

Sanitarian

April, 1979

newsletter



SUCCESS

WV Sanitarians and Health Officers Lobby Registration Bill and Money

West Virginia Sanitarians accomplished a major feat during the 64th Legislature:

- In a year of Sunset legislation, they successfully lobbied a new registration law; and
- In a year of Fiscal Conservatism in government, they successfully lobbied a substantial increase in local health department funding;

The new registration law is based on national model legislation and requires up

to four years experience before becoming registered. However, built into the legislation are lessened requirements for qualifying degrees. A masters degree in environmental health requires only one year of actual job experience, for example. A test is required for registration.

Sanitarian Association President Robert Parkins called the legislation "a Phyrrie victory, but more."

"It represents a primary goal outside what the proponents call 'sunset legislation.' What it shows is that Sanitarians are willing to tackle those outstanding problems that they as a group feel need improving on. It is a beginning of dealing with the groups' problem of a 67% turnover rate," he said.

Kanawha-Charleston Chief Sanitarian Charles Saber coordinated the overall effort for Sanitarians from county units.

"Our chief goal," he said, "was to have a Sanitarian on duty every day who could coordinate the hearing schedule for the next day and let us know if our bill or the budget bill for the health department was going to be reviewed."

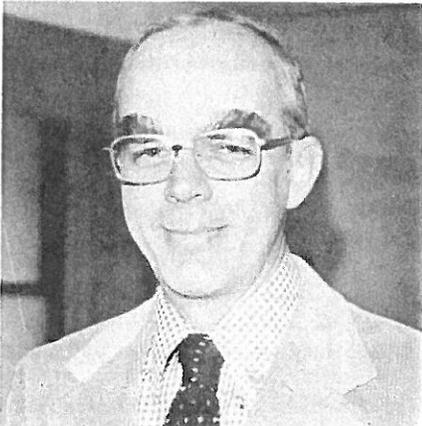
Area county sanitarians were assigned specific days, and visiting sanitarians from throughout the state were assigned to those leaders for the day for lobbying.

"Up to 16 Sanitarians were present during any given day," Saber said.

IN ADDITION to the registration bill,

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State Director Supports Bill



George Pickett, M.D., M.P.H.

Faced with a philosophical paradox, Dr. George Pickett nevertheless appeared before the Senate Health Committee and gave tacit support to the now-passed Sanitarian Registration Bill.

The bill, signed by Governor John D. Rockefeller IV in time to become law, was the only registration bill passed this session by the Legislature. Eight were introduced.

Appearing before the committee, along with a number of Sanitarians and Health Officers, Pickett was questioned by committee members regarding the apparent contradiction of not wanting any new

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Policy Decision:

Directors Vote to Introduce Bill on Electrical Hook-Up

A bill requiring health department approval prior to connection of a permanent electrical power hook-up will be introduced in the Legislature next year following a policy decision of the Association Board of Directors' third quarterly meeting of the year.

Several area states now have the statute and have found it very effective in septic tank permit enforcement. The bill is to be modeled after existing legislation in at least four surrounding states.

What the law does in these states, according to information already gathered from state health departments which have the law, is to minimize the enforcement problems for Sanitarians. The increase in the number of legal permits is offset by eliminating legal and environmental problems with illegally installed systems.

In one state, South Carolina, a 50 percent increase in the number of permits issued resulted from the statute.

The vote to request introduction and lobbying of the electrical hook-up bill was unanimous by Board members present at

the meeting held at the Harrison-Clarksburg Health Department on March 23, 1979.

Mr. Lemoine Thompson, Sanitarian, Hardy Co., and Secretary-Treasurer of the Association, moved the motion, stating that prior enforcement restraint is the only good insurance for obtaining guaranteed enforcement of the State Health Department's Small Sewage Law.

Board member, Mr. Earl Burgess, Nicholas Co. Health Department, said the outstanding problem in enforcement will come in southern coal producing counties, where land is at a premium and where the Department's environmental health laws are sometimes not enforced in equal comparison to other counties in the state.

Following compilation of the statutes and related memos from adjoining states, a draft of the proposed bill will be written and Legislators asked to sponsor the measure. Legislative sponsors suggested were Mr. Clyde See, House of Representatives, and Senator William Brotherton, Senate.

News From the Chief

An Interagency Agreement has been completed between the State Solid Waste Authority and the State Department of Health which clearly defines the respective responsibilities of the agencies.

