrade for the computer system. Some are as simple as installing a software program. Others require a chip replacement. In either case *do not attempt to perform this upgrade yourself*. Doing so could make the system unusable.

Contact a local repair shop with questions on how to get an upgrade for your BIOS.

To determine if you have a 2000 problem set the date and time to one minute before the turn of the century. Turn the computer off and wait for a minute for the clock to roll over. Restart the computer and see what the date reads. If it says 2000, you have no problem with the BIOS. If it has reverted to 1980, set the date to 1-1-2000 and re-



start. If it holds a date of 2000, you are okay. Then simply follow the procedure above when the new century starts.

If your computer does not properly record the date, the system require a BIOS upgrade. Once again, please contact a local computer shop to get information on making this change.

The other side of the coin is the software that you use. Older versions of Microsoft Access and Microsoft Excel, if used for date calculations, require an upgrade. This requires buying a newer version of the program.

It is important that you look into these situations as soon as possible. The more time you have to correct problems, the easier the conversion will be. It may seem that you have two years to make changes, in reality there is

only one year remaining because the year 1999 is needed for testing. If there are bugs, you want to see them earlier so you have time to make needed changes.

Mailing List Changes

Bill Snyder received over 100 messages on his answering service in response to the notice in the corporate newsletter dated "Fall '97." Bill tried to get all the information given entered on the retiree mailing list before our "Winter '97" retiree newsletter went out. However, if you find your address has not yet been changed or if you know of someone who called in but did not receive our "Winter '97" newsletter, please advise Bill Snyder at 1952 W. Ridge Road, Littleton, CO 80120; or phone him at 303-794-0356.

Savannah Regional Representative

A new regional representative for the Savannah area has been appointed due to the death of John Balmes. Peggy Carlisle has agreed to fill this spot. Her address is 2 Elder Court, Savannah, GA 31419, telephone 912 925-5935.

Peggy was hired by Johns Manville in 1962 and worked in Atlanta Building Products office. Later, she became the first woman sales coordinator in Packing and Frictions and worked there until 1978 when she became Chief of Customer Service for Commercial Roofing. Peggy moved to Savannah in 1985 when Commercial and Residential Roofing were merged at the Savannah Plant. She retired in Savannah in 1992.

(from) Roger DeVries, C.P.A.

Board of Directors
Manville Retirees Association

I have examined the receipts and disbursements records and other financial records of the John Manville Retirees Association for the year 1997 and found the financial operations and record keeping of the Association to be in order.

The enclosed Financial 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

Johns Manville Retirees Association Fund Activity Summary Years 1997 & 1996

	1997	1996
Beginning balance, funds on deposit	\$ 61,669	\$ 65,929
Income: Credit Union dividends	3,184	2,524
Expenditures:		
Legal & Accounting Fees	\$ 888	\$ 1,639
Innoventions - conf. calls & materials	566	
Insurance	2,500	2,500
Newsletters, Postage & Other	3,234	2,645
Total Expenditures	\$ 7,188	\$ 6,784
Net Change in Funds During Year	(4,004)	(4,260)
Ending Balance, Funds on Deposit	\$ 57,665	\$ 61,669

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