An Interagency Agreement has also been reached between Dr. Pickett and Mr. Callaghan, Director of the Department of Natural Resources, which will result in the reduction of total time required to process sewer applications from an average of 82 days to 50 days.

The State/Local Environmental Health Liason Group will hold it's second meeting in Charleston on April 30, and May 1, 1979.

Mr. Boutros (Pete) Habek has now joined the Martinsburg District Office as District Engineer.

Mr. Bharat Maniar has been employed as Water Supply Engineer for the Moundsville District Office and will report to that office about June 1 after completing orientation with the State Water Supply Program.

Mr. Robert Frost, Sanitarian II, is now undergoing orientation with the Drinking Water Division prior to his assignment to the Beckley District Office to work on the Water Supply Program.

The next Sanitarian Training Course is tentatively scheduled to commence on May 14, 1979 and will be under the direction of Mr. Edwin DeBarr. Mr. Ronald Forren will serve as Acting Chief, General Environmental Division, during this period. Official announcements will be sent shortly to the counties regarding this matter.

Director Supports . . .

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registration acts but speaking in behalf of the bill.

Asked by Senator William Moreland, Monongalia County, to explain the apparent contradiction, Pickett said his policy had not changed, but rather that Sanitarians, with a documented 67 percent turnover rate, must be provided "... with any assistance necessary to get the job done ..."

Pickett said that his office had requested that the Legislature solve such philosophical contradictions earlier by providing his office with an office of secretariat for health licensing boards. The office was created but not funded by the legislature, Pickett added.

Fee Increased

Registration renewal is due July 1, 1979. The new Registration Bill mandates a fee of \$10.00 per annum. The Sanitarians Executive Committee had amended the fee to \$5.00 in the amended bill which they had submitted for adoption by the legislature. However, for the sake of expediency in introducing a registration bill, the amended version was passed over for an older version of the bill which was already on hand at the legislature. As a result, the bill which was subsequently introduced and passed is with us "lock, stock, and barrel"; hence the fee increase.

Mr. Donald Kuntz, Chief, Drinking Water Division, has recently been designated to represent Dr. Pickett on the Ohio River Sanitation Commission.

The State/EPA Agreement on environmental programs operated under federal grants is now being prepared for consideration by Governor Rockefeller and Regional Administrator, Jack Schram. The Agreement in the initial year will cover the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act and RCRA (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act). Mr. McCall is Dr. Pickett's designee to work with other agencies and EPA on this agreement.

New Sanitarians: Ms. Nancy Newton—Brooke Co., Mr. Anthony Turner—Grant Co., Mr. John Hammond—Jefferson Co., Ms. Shirley Burdick—Lincoln Co., Mr. Marcus Henderson—Logan Co., Mr. Samuel Worman—Logan Co., Mr. Dowell Gray—Monongalia Co., Ms. Judi Rice—Berkley Co., and Mr. Stephen Bayer—Wood-Pleasants Co.'s.

Mr. Phillip R. Jones, Jr., formerly a sanitarian with the Berkley Co. Health Department, has transferred to the State Health Department's General Environmental Health Division as a staff sanitarian.

Mr. John Gilliam, a former sanitarian with the Wyoming Co. Health Department, has returned to West Virginia from the West, and is serving as a sanitarian with McDowell Co. Health Department.

Definitions

Definitions from *The Devil's Dictionary*, by Ambrose Bierce

Positive: Mistaken at the top of one's voice.

Egotist: A person of low taste, more interested in himself than in me.

Presidency: The greased pig in the field game of American politics.

Dr. Pickett's View . . .

(Continued from page 2)

Senate Bill 217 (introduced by Senator Brotherton) dealing with the registration of sanitarians; House Bill 1103 (introduced by Speaker See) dealing likewise with the registration of sanitarians; and Senate Bill 254 (introduced by Senator Hamilton) dealing with the licensure of medical laboratory personnel.

There are approximately 140 separate categories of workers functioning in the health field alone. To continue to add to the list of those presently licensed in West Virginia without looking at the entire concept and the policy issues involved will not, I believe, provide West Virginians with any reasonable measure of protection, but will increase the amount of confusion which prevails.

Very truly yours,
George E. Pickett, M.D.
Director of Health

Thanks Legislators, Si!

Legislators, Si!

By unanimous vote of the Association Board of Directors, letters of "thanks" have been sent to legislators who supported passage of the new registration bill and increased budget allocations to county health departments.

Special and outstanding "thanks" have gone to the following: William Brotherton, Kanawha Co.; Clyde See, Hardy Co.; Ortin Jones, Roane Co.; Robert Harman, Mineral Co.; and John "Si" Boettner, Kanawha Co. All are members of committees responsible for "moving" either the registration bill or the section of the budget bill dealing with local health services.

Endorsing both matters in a timely matter were the WV Association of Local Health Officers, Dr. N. Allen Dyer, President, and Dr. Neal, President-elect.

Following passage of the new registration bill, the WV Public Health Association requested the governor to sign the measure. Dr. Harry Stansbury, member, assisted with lobbying efforts on behalf of WVPHA.

SUCCESS . . .

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efforts were aimed at increasing local health services funds, according to Parkins. "For years, small county health departments in about 50 counties have had the feeling that they are being 'starved out' except where massive doses of federal funds are concerned. Many of them survived through CETA, switching staff were possible, but that era has ended, and responsibility must now be faced for funding public preventive health in all phases."

"Finance committee members in both the House and Senate were receptive to problems of local health departments," he said. "Many were aware that actual health services are offered at the county level, and they support that idea. I believe that was why the House Finance committee voted their 20% increase." The final decision, though, he added, rests with the conferee committee between the Senate and House members.

"Our point has been made, though, whether or not tangible results are forthcoming this year or in the future."

Parkins said he believes that the principle behind the funding procedure must be reviewed by individual legislators and that "a guaranteed funding system for public health in West Virginia must be achieved."

"Our present 'give me if you choose me' philosophy in the Legislature must end," he said. "County health departments offer our basic services, whether family planning with the nursing staff, or basic environmental health practices ranging from preventing foodborne illnesses to providing septic tank permits."

Editorial Comment

A BASIC "LACK" and the Bottom Line

by Robert Parkins, President, WVAS

West Virginians tend to view themselves in terms of what they "have" and what they "lack." On a scale of 1 to 10, then, I will attempt to show you some of the things that I feel you need or "lack" in public health in *Montani Semper Liberi*.

1. Inadequate plumbing, according to W. Va. Health Systems Agency, is approximately 37% substandard in W. Va. That figure rises, of course, in accordance with the disproportionate number of rural counties which have not had registered sanitarians to prevent new construction sewage from being added to streams from septic tanks.
2. Reporting of communicable and foodborne and waterborne diseases by licensed physicians to county health departments, as required, WV Code; Only the "lack" of figures are not available, by individual estimates for VD, Foodborne Illnesses, etc.
3. Real life (Creasey greens, too) nutritional information to women, in particular, who do the cooking for most West Virginia children.
4. The percentage of all unvaccinated children in West Virginia schools.
5. The percentage of unvaccinated children entering Kindergarten in West Virginia.
6. The percentage of West Virginia school children exposed daily to carbon monoxide, lead poisoning, unsafe water, and USDA endorsed nutritional standards (sugar).
7. Federal and State funding of new programs at the local level guaranteed to be at least 500% more than that currently supplied to county health departments.
8. "Lack" of foresight of the powers-that-be to fund a combining of at least the administrative functions of licensing and registration boards for all WV health related professions as required, H.B. 585.

9. Our present antiquated (Nurse trained in the sanitary sciences?) belabored public health law.

10. Lack of a funding SYSTEM for county health departments in West Virginia.

IT IS THAT BOTTOM LINE that I chose to dwell on, Folks, in terms of a primary "lack" in West Virginia.

Of the total \$78 million allocated to the state health department by the Legislature this year, only about \$2.7 million will go out to all the 55 county health departments. Built into that system, of course, are various amounts for laboratory services, administrative fees, but above all, personnel salaries, including those of mental health personnel; administration in Charleston; and matching funds for programs from the federal level, such as Women, Children and Infants (WIC) Program. (And who said nutrition is being disregarded here?) The budget, of course, is mind boggling, as you can see.

Bottom lines, though, are only important in that they are divisible by their parts. But we'll let Einstein, not Bob Parkins, deal with that; suffice it to say, however, that the county health department line item in the present state health department budget does not equal out in terms of local health services offered by county health departments. In terms of that budget, imagine all health departments in the counties being 'one'; then divide the profits to the public, if you will; now subtract \$70 million for mental health and administrative costs and what do you get?

You will get what should be about the bottom line (\$7.7 million) for 55 county health departments in West Virginia, I believe. That figure would probably mean an adequate number of nursing, sanitarian, administrative and other local health personnel. For county health departments, Folks, that is not only what we "lack," but it also should be the "bottom line."

Licensing Boards: Dr. Pickett's View

Dear Senator Huffman:

So far this Legislative Session, at least six bills have been introduced which would cause new registration or licensing boards to be established in West Virginia. I would like to once again urge that no additional licensure functions pertaining to health services be established in West Virginia until the Office of the Executive Secretariat to the Health Professions Licensing Boards has been funded, established and has functioned for at least one full year. While the individuals who are seeking licensure are doing so for the best of purposes, it is not possible to show that the public is harmed by not licensing them nor is it possible to show that the public will be significantly benefitted by establishing a licensure or registration program. As it stands now, the people of West Virginia are being misled into a false sense of security by the existing licensure functions, most of which are simply unable to carry out the kinds of responsibilities which the people of this State believe to be encompassed in such procedures.

Generally speaking, none of the existing health professions licensing boards (and none of those proposed) has a proven capability to differentiate between qualified and unqualified applicants; none of them has procedures in place for making sure that those who were originally qualified to practice their profession remain so qualified, and none of them has really adequate procedures for revoking or suspending a license if they could ascertain whether or not the qualifications and capabilities had deteriorated. In essence, while the members who serve on the health professions licensing boards do so earnestly and in good faith, most of the boards serve a function which could be more appropriately carried out by the private practice of professional accreditation rather than the public function of licensure. Except for the Board of Pharmacy, none of the boards has field investigators to look into the state of practice or to adequately follow up on complaints. This being the case, I do not believe that it can be demonstrated that the public's interest would be better served by adding additional licensing boards to an already confused array of functions. It makes sense to deliberately study the existing situation, and to develop thoughtful public policy alternatives for debate as to how best to organize a function which would see to it that those necessary health professionals who are required in West Virginia can be properly reviewed as to their qualifications and capabilities.

There may be additional bills which I have not seen yet, but those I am aware of are as follows: Senate Bill 209 (introduced by President Brotherton) dealing with the licensure of opticians; Senate Bill 189 (introduced by Senator Nelson) dealing with the licensure of social workers; Senate Bill 102 (introduced by Senator Colombo) dealing with the licensure of electrologists;

Letter to the Editor:

Super Sanitarian

Dear Editor:

Rumor has it that a new sanitarian has arrived in the State of West Virginia to help solve the woes of environmental health. His (or her) true identity is unknown to mere mortals; this sanitarian has come to be known as "Super Sanitarian." Yes, Super Sanitarian—more powerful than a Caterpillar DC9, faster than a flushing toilet, able to leap large stabilization ponds with a single bound. Yes, up there in the sky it's not a bird, it's not a plane, that big SS on its chest identifies that speeding comet as the answer to a cry of need.

In a recent interview with Clark Kent of the Daily Planet, Super S has some advice for you new sanitarians. Remember, says "Sup," it's important for sanitarians to establish a good working relationship with the public. So don't worry about it if that German Shepherd is chewing the tires off your car, or that kid is throwing his Maypole at you. Stay calm, be polite, and always try to make a fair, objective, and rational decision. Most people appreciate true sincerity.

In weeks to come, "The Continuing Saga of Super Sanitarian."

Normone Cornpone

(Continued on Page 3)

Meetings to Attend

Mid-Year Meeting Set May 8 and 9

As mandated by the membership of the Association in the State Health Conference at Wheeling, a Mid-Year Meeting and In-Service Training Session has been scheduled for May 8 and 9. Location for the event is Cedar Lakes FHA-FFA Camp near Ripley.

Several important in-service activities have been scheduled including:

- Food Service Plan Review
- Revised Small Sewage and Excreta Disposal Regulations
- Revised Food Service Code and
- Legal Enforcement Matters for Sanitarians.

Also scheduled during the event will be an evening membership meeting of the Association, according to Robert Parkins, President.

Reservations for the event should be mailed to Perry Merritt, RS, Administrative Assistant, Jackson County Health Department, Ripley, WV 25271, as soon as possible (see registration form, this page). No prior registration fee is required.

No additional registration material is to be mailed to Sanitarians other than what appears in this newsletter, according to Parkins. "Since this is a session by and for Sanitarians, we are using the Newsletter as our only vehicle of communication for the event."

Program activities include a request to the National Sanitation Foundation for a speaker on food service plan review from

Interstate Seminar Set For July 25-28

The annual in-service training session of the Interstate Environmental Health Seminar has been set for July 25 to 28 at Jeckyl Island, Georgia. This is Georgia's first hosting of the Seminar which originated in West Virginia at Jackson's Mill.

Planning committee members Ken Ware, RS, State Dept. of Health, and Robert Parkins, RS, WVAS, said many varied activities are planned. According to Ware, "All West Virginia Sanitarians will have an interest in several activities scheduled."

Topics for discussion include disposal of offensive materials, foodservice inspection techniques, bacteriological analysis of foodborne illnesses as well as shellfood investigation, and many other environmental health topics.

Scheduling and costs for the training session are to be distributed to Sanitarians by the Environmental Health Services Division Director. Last year's conference at Canaan Valley was underwritten by the WVAS and well attended by Sanitarians here. Attendance for the affair has traditionally been endorsed by several officials including the State Director of Health, local health officers, and the Association Board of Directors.

All WV Sanitarians are urged to attend.

Ann Arbor, Michigan; William Bradford and Brian Wheeler, both PE's with the WV Dept. of Health Housing Section; Division Director Robert McCall speaking on the proposed food service code to be presented to the WV State Board of Health; and a team of prosecuting attorneys speaking on a panel discussion of legal enforcement activities for Sanitarians.

Here's the Schedule of Events:

- May 8:
- 11 a.m. - 12 noon: Registration
- 12 noon - 1 p.m.: Lunch
- 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.: Small Sewage Regulation

Revisions

2 p.m. - 3 p.m.: House Bill 1103, Sanitarians Registration Bill

3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: Legal Enforcement

Activities for Sanitarians

State Health Conference Planned for September 12-14

The Annual meeting of the West Virginia Public Health Association and the annual meeting of the West Virginia Association of Sanitarians has been set for September 12, 13, and 14, 1979 in Charleston, according to Dr. William Neal, M.D., President Elect and Program Chairman, WVPHA.

The 55th Annual Meeting will be held at the Charleston House Holiday Inn, Kanawha Blvd.

Environmental Health Section chairman, Robert Parkins, said the following program areas will be covered for Sanitarians:

- Continuing education for legal enforcement activities (warrants, legal decorum, tangible evidence, etc.);

- How to Lobby a Bill through the Legislature;

- Professional organizations: Help or Hindrance?;

- West Virginia's Court System at the County Level;

- Professional Development: An Idea Whose Time Has Come;

- West Virginia's Civil Service "System?";

- Discussions: "Children Are People Too";

- Special awards and elections of officers, and more.

Parkins said every Sanitarian is urged to attend the meeting and is encouraged to be prepared to deal with the theme of the conference for the year: "The International Year of the Child." Recommended reading for one group discussion is "Children are People Too" by Virginia Coigney.

A Sanitarians' picnic, an annual affair, is planned at the pool for recreation, he said, possibly starring a "porpoise" provided by delegates.

Dinner

6:30 p.m.: Semi-Annual Meeting of

Association Membership

8:00 p.m.: Special Activities

May 9:

9 a.m. - 11 a.m.: Foodservice Plan Review by NSF Standards

11 a.m. - 12 noon: "Gripe Session" and positive reflections

12 noon: Lunch

1:30 p.m.: Dismiss

Cost of the two day affair includes fee for registration, room and board. All of the state's 109 Sanitarians are asked to attend, along with aides and related environmental health personnel. Pre-registration is not required, but suggested.

REGISTRATION FORM: SANITARIAN'S MID-YEAR MEETING

registration fee.....	
breakfast.....	\$1.75
dinner.....	\$2.75
lodging (semi-private).....	\$9.00/night
lunch.....	\$2.25

Please complete and return to Mr. Perry Merritt, Administrative Assistant, Jackson County Health Department, Ripley, WV 25271.

Name.....

Address.....

County.....

Lodging (private or semi-private).....

Amount, if any, deposited.....

WV Sanitarian's NEWSLETTER
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 Morongalia County Health Dept.
 Van Voorhis Road
 Morgantown, WV 26505